

# The Incredible Rare Clock Collection of Dr. William Thomas will Headline Cottone's March 31 Auction

News-Press Release

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## Summary

Dr. Thomas's outstanding collection showcases 50 of the finest examples of French and European clock masterpieces. The auction, at 12 Eastern time, contains 220 choice lots.

## Message

Geneseo, NY, USA, March 11, 2023 -- Cottone Auctions' Important Timepieces & Decorative Arts auction, on Friday, March 31st, will feature the incredible collection of Dr. William Thomas of Naples, Florida, showcasing 50 of the finest examples of French and European clock masterpieces. The auction, starting promptly at 12 o'clock Eastern time, features 220 choice lots. Both rarity and condition were important to Dr. Thomas. Highlighting his collection, assembled over a period of 50 years, is an extremely rare Raingo orrery clock and music box, with original matching pedestal. The clock and music box are in fine running order with beautiful patina and gilt bronze mounts, in remarkably original condition, possibly one of the finest known examples. An orrery is a mechanical model of the solar system, one that illustrates or predicts the relative positions and motions of the planets and moons. Orreries are typically driven by a clockwork mechanism with a globe representing the sun at the center, and with a planet at the end of each of the arms. It is widely believed that perhaps as few as twenty orrery clocks exist. Most known examples, like the present clock, are in the form of a gilt mounted, four column rotunda, veneered with mahogany or amboyna. Few rest on a musical base, playing on the hour or at will. A well-known example, now at Windsor Castle was purchased by King George IV in 1824. Other examples can be found in the Spanish Royal Collection at the Palacio Real de Madrid, the Conservatoire National des Arts et M<sup>u</sup>tiers in Paris, the Mus<sup>u</sup>e International de l'Hologerie, La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland, the Science Museum, London and the Sir John Soane Museum, London. The clock was purchased from renowned horologist, Jim Cipra of Long Beach, California, who acquired it from an important Portuguese collection. The orrery clock, signed Raingo A. Paris, circa 1820, has an exceptional Amboyna burl veneer and gilt bronze Neoclassical case in the form of a classical rotunda temple. It is supported on a round base that is set on a plinth with cylinder musical movement. It is pictured in (Tardy, French Clocks the World Over, Part II, p.224, Paris 1981, p.224, pls. LXXII & LXXIII). (est. \$150,000-\$250,000). Another masterpiece from Dr. Thomas' collection is an exceptional Louis XVI Regulator with equation of time and remontoire, clockmaker Robert Robin, Horloger du Roi, renowned enameller Joseph Coteau and case attributed to Pierre-Philippe Thomire, Paris, circa 1785, the quintessence of Parisian luxury horology during the reign of Louis XVI. Such clocks were made for a handful of important connoisseurs, often people who were close to the royal family. A near identical model was in the inventory of Queen Marie-Antoinette's horological collection, which was maintained by Robin. The inventory of the Ch<sup>u</sup>teau de Saint-Cloud made in January 1794 features two clocks in Marie-Antoinette's pi<sup>u</sup>ce des nobles (room for receiving visiting nobility) that were not there during the previous inventory of 1789. Around 1860, the clock was still, or again, at Saint-Cloud, in the bedroom of Empress Eug<sup>u</sup>nie, who surrounded herself with objects that belonged, or were thought to have belonged, to Marie-Antoinette. Vignon, Charlotte, The Frick Collection Decorative Arts Handbook, New York: The Frick Collection, Scala, 2015. The regulator being offered features a stunning dial by Joseph Coteau (1740-1801) who is regarded as the greatest enameller of all time, supplying dials for the most eminent horologists, including Antide Janvier (1751-1835), Robert Robin (1742-1809) and Ferdinand Berthoud (1727-1807). This finely painted, jeweled and enameled porcelain dial with astrological zodiac cartouches and signed "Coteau" is illustrated in Tardy, La Pendule Francaise: Des Origines A Nos Jours, pg. 201, and, like the orrery clock, was purchased from Jim Cipra. It stands a little over 15 inches tall and is in running condition, with an estimate of \$100,000-\$150,000. Fine and rare Skeleton clocks as well as Vienna Biedermeier laterndluhr regulators from the collection of Robert Seitz, Indian Shores, Florida will also be featured. Also up for bid will be Tiffany Studios (N.Y.) lamps from the collection of Dr. Robert McGann of Naples, Florida, led by a Poppy lamp with a 16-inch shade (est. \$50,000-\$80,000). Other fine works by Tiffany Studios from various private collections include a rare Lotus lamp with a 26-inch shade (est. \$80,000-\$120,000); a Poinsettia lamp with lighted turtleback base (est. \$40,000-\$60,000); and a Tiffany Studios Dichroic Curtain Border floor lamp (est. \$60,000-\$80,000). Additional Tiffany Studios offerings will include a Grape Trellis chandelier (est. \$80,000-\$120,000); two Impressionist sunset landscape windows dated 1915 (each est. \$40,000-\$60,000); 18- and 10-light Lily lamps; and over 20 decorated favrile pieces of art glass and accessories, including an Exhibition Gladiola paperweight vase, created circa 1917 (est. \$10,000-\$15,000). Highlighting American paintings will be an oil on paper by Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902), titled A View of the High Sierras by Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902),

included in the database being compiled for a forthcoming catalogue raisonné of the artist's work. Hailes (Rochester, N.Y.) in the 1930s by Mr. and Mrs. Edward Crumpston (Rochester, N.Y.) collection of Dr. Robert McGann include an oil on canvas street scene by Edouard-Leon Cortes (1854-1941) depicting Moulin Rouge and Palace de Bastille, each 7 inches by 12 inches (est. \$10,000-\$15,000); and a diminutive pair of watercolor and gouache works by Eugene Delacroix (1798-1863) depicting the same scene, each 3 inches by 5 inches (est. \$5,000-\$10,000). Surrounding Dr. McGann's collection are works by Emile Gruppe (1896-1978). Other artists from private collections will include John Sloan (1871-1951), Laurence A. Campbell (American, b. 1939), Richard Hayley Lever (American, 1876-1958), Orville Bulman (American, 1904-1978) and Anthony Thieme (American, 1888-1954). 20th century design, paintings, and prints will include several works on paper by Chinese modern artist Zao Wou-Ki (1920-2013); Butterfly Series; and additional works on paper by Pablo Picasso, Marc Chagall, Helen Frankenthaler, William Scott and Sam Francis. Works of design include an occasional table by Gio Ponti, sculptures by Albert Paley, and a Madoura plate by Pablo Picasso, titled Visage No. 157 (est. \$8,000-\$12,000). Asian items will feature an Imperial Chinese parcel gilt Bronze censor, mark and period of Qianlong (1736-1795), bronze with gilding, circular censor, bombe form and splayed foot, with Qingqing six character mantra (Om Mani Padme Hum) and celestial elephant handles, from a Buffalo, New York estate (est. \$3,000-\$5,000); an early Chinese gilt iron seated figure of Guanyin or Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara; as well as Japanese Meiji mixed metal warriors. Silver and estate jewelry will feature a fine lady's 2.74-ct. brilliant diamond ring, GIA Report #10369188 (est. \$20,000-\$40,000); and a lady's 24.26-ct. diamond and platinum necklace (est. \$15,000-\$25,000). Estate silver will be highlighted by Georg Jensen tea and coffee services. Americana and Native American offerings will include a Federal satinwood and mahogany bow-front chest of drawers, signed and dated Saco, Maine, 1812 (est. \$10,000-\$15,000); and a hand-painted miniature of Lady Liberty, signed Abijah Canfield, April 1797, depicting a female figure dressed in a classical Greek or Roman costume, as well as a "cap of liberty" (est. \$5,000-\$8,000). From the estate of Joseph R. Eger, Buffalo, New York, is a fine 19th century Northwest Coast feast bowl from the Haida or Tlingit tribe, kerfed and painted wood with stylized figures and opercula shells (est. \$5,000-\$8,000). Previews will be held by appointment in Cottone Auctions' gallery, located at 120 Court Street in Geneseo, N.Y. Online bidding will be facilitated by CottoneAuctions.com, Invaluable.com and LiveAuctioneers.com. Register to bid at live.cottoneauctions.com. Telephone and absentee bids are accepted. To place bids, you may call the Cottone Auctions gallery at (585) 243-1000. For more information about Cottone Auctions' Friday, March 31st auction, please visit www.cottoneauctions.com; or call (585) 243-1000. About Cottone Auctions: Since 1985, Cottone Auctions has expertly handled a diverse mix of fine art and antiques for national and international audiences. With average sales between \$1 million and \$2.5 million, our typical offerings include Fine Jewelry, Asian Art, Modern Design, American & European Paintings, Decorative Items, Americana, Native American, Oriental Rugs, and more. Allow Cottone to be your gateway to the international art market through live internet and unlimited phone bidding. To learn more, please visit www.cottoneauctions.com; or call 585-243-1000.



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5 inches,

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