



BALDWIN'S
The Name for Numismatics

The Prospero
Collection

Such stuff as dreams are made on...
The Tempest, Act 4, scene 1, 156-157

Press Release

5th January 2012

BALDWIN'S SET NEW WORLD RECORD FOR ANCIENT GREEK COIN

The much anticipated sale of the spectacular Prospero Collection concluded at 03.30 EST this morning and, after a phenomenal eight hour 'white glove' auction, the team at Baldwin's had a lot to smile about. Although results are still in the process of being confirmed initial figures released by the company state that the sale total for all 642 lots is approximately US\$25,000,000 (including buyer's premium at 17%), more than double the pre-sale estimate.

Lot 213, the catalogue cover coin, broke all previous world records for an ancient Greek coin, selling for a phenomenal US\$3,250,000 (hammer). This beautiful example of a Gold Stater from Pantikapaion depicts the head of a satyr, a character widely used in Greek mythology. The coin is one of the most spectacular numismatic objects to have survived from the classical world and is one of the greatest and admired of all the ancient Greek coins. This miniature work of art is an incredibly rare artistic masterpiece and it was no surprise when bidding soared past the pre-sale estimate of US\$650,000.



The magical worlds of Greek history and mythology depicted in the coins from this dazzling collection certainly captured the imagination of the collectors, dealers and investors bidding in the room and online via the services of www.the-saleroom.com. Around 200 bidders were in attendance in the magnificent Vanderbilt suite at the Waldorf Astoria hotel (a fitting venue for the most significant auction of ancient Greek in the last 20 years) with an additional 156 registered to bid online. Anticipation was building prior to the auction and an electrifying buzz filled the air when the auctioneer opened the first lot at US\$450 and was immediately bid up to US\$1,700. Excitement grew as lots proceeded to sell for three, four, five times their pre-sale estimates, it became clear that the prices achieved in this landmark auction would be the new benchmarks for high quality Greek coins.

A good stalwart group of international collectors with an eye for the highest quality Greek coins took the bidding to new levels never seen before in this market. Bidding from start to finish was extremely strong

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and lots were selling to many different bidders from around the world, with a noticeable presence from European and America dealers and collectors. The internet too played an important role in the success of the auction with a total of US\$1,400,000 selling to bidders online from around the globe. The most expensive single coin sold online went under the hammer at US\$150,000 and the internet was responsible for a great deal of underbidding throughout the sale.

Paul Hill, Baldwin's ancient coin specialist and cataloguer for the Prospero Collection, commented directly after the auction:

'The sale of the Prospero collection has far exceeded our expectations. It has truly been a once in a generation auction and one that will go down in numismatic history. It was an honour and a privilege to catalogue this collection and the results achieved are testament to the dedicated team at Baldwin's.'

The coins in this auction broke records across the board but the most noteworthy sales included lot 149, a Silver Tetradrachm of Naxos, a wonderful example of one of the greatest of all fifth century Greek coins, which sold for US\$850,000 against its pre-sale estimate of US\$125,000 and lot 411, an outstanding Stater of Phaistos with an exceptional provenance, which achieved a staggering US\$650,000 against the pre-sale estimate of US\$40,000.

Ian Goldbart, Managing Director of Baldwin's commented:

'The auction has just concluded after eight hours. We are delighted to have sold this important and comprehensive Prospero Collection for a total of approximately \$25 million, making it the largest auction in Baldwin's history.'

In the year that sees Baldwin's celebrating their 140th anniversary the sale of the Prospero Collection has put the company firmly in the centre of the international numismatic stage. A packed auction schedule for 2012 should see them go from strength to strength.

~ Ends~

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Top Ten Selling Lots

213

Black Sea Region, Pantikapaion (c. 350-300 B.C.), Gold Stater, 9.12g., . Head of bearded satyr facing, inclined slightly to left, with long dishevelled hair and pointed horse's ear. Rev. Π-A-N, winged griffin standing to left, with its horned head facing, its right forepaw raised, holding a spear in its jaws, a large grain-ear below on which the griffin stands (Locker Lampson 122 (ex Grand Duke Alexander Mihailovich collection) = Gulbenkian 583 (these dies); Gulbenkian 584 (this obverse die), 580 (this reverse die); K. Regling, 'Der Griechische Goldschatz von Prinkipo', ZfN XLI, 1931, 165 (this obverse die); BM Principal Coins III. B, 1, pl. 21, 1; Jameson 2143). One small area of softness at top of the head, otherwise well-struck and extremely fine, fantastic style, one of the greatest and most admired of all ancient Greek coins, a true masterpiece and excessively rare, a coin of the highest importance.

Hammer: US\$3,250,000

149

Sicily, Naxos (c. 461-430 B.C.), Silver Tetradrachm, 16.98g., . c. 460 B.C. Bearded head of Dionysos facing to right, wearing an ivy-wreath, his hair tied in a krobylos at the back. Rev. N-AXI-ON, naked, bearded and ithyphallic Silenos squatting facing, his head turned left towards the two-handled drinking-cup he holds in his right hand, he supports himself with his left hand propped on the ground (Cahn 54 (V39/R45); Antikenmuseum Basel 384; BMC 7; Gulbenkian 230-1; Randazzo 227-31; Rizzo pl. XXVIII, 12; SNG ANS 515; SNG Lloyd 1150). A wonderful example of one of the greatest of all fifth century Greek coins, struck on a broad flan, superb cabinet tone, about extremely fine.

Hammer: US\$850,000

411

Crete, Phaistos (c. 350 B.C.), Silver Stater, 11.60g., . ΦΑΙΣΤΙΟΝ, youthful, naked Herakles seated facing three-quarters to left on a lion's skin spread over a low rock, his head turned to the right and gazing outwards from the coin, he holds his club before him with his left hand and rests his left elbow on his left knee, in the background is a tree set on a base, from which hang a bow and quiver. Rev. Bull butting to right on ground line, its head lowered; all within an olive-wreath (BMC 17, pl. XV, 9 (these dies); Jameson 1337 (this coin); Kraay - Hirmer pl. 167, 550 (these dies); Svoronos, p. 260, 39, pl. 24, 6). A beautiful coin of superb style, wonderful old cabinet tone, extremely fine.

Hammer: US\$650,000

271

Macedon, Amphipolis (366/5 B.C.), Silver Tetradrachm., 14.21g., . Head of Apollo facing, slightly inclined to right, wearing a laurel-wreath. Rev. ΑΜΦ-ΙΠΙΟ-ΑΙΤ-ΕΩΝ on a broad frame of a raised linear square enclosing a race-torch, a cicada on inner left; all within a broad shallow incuse square (Lorber, type E, 13c (O8/R10), pl. XX (this coin); Brett, AJN 1909, pl. III, 9 (this obverse die); Regling, ZfN 33, 1922, p. 59, 52, pl. II, 14)). Well-struck in high relief, wonderful style, lightly toned, good very fine, very rare and with a superb old pedigree.

Hammer: US\$600,000

150

Sicily, Naxos (c. 415 B.C.), Silver Tetradrachm, 16.94g., . Bearded head of Dionysos facing to right, wearing a stephane adorned with an ivy-wreath. Rev. ΝΑΞΙΟΝ, naked and bearded Silenos squatting facing, his head turned to left towards the kantharos that he holds in his right hand, he holds a thyrsos in his left hand, an ivy-plant creeps upwards to his left, behind which his tail is visible (Cahn 101 (V66/R83); Rizzo pl. XXVIII, 16 (this obverse die), 17 (this reverse die); BMC 18; SNG Lloyd 1156). Well-struck, attractive cabinet tone, good very fine, an excellent example of this famous coin, of exceptional classical style.

Hammer: US\$475,000

367

Attica, Athens (c. 510-490 B.C.), Silver Tetradrachm, 17.22g., . Head of Athena facing to right, wearing a crested Attic helmet and an earring, a large pellet above her forehead. Rev. ΑΘΕ, owl standing to right, its head facing, an olive-sprig on left; all within an incuse square (Svoronos pl. 6, 8ff.; Seltman 340; Asyut, pl. 14, 261). Very well struck in high relief, well-centred and with full crest visible, wonderful late archaic style, lightly toned, nearly extremely fine, very rare, a superb coin.

Hammer: US\$400,000

23

Calabria, Tarentum (c. 344-338 B.C.), Gold Stater, 8.56g., . Head of Hera facing to right, her curling hair held in a stephane decorated with palmettes, a diaphanous veil is visible on both sides of her neck, small E behind, a small dolphin swimming downwards and TAPA before. Rev. ΤΑΡΑΝΤΙΝΩΝ, Taras standing to right, raising his hands in supplication towards Poseidon, seated left on a stool, wearing a himation over his lower limbs and holding a trident, K beneath stool, a star and ⌋ on right (E.S.G. Robinson, Ancient Greek Coins in the possession of William Harrison Woodward (privately printed, Oxford, 1928), no. 4 (this coin); Vlasto 1 (these dies); Vlasto, 'Le monnaies d'or de Tarente', JIAN II, 1899, p. 306, I; A.J. Evans, 'The Artistic Engravers of Terina and the Signature of Evaenetos on its later Didrachm Dies', NC 1912, p. 45; Head, BM Principal Coins, pl. 25, 7 (these

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dies); HN Italy 901 (these dies); Kraay - Hirmer pl. 109, 315, and colour plate X). Two small insignificant nicks on the obverse and one on the reverse edge, extremely fine, very rare, a superb example and one of the most beautiful designs to appear on an ancient Greek gold coin.

Hammer: US\$350,000

369

Attica, Athens (c. 467-465 B.C.), Silver Dekadrachm, 42.56g., . Head of Athena facing to right, wearing a crested Attic helmet decorated with three olive-leaves and a palmette, and wearing an earring and a necklace. Rev. A-Θ-E, owl standing facing, with its wings spread, an olive-twig with two leaves and fruit at upper left; the whole within an incuse square (W. Fischer-Bossert, *The Athenian Decadrachm*, 19c (O10/R19) (this coin); cf. Seltman 445-452; Starr group ILC; ACGC 188). Struck in high relief, a few light marks otherwise about extremely fine, extremely rare, only two other examples known from this pair of dies, of the highest numismatic and historical importance and a magnificent example of ancient art.

Hammer: US\$350,000

483

Troas, Abydos (c. 410 B.C.), Gold Stater, 8.58g., . ΑΒΥΔ / ΗΝΟΝ (the lower part of the legend retrograde), eagle standing left. Rev. Gorgoneion facing; within incuse square (E.S.G. Robinson, *Some Electrum and Gold Greek Coins*, Centennial Publication (ANS) 1958, 593, 13 and pl. 39, 13). A light scrape on reverse edge at 5 o'clock, obverse very fine, reverse good very fine, unique and of great importance.

Hammer: US\$325,000

356

Phokis, Delphi (c. 485-475 B.C.), Silver Tridrachm, 18.36g., ΔΑΛΦΙ-ΚΟΝ, two rhytons, in the form of ram's heads, side by side, downwards, two dolphins leaping towards each other above. Rev. Quartered incuse square, each quarter with stepped sunken squares in the form of a "coffered ceiling", each containing a dolphin and a spray of laurel leaves (Asyut 240 (this coin); Babelon, *Traité* 1392, pl. 42, 16; Kraay – Hirmer pl. 146, 461; Rosen 173; K. Regling, *ZfN* 37, 1927, pl. IV, 189; Kraay, ACGC 413). With a deep chisel-cut, otherwise lightly toned, extremely fine, exceedingly rare, less than a dozen known examples, a coin of great importance.

Hammer: US\$325,000

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For more information visit www.baldwin.co.uk/prospero

For all enquires about The Prospero Collection or to request a copy of the collection catalogue please contact Paul Hill at paul@baldwin.co.uk or on +44 (0)20 7930 6879.

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