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## Illustration Art Sale at Swann Sets Six Records

### *Al Hirschfeld's Marx Brothers Tops Auction at \$26k*



#### **ILLUSTRATION ART**

Sale 2495; December 6, 2018

New York–**Swann Galleries'** auction of **Illustration Art** on **December 6** saw a bustling auction room as well as live bidding from the newly launched Swann Galleries app. Original works from children's literature and *Peanuts* comic strips from Charles M. Schulz were among highlights. Of the sale, Illustration Art Specialist Christine von der Linn noted, "We had a strong turnout and set records for six illustrators. The breadth and quality of the material enabled us to further the appreciation and enjoyment of this specific category of art."

Illustrations from children's literature saw outstanding results, boasting five records: **Eric Carle's** *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* with \$20,000; H.A. Rey's color pencil work for *Cecily G and the 9 Monkeys*, 1939—the first book to introduce Curious George—earned \$17,500; a watercolor and ink alternate version of the title page for *Angelina Ballerina* by Helen Craig saw \$5,460; and Leonard Weisgard's double-page illustration for *The Golden Christmas Tree* brought \$5,000. Two archives from Helen Stone found buyers: a rich collection of production material from *Tell Me, Mr. Owl*, 1957, which included sketches, studies and thoughtfully composed finished drawings garnered \$3,500, a record for the artist; and the 50-page mockup of *Watch Honeybees with Me*, 1964, with numerous illustration, was collected by an institution for \$688. Also present was Jerry Pinkney's special holiday watercolor for a 2009 cover of *School Library Journal*, which realized \$7,000.

The runaway top lot of the sale was a pen and ink drawing of the Marx Brothers by famed cartoonist **Al Hirschfeld**. The illustration for the cover of *Why a Duck?*, 1971, which features Chico, Harpo and Groucho in classic Hirschfeld style, barreled through its high estimate of \$7,500 selling for \$26,000 after a bidding war.



Charlie Brown, Snoopy and the Peanuts gang took the spotlight with five original *Peanuts* comic strips by Charles M. Schulz earning top spots in the sale. *The Years are Going by Fast*, 1979, which put Schroeder, his piano and Lucy's fussbudget personality on display; along with *Everyone Needs to Have Hope*, 1971, with Snoopy atop his doghouse, were sold to collectors. *Eventually, That Could Wear Out My Nose*, 1971, *Woodstock is Searching for His Identity*, 1972—each featuring Snoopy and Woodstock; and *Neighborhood Dog of the Year*, 1973, with Linus and his ever-present security blanket, were won by an institution. Each of the five strips brought \$12,500.

Additional cartoons included an original 11-panel *Doonesbury* strip, *Is Rufus Ready for his Lesson?* by Garry Trudeau. The comic was dedicated and inscribed to the influential psychologist, educator and civil rights activist Kenneth B. Clark (\$5,750).

Illustrations from *The New Yorker* performed well, with a cartoon by Charles Addams of a couple passing a giant bird house which sold for \$16,250, and a 1926 *New Yorker* cover by James Daugherty—the earliest cover for the publication offered at Swann to date—realized \$3,750.

Other notable lots included: a previously unknown work by Rockwell Kent, *To All Fascists* for the League of the American Writers (\$6,500); and Mary Mayo's illustration for a General Mills *Wheaties* advertisement (\$3,000, a record for the artist). Scottish illustrator Sir William Russell Flint found success with a watercolor and gouache scene from Homer's *Odyssey* of Penelope weaving her shroud selling for \$22,500.

The next auction of **Illustration Art** at Swann Galleries will be on June 4, 2019. The house is currently accepting quality consignments.

**Additional highlights can be found [here](#).**

**Captions:**

[Lot 14](#): Eric Carle, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, hand-painted collage. Sold for \$20,000, an auction record for the artist. (Pre-sale estimate: \$8,000-12,000)

[Lot 233](#): Al Hirschfeld, *The Marx Brothers*, illustration for the cover of *Why a Duck?*, pen and ink, 1971. Sold for \$26,000. (Pre-sale estimate: \$5,000-7,500).

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