



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

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Contact: Alexandra Nelson
Communications Director
212-254-4710, ext. 19
alexandra@swannalleries.com

Swann Sets Record for Cuban-American Painter Emilio Cruz



New York—Swann Galleries’ auction of **American Art** on **June 14** offered original works by bastions of the category including William Glackens and John Singer Sargent, as well as artists whose work has only more recently been recognized. 81% of the 300 works found buyers, indicating a robust market with continued interest in rising stars.

Nearly a fifth of the auction comprised works by the artist collective PaJaMa, consisting of Paul Cadmus, Jared French, Margaret Hoening French and their various partners and friends. Many of these works came from the collection of Jon Anderson and Philis Raskind-Anderson, including Jared French’s graphite *Portrait of Paul Cadmus*, 1931, and study for *Elemental Play*, 1946 (\$10,625 and \$11,250, respectively). The evocative chalk *Nude Reclining on Bentwood Chairs with a Dog*, circa 1975, by Paul Cadmus, reached \$10,000.

All five works in the sale by **Pavel Tchelitchew** found buyers, with the 1930 pastel *Portrait of Robert Cluzan* leading the auction at \$32,500. Cluzan was a communist police officer who sold Nazi secrets during WWII. Tchelitchew’s ink and wash *Interiors (Skull)*, 1944, a motif for which the artist is well known, reached \$11,250.



The increasingly popular section of sketchbooks saw competition for collectors and dealers seeking background information into beloved artists' processes. Two sketchbooks by Ashcan artist Mahonri Young, grandson of LDS leader Brigham Young, sold after breakneck bidding for \$22,500, a record for a work on paper by the artist, who is primarily known as a sculptor. A sketchbook of diners in Washington restaurants by Peggy Bacon nearly doubled its high estimate to sell for \$5,750.

All eight works by Fairfield Porter saw strong results, including two sketchbooks featuring primarily urban scenes, which sold together for \$6,750. The highlight was *Coastal Scene*, a charming pastel view of Maine islands that encapsulates the artist's oeuvre, purchased by a collector for \$20,000. The double-sided watercolor *Rocky Coastal View*, also of Maine, reached \$13,750.

An auction record was established for **Emilio Cruz**, an African-American artist of Cuban descent whose work is gaining recognition: the undated oil painting *Floating Figures*, a fine example of his expressive blend of figuration and abstraction, reached \$17,500.

Additional highlights included a pencil portrait by John Singer Sargent of a young girl, circa 1875-78, was purchased by a collector for \$25,000, and an elegant oil painting by William Glackens of *Le Royal Conti-Isle Adam*, circa 1926, which evinces his later Impressionist style (\$27,500).

Todd Weyman, Director of Prints & Drawings and Vice President of Swann, was pleased with the sale. "Twentieth-century American Art continues to attract new buyers. We're delighted to see traditionally under-recognized artists like Emilio Cruz offered alongside superstars like Glackens and Sargent, and achieving comparable prices."

The next fine art auction at Swann Galleries will be **19th & 20th Century Prints & Drawings** on September 20, 2018. The house is currently accepting quality consignments for autumn auctions.

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

Captions:

[Lot 278](#): Pavel Tchelitchew, *Portrait of Robert Cluzan*, color pastels, 1930. Sold June 14, 2018 for \$32,500. (Pre-sale estimate: \$3,000 to \$5,000)

[Lot 200](#): Emilio Cruz, *Floating Figures*, oil on canvas. Sold June 14, 2018 for \$17,500, a record for the artist. (Pre-sale estimate: \$1,500 to \$2,500)

Specialist: Todd Weyman • tweyman@swanngalleries.com • 212-254-4710 x 32

Press: Alexandra Nelson • alexandra@swanngalleries.com • 212-254-4710 x 19

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Swann Auction Galleries is a third-generation family business as well as the world's largest auction house for works on paper. In the last 75 years, Swann has repeatedly revolutionized the trade with such innovations as the first U.S. auction dedicated to photographs and the world's only department of African-American Fine Art. More than 30 auctions and previews are held annually in Swann Galleries' two-floor exhibition space in Midtown Manhattan, and online worldwide. Visit swanngalleries.com for more information.