

NOVEMBER 2010 ART ASSET OVERVIEW

VOLUME 2— POPULAR CULTURE



Dear Friends,

Welcome to Winston Art Group’s second monthly market update. This newsletter is designed to give you a closer look at current market trends so you can best manage your assets and continue to grow your collections. Each month you will receive an overview of the current state of a different sector of the art and collecting world. For our first issue, we spotlighted stamps and postal history. In our current issue, Brian Cummings takes you through the market for *Popular Culture*. Stay tuned for further newsletters on navigating the art world!



Mr. Cummings inspecting Elizabeth Taylor’s earliest known MGM film costume, which WAG successfully acquired for a client.



“National Velvet” 1944, costars Elizabeth Taylor and Mickey Rooney. Taylor wearing the costume.

OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS, THERE HAS BEEN SOME CONCERN about how the popular culture marketplace has fared during the worst economic recession since WWII. Like all markets, it has been a time of struggle and consolidation. But despite these challenges, the demand has generally remained robust during the downturn. Evidence of this can be found in the recent record auction prices for two noted pieces of pop memorabilia: Marilyn Monroe’s memorable pink gown from “Gentlemen Prefer Blondes” (\$310K) and Michael Jackson’s iconic white glove (\$420K). Both sold at levels well above the expected bidding.

THE BIGGEST CHANGE TO THE MARKETPLACE IN COLLECTIBLES has come in the form of technology. Due to the popularity of new venues like Etsy.com and old stalwarts like eBay.com, the number of collectors has grown, especially at the international level. Though these online customers from around the world are often dealing in lesser valued items, their growing presence is still notable.

ALONG WITH THIS SURGE, THERE HAS ALSO BEEN A MAJOR GROWTH in online ads. Sellers of collectibles are moving away from advertising in traditional print media as they explore cheaper and more effective alternatives that are now available on the Internet. The most growth in this sector has been seen in the innovative use of Google’s AdSense. This type of advertising is creating some new and unique retail opportunities. For example, if a collector is viewing an image of the original lobby card from “The Wizard of Oz” on eBay, their AdChoice technology will create an ad for related items on the same page, such as a Turner Classic DVD of the film or a Dorothy Gale Christmas ornament by Hallmark. As the collector is purchasing one item, another similar item is promoted to them at the exact same moment. It’s a revolutionary way to get the right items matched up with the collectors who are most interested in them.

SO, CONSIDERING THESE NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN TECHNOLOGY along with steady growth in the sheer numbers of collectors worldwide, the market for pop culture collectibles has only grown stronger. Despite the current economy, the continuing expansion of Internet users and the ever-increasing fascination with the touchstones of American pop culture bodes well for the future of the popular culture marketplace.

To obtain a current appraisal for items of popular culture, or for further information and advice regarding the acquisition and sale processes, please contact us at any one of our New York, Los Angeles, or Boston offices.

Courtesy of BRIAN CUMMINGS , Winston Art Group’s Popular Culture and Recorded Media Specialist

On NOVEMBER 14th Brian will be delivering a lecture at the Appraisers Association of America national conference sponsored by Winston Art Group entitled “National Velvet, Elizabeth Taylor and a Closer Look at one of her Earliest Film Costumes.”



Marilyn Monroe in “Gentleman Prefer Blondes” wearing the pink satin gown, 1953.

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