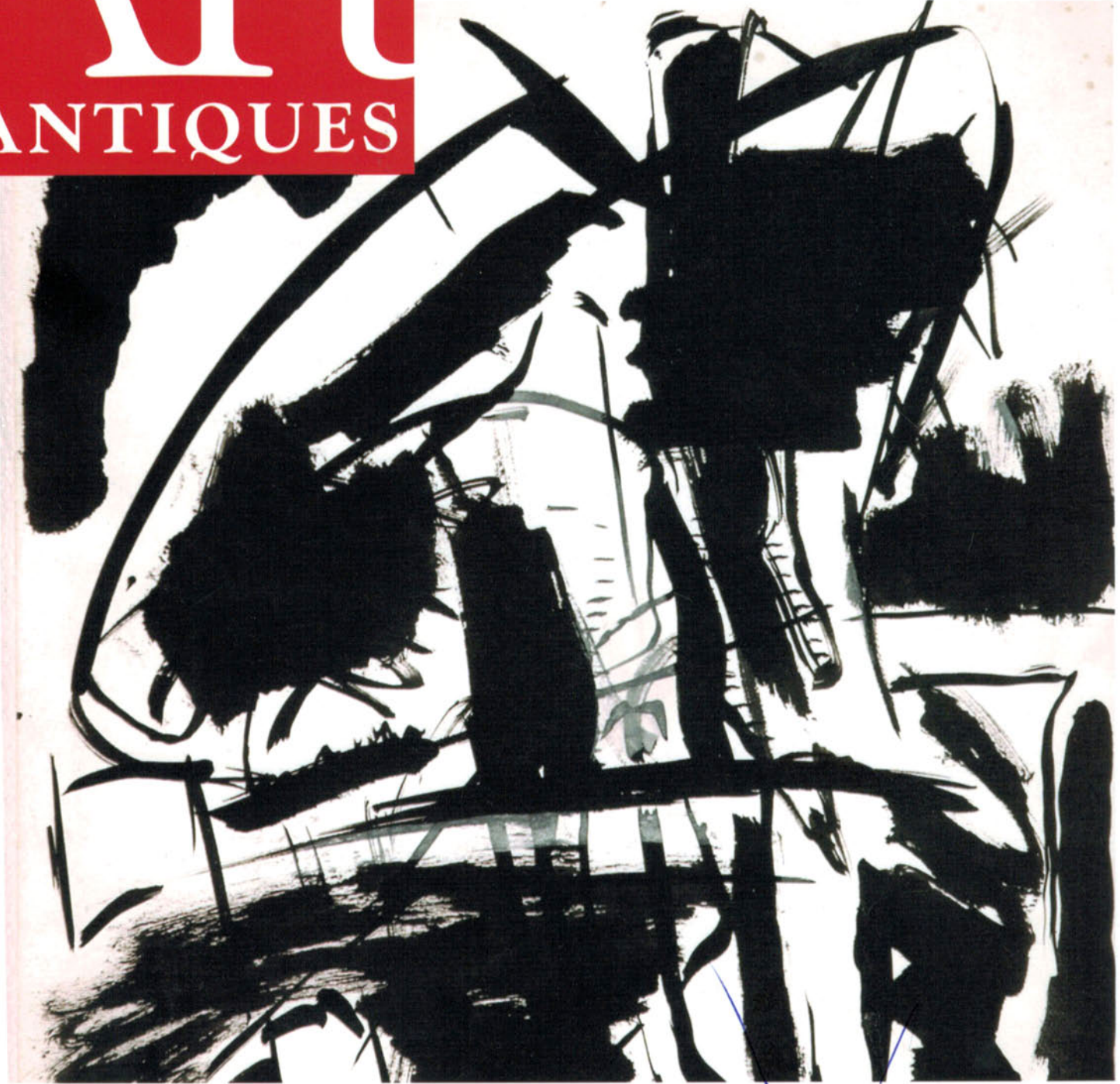


OCTOBER

# Art & ANTIQUES

FOR COLLECTORS OF THE FINE AND DECORATIVE ARTS



AMERICAN FURNITURE | FRANCISCO GOYA | SURREALIST PHOTOGRAPHY | RENÉ LALIQUE

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MICHAEL GOLDBERG



## Sanguine Seating

"I drink a whiskey every night. One night I had two whiskeys and I started thinking about the passion of Jesus Christ," says the architect and interior designer William T. Georgis. "I was raised Greek Orthodox, and I'm interested in the veneration of Christ, icons, and the venerated bits of the cross." One part whiskey and another part blood of Christ culminated in a beautiful, albeit strange, cocktail. The New York-based designer created *Santa Sangre*, a console with legs that appear to be fashioned from dripping blood. Its look is more Lynda Benglis meets home furnishings than the hallway in *The Shining*.

The "blood" is epoxy. To get the right color, Georgis says, "I took a safety pin and stabbed my finger and drew blood and then matched the color of my blood—it seemed reasonable." The wood portion is a piece of reclaimed cedar. Georgis chose cedar because it is one of the three woods that the cross was purportedly made of, and the entire piece signifies "the cross levitating with the blood of Christ."

*Santa Sangre* made its debut in the sitting room Georgis designed for the 2014 Kips Bay Decorator Show House. He was inspired by the late Francis Cardinal Spellman, who served as Archbishop of New York from 1939 until his death in 1967. The room, dubbed "Study in Red," was

designed as a retreat where Spellman could have entertained guests. The highly conservative yet power-hungry cardinal was a stalwart supporter of Joseph McCarthy and backed Richard Nixon during his presidential run against John F. Kennedy, despite the fact that Kennedy was a member of the Catholic Church. Controversially, Spellman is said to have been, as Georgis puts it, "popular among chorus boys." Mirroring the juxtapositions in Spellman's character, the room was a combination of antiques, such as an 18th-century George II lacquered bureau; Georgis' original designs; and more contemporary works, like a bronze sculpture by Joel Shapiro and a red resin drip painting by Piotr Uklanski that shares the sanguine look of *Santa Sangre*.

The console has been made in an edition of 10 in conjunction with Georgis' new collaboration with New York gallery Maison Gerard. The designer's collection for the gallery, which will be added to over time, also includes a sumptuous sofa and chair inspired by the bones of a whale (also part of the Kips Bay display). "I make a lot of custom furniture that's never been available to a larger market," says Georgis. "This collection is a way of making my work available to more people."

