

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
September 15, 2006

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26TH ANNUAL BALTIMORE SUMMER ANTIQUES SHOW IS HUGE SUCCESS UNDER NEW OWNERSHIP

Largest Summer Antiques Show in the Nation Boasts Record Attendance

(Baltimore, MD)- While Labor Day traditionally marks the end of the summer season, things were still hot in Baltimore with record-breaking crowds and high-paced sales during the 26th annual Baltimore Summer Antiques Show. This year's show, under the new management of the Palm Beach Show Group, attracted approximately 30,000 visitors to the Baltimore Convention Center, more than tripling past attendance figures.

The Baltimore Summer Antiques Show, held from Thursday, August 31 through Sunday, September 3, featured over 500 exhibitors drawn from the United States, China, Canada, Germany, Italy, England, France and South America. The annual show is a cultural experience showcasing fine art, jewelry, silver, porcelain, decorative accessories, furniture, glass, textiles and other pieces ranging from the antiquities to the 20th century. The event also featured a 60-dealer Antiquarian Book Fair.

"We were extremely pleased with the overwhelming increase in attendance over past years. This year's show attracted hundreds of new attendees in addition to those who attend the show each year," said co-owner and show manager Kris Charamonde of the Palm Beach Show Group. "I think some of the positive changes we made to the show, including the addition of approximately 100 new dealers and an extra day, appealed to the public."

The Baltimore show has traditionally attracted a wide range of buyers – knowledgeable collectors, dealers, decorators and shoppers. The incredible diversity combined with the solid quality of the items featured makes the Baltimore show a significant event.

"This year's show attracted thousands of new collectors, dealers, and interior designers from the major metropolitan areas of Baltimore, Washington, DC, Virginia, and Pennsylvania," said Kevin Anderson of Anderson Galleries. Antiques that sold well included silver, Asian objects, furniture, and decorative accessories. Noteworthy reported sales:

Bill Rau of **MS Rau Antiques**, enjoyed substantial sales both during and after the show. He said, "We sold a wonderful diamond ring for six figures and will definitely be back next year." Additional sales included a silver spoon made by Paul Revere (\$26,000), a forty-drawer butterfly cabinet by Watkins & Doncaster naturalist furnishings containing thousands of preserved butterflies (\$52,000), and an art-deco cocktail cabinet (\$21,500).

Larry Dalton's bird boxes were popular items at this year's show, particularly with new collectors. Mr. Dalton sold eight bird boxes over the course of the weekend. "Usually, we are lucky if we sell one bird box at a show," said Dalton. The handmade bird boxes were made in Russia in the 1820s and feature small birds with real feathers that flap their wings and sing when the box is opened. In an effort to replicate a bird's call, the craftsmen would go into the woods to listen to the birds before reproducing the sounds. Some bird boxes double as snuff boxes, with small compartments underneath for snuff storage. Celebrities such as Whoopi Goldberg and Barbara Streisand have purchased bird boxes from Mr. Dalton in the past.

TK Asian Antiquities snuff bottles were also a hot seller as well as scholars' items including inkwells and scholars' tables. Their first time back at the Baltimore show in 9 years, TK Asian was pleased with the weekend's sales. "We sold to several individuals who were new to collecting Asian art," said president Michael Teller. "A lot of people have told me that they didn't know you could collect Asian art. They thought it was only for museums!"

Nicolaus Boston Antiques sold a museum-quality Monumental Wedgewood Majolica Swan Vase to a private Baltimore collector for approximately \$95,000. This vase was shown at the Melbourne Exhibition in 1888 and the only two other known examples are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. "This was a fabulous show. We sold to many new as well as repeat customers," said Nicolaus Boston.

Long time Baltimore exhibitor, **Drucker Antiques**, said that "this year's show was the best yet." They enjoyed a successful weekend selling several pieces of Georg Jensen silver and some Georg Jensen jewelry. In particular, they sold a gold Georg Jensen bracelet with tourmaline stones and two silver Georg Jensen necklaces.

Spencer Marks also sold several pieces of silver. Commenting on the Baltimore area, Spencer Gordon noted that "this is an affluent area and they like their silver." Spencer Marks sold 20th century, English Silver and Baltimore silver while at the show.

European paintings and furniture were huge hits at **John Orban Antiques**. **Bedford on the Square Antiques** also sold furniture pieces during the show. Bedford on the Square sold a wooden table from the Kellogg Estate for approximately \$6,000. David Snuffler of Bedford on the Square said, "The sky is the limit in Baltimore."

By the end of the weekend, **I.T.O. Antiques'** booth was almost bare. Sale items included a Baltimore Brew doorstop, a hall tree, and French mirror. They noted that about 50% of their sales were to attendees, while the rest of their sales were trade. "Usually, the Monday after the show we do as much in sales if not more than at the show," said Rick Griffin of I.T.O. Antiques.

In October 2005, the Baltimore Summer Antiques Show was acquired by the Palm Beach Show Group, who also own and operate the highly successful Palm Beach Jewelry & Antique Show. In just a few months, the new operators made positive changes to the show, which include the addition of a fourth day, a full-service restaurant area on the show floor, new high-end exhibitors, and an aggressive promotional campaign to attract new audiences.

“ The Baltimore show has always been a fantastic show, however, it was in need of face lift. We have long term plans to increase its size, quality and reputation over the next several years,” said Charamonde.

Overall, the changes were well received by exhibitors. Several commented on the outstanding coordination and promotion of the show. “Baltimore is back, “ said exhibitor Joyce Groussman. Ian Kahn of Lux Mentis Booksellers said that “the new ownership has made conscious changes such as bringing in quality dealers and most importantly, promoting and advertising the show. This year’s show attracted large crowds that we have not seen in years!”

The Palm Beach Show Group, based in West Palm Beach, Florida owns and manages the annual Palm Beach Jewelry & Antiques Show-- widely recognized as one of the most prestigious shows in the nation. In October, the company acquired the successful Baltimore Summer Antiques Show, one of the longest continuing annual events at the Baltimore Convention Center.

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