

**Werner Pfeiffer** *continued from page 18* has architectural structure;" and *The Banana Drawings*," a series of drawings with seven basic images that reoccur in different configurations, in a combination of drawing and silkscreen prints.

Also on view will be *Liber Mobile*, in which the alphabet becomes a visual element. The piece was inspired by the writings of Marshall McLuhan (who famously pointed out that "the medium is the message" in the 1960s). The letterforms simulate interpretive content, suggesting legibility, but the artwork is simply an interaction of form and color.

While influenced by his contemporaries, Pfeiffer's earliest memories of life in Germany during and after World War II have impacted his work the most. "There was no paper; there were no books. Censorship was everywhere. Since childhood I've always been sensitive to what is being done to books and with books," the 77-year-old artist has said.

**Drawn, Cut & Layered** will be on view Feb. 6–May 3, 2015 in Toledo Museum of Art's Canaday Gallery. The exhibition is made possible by Museum members and in part by funding through the Ohio Arts Council's sustainability grant program. Admission to the exhibition and to the Museum is free. Visit [www.toledomuseum.org](http://www.toledomuseum.org) for more information.

Born in Stuttgart, Germany in 1937, Werner Pfeiffer is a resident of Red Hook, New York. After immigrating to the United States in 1961, he pursued a career in design and art direction, becoming an art professor at Pratt Institute and director of the Pratt Adlib Press in 1969. He retired from Pratt in 2002.

His books, collages, drawings, prints, paintings and sculptures have been shown in more than 100 group exhibitions and over 70 solo shows internationally. His award-winning designs have been widely published in magazines such as *Print*, *Modern Publicity* and *Art Direction*. His work can be found in the permanent collections of the Art Institute of Chicago, the Boston Museum of Fine Art, the 9/11 Memorial Museum and the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), among others.

The exhibition catalog produced by TMA is a multimedia e-book containing an exhibition checklist; an essay by Pfeiffer explaining the role of paper in his art and the influence of the digital age; videos of Pfeiffer speaking about and demonstrating his work; a video conversation between the artist and the Museum's director; and an interactive animation of one of his artist books. "It's perhaps ironic to create an e-book for an artist who uses paper as his primary medium, but it gives us the opportunity to better show the nature of Pfeiffer's books, which are meant to be handled and unfolded. It's an interactive way to digitally demonstrate how his books move and re-form," said Paula Reich, head of interpretative projects and managing editor.

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**Upcoming auction provides great opportunity to**

## INVEST IN THE WEST

by John Faubion

On January 24th, collectors of works on paper will have a fine opportunity to invest in the West at the 25th annual **High Noon Auction** in Mesa, Arizona. New owner Brian Lebel has built a solid reputation in the Western auction world with his Old West Show and Auction in Cody, Wyoming (relocating this June to Fort Worth Texas), which he launched in 1988. Both auctions have thrived as interest in Western Americana has grown here and abroad. Among the 350-plus lots to be offered to international bidders are exceptional authentic cowboy trappings and notable Western art including collectible prints, paintings, and drawings, on paper.

Of particular interest to collectors of works on paper is a small, illustrated



letter that is generating BIG interest. The 10" x 6.5" letter is dated February 25, 1921, and was written by revered Western artist Charlie Russell to one of the nation's best loved early Western movie stars: Harry Carey (no relation to the late announcer Harry Caray). It is estimated to sell for \$90,000 - \$115,000 but with an item of this rarity there is no telling how high the bidding might go.

What makes this piece of paper so desirable? Any letter from Russell is collectible. This one is even more so by virtue of its provenance, the subject, and the illustration. The letter comes directly from the Carey Family Trust making its provenance as solid as it gets. The subject has the campy humor for which the West is legendary: Russell recalled that at a meal the previous year, Carey whispered to him that he had buried a treasure of "corn and rye juice" (alcohol) on his California ranch and could not find it when he later went looking for it. Wrote Russell: "You told me you were going to organize a small band of booze hounds and go prospecting. I hope you raised the cash [sic]." Russell embellished the letter with a colorful illustration that is characteristic of the wit and talent he displayed in his larger works.

The value of this Russell letter to col-



lectors is further enhanced because it was written from one Western icon to another. Charles Marion Russell (1864-1926), is considered one of the most important artists of the American West. As with the earlier work of Frederic Remington, Russell helped set the standard for what many expected Western art to look like. Scores of books have been written about him and there are a number of museums and institutions that bear his name in one form or another. Harry Carey (1878-1947), was a star of silent Western films who made a successful transition to "talkies" and became one of the highest paid Western celebrities of his day. John Wayne, with whom Carey appeared in a number of films, called him "the greatest Western actor of all time." Carey was inducted into the Western Performers Hall of Fame at the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma

City, Oklahoma, in 1976.

This alignment of Western stars on one piece of paper is of special significance to serious collectors. Those who understand the philanthropic and substantial income tax advantages of the planned giving of art know that an important component of this estate planning is that the receiving institution must want the donated art and it must fit with their non-profit mission. This Russell letter meets these requirements. Of it, Rebecca E. Lawton, Curator of Paintings and Sculpture at the Amon Carter Museum of American Art in Fort Worth, Texas, wrote: "Russell's letters are cherished by collectors for what they reveal about the man, his humor, his modesty, and his surprisingly wide circle of friends and admirers, including Hollywood celebrities, such as Harry Carey; for museums, his beautifully illustrated letters reveal the brilliance of his artistic talents, but they also function as key documents that allow us to chart his development as an artist."

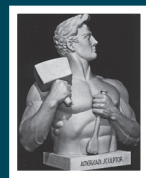
How strong is the market for quality Western Americana? Very! And not just among Americans. "There has always been an interest in the American West overseas," says Lebel, adding "... trends and economics can shift the people and the places, but the Old West is legendary around the globe. Germany and Japan are two countries that come to mind that really seem to enjoy what we do." Asked if he has seen a trend in foreign interest Lebel replied: "... over the decades it's definitely been increasing." As the economies of other nations *continued on page 21*

## LAWRENCE TENNEY STEVENS (1896-1972)



Historic "Old John" with horse, Monty, and dog, boy.  
Linocut, c. 1935. Copyright LTS Trust 2014

From a series of rare linocut prints pulled from his own press by American sculptor Lawrence Tenney Stevens beginning in the spring of 1935. These are among discoveries in the Stevens archives that have compelled scholars to conclude that Stevens was "an undeniable progenitor of Cowboy High Style."



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