

ROCKPORT ARTISTS BRING OUT THE CROWDS AND BIDDERS



Previous Page: Paintings in the auction were well displayed in the association's spacious Hibbard Gallery. —Rick Russack photo

by Rick Russack

ROCKPORT, MASS. — A well-chosen selection of mostly fresh-to-the-market paintings by prominent American artists, a beautiful spring day and a smoothly run auction combined to produce a very successful auction and fundraiser for the Rockport Art Association on May 2. The year 2015 marks the 30th edition of these annual auctions. While

Emile Gruppe was a well-known Gloucester artist. His brother Karl created a sculpture of the artist's head. It went out at \$403.



While most of the paintings had a Rockport or Gloucester connection, other works by well-known American artists were also part of the sale. Only works by deceased artists are included.

The salesroom was packed with more than 200 prospective bidders, many of whom seemed to know one another. Auctioneer Mike March of Blackwood/March, Essex, Mass.,

Wayne Morrell's "Low Tide at Wingsheek Beach" sold for \$3,738. One of the figures in the painting is Lillian Morrell. (Click image to see full size)





◀ The highest price of the day was achieved by this painting by Anthony Thieme. "Quarry in Rockport" sold well over its high estimate of \$8,000, finishing at \$21,850. (Click image to see full size)

Peter Vincent's "Phillips Avenue," a ► windswept fall scene, brought \$2,588, less than some of his other paintings. (Click image to see full size)



donated his time to conduct the auction and it went quite smoothly. About 135 bidder numbers were given out at the sale, and absentee and Internet bidding was active. Several lots were purchased by online bidders.

The Rockport Art Association was formed more than 90 years ago. It maintains a gallery in the heart of historic Rockport. Selections from its collections are on view all year and it mounts special shows throughout the

"Driftwood" was painted by W. Lester Stevens. It achieved \$3,220. (Click image to see full size)





"The Orange Roadster" by Marge Mills sold well over its \$700 estimate, finishing at \$1,150. (Click image to see full size)

There were four paintings by W. Lester Stevens. "Houses With Fence" brought the highest price of his works, \$5,750. (Click image to see full size)

year. There about 250 artists and photographers who are currently members of the association and about 800 contributing members. This annual auction is the major fundraising event for the organization. Some of the paintings are property of the association, some are donated by generous members and some are consigned by members. Anyone may offer a painting for consignment and the auction committee reviews all suggestions,



settling on the ones most appropriate for the sale. The auction was conducted in the Hibbard Gallery, a spacious modern, well-lit facility, and all the lots were hung in this gallery. Many buyers were collectors, buying

for themselves. It was apparent that these were knowledgeable buyers. They were not buying signatures; they were seeking quality. In several cases, there were multiple examples of the

work of a particular artist and the price range could be wide. Again, local scenes were most in demand. [\(Continued on page 42 inside the E-edition\)](#)

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