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

LAWRENCE M. SOLOMON COLLECTION JOINS THE LINEUP OF MARKET-DEFINING AUCTIONS FOR GENRE FICTION

New York—Swann Galleries’ **November 10** auction of **19th & 20th Century Literature Featuring the Lawrence M. Solomon Collection** of mystery, science fiction and detective novels saw records set for multiple books, as well as an impressive auction debut for a rare Jules Verne text.

John D. Larson, Swann Galleries’ 19th & 20th Century Literature Specialist, said, “Genre fiction of the crime, mystery, detective and science-fiction variety is alive and well in the wake of the strong results from the Solomon sale. Records for several of the benchmarks of the genre were established including works by Rex Stout, Dashiell Hammett, Gaston Leroux and the first edition of Jules Verne’s *From the Earth to the Moon*, which appeared at auction for the first time. The strong prices and records ensure that Dr. Solomon’s important collection will be remembered along with other market-defining auctions, including the Goldstone, Ackerman, Neville and Lackritz sales.”

The top lots were flush with Hammett texts from the Solomon Collection, including a first edition of his first book, *Red Harvest*, New York, 1929, in its original dust jacket, which brought \$65,000*. A first edition of Hammett’s second book, *The Dain Curse*, New York, 1929, also in its original dust jacket, sold for \$40,000 and set an auction record, while a first edition his iconic and influential novel *The Maltese Falcon*, New York, 1930, also with original dust jacket, realized \$27,500.

Other detective novels from the Solomon collection included a scarce advance review copy of Rex Stout’s *The League of Frightened Men*, New York, (1935), the second book to feature his prolific detective Nero Wolfe, which sold for \$42,500 and set a record at auction. A first edition of John Dickson Carr’s *It Walks By Night*, New York, 1930, and a first edition of Mary Roberts Rinehart’s *The Man in the Lower Ten*, Indianapolis, (1909), both set auction records. Each book realized \$5,500.

Of course, no collection of detective novels would be complete without the inscrutable genius of Sherlock Holmes. The first American edition of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, New York, 1924, in what is possibly a unique surviving dust jacket, brought \$8,125; as did the first American

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edition of *The Sign of Four*; New York, 1891; while a complete 24-volume set of the Crowborough edition of Conan Doyle's *Works*, Garden City, 1931, signed by the author, realized \$7,500.

Jules Verne's *From the Earth to the Moon*, and Gaston Leroux's *The Phantom of the Opera* may not often be thought of as "genre" fiction, but Dr. Solomon had a strong interest in texts that were genre forerunners as well. Verne's *From the Earth to the Moon*, first edition, Newark, 1869 brought \$22,500 in its first appearance at auction; while the first printing of the first American edition of *Phantom* in its original dust jacket sold for \$35,000; and the first book edition, *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*, Paris, (1910), sold for \$7,500.

Outside of the Solomon Collection there were several top performers from our 19th & 20th Century Literature selection. A two-volume set of the first English edition of Alexander Dumas's classic *The Count of Monte Cristo* to appear in book-form sold for \$47,500, setting an auction record, while a first regular issue copy of Oscar Wilde's *The Happy Prince and Other Tales*, London, 1888, signed and inscribed by the author, realized \$15,000. Other signed texts included a first edition of Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, New York, 1949, in its first issue dust jacket, which brought \$5,000; and a specially-bound copy of Samuel Beckett's *Murphy*, New York, (1957), signed by the author and playwright.

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

For further information, or to consign items to upcoming 19th & 20th Century Literature auctions, please contact John D. Larson at 212-254-4710, extension 61, or via email at jlaron@swannalleries.com.

*Prices include buyer's premium.

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