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Historic Western Art & Antiquities Auction Presents Rare Buying Opportunities

Billy the Kid headlines an eclectic collection of over 350 pieces of Western art and artifacts at Brian Lebel's 22nd annual Old West Auction this June 25, 2011 in Denver.

Denver, CO – Estimated to sell for between \$300,000 and \$400,000, the only known photograph of Billy the Kid is the big news at this year's Denver Old West Auction. But it is hardly the only historic or important piece for sale at the annual event. The live auction will be held Saturday, June 25th at the Denver Merchandise Mart, and also offers absentee, phone and internet bidding.

Another item of historical importance is J.A. Garrett's Colt single action, documented as used in the Johnson County War. Garrett was one of only four men to be charged with murder by the State of Wyoming in the killing of Nick Ray and Nate Champion. Another Colt for sale was used by a member of the infamous Wild Bunch of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid.

Buffalo Bill Cody is well represented this year. One of his personal pocket watches will be auctioned, as well as his wife Louisa's copies of depositions taken during their (unconsummated) divorce in 1905, in which a witness claims Louisa tried to poison her famous husband. The collection of Jordan B. Cottle, a performer in Buffalo Bill's Wild West and friend of Bill Cody, includes an incredible scrapbook chronicling his life with the Show and friendship with Cody.

Western fine art for sale includes the famous Borein watercolor, "California Vaquero," which came out of the collection of legendary Borein collector, Katherine Haley. Another important watercolor for sale is a recently discovered, unpublished work by Will James. Other artists of note include Will Crawford, Nick Eggenhofer, Ross Stefan, Eric Michaels, Remington Schuyler, Dave Powell CA, and Ralph Lillywhite. Bronzes by Dave McGary, Curt Mattson, Bob Scriver, John Coleman CA, Harry Jackson, Joe Beeler and C.E. Dallin will be offered.

Native American artifacts are strong, with an impressive beaded Omaha Man's Shirt, pictorial pipe bags, a beaded rifle scabbard, Apache baskets and a parfleche bonnet case. Navajo textiles include a unique, early 20th century "cow" rug, and a large Ganado rug that belonged to master rawhide braider, Luis Ortega. (A number of Ortega's braided items will be offered as well.)

A selection of fine saddles, horsehair prison bridles, fine spurs and bits, and other cowboy trappings and equestrian items will be available, including a fine collection of vintage cowboy boots. And for the Hollywood crowd, there's Buck Jones's belt buckle and John Wayne's hat.

"I'm very excited about this year's auction," says founder, Brian Lebel. "The quality and diversity of the items is among the best we've ever offered." The auction is part of a weekend event that includes the Old West Show, which showcases dealers of fine Western art, antiques, and merchandise. Both the Show and Auction are open to the public. For more information, visit www.denveroldwest.com.

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