

Record prices are set at Material Culture's Straight Up: American Outsider Art auction held June 10th in Philadelphia

The auction brought to market an exceptional, unknown collection of this once-overlooked class of fine art. 327 of 339 lots sold for a total of \$439,575.

PHILADELPHIA , PA., UNITED STATES, June 20, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- With fervent buyer participation through three online bidding platforms, telephone and floor bidding, Material Culture's June 10th Straight Up: American Outsider Art auction broke records as it brought to market an exceptional, unknown collection of this once-overlooked class of fine art. 327 of 339 lots sold for a total of \$439,575, the sale presenting opportunities for collectors at all level of the market.

The sale was most impressive for its breadth and assortment of works by 20th century Southern black artists, including: Purvis Young, James "Son Ford" Thomas, [Mary Tillman Smith](#), David Butler, Mose Tolliver, Nelley Mae Brown, Bessie Harvey, Jimmy Lee Suddeth, Prophet Royal Robertson, Clementine Hunter and Willie White. Other Outsider works offered included a large group by Jon Serl, as well as works by Howard Finster and B.F. Perkins.

The highest price of the day, and a world record at auction, belonged to lot 46, a painting on metal by Mississippi-born Mary Tillman Smith, which sold for \$25,000 with premium. Other works by the artist reached \$15,000 and \$11,875. Another record was set for artist James "Son Ford" Thomas with his skull sculpture, lot 24, which brought \$6,250 with premium. The sale was capped off by a large offering of unframed works on paper by self-taught Alabama artist Sybil Gibson, which were snapped up by Outsider Art collectors both new and established. All prices quoted include a 25 percent buyer's premium.

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Matt Wilcox

Despite the ease of bidding long distance, several major collectors and dealers chose to travel to Material Culture's Philadelphia gallery in order to bid in person. Southern collectors and New York gallerists competed with the internet and telephones driving the strong and record prices. Following on the success of their May 5th sale, which set auction records for works by renowned Haitian

artists Jacques-Enguerrand Gourgue and Micius Stephane, as well as by Bahamian artist [Amos](#)



Mary Tillman Smith
(American/Mississippi, 1904-1995)
Painting on Found Metal. Size: 60" x 46"
Sold: \$25,000 (Auction Record)

[Ferguson](#), Material Culture has emerged as a premier auction venue for Outsider Art.

The next Outsider Art offering at Material Culture will be October 6th in their Fine, Folk, Outsider and Ethnographic Art Auction. Consignments are accepted until September 4th. For more information please visit www.materialculture.com. They may be reached via email at expert@materialculture.com.

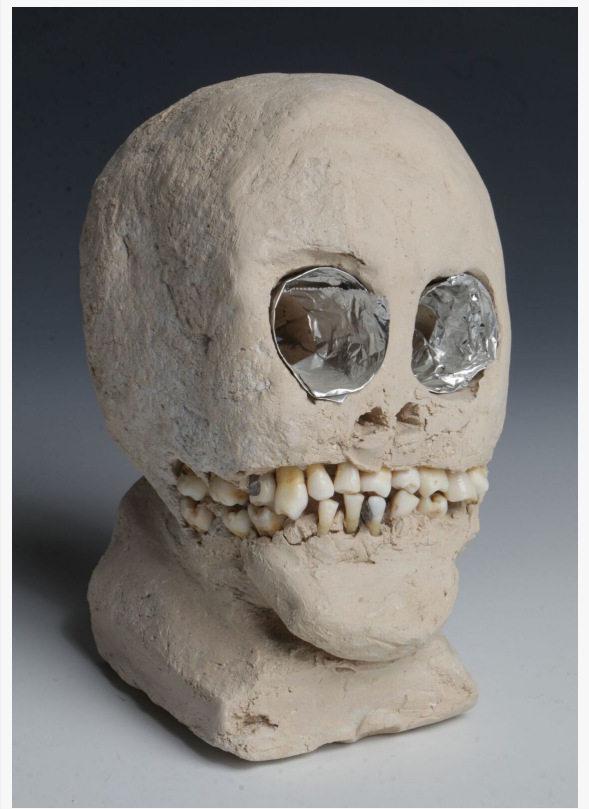
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Jacques Enguerrand Gourgue (Haitian, 1930-1996) "Ritualistic Symbols", c. 1940-50, oil painting on cardboard, 25 ½ x 17 in., signed. Sold: \$37,500 (Auction record)



Amos Ferguson (Bahamian, 1920-2009)
"When Tourists Come to Town", Enamel
painting on paperboard, signed. 36 x 30 ¼ in.
Sold; \$11,875 (Auction record)



James "Son Ford" Thomas
(American/Mississippi, 1926-1993)
Skull Sculpture, unfired clay, teeth,
aluminum foil, unsigned. Size: 6.5" x
3" x 4", Sold: \$6,250 (Auction record)



Purvis Young (American, 1943-2010) 3 Angels. Painting on found wood assemblage. Unframed. Size: 49.75" x 45", 126 x 114 cm (board). Sold: \$6,032

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