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Sale Set for Treasures Left by Jackie Onassis

By CAROL VOGEL

Much of Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis's personal property, including the desk on which a nuclear test-ban treaty was signed in 1963 and a 40-carat diamond ring she received from Aristotle Onassis, is to be auctioned at Sotheby's over a four-day period beginning April 23, the auction house said yesterday.

The announcement of the highly anticipated sale, which is to be held at Sotheby's Manhattan salesroom, came after months of secrecy. Experts at Sotheby's began cataloguing the contents of Mrs. Onassis's Fifth Avenue apartment shortly after her death in May 1994.

Objects as personal as John F. Kennedy's golf clubs and John F. Kennedy Jr.'s highchair are among the more than 4,000 items to be auctioned, along with paintings, furniture, decorative objects, jewelry, antiques and books. The objects are being sold on behalf of Mrs. Onassis's two children, Caroline Kennedy Schlossberg and Mr. Kennedy.

Sotheby's expects the five days of viewing (from April 19 to April 23) to attract even more than the 12,000 people who formed lines around the block to glimpse the Duchess of Windsor's jewels when they were up for sale in 1987, or even the 60,000 people who came to see the contents of Andy Warhol's estate a year later.

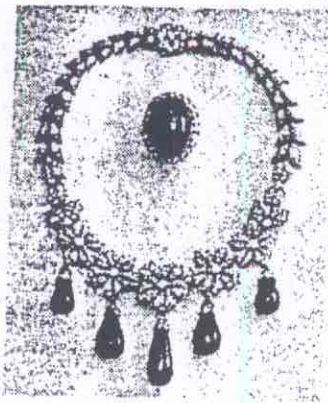
The auction house has hired Trase-Miller Teleservices, a Chicago-based company that handled ticket sales for the hugely successful Monet retrospective that closed last month at the Art Institute of Chicago.

Admission for viewing will be by ticket only. Sotheby's said it would admit only 30,000 people drawn randomly by computer from among those who buy the lavish, 500-page auction catalogue.

"It seemed like the only way to handle the crowds," said Diana D. Brooks, chief executive officer at Sotheby's. "We didn't want 20,000 people lining up around the block and not be able to let them in."

Before deciding what should be turned over for sale, Mrs. Schlossberg and Mr. Kennedy donated thousands of objects relating to their father's White House years to the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation in Boston. Proceeds from sales of the catalogue are also to go to the presidential library.

The volume will contain more than 700 color photographs and other illustrations, including unpublished photographs of Mrs. Onassis's Fifth Avenue apartment. It is to be printed in both a paperback edition (\$45) and



For auction from Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis's estate: A Van Cleef & Arpel emerald necklace and a set of President Kennedy's golf clubs.

in hardcover (\$90). Both are to go on sale at Sotheby's in March.

The range of objects in the sale is vast, and many are personal. The stone from Onassis, for instance, was cut from a diamond believed to be the 11th largest gem ever found. Experts at Sotheby's estimate that it could sell for \$500,000 to \$600,000.

Several other pieces of jewelry owned by Mrs. Onassis are also to be auctioned, like an emerald and diamond necklace designed by Van Cleef & Arpel, expected to bring

rocking chairs, hatboxes and golf clubs, the auction will include a drawing by Robert Rauschenberg of the presidential couple during the 1960 campaign.

Mrs. Onassis, who worked as a editor at Doubleday, was known to have difficulty parting with books. More than 3,000 from her personal library, primarily nonfiction on subjects ranging from art history and ballet to dance and horticulture, are for sale. Many come with inscriptions from the authors.

Also included is one of her grammar school textbooks, "A Complete Treatise on the Conjugation of French Verbs," with "Jackie Bouvier" written inside the front cover. The back cover includes conjugated verbs in her handwriting as well as doodles of ladies in elegant dresses. It is expected to sell for \$500 to \$700.

"She would never have considered herself a serious collector," said Nancy Tuckerman, a longtime friend and confidante who is writing the introduction to the catalogue. "But she certainly had an eye for art."

Besides several Old Master paintings and two watercolors by John Singer Sargent, there is a pair of 21-inch-high obelisks, each decorated with a lion's mask, that she and the President lent for display in the Red Room of the White House.

Mrs. Onassis was a frequent customer of Sotheby's in New York and London. More than 30 of the objects up for sale are pieces she bought at the auction house, including a Louis XV leather casket, circa 1770, that was owned by Marie-Antoinette. Mrs. Onassis purchased it in 1981 at Sotheby's in London for \$17,200.

30,000 lucky catalogue buyers will get tickets to a pre-auction viewing.

\$100,000 to \$125,000. The sale is also to include many of the sporting paintings and drawings collected by Mrs. Onassis, who was a serious equestrian. Among the most important is "Lord Bateman's Arabian," by the British artist John Wootton, estimated to sell for \$80,000 to \$120,000.

Far less valuable are three of her leather saddles, one with a tag marked Mrs. A. S. Onassis, which are being sold together with an estimate of \$500 to \$700.

A 1968 study by Aaron Shikler for her official White House portrait is for sale, and Sotheby's predicts it will bring \$10,000 to \$15,000.

Memorabilia is plentiful. Besides