LOT 24
EDWARD WESTON
1886-1958
PEPPER (NO. 30)
mounted, signed, dated, and editioned '25-50' in pencil on the mount, with partial signature by Weston in pencil and annotation by Tullah Hanley in ink on the reverse, framed, 1930
9 1/2 by 7 1/2 in. (24.1 by 19.1 cm.)

ESTIMATE 150,000-250,000 USD
Lot Sold: 341,000 USD

PROVENANCE
The photographer to T. Edward Hanley
By descent to his wife, Tullah Hanley, 1969
Gift of Tullah to Allegheny College, 1974
Christie’s New York, 27 April 2004, Sale 1367, Lot 91
Howard Greenberg Gallery, New York, 2006

LITERATURE
Conger 606
Merle Armitage, Art of Edward Weston (New York, 1932), p. 5
Nancy Newhall, ed., The Daybooks of Edward Weston, Volume II, California (Millerton, 1973), cover and pl. 5
Beaumont Newhall, Supreme Instants: The Photography of Edward Weston (Boston, 1986), cat. 150
Theodore E. Stebbins, Jr., Karen Quinn, and Leslie Furth, Edward Weston: Photography and Modernism (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1999), frontispiece and pl. 38
Sarah M. Lowe, Dody Weston Thompson, et al., Edward Weston: Life Work; Photographs from the Collection of Judith G. Hochberg and Michael P. Mattis (Revere, 2003), pl. 43

CATALOGUE NOTE
The photograph offered here, Weston’s iconic Pepper No. 30, is from a series of thirty pepper studies made by the photographer over an intensive four days in the summer of 1930. Pepper No. 30 was immediately one of Weston’s favorite and most sought-after pepper studies. For Weston, this photograph represented a definitive step forward in the evolution of his work.
Weston describes this series in the 8 August 1930 entry in his Daybooks: ‘It is a classic, completely satisfying, – a pepper – but more than a pepper: abstract, in that it is completely outside subject matter. It has no psychological attributes, no human emotions are aroused: this new pepper takes one beyond the world we know in the conscious mind. . . . My recent work more than ever indicates my future’ (California, p. 181).
Unlike the pepper studies of 1929, Pepper No. 30 and others made during the summer of 1930 fill the 8x10-inch negative nearly to the point of abstraction. Weston captures the details of the undulating bell pepper, with its curves, smooth skin, and hint of decay, with brilliant clarity. Whereas previous peppers had been placed on a plinth, against burlap, or in bowls, Weston placed these new peppers in a tin funnel, which provided not only a curving, undefinable background, but also refracted lighting.
This photograph comes originally from the collection of art patron, book collector, and energy tycoon Thomas Edward Hanley (1893-1969), who first met Weston in Carmel in 1939. The pair corresponded over the next 15 years, during which Hanley acquired prints for his collection. After Hanley’s death, his widow, Tullah, donated this and a selection of other Weston prints in 1974 to Allegheny College, who in turn offered a group of these photographs at auction in 2004.