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NEAL AUCTION COMPANY'S *Absolute Auction of* HISTORIC MARY PLANTATION & CONTENTS

New Orleans, Louisiana

Neal Auction to sell Mary Plantation and contents at absolute auction on March 10, 2012.

On March 10, 2012 Neal Auction Company will present a nationally recognized, architecturally important Creole plantation home and its contents at absolute auction.

Mary Plantation, built circa 1795, is situated before a grove of ancient oaks on 7 ½ acres of high ground on the East Bank of the Mississippi River in Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana, just 22 miles downriver of New Orleans in the heart of some of the nation's most fertile fishing and hunting grounds. The architecturally and historically important home was listed on the National Register of Historic Places (National Register Information System (NRIS) Item No. 83000533) in 1983 and was recorded for the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS No. LA-1250-A) in 1995. Mary has been written about and photographed for numerous architectural books and shelter magazines, including, most recently, the May-June 2007 issue of *Old-House Interiors*.

Neal Auction Company, an internationally recognized fine art and antiques auctioneer and appraiser in New Orleans, Louisiana, has meticulously catalogued the house, grounds and contents for their sale at absolute auction. An absolute auction is an auction in which there is no minimum and no reserve. Confident in the draw of the "buy-it-now or forever-lose-the-opportunity" of the absolute, fixed-date auction process, Mary Plantation's current owners and long-time clients of Neal Auction Company, antiquarian Blaine McBurney and his wife Stephanie, have entrusted Neal Auction Company with the sale of their historic home and all of its contents. The real estate and contents will be offered in two separate auctions and will sell regardless of price.

Mary Plantation House is architecturally significant on the state level as one of Louisiana's finest examples of French colonial style architecture. It is a classic example of a nationally recognized style found in limited numbers in the state. Though many houses were built similar to it in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, few of these have survived. Although Louisiana has not been completely surveyed, it is apparent from the survey material presently compiled

that in all likelihood fewer than thirty first-rate examples of large French colonial style plantation houses remain in the state.

- National Register of Historic Places Inventory – Nomination Form, 8. Significance.

The Spring 2007 *Old-House Interiors* article, “Mary Plantation” by Gladys Montgomery, is aptly subtitled “A private Creole house gets a museum-caliber restoration to set the stage for historical colors and fine neoclassical antiques.” The McBurneys “chose period treatments as the backdrop for a mix of early-19th-century American classical furniture and Federal and French pieces... although woodwork had been stripped of its original paint, vestiges enabled the replication of early colors.” The McBurneys carefully restored the Plantation and Guest House using vibrant Creole colors and traditional horse-hair plaster. “In keeping with the French Creole custom, the McBurneys chose a vivid yellow for the exterior, reproduced pale blue and pinkish hues in bedrooms, painted the bathrooms’ cypress ceilings French green-blue, and used a grey-green copied from the Pitot House museum in New Orleans.”

Neal Auction Company has traced the plantation’s history of ownership—or in the art and antiques vernacular “provenance”— from a land grant in the 1720s to today. Their “catalogue” or Property Information Packet (PIP) includes, in addition to some 150 pages of documents, disclosures, and other items of relevance, a 26 page “Historic & Architectural Narrative” by Ann Masson, a local, award-winning architectural historian and decorative arts consultant at Neal Auction Company. The PIP will be available to registered bidders only. A \$50,000 bid deposit in certified funds is a requirement to bid on the real estate; a driver’s license or state issued ID and major credit card is a requirement to bid on the contents.

For information about Mary, visit Neal Auction Company’s website at www.nealauction.com. There will be images and a contents listing posted on the site two weeks prior to auction day. The home and grounds will be open for preview from March 6th to 9th, 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM.