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HANDLE

WITH CARE

MBE franchise partner Chris Mina and his team at MBE London - Ruislip have been providing shipping, print and mailbox services to local businesses and residents for 21 years. They specialise in professional packing and logistics, supported by MBE's global network of trusted couriers.

Chris and his team are proud to offer the MBE Auction Logistics white-glove service and have gained a well-deserved reputation for providing bespoke

collection, expert packing and worldwide delivery for both local and London-based auction houses and galleries, as well as private buyers and collectors worldwide. Their care and attention to detail ensures that everything from paintings and antiques to books, jewellery and designer items reaches its destination safely and on time.

Chris explains the process he follows when working with his auction house customers: "Every lot is assessed individually. We work to BS 1133-8 standards, using double or triple boxing, acid-free materials and custom-built crates when required. The aim is always maximum protection with minimum handling."



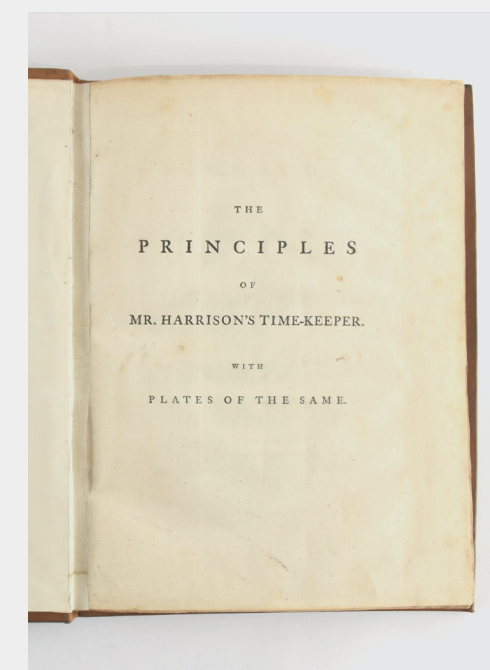
A recent shipment for Adam Partridge Auctioneers involved two antique books dating to 1767 that were sold for £23,000 and £13,000 respectively.

"It was a privilege to handle these works linked to John Harrison's pioneering timepieces, which marked a turning point in maritime navigation," says Chris.

"The lots were The Principles of Mr Harrison's Time-Keeper and Rev. Nevil Maskelyne's An Account of the Going of Mr Harrison's Watch. These books were foundational for later high-precision watches."

Clockmaker John Harrison (1693-1776), through painstaking work on consecutive designs, invented the marine chronometer, a long-sought-after device for solving the problem of how to calculate longitude while at sea. In so doing, he revolutionised navigation and greatly increased the safety of long-distance sea travel, making important advances in time-keeping technology in the process.

With their detailed illustration plates, rare books like this are highly prized by



collectors, and the key challenges when securing them for safe transit are their age and fragility. "To keep handling to a minimum, we collected the books directly from the auction house so they could be transported and packed under controlled conditions," explains Chris.

"Bindings and paper can be very delicate. We use gloves, acid-free tissue and double-boxing with shock-absorbent layers to protect against both impact and environmental changes."

While waiting for their precious lots to arrive, buyers can breathe a little easier knowing they're protected against loss or damage of the items in transit. "Our MBE CoverProtect compensation scheme covers the declared value of the items, along with all the packing and shipping costs, in the event of loss or damage in transit. This gives clients confidence that their pieces are financially as well as physically protected."

Choosing an expert shipper also helps ensure smooth transit through the freight ecosystem. "When lots like this are shipped overseas, there are often restrictions that need to be taken into account," says Chris. "For example, certain



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antiques over 250 years old require additional licences, especially under EU rules. Regulations change frequently, too, so we carry out due diligence and monitor shipments closely to keep them compliant and on track."

Chris and his team are used to handling precious consignments for their customers. One of the most valuable items ever shipped by MBE London - Ruislip was a Patek Philippe watch that sold for around £30,000. "It came complete with paperwork and in the original box," says Chris. "Like most antiques we handle, its value lay in both the rarity and condition of the item."

Chris's advice to anyone securing their dream lot at auction, whether it is delicate, highly valuable or simply irreplaceable, is that it's important not to cut corners when it comes to shipping. "Plan ahead, get the paperwork right and use professional packing," he says. "Choose a shipper who understands both the logistics and the regulations and aim to keep transit times as short as possible. And remember, MBE London - Ruislip's expertise is only an email or phone call away."

www.mbe.co.uk/auction



Images courtesy of Adam Partridge Auctioneers & Valuers.

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