

Convenience, Fun and Top Names Tempt a New Generation of Collectors at PBMA

A younger, more mobile audience and strong international bidding produce record results at Palm Beach Modern Auctions' Feb. 8th sale.

WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA, UNITED STATES, February 25, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Art lovers flocked to South Florida – physically and virtually – for [Palm Beach Modern Auctions' February 8th Modern Art & Design sale](#) headlined by a wall-spanning Tom Wesselmann steel-cut floral bouquet which realized \$338,000. The premier sale raked in \$2.1 million and recorded an overall 90% sell-through rate, a record single-day event for the firm.

“As a new generation develops buying power, the industry changes to reflect their preferences,” says Modern Auctions’ co-owner and auctioneer, Rico Baca, who also mentioned that the live audience trended towards 45-and-under as well.



Top names, eclectic finds and a good time combine to bring bidders to PBMA's Modern Art & Design auctions.

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Rico Baca, auctioneer and co-owner

“We've seen growth in bidding specific to mobile devices. If they're bidding online, they're on the app, not at their desk on a computer. If they have a phone line, they're taking the call while out and about. One of our phone reps was certain her bidder was on a date during the call.”

“Location has become less of a factor as well,” continues Baca. “When we opened our doors eight years ago, we were in the category industry people call ‘local sale.’ That doesn't really apply anymore – not when 65% of bidders and a bulk of consignments are coming from outside South Florida. Those numbers aren't even considering underbidder locations.” Outside the U.S., the largest number of buyers were from the U.K. and Switzerland.

Austria, Canada, Cyprus, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, Russia, Spain and Venezuela were represented as well.

The auction catalog was as diverse as the audience, offering 550 lots across the spectrum of genres and price points. The Pablo Picasso Madoura ceramics, which saw a 100% sell-through rate, went to Miami, New York, London and Paris. The star of the Picasso show was the rare “Tarasque” jug (lot 125), which realized \$71,500.

Filling out Session I were a monumental Ray Parker abstract in three swaths of earthy purples, which realized \$91,000 on an estimate of \$50,000-70,000 and two Michele Oka Doner sculptural chairs, each of which exceeded expectations. It was no surprise that all phone lines were busy on the Lynn Chadwick "Maquette IV Walking Woman" (realized \$104,000 on an estimate of \$40,000-60,000) and the George Ohr vase (realized \$9,100 on an estimate of \$300-500).

Beyond the two stunning Wesselmann "Steel Drawing" bouquets, Session II's solid lineup included a number of perennial favorites: editions by Fairfield Porter, Pablo Picasso, Joan Miro, Max Ernst, Alexander Calder and Sam Francis as well as photography from Annie Leibovitz, Steven Klein and an intimate Duane Michals gelatin silver print that more than doubled its high estimate.

Session III, presented in conjunction with [Urban Culture Auctions](#), has quickly become known for its curated blend of contemporary cool mixed with niche and nostalgia. A 102" Sebastian Wrong & Richard Woods "Wrongwoods" cabinet for Established & Sons defied its modest \$1,500-2,500 estimate, realizing \$9,100. Several quirky lots of Space Age electronics made their way to the West Coast. Other lots appealing to younger collectors included a Trey Parker (of South Park fame) "Cartman" drawing, a "Mouton" bookshelf, unattributed but obviously inspired by Lalanne, a new old stock vintage Andy Warhol poster dress and editions at price points perfect for entry-level collecting.

Not only was the crowd younger, but they also lingered later into the evening, said [PBMA's](#) Rico Baca, who attributes some of that to the fact that attending a Palm Beach Modern auction is, simply put, fun.

"When you're competing for something you want, whether your rival is in the room or on the other side of the world, there's adrenaline involved. We send out a text alert when the sale goes live, and they jump on it."



PBMA's Feb. 8th auction was headlined by a monumental Tom Wesselmann (American, 1931-2004) steel-cut floral bouquet, which realized \$338,000 on an estimate of \$150,000-200,000.



A monumental Ray Parker (American, 1922-1990) abstract realized \$91,000 on an estimate of \$50,000-70,000.

Modern Auctions' next event will be Saturday, May 2nd at 12:00 noon ET. For additional information, visit www.modernauctions.com, call 561-586-5500 or email info@modernauctions.com.

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