

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Sale Results of Morton & Eden auction of Important Renaissance Medals and Plaquettes from the Estate of John R. Gaines on 13-14<sup>th</sup> December 2005**

This sale realized £853,330 (including premium) with 100% sold.

Two exceptionally fine German 16<sup>th</sup> Century medals realized the top prices in this 65 lot auction, the second part of the collection of medals and plaquettes formed by the late John R. Gaines of Lexington, Kentucky.

An important medal of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V designed by the artist Albrecht Dürer and one of only 10 known examples thought to exist today realized £198,400, **a record price for a German medal at auction** (estimate £70-100,000). The silver medal was originally struck in 1521 for presentation to the emperor on his visit to the city of Nuremberg following his coronation in Aachen in the previous year, but the visit was cancelled due to an outbreak of the plague and the medals became redundant and were mostly melted. The buyer was the New York dealer Stack's.

A silver "Trinity Medal" by Hans Reinhart issued by Maurice, Duke of Saxony, in 1544 greatly exceeded its estimate when it sold for £153,400 to the same buyer (estimate £40-60,000). The medal is Reinhart's masterpiece and its doctrinal texts were part of an attempt by the Duke at reconciliation between the Protestant and Catholic Churches.

The Italian medals were highlighted by Pisanello's medal of Alfonso the Magnanimous, King of Aragon, cast in 1449, which sold for £55,200 (estimate £60-80,000). A medal of Alfonso's granddaughter Camilla of Aragon, by the medallist Sperandio of Mantua realized £25,200 (estimate £6-8000), both purchased by Stack's of New York. A superb example of Trezzo's medal of the celebrated horologist Gianllo della Torre was bought for £22,800 by a US collector bidding by telephone (estimate £6-8000).

There was strong interest in the Renaissance plaquettes in the auction. The highlight here was the beautiful *Venus chastising Cupid* by the famous Paduan sculptor Riccio. The piece had last appeared at auction in the Adams collection, sold by Bonham's in 1996 for £45,500 and now brought £76,800 selling to an Italian private collector (estimate £30-50,000). A superb gilt-bronze plaquette of *Mars seated amidst Shields and Trophies* by Moderno realized £27,600 (estimate £10-15,000), selling to US private collector. A unique plaquette by the famous Milanese sculptor and medallist Leone Leoni of *Andrea Doria offering Thanks* was purchased by the Daniel Katz Gallery acting for the British Museum (with help from the National Art Collection Fund) for £15,600 (estimate £10-15,000).

Commenting on the sale, Tom Eden said: "Following the sale of the first part of the Gaines collection last April, this was another landmark auction in this specialized field. Top quality material seldom comes to the market and this latest sale demonstrated the continuing appeal of these small, hand-held, works of art. People are drawn to them not just from the medallic point of view but also for their sculptural qualities and portraiture which often reflects Renaissance art at its very best".

All realized prices include the buyers' premium of 20% on the first £100,000 of the hammer price and 12% on the amount by which the hammer price exceeds £100,000.

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