

THE ESTATE OF EDWARD S. STEPHENSON FEATURES ARMS & ARMOR AND ASIAN DECORATIVE ARTS

On March 9, Over 200 Lots from Private Collection Goes Up for Bid Online

SOUTH SAN FRANCISCO, CA, February 22, 2024 – Turner Auctions + Appraisals is pleased to present The Estate of Edward S. Stephenson on Saturday, March 9, 2024. Featuring over 200 lots, the sale features a diverse and eclectic collection featuring two major themes: arms and armor, and Asian decorative arts, primarily from Japan. The latter are mostly from Mr. Stephenson's time in Japan with the military at the end of World War II, before he became an award-winning Hollywood production designer. Highlights include a Franz Von Stuck nautilus cup and the coronation costume of Baron Sawada at Emperor Hirohito's coronation in Kyoto in 1928.



The part of the auction that features arms & armor includes a diverse range of items, mostly from England, continental Europe, and Japan: sets of armor, hall shields, chargers, medallions, military portrait plaques, helmets, tsuba, and more. Armaments from various countries and centuries include several swords and bayonets; a saber, cutlass, and dagger; plus a selection of Japanese tantō.

From Japan are an eclectic array of decorative arts, small furniture, works of art, household items, and more: netsuke, statues, ewers, bowls, vases, jars, Satsuma and Imari ware, hibachi, blue and white porcelain, miniature zushi, Bunraku puppet heads, early 20th-century kimonos, boxes, carved figures, a 19th-century tama sculpture, gongs, a scroll painting, groups of wooden boxes, and much more. Among the lacquerware items are picnic and other boxes, sets, games, a pear box, and miniatures. Noh items include an assortment of masks and a doll set in a fitted chest. Among

the small furniture items are tansu chests, armor chests, and collectors cabinets. Works on paper include calligraphy documents, woodblock books, and temple stamp books.

From China are censers, ceramic figures, famille verte dishes, a brush pot, vases, covered jars, a marble head of Guanyin, a jade figure of fu dogs,





and a bronze figure of Manjusri. From elsewhere in Asia are ceramics, textiles, mystical silk batik panels, and a collection of seals. Rounding out the sale are bronze figures and sculptures, candlesticks, platters, a 19th-century goblet, *Orlando Furioso* from 1967 in three volumes, and more.

Turner Auctions + Appraisals begins its online auction on Saturday, March 9, 2024, at 10:30 am PST; sale items are available for preview and bidding now. The online auction will be featured live on multiple platforms: LiveAuctioneers, Invaluable, Bidsquare, and Turner Auctions + Appraisals' free mobile app, which can be downloaded from the App Store or Google Apps ("Turner Auctions"). All are easily accessed through 'Upcoming Auctions' at the company's website: www.turnerauctionsonline.com/upcoming-auctions.

About Edward S. Stephenson and His Collection

Born in Iowa, Edward S. Stephenson (1917-2011)

moved with his family around age six to Glendale, in Southern California. Inspired by early motion pictures, young Edward decided at age 11 he wanted to pursue theater and production design. After high school, he attended the Pasadena Playhouse College of the Theater and after graduation began working in theatrical design. *(Photo right, Edward S. Stephenson)*

Like many other young men, his career was interrupted by World War II. Serving in the U.S. Air Force, he was stationed in Guam, Texas, and, for seven years, in Japan. He was appointed civilian Director of Entertainment and Music for the Commander

in Chief, Far East and Supreme Commander, Allied Powers; in this role, he headed the military's post-occupation entertainment services, when entertainment for GIs was said to be a "necessary supplement to the basic needs of food and shelter." Much of his time was spent at the Tokyo Takarazuka Revue building, later renamed the Ernie Pyle Theater for the Pulitzer Prize-winning author who was killed in Okinawa. Known as the "Radio City Music Hall of the East," this was the hub for American-style entertainment in Japan and indeed all of Asia. It was here that Mr. Stephenson plied his trade of production and theater design, including a performance of "The Mikado" that was attended by the Japanese royal family.

After the service, Mr. Stephenson spent a short time in New York, then returned to Southern California in the early 1950s. From his time in Japan, he sent the second largest shipment of Japanese artifacts back to the U.S.; the largest was sent to Gump's, the renowned retailer in San Francisco.

Upon his return to Los Angeles, Mr. Stephenson began working in production design in live television, a career that spanned five decades and numerous accolades. He received three Primetime Emmy Awards for production design and/or art direction -- for



An Evening with Fred Astaire, for *The Andy Williams Show*, and for *Soap*. With Norman Lear and Bud Yorkin, he worked on numerous shows, including *Maude*, *Sanford & Son*, *Good Times*, and the pilot for *All in the Family*. He also worked with Witt-Thomas-Harris on *Golden Girls*, *Empty Nest*, *Blossom*, and others.



In 1978, he found time to launch Hollywood Studio Gallery, which became the entertainment industry's leading prop house for art and wall décor, with 50,000 pieces available for rent. Today the company is owned and run by Mr. Stephenson's daughter, Tara Stephenson-Fong, herself a noted set decorator and winner of an Art Directors Guild (ADG) award, along with numerous Emmy and ADG nominations. Mr. Stephenson retired in 1994.

While collecting his entire adult life, Mr. Stephenson seems to have been first bitten by the bug when he was in Japan after the war; trading, for example, a carton of cigarettes for a samurai sword. While in Japan, he collected numerous Japanese woodblock prints: Turner Auctions + Appraisals' followers will remember the very successful sale in May 2023 of his collection of woodblock prints from post-war Japan that featured ghosts, demons, and monsters, whose myths and legends pervade Japanese culture. Other woodblock prints from Mr. Stephenson's collection will be available in a future auction. This sale offers an extensive array of many other Asian decorative arts he acquired over time, as well as his collection of European military armor and other arms.



According to Tara, her father loved art and architecture: "He saw something beautiful and wanted to have it – and he didn't know how to do anything small." Now, over the years, Mr. Stephenson's collections have been sorted out, awaiting the right time and the right person to go to sale. As with the supernatural prints offered previously, Tara says she hopes these objects, carefully acquired with a designer's eye, "find a good home with good people."

Here are some highlights of the upcoming online sale (please see lot details in the online catalog):

Lot 15: Pair of Gilt Metal Chargers or Shields. Each decorated in repousse classical style battle scenes around a raised boss with a captive woman; diam. 26in; c. 1900. Estimate \$300-\$500. (Photo, top left)

Lot 68: Japanese Sword with Gold-Inlaid Band, c. 19th Century. The hilt with black cord braid over ray skin, and inserted menuki on each side, with an incised brass buttcap; the tsuba is cast-iron with apple blossom decoration, and a gold-inlaid band; the ebony scabbard is undecorated. Total length 39 3/8". Condition: The blade is in good condition but shows rust spots; the scabbard with scratches, and an old auction label. Estimate \$500-\$700. (Photo, lower right)

Lot 18: Set of Six Silver Metal Candlesticks, c. 19th Century. The candlesticks with lobed design on stepped bases and pawed feet; unmarked; heavily weighted bases. Each 12 1/2in tall. Probably Spanish, 19th Century. Estimate \$200-\$400. (Photo, top right)



Lot 19: Bronze Figure of Young Hercules with the Snakes. The small figure after Guglielmo Della Porta; depicting Hercules as a child fighting the snakes sent by Hera; on a circular paw foot base with a frieze of his adventures; mounted on a stand; total height 8in. Condition: the top with figure is loose from the base; c. Late 18th Century. Estimate \$300-\$500. (Photo, top left)



Lot 42: Civil War Naval Cutlass and Scabbard. Stamped at ricasso: Ames

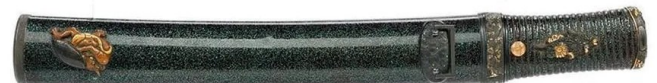


Mfg. Co., Chicopee, Mass. // [anchor] 1861; and 867 on the guard. Condition: blade good; grip with crack and some losses to leather, copper coil missing; some denting to cup. With scabbard, some cracking/ wear to leather, all brass rivets present including at tip. Total length 32in. Estimate \$300-\$500. (Photo, middle right)



Lot 88: Fukagawa Style Bowl. A large Fukagawa style deep bowl painted with a leaping carp within cartouche of flower heads, diam. 27in; Mark on base. Japan, c. 1900. Condition: no chips or cracks found. Estimate \$300-\$500. (Photo, middle left)

Lot 71: Japanese Tantō with Oni Menuki. The



short sword hilt

and scabbard are black lacquer with green iridescent flecks and gold-decorated fittings; the scabbard with a crouching gold-decorated oni with shield. The blade is 9 1/2in, total in scabbard 13in. Estimate \$600-\$800. (Photo, lower right)



Lot 199: Three Japanese Bunraku Puppet Heads. Two of the heads painted, one an old woman with gray hair, the other with a scowling blue face and moving eyes; the third silk covered with opening/closing red eyes and black hair. Ranging from approx. 11in to 15in with handles. Condition: various wear/surface losses, at least one with handle detached. Estimate \$200-\$300. (Photo, bottom left)



Lot 91: Satsuma Barbed Rim Bowl with Cranes, Mid-20th Century.

Satsuma bowl decorated with cranes in a lotus landscape, with butterflies and cranes on the outside; diam. 15 3/4in. Japan, Late First-Quarter 20th Century. Estimate \$300-\$500. (Photo, top left)

Lot 98: Chinese Commemorative Porcelain Vase.

The hexagonal porcelain vase with openwork panels, figures, and text; unmarked. 11in tall. 19th Century. Condition: one small hairline crack rim of one panel; some wear to gilt. Estimate \$200-\$300. (Photo, top right)



Lot 143: Japanese Lacquered Pear Box.

The mottled green and red lacquer box with cover is modeled as a pear, the interior black; 2 1/2in x 1 1/2in; with fitted box. Estimate \$150-\$250. (Photo, lower left)



Lot 179: Japanese Tsuba and other Sword Hardware. The tsuba cast with flower decorations at the corners; together with 12 additional pieces of hardware, including seppa spacers. With a wood box. Estimate \$200-\$300. (Photo, lower right)



– PREVIOUS IMAGES –

Lot 59: Silver Plated Franz Von Stuck Nautilus Cup. Designed by Franz Von Stuck (German, 1863-1928); manufactured by Württembergische Metallwarenfabrik (WMF). The c. 1900 figural centerpiece is modeled as a winged Mercury standing on a tortoise, holding aloft a nautilus shell surmounted by a putto seated on a fish. Stamped on the underside of the tortoise's head: "WMF / I/O / [?] / 8." Height: 18 1/4in. Condition overall good, there does appear to be slight denting to the front edge of the nautilus; the dolphin and putto are slightly loose but firmly attached; tarnished. Estimate \$3,000-\$5,000. (Photo, page 1, left)

Lot 188: Japanese Coronation Costume, c. 1920s. [BARON SAWADA; CORONATION OF HIROHITO, 1928.] The formal hand-stitched silk kimono set is identified in an accompanying autograph note signed by Edward S. Stephenson (Hollywood, 1973), as being the coronation costume of Baron Sawada at Emperor Hirohito's coronation in Kyoto. The set consists of a blue haori with red lining; a black nagagi with white lining; a red hakama; another white-lined black over-piece; two pieces of linen and white silk under clothing; a black metal and green brocade belt with white stones; and other textile and accessory pieces, including two blue bird-embroidered fringed sashes. Condition: The group is in very good/clean condition; one or two pieces with

minimal edge staining. The regalia is stored in a wood box lacking a lid, 36 1/4in x 14 1/4in x 7in. Estimate \$700-\$900. (Photo, page 1, right)

Lot 146: Chinese Bronze Figure of Manjusri, Ming Dynasty. A bronze seated figure of Manjusri, the figure seated on a double-lotus base; height 10 1/2in. China, Ming Dynasty (16th-17th Century). Condition: spots/areas of loss. Estimate \$150-\$250. (Photo, page 2, top left)

Lot 1: English Half-Size Set of Armor, 20th Century. A steel half-size set of armor with chain mail, and a wood staff; 42in. English, 20th Century. Mounted on a wood stand, with the lower body/legs being a stuffed form. Condition: the leather straps attaching arms and tasset flaps are detached with losses. Estimate \$200-\$400. (Photo, page 2, bottom left)

###

ABOUT TURNER AUCTIONS + APPRAISALS

Based in South San Francisco, Turner Auctions + Appraisals was founded by Stephen Turner to expand and complement the capabilities of Stephen G. Turner Associates, an auction and appraisal consulting firm founded in 2004. Turner Auctions + Appraisals presents online auctions in diverse categories of personal property (www.turnerauctionsonline.com). Among them are Fine Arts, Decorative Arts, Asian Arts, Toys, Jewelry, Militaria, Ethnic Arts, and others. The company offers a range of auction and appraisal services for buyers, sellers, and collectors. Online auctions are held several times a month. Working with leading live and online auction houses on the West Coast since 1991, Turner is a professional appraiser of personal property and seasoned auctioneer. His areas of expertise include fine art, decorative arts, antiques & residential contents. The company welcomes consignments and appraisals.

For more information about the company, please contact:

Stephen Turner, President

Turner Auctions + Appraisals, 461 Littlefield Avenue, South San Francisco, CA 94080
415-964-5250 / sturner@turnerauctionsonline.com / www.turnerauctionsonline.com

For media inquiries or photos, please contact:

Jill Turner, Rodin & Shelley Associates / 707-944-2433 / jillturnerpr@gmail.com