



Press Release

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Press Contact: Sam Heller
Office: 310-440-2982
Email: Sam@Natedsanderson.com

NATE D. SANDERS TO AUCTION ORSON WELLES' OSCAR FOR *CITIZEN KANE*

ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT PIECES OF CINEMA MEMORABILIA TO BE AUCTIONED ON DECEMBER 20, 2011

December 12, 2011 – LOS ANGELES, Calif. – Nate D. Sanders on December 20th will auction one of the most prized artifacts of American cinema, Orson Welles' 1941 Best Screenplay Academy Award for his masterpiece *Citizen Kane*.

“Orson Welles’ Oscar was awarded for the best screenplay, and incredibly, it’s the only Oscar that *Citizen Kane* received. Now with hindsight, it’s considered the best and most influential movie of all-time,” said Nate Sanders, owner of Nate D. Sanders Auctions. “*Citizen Kane* not only contains outstanding dialogue, but introduced techniques that were revolutionary and unheard of, such as the use of deep focus in shots, flashbacks and Bernard Herrmann’s brooding musical score.”

A prodigious talent, Welles built his reputation in the 1930’s as a theater director of classic Shakespearean plays such as *Othello*. In 1938, Welles’ Halloween radio drama *The War of the Worlds* spooked America, fooling many radio listeners into believing that the country was under attack by aliens from Mars.

In 1941, the 25-year old Welles directed his first feature film, *Citizen Kane*, for RKO Pictures. It presented, in part, a fictionalized account of the life of media tycoon William Randolph Hearst. Incensed by its account of his love affair with comedienne Marion Davies, Hearst marshaled a smear



campaign against *Citizen Kane* by means of his chain of newspapers. *Citizen Kane* was nominated for just three Oscars at the 1942 Academy Awards and was not nominated for best picture, which went to *How Green Was My Valley*. The lone Oscar awarded to *Citizen Kane* was for Best Screenplay, jointly to co-authors Herman Mankiewicz and Welles.

Despite directing and appearing in critically acclaimed films such as *The Magnificent Ambersons* and *The Third Man*, Welles never won another Oscar. He was perceived as an art-house director who had a reputation for going over budget, which discouraged the Hollywood studios from financing his films. In 1971, Welles was presented with the Academy Honorary Award for his contribution to motion pictures. Welles believed that he had lost his *Citizen Kane* statuette, however it resurfaced after his death in 1994 and was bequeathed to his daughter, Beatrice Welles, upon his death. The Academy testified in 2002 during *Beatrice Welles v. Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences* that Welles' Oscar was valued at \$1 million. In this case, the court affirmed the right of Beatrice Welles to sell her father's Oscar.

Recognized by many auteurs as the greatest film of all-time, *Citizen Kane* was selected as the top film by a 2002 *Sight and Sound Magazine* poll of directors and film critics conducted by the British Film Institute. The prestigious poll is organized every decade by the British Film Institute. In 2007, the American Film Institute announced that *Citizen Kane* was the top film of the past 100 years.

The auction ends Tuesday, December 20, 2011 at 5 pm Pacific Standard Time. Bids can be placed online at www.NateDSanders.com or by phone at 310-440-2982.

Additional information on the Oscar can be found at <http://natedsanders.com/ItemInfo.asp?ItemID=36255>

About Nate D. Sanders Auctions

An industry leader in documents and autographs, Nate D. Sanders has conducted auctions in Los Angeles since 1990 and now conducts major auctions on a monthly basis. He is recognized for his knowledge of sports and Hollywood memorabilia.