Glass Negatives Found at Garage Sale Are The Lost Works Of Ansel Adams According to Leading Experts


Beverly Hills, CA (PRWEB) July 21, 2010 -- A team of art and forensic experts have concluded an exhaustive examination of 65 glass negatives purchased at a Fresno garage sale for a mere $45. The experts, working together for almost one year, have emphatically determined that the negatives were in fact created by the iconic photographer Ansel Adams. The images themselves are stunning and, Patrick Alt, who has 40 years of experience working with the same types of cameras Ansel Adams used described them as follows: "In almost all of the photographs, the compositions are virtually flawless, truly being made by a photographer of singular vision and talent."

In 1937, a fire ripped through Ansel Adams' darkroom, destroying as many as 5,000 negatives. This loss represented one-third of his portfolio. Many of the negatives had never been developed into photographs. It was a heartbreaking loss for Adams' and his wife, Virginia, and it has long been lamented by art lovers who wanted to trace how Adams found his ultimate artistic voice in the initial phase of his career. Historians assumed that the images and evidence of his early career were simply lost forever.

This critical void in Adams' collection continued until Spring of 2000. Rick Norsigian, a painter for the Fresno school district, chanced upon two boxes of antique glass negatives at a garage sale in Fresno, California. He bargained the seller down from $70 and purchased the negatives.

The evidence that these negatives were created by Adams is overwhelming:

• Michael Nattenberg and Marcel Matley, two independent hand writing experts confirmed that hand writing on the envelopes in which the negatives were found belonged to Adams' wife Virginia.
• George Wright, a meteorological expert compared one of Adams' most famous photographs with one found in the Norsigian negatives. By looking at the cloud formation, the snow on the mountains and the shadow cast by a tree, Wright determined that the two photographs were taken on the same day at approximately the same time. These two images are posted on this website to the right.
• Robert Moeller, the former Curator of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts concluded: "After more than six months of close study, it is my opinion, within a high degree of probability, that the images under consideration were produced by Ansel Adams."
• Patrick Alt, a large format photographer with over 40 years of experience, meticulously refuted each of the questions raised and confirmed the authenticity of the negatives.
• In order to test the strength of the overall evidence, former FBI Agent and Section Chief Thomas Knowles and former Assistant United States Attorney and Legal/Supreme Court Reporter for ABC News Manny Medrano were asked to examine all of the evidence including the reports of the five retained experts. Both Knowles and Medrano declared that the evidence was sufficient to prove beyond a reasonable doubt, the highest standard used in United States courts, that the glass negatives were created by Ansel Adams.

The final report for the investigation will be released at a press conference on Tuesday, July 27 at 10:30 a.m. at the David Streets Gallery, 9407 South Santa Monica Boulevard, Beverly Hills Journalists and media representatives may register for the press conference at www.lostnegatives.com.
Rick Norsigian observed, "You look at these photographs and they take your breath away. But it is even more meaningful and rewarding to finally have the leading experts confirm what I believed in my heart when I saw the images for the first time. I am grateful to these highly skilled professionals who have given so generously of their time and expertise to make Ansel Adams' work come alive in never before seen images. Now, his fans worldwide and an entirely new generation can explore and fall in love with his work."

Arnold Peter, partner at boutique entertainment law firm Peter Rubin & Simon, assembled the authentication team and spoke about the unique challenges inherent in verifying photographs. "There is no definitive authority charged with authenticating photographs and unlike a painting there is no signature linking the work to the artist. So, we decided to apply the highest possible evidentiary standard we could think of. Every individual who has actually examined all the evidence we have gathered has come to the same conclusion--these are in fact the works of Ansel Adams."

About Peter Rubin & Simon, LLP and PRS Media Partners, LLC

With reputations as industry insiders, the members of Peter Rubin & Simon have expertise in all facets of film and television, artist representation, finance, new media, litigation and other legal and entertainment fields. The firm has a distinctive and diverse roster of clients. Its institutional clients include BBC Worldwide, Netflix, National Association of Television Program Executives, Participant Media and the University of Southern California. Launched by the founding partners of the law firm who wanted to address a growing client need, PRS Media Partners, LLC represents an innovative model that goes above and beyond the traditional legal representation model, offering an extension of services that include business development and analysis; strategies for content development and production; distribution and marketing; brand building; and financing. One of the founding partners of the law firm and Managing Director of PRS Media Partners, Arnold Peter has a unique combination of entertainment industry experience as a former Universal Studios executive and an extensive background in criminal forensics and crime scene investigations.

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