

EMPIRE NUMISMATICS



US \$20 ST. GAUDENS DOUBLE EAGLE 1907-1933

- **Diameter:** 34 mm
- **Composition:** 90% gold, 10% copper (22-karat gold alloy)
- **Weight:** Approximately 33.44 grams (0.9675 troy ounces)
- **Designer (Obverse and Reverse):** Augustus Saint-Gaudens
- **Engraver (Die Preparation):** Charles E. Barber

The St. Gaudens Double Eagle not only encapsulates the artistry of Augustus Saint-Gaudens but also captures the essence of an era marked by a striving for excellence and a desire to convey profound ideals through tangible forms. Beyond its monetary value, the coin stands as a testament to the confluence of artistic ingenuity and historical context, a piece of American heritage that continues to captivate collectors, investors, and enthusiasts worldwide.

The St. Gaudens Double Eagle, an exemplar of numismatic excellence, emerged as a remarkable fusion of artistic brilliance and historical significance. Its genesis in the early 20th century marked a period of innovation and cultural revival, reflecting the United States' aspiration for grandeur on the international stage.

In 1907, President Theodore Roosevelt sought to elevate the aesthetics of American coinage and commissioned celebrated sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens to redesign the \$20 gold coin, commonly referred to as the Double Eagle. The result was a masterpiece that transcended its monetary function, embodying the ideals of liberty, progress, and cultural renaissance.

The St. Gaudens Double Eagle bore the iconic Liberty design on the obverse, depicting a resplendent Lady Liberty holding an olive branch and a torch, with the U.S. Capitol in the backdrop. This representation symbolized enlightenment and democracy, capturing the nation's spirit and its commitment to ideals both at home and abroad. The reverse featured a powerful and majestic eagle in flight, carrying the motto "E PLURIBUS UNUM."

The coin's high-relief design, masterfully sculpted by Saint-Gaudens, presented an artistic breakthrough that redefined American coinage aesthetics. However, due to technical difficulties in minting, a modified version with lower relief was eventually issued for circulation starting in 1907.

The St. Gaudens Double Eagle's historical significance is underscored by its association with key moments in American history. Its introduction aligned with a period of national transformation, marked by the emergence of the United States as a global power and its cultural blossoming during the Progressive Era.

