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PRESS RELEASE

PHILLIPS BREAKS AUCTION WORLD RECORD FOR MARTIN BROTHERS 'GROTESQUE'

PHILLIPS DESIGN SALES TOTAL \$7,299,750 / £4,908,388 / €6,756,520



NEW YORK – 17 DECEMBER 2015 – Phillips Design, Design Masters and Martin Brothers auctions totalled \$7,299,750 / £4,908,388 / €6,756,520, selling 78% by value and 66% by lot.

Phillips sold all 23 stoneware works by the late nineteenth-century ceramists R. W. Martin & Brothers. The top lot, a covered tobacco jar modelled as a grotesque bird caricature of former UK Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli, broke an auction world record by achieving \$233,000. The 1889 work shows Benjamin Disraeli characterized as a fantastical raptor, wings folded to his sides with a wise and knowing gaze on his anthropomorphized face. All 23 of the “grotesques” came from a single UK collection and have been gathered over 21 years since the mid-1990s.

“In all three of our design auctions, we saw a discerning market led by great connoisseurs and collectors who chose works by established designers across a century and a half,” said Alexander Payne, Worldwide Head of Design. “We had very active bidding for a number of lots, and we are pleased to set a new record for a Martin Brothers’ bird caricature of Benjamin Disraeli. The market for extraordinary design pieces remains solid, and our international team worked hard to assemble a sale that offered desirable works across multiple categories and price points.”

TOP TEN LOTS

- 321 Carlo Mollino, Unique ceiling light, \$293,000 / £197,033 / €271,189
- 302 Jean Royère, Ours Polaire armchair, \$269,000 / £180,894 / €248,976
- 306 Ron Arad, Prototype D-Sofa, \$257,000 / £172,809 / €237,860
- 323 Charlotte Perriand, Large unique sideboard, \$245,000 / £164,740 / €226,753
- 7 R. W. Martin & Brothers, Benjamin Disraeli bird jar and cover, \$233,000 / £156,652 / €215,613

342 Pierre Jeanneret, Set of eight chairs from Punjab University, \$197,000 / £132,424 / €182,299

313 Jean Prouvé, Cabinet, \$191,000 / £128,390 / €176,752

314 Jean Prouvé, Rare Potence pivoting wall light, \$185,000 / £124,337 / €171,200

317 George Nakashima, Conoid dining table, \$155,000 / £104,173 / €143,441

13 R. W. Martin & Brothers, Grotesque and smiling armadillo, \$143,000 / £96,108 / €132,336

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**Estimates do not include buyer's premium; prices achieved include the hammer price plus buyer's premium.*

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