



NEW YORK

THE WILLIAM F. REILLY
COLLECTION

Wednesday, 14 October 2009

CHRISTIE'S



Sutton Square was only a vision for William Reilly

when I first met him in 1991; Bill wanted to create “one of the greatest houses in New York City” and the project began for him like any other business venture, but evolved over time into something much more profound and personal. Sutton Square and the beautiful art and antiques which adorned it were the culmination of many years in the making; Bill was a prolific reader, had an encyclopedic knowledge of history, loved classical architecture, travel and bespoke clothing and often talked about his visits to textile mills in Europe when he worked for Peter Grace at WR Grace & Co. An aesthete had been long in the making and all these threads were woven into the creation of 7 Sutton Square.

But as Bill’s friend David Adler said in his eulogy on October 22th, 2008 “his legacy lives on not in his wealth or paintings or furniture or houses, but rather in his appreciation of beauty, great friendships and that life should be filled with laughter.’ The lots which fill these pages are testaments to Bill’s appreciation of ‘Beauty’ and the furniture, antiquities and paintings served as backdrops to much celebration, verbal jousting, oenophilic excesses, and repartee. Repartee skills went a long way with Bill in securing a second invitation to dine on Lot #91, An Irish Mahogany Hunt Table at his Sutton Square home, and coincidentally it was the unique and rare Lot #92 A Court Festival Set in a Garden of an Italian Villa which hung front and center in his dining room. This was by far Bill’s favorite painting with its rich color palette, formal Italianate gardens, and costumed acrobats and performers -- which at its core is really a celebration of life.

One of the first buying trips on which I accompanied Bill and his sister Betty was to Ireland. We had gone to Dublin in search of Irish furniture and a Bossi chimney-piece as well as to seek inspiration from 18th century Georgian architecture for Bill's new house. We visited the dealer Paul Johnston in Dublin where we purchased Lot# 233 An Irish George III Serving Table, stopped in to see the Honorable Desmond Guinness at Lexlip Castle, were wonderfully entertained over lunch by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Guinness at their beautiful home, Lodge Park in Straffan, and had tea with the late fashion-designer Sybil Connolly at her Georgian house on Merrion Square. Although we did not locate Bill's dream Bossi chimney-piece on this trip, we did purchase a cracker of a Bossi at Christie's several years later, Lot #136. It was one of Bill's favorite pieces and was the focal point of the second floor front sitting room where Bill spent many evenings. These buying trips became annual events planned around major art fairs such as Grosvenor House, the Paris Biennale and the auction calendar. Along with the art and antique agenda on these trips, Bill made sure we had a carefully selected culinary itinerary; his friend, the food critic, Gail Greene would often make the restaurant selections. These trips, like Bill's life, were filled with the 'Billism' "better to do than not to do". Life with Bill both professionally and socially was not for the meek at heart.

Bill's knowledge of Roman history and the emperors never ceased to impress me. He had purchased Lot #83 A Roman head of the Young Marcus Aurelius at the very beginning of his collecting; Bill had such high regard for Marcus Aurelius, he named his company Aurelian Communications, founded in 2001, after him. The head was proudly displayed in the center of his living room on a beautiful Regency Oak Circular Library Table, Lot #42,

and Bill loved speaking anecdotally about Marcus. When the Roman Portrait Head of The Emperor Antoninus Pius came up at auction, Lot #84, it gave Bill great joy to be able to own another one of his favorite emperors and the adoptive father of Marcus Aurelius.

Bill's presence in this world is sorely missed by those who were fortunate enough to know him. Not a day goes by when some event does not trigger a business lesson I learned by Bill's example, or a 'Billism' like "pay peanuts get monkeys" (which always puts a smile on my face), or the memory of a past pursuit of one of the many beautiful objects being offered in this sale—my hope is that these objects find a new home, as many of them have for hundreds and thousands of years already, with the same 'joie de vivre' with which they came to Sutton Square.

Bill's son Tony and daughter Jane were his greatest loves along with his sister Betty and grandchildren Charlie, Scarlett, Ali, and last but not least William Francis Reilly III--and as Bill would say "what's not to like."

Timothy Whealon

Tim Whealon Inc. specializes in high-end interior design with a focus on fine and decorative arts. Timothy Whealon completed the Sotheby's Works of Art course in London and the corporate management training program with Sotheby's New York before opening his offices in 1994.

His work has been published in ELLE DÉCOR, House Beautiful, House and Garden, Architectural Digest, Domino Magazine, The New York Times- Home Section and numerous books.



8
A DIRECTOIRE ORMOLU BOUILLOTTE
LAMP
LATE 18TH CENTURY

With a green tôle shade and pierced circular
base, shade redecorated, electrified
26 in. (66 cm.) high, overall

\$7,000-10,000

PROVENANCE:
Bought from Mallett, London, in 1997.

9
A FRENCH ORMOLU AND PATINATED
BRONZE LAMP
20TH CENTURY

The central well supported by winged
monopodia
11½ in. (29 cm.) high, excluding fittings

\$1,500-2,000

10
TWO SETS OF FRENCH GILT-BRONZE
AND GLASS NESTING TABLES
20TH CENTURY

Each nest with three tables
15 in. (38 cm.) high, 15¼ in. (40 cm.) square
the largest (6)

\$1,200-1,800

PROVENANCE:
Bought from Eric Allart, Paris, in 2003.



10



11

* 11
A PAIR OF TOLE PEINTE LEMON TREES
 20TH CENTURY
 23½ in. (59.5 cm.) high (2)
 \$600-800



12

* 12
A GROUP OF SIX WROUGHT-IRON AND BRONZE OBJECTS
 Comprising five finials and a horse-head-form curved handle, mounted on ebonized stands
 18½ in. (47 cm.) high, the tallest (6)
 \$700-900
PROVENANCE:
 Bought from Lucca & Co., New York, in 2003.

* 13
A PAIR OF ENGLISH MAHOGANY WING ARMCHAIRS
 MODERN, BY TIMOTHY WHEALON INC.
 In the George I style, each with blue and white striped slip covers, upholstered in brown velvet, on cabriole legs, with two matching throw pillows (2)
 \$3,000-5,000



13 (pair)

