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local living

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For sale: Curtains that draw people

BY JURA KONCIUS

It's curtains for the Kluge window treatments.

The last lavish remnants of Albemarle House, the former Charlottesville area home of socialite Patricia Kluge, go on the auction block Saturday at the Potomack Co. in Alexandria.

Kluge, ex-wife of the late billionaire John Kluge, lost the 45-room English country manor house in a foreclosure. Donald Trump bought the vineyards around the house and reportedly is considering buying Albemarle.

A Sotheby's auction last June of Kluge's Albemarle antiques and jewelry netted \$15 million.

Whoever ends up in the 24,000-square-foot mansion will find the windows bare. The auction includes dozens of pairs of frothy window confections created by designer David Easton in the 1980s. Styles are in the over-the-top, "Bonfire of the

Vanities" manner: swags, braided fringe, tassels, gilded cornices and yards and yards of silks, brocades and chintzes.

"We think it's a timeless look," says Elizabeth Wainstein, Potomack's owner. She added that some of the fabrics and trims used for the high-end designs sell for hundreds of dollars per yard.

Most of the curtains are being sold in pairs, with starting estimates of less than \$1,000. The 103 Kluge lots also include sporting guns, garden ornaments and African art.

One of the lowest-priced offerings: a lily of the valley print shower curtain with an estimated value of \$80 to \$120.

Items can be previewed Thursday and Friday at the Potomack Co., 526 N. Fayette St., Alexandria. The auction is 10 a.m. Saturday. For information, go to www.potomackcompany.com or call 703-684-4550.

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ANNE BRYANT

The 140-inch-long green silk taffeta curtains, complete with crowns, swags, valances and jabots, made quite a statement at Albemarle House, the former mansion of socialite Patricia Kluge near Charlottesville. This Saturday, they will be auctioned off at Alexandria's Potomack Co. auction house.