

## Caravaggio's *Card Sharps* on Trial: Thwaytes vs. Sotheby's

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6:00 pm, Wednesday, November 11, 2015

Memorial Hall 127  
University of Delaware



Copies after Caravaggio's *Card Sharps*.

In 2006 the late Caravaggio scholar Sir Denis Mahon bought a version of Caravaggio's *Card Sharps* at Sotheby's, where it was auctioned as a copy of the Kimbell's famous original. When Mahon subsequently declared that it was Caravaggio's first, autograph version, the consignor of the painting sued Sotheby's for negligence. A three-week trial at the High Court of Justice in London ensued, at which Richard Spear served as an Expert Witness. In this lecture Richard E. Spear explains the unusual case, which set an important legal precedent for the validity of connoisseurship.