



104 East 25th Street • New York, NY 10010
Telephone: 212.254.4710 • Fax: 212.979.1017
swannalleries.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 19, 2015

Contact: Alexandra Nelson
Communications Director
212.254.4710 ext. 19
alexandra@swannalleries.com

SUCCESS OF INTERNATIONAL AUTOGRAPHS AT SWANN SHOWS A SHIFT IN THE AUTOGRAPHS MARKET

New York—Swann Galleries’ **October 22** auction of **Autographs** brought over \$516,000 and, according to Swann Autographs Specialist Marco Tomaschett, “Many of the top lots came from a host of international musicians, artists, scientists and others, which reflects a shift of interest in the autographs market from Americana toward international items.”

The sale was headlined by *The Tagore Birthday Book* by famed Bengali polymath and poet Rabindranath Tagore which sold for \$30,000. The book, a calendar with quotations from Tagore for each day of the year, is Signed, or Signed and Inscribed, by over 80 notable figures (mostly British or South Asian) including Winston Churchill, Mohandas K. Gandhi, and Tagore himself. Another item related to Gandhi, a Letter Signed MK Gandhi to Dr. John Haynes Holmes realized \$10,625. In the letter dated 27 April 1940, Gandhi expresses his surprise at the accusation that he stated that an independent India should form an army.

Among the items relating to musicians was a Typed Letter Signed by George Gershwin to Benjamin Kasser, giving notes on the clarinet portion of Gershwin’s famous *Rhapsody in Blue*, which brought \$27,500. A carte-de-visite Photograph Signed and Inscribed by composer Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky to librettist Paul Colin realized \$11,700, while an Autograph Letter Signed by Johannes Brahms to an unnamed recipient, containing rehearsal requests and complaints about two performances, brought \$8,125. An Autograph Letter Signed by Richard Wagner, recruiting musicians for a concert series while he was exiled in Switzerland, sold for \$4,810.

In addition to the selection of items from musicians, multiple lots relating to artists performed well in the sale. Among the artist lots was a copy of the *Katalog der Wiener Kunstschau*, Signed with two additional inscriptions by Austrian artist Egon Schiele, correcting captions for the illustrations of his works, which sold for \$8,125. Another item relating to exhibition catalogues is a set of three Typed Letters Signed by Henri Matisse to MoMA Director Monroe Wheeler, which brought \$7,020. A group of five items from Jean Cocteau relating to jewelry designs, including three ink drawings and two Autograph Letters Signed, realized \$4,420.

MORE

As in previous sales, presidential items and items relating to various international political figures sold well. An autograph album kept by Abby S. Smith, granddaughter to President John Adams and niece to President John Quincy Adams, sold for \$12,500. The album contained over 40 items signed by various relatives and friends, including an original Autograph Poem Signed by John Quincy Adams and an Inscription Signed by John Adams. Items from both President Abraham Lincoln and his wife, Mary Todd Lincoln, sold well. An Autograph Endorsement dated and Signed by Lincoln as President on 8 November 1861 realized \$5,720; while an Autograph Letter Signed by Mary Todd Lincoln as First Lady from October of that same year brought \$7,540. Among the international political items, a partly-printed Letter Signed by Raoul Wallenberg as Secretary of the Royal Swedish Embassy in Hungary notifying the Hungarian Central Alien Control Office that his embassy as issued a protective passport for a Jewish man seeking asylum sold for \$9,375. Wallenberg issued over 4,000 protective passports, saving the lives of thousands of Jews trapped in Hungary during German occupation.

Complete results are available online via www.swannalleries.com.

Swann Galleries' first photo auction of the 2016 season will take place May 5. The department will be accepting consignments until February 5.

For further information, or to consign items to upcoming Autographs auctions, please contact Marco Tomaschett at 212-254-4710, extension 12, or via email at mtomaschett@swannalleries.com.

*Prices include buyer's premium.

#

CATALOGUE AND ADDITIONAL DIGITAL IMAGES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST