

Old West meets the new (cyber) Frontier at March in Montana

The 2020 March in Montana sale went from a packed house of hundreds in 2019 to a small group of staff conducting the sale exclusively via remote bidding in 2020. Sales were not tempered in the least though, with 90% of all lots selling for a total over \$1.8 million, the second highest in the auction's history!

With safety for our employees as our primary concern, we were able to conduct the sale entirely through online and telephone bidding. Faced with a very fluid environment in the week leading up to the sale, we added a third online platform and enjoyed over 1000 registered online participants, more than double previous years. Many were completely new to the sale which is always a welcome sight. Telephone bidding also far surpassed typical volume, keeping our limited staff on its toes.

Highlights of the sale included a large oil painting by Montana artist William Standing (1904-1951). Considered to be his masterpiece, *THE LAST CHASE* shattered the old world-record price, selling for \$118,000 vs. a \$25,000-35,000 presale estimate. Two chairs by legendary furniture maker Thomas Molesworth sold for more than double the estimate and brought over \$60,000. Works by great western artists such as Philip Goodwin, Edgar Paxson, Edward Borein, and Bob Scriver also met or surpassed their estimates.

March in Montana has long been known for exceptional weavings. This year's sale showed continued strength with more than 60 rugs and blankets offered. Many of which sold over their high estimates. Native beadwork was also a major part of the auction along with cowboy items such as a rare Edward Bohlin parade saddle which sold for \$38,350.

While we were very happy with the outcome, we're looking forward to seeing all of our friends again at March in Montana 2021!