

Auction Action In Mount Kisco, N.Y.

Heads Were Held High At Benefit Shop Auction



Antique cast iron lions that graced the front entry to the consignor's Bedford home, went over estimate to fetch \$3,050.

MOUNT KISCO, N.Y. — Harvey Fierstein held his head up high, and a few more, as the proud winner of 14 carnival shooting gallery heads at Benefit Shop Foundation's June 14 auction.

The Tony Award-winning actor, producer and writer is an avid collector of carnival memorabilia. For \$2,250, he became the owner of 14 antique hand-carved carnival heads that were sold as pairs among seven lots. The folk art-style heads originated from The Tivoli Gardens Amusement Park in Copenhagen, Denmark, and date to the mid-1800s. They retain their attached hinges allowing each head to fall back when struck.

Fierstein enlightened the auction gallery staff, explaining that the heads are of varying weights making it virtually impossible to shoot them all down. He laughed at the staff's shock that the game was "rigged," saying, "Of course it is, it's a carnival!" The Tivoli heads were originally purchased by the consignor in England, and like Fierstein's award-winning play, "Kinky Boots," have found their way to this side of the pond.

Appraiser and auctioneer Stefan Anikewich was thrilled to see many unusual pieces cross the block at strong prices and exceeding estimates. Highlights included an Elie-Bleu humidior, handmade in France, that went out well over its \$400/600 estimate at \$3,050. Performing well above estimate were a pair of crystal parrot wall sconces that flew out of the gallery for \$3,270, two antique cast iron lions that graced the front entry to the consignor's Bedford home brought \$3,050 and antique gilded bronze and crystal electrified wall sconces for \$1,708.

When a partial Hermes signed dinner service in the discontinued pattern of Marqueterie de



Performing well above estimate was a pair of crystal parrot wall sconces (one shown) that took \$3,270.

Pierres D'Orient et D'Occident sold for \$2,745, and two lots of decorative napkin rings went for over \$1,300, Stefan quipped, "I am clearly in the wrong business — tabletop will be my chapter two." Other dining items that had a strong showing were seven Lalique wine glasses and a decanter achieving more than \$1,100, and four pink and gold Versace lunch plates going home with an audience member for more than \$200. Porcelain from Bernardaud, Mottehedah, Tiffany, Rosenthal and Haviland also exceeded estimates.

Brunschwig and Fils proved French style is timeless with a side chair achieving \$1,220, its matching love seat selling for \$1,342 and a leopard print and fringed ottoman earning \$1,952. A carved Provencal dresser kept the French theme going when it fetched \$2,074.

Rounding out the auction were a chinoiserie-style open shelf book case going to a phone bidder for \$3,355, an antique Italian wooden rocking horse, brought over from Rome by the consignor, that rode off for \$366,

vertically, horizontally or diagonally on the picture plane, employing the invisible grid as the overall structural backbone.

Though seemingly graphic when viewed from afar, Witek embraces handmade imperfections that offer rich nuance. In fact, subtle expression is found within each line as thickness and strength of application shifts.

Jason McCoy Gallery is at 41 East 57th Street. For information, www.jasonmccoyinc.com or 212-319-1996.



Harvey Fierstein poses with auction house staffer Dara Boucher and the carnival heads he bought here.

and a signed English secretary book case that achieved \$2,318 online.

Stefan summed up this auction as a "designer showcase from around the tri-state area and around the globe that truly brought out the bidders." The gallery had a record number of Internet participants, with more than 2,500 registered, representing more than 30 countries, and approximately 70 in-house bidders.

All prices reported include the buyer's premium.

The non-profit Benefit Shop Foundation has its auction gallery at 27 Radio Circle and a thrift shop at 720 North Bedford Road, in Bedford Hills, N.Y. For information, www.thebenefitshop.org or 914-864-0707.

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'Joan Witek: Paintings' At Jason McCoy Gallery

NEW YORK CITY — Jason McCoy Gallery is presenting a solo exhibition of selected paintings by New York-based artist Joan Witek, spanning several decades of the artist's oeuvre.

"Joan Witek: Paintings," on view through July 31, brings together works from the 1970s to the present, revealing the artist's impressive unwavering focus. Witek uses fine pencil lines on white ground to define her compositions, before applying black oilstick to establish rich strokes. The latter move