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# MICHAAN'S AUCTIONS

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Auctioneers & Appraisers

## PRE SALE PRESS RELEASE!

### Press Office Contact!

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### Auction:

Fine Art, Furniture, Decorative Arts and Jewelry  
December 9, 10am

### Previews:

December 3, 4 and by appointment

### Location:

Michaan's Auctions  
2751 Todd Street  
Alameda, CA 94501

## **Exceptional Miniatures, Fortuny Gowns, Rare Currency and Period Jewels at Michaan's Fine Sale Led by Sam Francis, Amoroso and Thiebaud Paintings**

A pair of paintings by Sam Francis headline Michaan's next biannual Fine Art, Furniture, Decorative Arts and Jewelry Auction [on Friday, December 9](#). Sam Francis (1923-1994) is best known for paintings consisting of vivid, corpuscular drips of pigment applied with gestural freedom and large "empty-center" canvases that reflect the influence of Japanese art. "Untitled" (SF70-723, estimated at \$60,000-\$80,000) is a fine example of this signature style. "Point Reyes Self Portrait" (created in 1990, \$150,000-\$200,000) is a color explosion in Francis's free gesture style. Francis lived and worked all over the world but spent formative years in Berkeley. "We love California Abstract Expressionists and are thrilled to offer these important works in our [December 9th](#) auction," says Michaan's Fine Art specialist Susan Paffrath. The paintings were acquired directly from Sam Francis by the consignor and have been approved for inclusion in the next printing of the artist's catalogue raisonné.

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In today's strong market for works by Filipino artists, Fernando Amorsolo stands out as a favorite of collectors. Michaan's [December 9](#) auction features "Marikina" by Amorsolo (1892-1972), the leading artist of the late colonial period in the Philippines. This masterful landscape in oil shows the strong influence of European art at the turn of the 20th century, yet is infused with the golden light and relaxed mood of the tropics, an effect for which Amorsolo is well known. The subject is farmhands at work in a scene reminiscent of Monet's many haystack paintings. In 2009, the artist's daughter Sylvia Amorsolo Lazo confirmed the painting's authenticity and remarked, "it is one of the rare subjects that Papa painted depicting a typical Filipino custom." "Marikina" is estimated at \$50,000-\$70,000.

In 1958, French Expressionist Bernard Buffet (1928-1999) was dubbed one of "France's Fabulous Five" (alongside Brigitte Bardot and Yves St. Laurent) in a New York Times review. Michaan's will auction his sensational landscape, "Coastal Town With Lighthouse, South of France", a signed and dated work in Buffet's characteristic bold ink and watercolor on paper. The piece is in very good condition and is estimated at \$30,000-\$35,000. Another highlight of this sale is a work by pioneering Italian abstract painter Achille Perilli (b. 1927). "La Luce della Cabala" (The Light of the Kabbalah), oil on canvas, is signed and dated, in very good condition, and estimated at \$20,000-\$30,000.

Also in the auction is "Colorful Cakes" by Wayne Thiebaud, a 1990 lithograph (\$10,000-\$15,000) depicting the archetypal rows upon rows of cakes with their equally vibrant reflections. At age 96, Thiebaud is among the most respected and beloved living artists, and Michaan's is proud to feature an iconic work by this longtime Northern Californian of international renown. Highly collectable original works by Thomas Kinkade and LeRoy Neiman will also attract many bidders. The Kinkade paintings are scenes of Yosemite Valley, and the Neiman serigraphs include his popular bar scenes, such as one set in San Francisco's Buena Vista Café.

Michaan's [December 9th](#) sale presents a rare and exciting opportunity for connoisseurs of museum-quality couture and textiles: three pieces by legendary couturier and fabric designer Mariano Fortuny. These include a richly embroidered velvet cape (\$1,000-\$1,500) and two versions of the Delphos gown (\$1,500-\$2,000), a classically inspired goddess dress made of the signature silk pleats for which the House of Fortuny is best known. The shimmering pleats of

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these inimitable gowns are softly weighted by tiny beads of hand-blown Venetian glass. The result is a body-skimming silhouette that broke new ground when it was introduced in the early 20th century and will be forever revered for its effortless beauty. Collectors are already lining up to bid on these extraordinary pieces, which are in fine condition and were recently displayed to the public at Michaan's in anticipation of the upcoming auction.

Outstanding period jewelry is another [December 9th](#) auction highlight. An Art Deco bracelet features fine diamonds totaling well over 14 carats, set in platinum (\$25,000-\$35,000). An Etruscan Revival suite of drop earrings and a brooch, made of lustrous malachite spheres and cabochons set in gold, comes in an original fitted leather box bearing the name and address of Tiffany & Co., to which this family heirloom (\$1,000-\$1,500) is attributed. The sale offers diamond rings ranging from 1.70 to 3.85 carats, as well as a spectacular diamond necklace centering an emerald weighing over 38 carats (\$8,000-\$12,000). Bidders will find a gentleman's Edwardian pocket watch featuring dapper tricolored pinstripes of platinum and gold, and a ladies' Art Nouveau pocket watch decorated with tiny insects made of diamonds and enamel (each estimated at \$1,000-\$1,500). Additional lots include estate jewelry pieces from Cartier and Tiffany & Co., and several fine ladies' wristwatches including a Rolex Oyster Perpetual Datejust (\$3,000-\$5,000).

A large selection of early 20th century Tiffany Studios glass is offered in this sale. Vases include many iridescent favrile pieces and range in estimated price from \$400 to \$3,500. Highly coveted glass and bronze Tiffany desk sets will also be sold, including the Zodiac (\$3,000-\$5,000) and Pine Needle (\$2,000-\$3,000) designs. Additional auction highlights from the same period are some excellent pieces by Dirk Van Erp, including a hard-to-find oblong copper bowl (\$2,000-\$3,000), a hammered honeycomb copper vase (\$1,500-\$2,000), and a large Arts & Crafts tile depicting a landscape of cypress trees, by Chauncy R. Thomas for California Faience Pottery in a Dirk Van Erp copper frame (\$2,000-\$3,000). An imposing ceremonial chair from the San Francisco Masonic Lodge is another Arts & Crafts highlight. The chair was crafted of tiger oak at the Mathews Furniture Shop, whose works are found in the Oakland Museum of California but are rarely seen at auction. It bears the Mathews stamp and four digit painted number, and is estimated at \$3,000-\$5,000.

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A very special feature of Michaan's [December 9th](#) auction is an outstanding collection of exquisite dollhouse miniatures, showcased in astonishingly lavish and detailed scale model interiors created by the original collector, Elizabeth Larke Blodget, known as "Mother Larke." Mother Larke assembled these rooms from over 25,000 fine miniatures collected in Europe and around the world. They were first displayed at the California Pacific International Exposition of 1935, and later delighted thousands of visitors to the Cliff House at Ocean Beach, San Francisco, where they were exhibited until the 1970s. Additional pieces have been added over the years. The scale is one inch to the foot, and in the collection are silver filigree pieces, fine porcelain including Dresden china, a Royal Vienna parlor suite, musical instruments inlaid with mother-of-pearl, and an English pram signed by Colin and Yvonne Roberson, to name just a few. Mother Larke's miniature rooms will be sold in one lot estimated at \$20,000-\$30,000 (featuring a Chinese room and a ladies' boudoir) and two additional lots at \$15,000-\$20,000 each.

Numismatists will find noteworthy lots such as an uncirculated \$1000 bill, U.S. Federal Reserve Bank series [1934A](#), Bank of Chicago (\$5,000 to \$6,000). Gold coins include a People's Republic of China 1994 100 Yuan gold coin (\$5,000-7,000) and many more from the U.S. and around the world. A range of U.S. Morgan Dollars will be offered, including three collections of uncirculated coins in presentation boxes. An ancient Greek silver coin, circa third to fourth century BCE, is estimated at \$2,500 - \$3,000.