



BERTOIA

New York 10 November 2010

Sotheby's

5 HARRY BERTOIA

Tree

EXECUTED CIRCA 1957-1959

BRASS AND COPPER

72¼ X 30 X 24 IN. (183.5 X 76.2 X 61 CM)

LITERATURE Nancy Schiffer and Val O. Bertoia, *The World of Bertoia*, Atglen, PA 2003, p. 91 (for period photographs of the Staempfli Gallery example)

PROVENANCE Wright Chicago, December 6, 2005, lot 272

This lot is being sold with a certificate of authenticity from the Harry Bertoia Research Project.

\$60,000-80,000

This grand tree-shaped sculpture is one of only three known pieces in this style, all of which were created in the years 1957-1959. One was exhibited at Galeria Don Hatch, Caracas, Venezuela in 1958. The second belonged to George Staempfli, Bertoia's New York dealer, which he displayed in his home in Spain before selling it to the famed soprano Anna Moffo Sarnoff, whose estate auctioned it at Sotheby's in October 2006. This third example is a stunning gilded explosion, emanating from a center of voluptuously dark structures. It is as if Bertoia were looking at the center of his creative forces.

For the first time in his work, straight golden rays shoot from the core; radiate brilliantly through space, almost free, almost flying through space. It is the embryo of all the dandelions. After a decade-long series of screens and trees, static by nature, it is a turning point. Of course, there is still a base, but in this piece, the stem and the base are not as critical. Crafted with meticulous, jewelry-like precision, they are there only to elegantly put the flower form at eye level, so we can experience with him the "ah ha" moment.

A brilliant development in the life of this creative genius.

— Mary Thorp
Harry Bertoia Research Project

