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\$100,000 Illustrated Map of Harlem Leads Swann Galleries’ 20th Anniversary Auction of African Americana

New York—Swann Galleries’ **March 31** auction of **Printed & Manuscript African Americana** brought in more than \$850,000, led by items related to Civil Rights, Frederick Douglass and the Harlem Renaissance.

Wyatt Houston Day, Swann Galleries’ Printed & Manuscript African Americana Specialist, noted after the sale, “I am really very gratified with the results... When I thought about the planning of this as an anniversary sale, it was my intent to try and make it a *special* one. I was very fortunate to have both the weight of 20 years of auctions and exposure behind this one, as well as just plain good luck in locating and acquiring some truly exceptional material in the course of the year.”

The top lot was illustrator E. Simms Campbell’s lively *A Night-Club Map of Harlem*, pen and brush, 1932, featuring images of Harlem Renaissance hot spots and popular figures like Cab Calloway and Bill “Bojangles” Robinson. The map brought \$100,000 and set a record for the artist at auction. It also happened to be the top lot ever sold in one of Swann Galleries’ Printed & Manuscript African Americana auctions.

Items pertaining to the Civil Rights Movement were popular in this sale. Two cardboard placards from the 1968 Memphis Sanitation Workers’ Strike, one reading *Honor King End Racism!* and the other *I Am A Man*, sold among the top lots for \$25,000 and \$23,750, respectively. A limited edition portfolio of photographs, Benedict Fernandez’s *Countdown to Eternity: Photographs of Dr. Martin Luther King in the 1960s*, featuring twelve prints from the last year of Dr. King’s life, brought \$12,500. Additionally, *March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, August 28, 1963: We Shall Overcome*, a portfolio with five collage prints by painter Louis Lo Monaco, achieved \$7,500, an auction record.

Black Panthers-related material also fared well in this auction. A copy of the early poster *Move On Over or We’ll Move On Over You*, circa 1966, brought \$12,500. Another poster, Emory Douglas’s *You can jail a revolutionary, but you can’t jail a revolution*, 1969-70, brought \$6,750; while a set of Black Panther

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berets, one reading *Black by Birth / Militant By Choice / Free By Revolution* and the other *Bro. Strawther / I'm Proud / I'm Black*, brought \$3,000.

Pre-Civil War items in the auction included a copy of astronomer, mathematician and surveyor Benjamin Banneker's *Bannaker's (sic)...Almanack...for the Year of Our Lord 1796*, Baltimore, (1795), which sold for \$47,500. Two runaway slave broadsides, one from 1854 reading *100 Dollars Reward!*, and the other circa 1850s reading *\$100 Reward*, sold among the top lots. The broadsides achieved \$7,250 and \$6,750, respectively. Items related to Frederick Douglass were also highly sought by collectors. An Autograph Letter Signed to a son of Alphonso Janes of Providence RI, 6 July 1889, sold for \$45,000, while another Autograph Letter Signed by Douglass to fellow abolitionist Lewis Tappan, 28 March 1854, brought \$22,500.

Cultural touchstones continue to perform beyond expectations at Americana auctions. Notably, a heavily annotated stage manager's copy of Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun*, with notes for a 1959 performance of the iconic play, sold for \$21,250.

The next Printed & Manuscript African Americana auction will be held in early 2017. For further information, or to consign items to upcoming auctions, please contact Swann Galleries at (212) 254-4710 or e-mail Arielle Bremby, Associate Cataloguer: abremby@swanngalleries.com.

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

*Prices include buyer's premium.

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