

# CHRISTIE'S

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## *Alice & Nikolaus Harnoncourt:* *Artists Collecting Art* During CLASSIC WEEK



*Alice & Nikolaus Harnoncourt*, Photograph © Courtesy of family archive

**London** – A highlight within *Classic Week* in London, Christie's will present *Alice & Nikolaus Harnoncourt – Artists Collecting Art*, an online sale of 50 select works which opens for bidding on 30 June until 14 July, alongside a group of Old Master pictures and illuminated manuscripts that will be offered from their collection in the *Old Masters Part I Sale* on 6 July. A renowned classical violinist (Alice, 1930-2022) and a celebrated conductor and musicologist (Nikolaus, 1929-2016), the Harnoncourts were a remarkable artistic duo whose lives were dedicated to music and art. Intellectually curious, collecting was a shared passion that lasted the entirety of their sixty-three year marriage. Providing a window into the very private world of these celebrated public figures within Classical Music, the works being offered span fine and decorative European art from over five centuries, comprising Old Master paintings, early European furniture and sculpture, and ceramics. Notable provenances include the Rothschild family, Alfred Cortot, Yves Saint Laurent and J.P. Morgan.

**Elisabeth von Magnus, daughter of Alice & Nikolaus Harnoncourt:** *"My parents bought works that inspired them and that they wanted to live with. They were never just collectors. They only bought art that they found important and fascinating, as well as with the music they engaged with – it was worth studying and discovering again and again."*

**Benedict Winter, Head of Sale** commented: *"Alice and Nikolaus Harnoncourt left an indelible mark on the world of classical music. Their unwavering commitment to music and art underpinned their collecting and desire for artistic perfection. The works being offered for sale provide the public with a rare glimpse into their private world."*

## ALICE AND NIKOLAUS

Nikolaus Harnoncourt (1929-2016), an Austrian conductor and musicologist was born in Berlin, Germany. Influenced by his upbringing in a musical family, his passion for music grew from an early age. In 1953, following his marriage to Alice Hoffelner, a renowned Austrian violinist, they co-founded the *Concentus Musicus Wien*, an ensemble dedicated to the performance of Baroque and Classical music using period instruments. The numerous recordings made by both Nikolaus and Alice have become benchmarks in the field of historically informed performance.

It was at home, near Salzburg, that the Harnoncourts pursued their other lifelong shared passion – collecting art. Their home was adorned with a diverse collection of artworks, carefully curated to reflect their artistic sensibilities.

## OLD MASTERS PART I SALE, 6 JULY



The six captivating works offered in the *Old Masters Part I Sale* include, from left to right: *Cupid holding the reins of Mars' charger*, a fragment oil on canvas by Paolo Caliari, Called Paolo **Veronese**, the full picture of which was **painted for the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II** (1552-1612) (estimate: £200,000-300,000 / €230,000-340,000); *Ecce Homo* – a sketch, oil on panel, by Sir Peter Paul **Rubens** (estimate: £600,000-800,000 / €690,000-920,000); a lavishly illuminated, iconographically unusual Book of Hours by the Master of Martainville 183 [Paris, *circa* 1490s], once **in the collections of Napoleon's chamberlain Count Joseph-François de Kergariou, and later the great French bibliophile André Hachette** (estimate: £300,000-500,000 / €350,000-570,000); and *The Rape of Europa* - a sketch, oil on panel by Jacob **Jordaens** (estimate: £300,000-500,000 / €350,000-570,000).

## THE COLLECTION SALE:

**Alice & Nikolaus Harnoncourt – Artists Collecting Art**

30 June – 14 July:

Highlights from across the Collection sale, by category include the following:

## SCULPTURE AND WORKS OF ART



The breadth of sculpture and works of art offered include, from left to right: *Christ Crucified*, a polychrome wood figure probably Italian, late 14<sup>th</sup> or early 15<sup>th</sup> century (estimate: £50,000-80,000 / €58,000-92,000); *The Months of the Year*, a partial set of ten oval enamel plaques, attributed to Pierre Reymond (1513–1584), *circa* 1560-80;



each with a scene representing a month of the year with a zodiac symbol in clouds and inscribed with the name of the month to the lower edge, eight of the plaques were previously in The J.P. Morgan Collection (estimate: £30,000-50,000 / €35,000-57,000); *Saint George and Saint Florian* German or Austrian, late 17<sup>th</sup> or early 18<sup>th</sup> century, wood figures (estimate: £25,000-35,000 / €29,000-40,000).

## BOOKS AND MANUSCRIPTS



Books and Manuscripts highlights offered within Alice & Nikolaus Harnoncourt – Artists Collecting Art include, from left to right: a **First edition of the Ninth Symphony, Beethoven's last and greatest symphony**, *Sinfonie mit Schluss-Chor über Schillers Ode 'An die Freude', für grosses Orchester, 4 Solo- und 4 Chor- Stimmen*. Mainz and Paris: Schott, [1826] (estimate: £10,000-20,000 / €12,000-23,000); **first incunable edition of the important and famous musical treatise by Hugo Spechtshart** (circa 1285-1360) *Flores musicae*. Strasbourg: Johann Prüss, 1488 – **one of the very first to include woodcut-printed scores** (estimate: £15,000-20,000 / €18,000-23,000); and *De Europaeis Insectis, Naauwkeurig onderzocht, na 't leven geschildert, en in print gebragt door*. Amsterdam: J.F. Bernard, 1730, **the work on the insects of Europe by the naturalist-artist Maria Sibylla Merian whose 'careful and deliberate portrayal of insect and host plant together had no precedent in scientific illustration'** (Blunt and Stearn) (estimate: £30,000-50,000 / €35,000-57,000).

## EUROPEAN DECORATIVE ARTS



**Porcelain and silver** from the collection includes, from left to right: an Urbino Maiolica documentary, signed and dated *Istoriato* charger (*Piatto da Pompa*) painted by Orazio Fontana in the workshop of Guido Durantino 1543, **formerly in The Collection of Barons Nathaniel and Albert von Rothschild** (estimate: £40,000-60,000 / €46,000-69,000); a *German parcel-gilt silver tankard*, Hans Jacob I Baur, Augsburg, 1666-1669 (estimate: £3,000-5,000); a 17<sup>th</sup> century, probably German rock crystal cup, with gilt-metal mounts (estimate: £7,000-10,000 / €8,100-11,000). **Furniture and objects** include, left to right: a 16<sup>th</sup> century French oak double-eagle lectern, the associated base 15<sup>th</sup> century and later (estimate: £25,000-35,000 / €29,000-40,000); and a

Flemish pastoral tapestry, Brussels, late 17<sup>th</sup>/early 18<sup>th</sup> century, depicting a *fête* with figures dancing (estimate: £7,000-10,000 / €8,100-11,000).

For images please see the [DropBox](#)

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*\* Please note when quoting estimates above that other fees will apply in addition to the hammer price - see Section D of the Conditions of Sale at the back of the sale catalogue.*

*\*Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium.*

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