



\$1.8 Million Tea Table Sold At Keno Auctions

NEW YORK CITY — Keno Auctions sold an important Philadelphia piecrust tea table, which has descended through seven generations of the Jordan and Bacon branches of the Potter-Crouch family to the present owners, for \$1,895,000 at its Sunday, January 31, auction, capping off an already impressive slate of auctions conducted by auction houses during New York's Antiques Week.

Card table (detail), New York, 1815–20. Museum purchase with funds provided by Collectors Circle.

The Chippendale mahogany tea table is signed by the cabinetmaker Henry Clifton, and was made in Philadelphia circa 1755–60. Previously unknown and never published, the table exhibits exuberant and masterful carving that set it apart from other Eighteenth Century American Colonial tea tables along with its unusually large size. While many colonial Philadelphia piecrust tea tables dating to 1750s–early 1770s had tops averaging about 32 inches with seldom more than 34 inches, this example has a 37 3/8 -inch diameter as well as 72 inches of vigorous scalloping. The single-board scalloped top has never been cleaned except for daily use, which adds to the table's significance. Also noteworthy about the table is its boldly carved and seldom-seen C-scrolls on the underside of each leg.

The crème de la crème of Philadelphia pie-crust tea tables from the Bacon-Jordan-Potter-Crouch family attained \$1,895,000.



"If one employs the four factors used to evaluate a scalloped-top Philadelphia tea table: quality, rarity, condition and provenance, this example ranks at the very top. It is quite simply, an unequivocal masterpiece and represents the apogee of Philadelphia Rococo craftsmanship," according to the lot's catalog description. "I rarely use the word 'masterpiece,' but this is a masterpiece," said Leigh Keno a day after the sale that totaled \$ 3.4 million on just 13 lots. Also selling well in the auction was lot 11, an untitled hanging, six-lobed, multilayered sculptural piece from Ruth Asawa, circa 1973, in brass and copper wire, that trumped its \$150/250,000 estimate to bring \$965,000. A full report on the auction will appear in a future edition.

Scroll Through Photo Slideshow (Right):

Auctioneer John Nye called the sale for Leigh Keno. The buyer for the Ruth Asawa sculpture (seen at right) was in the room.

