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Auctioneer Rafael Osona with the rare Susan's tooth by Frederick Myrick that sold for \$139,200.

Susan's Tooth Leads Osona's Nantucket Auction At \$139,200



Listing a provenance of the Sara Jo and Art Kobacker collection, the rare Susan's tooth by Frederick Myrick sold for \$139,200.



The Rufino Tamayo oil and sand painting "High Five" went out at \$12,760.

Auction Action In Nantucket, Mass.



Rafael Osona works with clients on the telephone prior to the auction.

NANTUCKET, MASS. — Spirited bidding across the board was witnessed at Rafael Osona's Americana, fine arts and marine auction, August 4, as a stellar selection of materials crossed the auction block. Taking place in conjunction with the Nantucket Antiques Show, the event drew large crowds for preview and again on Saturday morning for the



The French prisoner-of-war carved bone ship model, circa 1800, was one of the stars of the auction, selling at \$52,200.

auction.

The auction was filled to the brim with Osona's usual selection of all-things-Nantucket, including furniture, paintings, baskets, silver, marine items and a host of other trinkets.

Come sale time, a full house was on hand for the sale, with every seat in the house occupied. Starting off with a bang, the sale began with a selection of early silver items; a set of six silver tablespoons by Benjamin Bunker set the pace for the day, as they were actively bid to \$8,120. A Nantucket coin silver soup ladle by J. Easton also did well, bringing \$6,960.

Leading the auction was a rare Frederick Myrick scrimshawed Susan's tooth dated "February the 8th, 1829." Listing a provenance of the Sara Jo and Art Kobacker collection, the rare tooth was inscribed "The ship *Susan* of

Nantucket" within a banner depicted above the handsome vessel. Several long boats filled with men and three whales were also depicted in the scene.

Spread-winged eagles with banners, American flags and a depiction of "The Susan on her homeward bound passage" on the verso were also scrimmed all around the tooth, as was the slogan "Death to the Living – Long Life to the Killers. Success to Sailor's Wives & Greasy Luck to Whalers." Measuring little more than 6 inches in length, the tooth is one of several of a series of scrimshaw teeth by Myrick depicting the *Susan*. Fierce bidding ensued when the lot was opened to the floor, with buyers on the telephones and in the room competing all the way to a selling price of \$139,200.

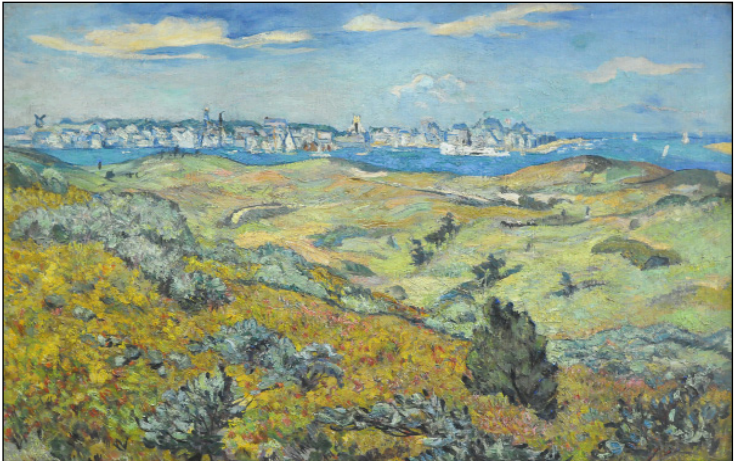
A French prisoner-of-war carved bone ship model, circa 1800, was another of the stars

of the auction. Featuring more than 100 retractable guns, a Roman soldier figurehead and elaborate rigging, the rare model sold at \$52,200.

A large polychromed French prisoner-of-war carved bone articulated "Spinning Jenny," measuring 7 inches tall, attracted the attention of collectors. Carved circa 1809, the piece featured nine figures and two dogs on two straw platforms. Carved bone handles turned and set into motion an articulated violin player and "Spinning Jenny." Also listing a provenance of the Kobacker collection, the rare piece hammered at \$34,800.

A rare sailor-made knife box was yet another well-known item among collectors as it listed the impressive provenance of Norman Flayderman as well as William Boylhart. The rare knife box is also illustrated in *Scrimshaw and Scrimshanders*. With nearly 30 bone, ivory and wood inlays depicting such items as a knife and fork, hearts, pinwheels, stars and geometric designs, the box was made circa 1840. Active bidding was seen on this lot, with it selling at \$26,680.

Nantucket baskets are always popular items at an Osona auction, and this sale featured a group that easily got the crowd's blood boiling. Leading the group was a nest of eight round swing-handle baskets that graduated up from 3½ inches tall and 5 inches in diameter to the largest basket at 8 inches tall and more than 13 inches in diameter. The nest of baskets was attributed to Andrew Jackson Sandsbury, circa 1890. Among other duties, the maker crewed on the *Nan-*



The Richard Hayley Lever oil on canvas "Nantucket from the Moors" sold for \$72,500.



Review and Photos by
Antiques and The Arts Weekly
David S. Smith, Managing Editor



The Dimitri Chiparus patinated bronze and ivory sculpture did well at \$25,520.

The nest of eight Nantucket baskets attributed to Andrew Jackson Sandsbury, circa 1890, sold at \$40,600.



The Anne Ramsdell Congdon oil on board "Fishing Fleet," realized \$10,440.



The polychromed French prisoner-of-war articulated "Spinning Jenny," 7 inches tall, hammered at \$34,800.



The rare Nantucket compote by Captain Thomas James, circa 1880, hammered down at \$12,760.



The porcupine quill and specimen wood table sold at \$5,220; the Lipchitz bronze, top left, brought \$696; the Joseph Emanuel bronze, center, realized \$2,320, and the Lorenz bronze with damage went out at \$4,640.

tucket New South Shoal lightship as a second mate and in his spare time he made baskets alongside another popular basket maker, Davis Hall. Bidding on the rare nest was brisk, and it sold at \$40,600.

Two baskets by Captain Thomas James, circa 1880, were offered with a compote, a rare form for a Nantucket basket, selling at \$12,760, while a large round basket with inscribed wooden bottom brought \$6,960.

Leading the selection of paintings was a Richard Hayley Lever oil on canvas titled “Nantucket from the Moors.” The Impressionist scene had been sold at the Walter Beinecke collection auction conducted by Osona in 1990 and remained in the buyer’s home until recently when the house was placed on the market. The only way Osona could get the painting consigned to the auction was to have a giclée reproduction print of the painting made so that

prospective buyers looking at the house with real estate agents could witness it hanging over the mantel. An “important view” of Nantucket, the desirable painting sold at \$72,500.

Several small paintings by Anne Ramsdell Congdon did well, with the watercolor “Nantucket Town Skyline from the Creeks,” a rare early work, selling at \$10,440, as did a small oil on board titled “Fishing Fleet.” An unusual painting in the auction, Rufino Tamayo’s abstract oil and sand painting titled “High Five,” went out at \$12,760.

A small collection of woolies were offered, with a sailor-made picture of the British *Ship-of-the-Line* with elaborately executed skies and seas bringing \$9,860.

While furniture has been bringing lackluster prices as of late, a rare Nantucket-made Windsor brace back armchair elicited strong bids, with the lot hammering down at \$11,600.



The Wooton desk did well, selling at \$13,920.



The Nantucket basket by Captain Thomas James with inscription on the wooden bottom sold at \$6,960.

Prices reported include the buyer’s premium. Osona will be conducting auctions on the island on September 1 and 15, October 6, November 24 and December 1. For information, www.Rafaelosonaauction.com, or 508-228-3942.



The Anne Ramsdell Congdon watercolor “Nantucket Town Skyline from the Creeks,” a rare early work, sold at \$10,440.



The rare sailor-made knife box with Norman Flayderman provenance was bid to \$26,680.



The Ralph Cahoon oil “Circus Horse Play” sold for \$10,440.



Nautical dealer Alan Granby was on hand for preview, shown here inspecting a whale bone and whale ivory swift, circa 1830, that sold for \$4,640.

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