

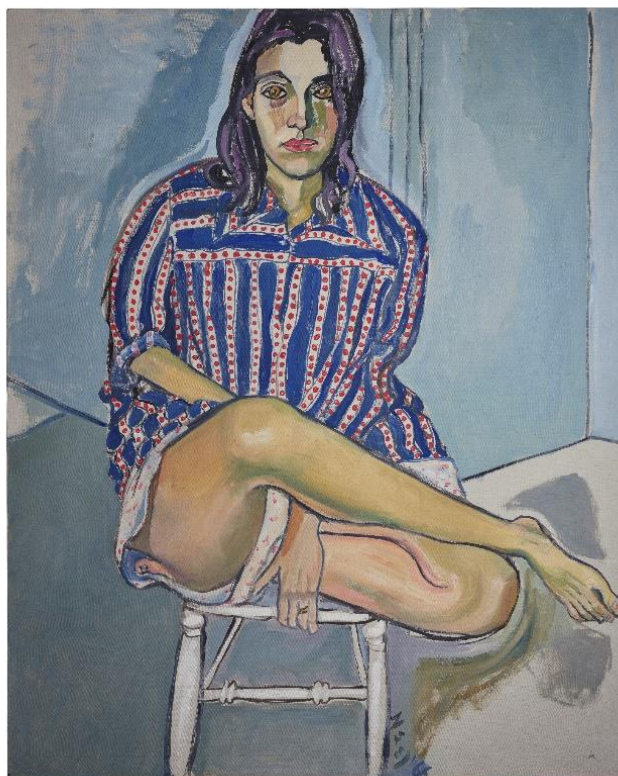
# PRIVATE SALES CHRISTIE'S

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## SELFHOOD

EXPLORATIONS OF BEING AND BECOMING IN 20TH AND 21ST CENTURY ART

A SELLING EXHIBITION FROM JUNE 20 TO CELEBRATE THE REOPENING OF  
THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY



**ALICE NEEL (1900-1984)**

*Nancy*

oil on canvas

50 x 40in. (127 x 101.6cm.)

Painted in 1966

With thanks to our lenders, a distinguished private British collection

**London** - To celebrate the reopening of the National Portrait Gallery, Christie's will hold [Selfhood: Explorations of Being and Becoming in 20th and 21st Century Art](#), a selling exhibition focusing on art as a vehicle for the expression of self-identity as part of the gallery's [Portrait Mode](#) campaign. Curated by the Private Sales team and opening at Christie's King Street, London on 20<sup>th</sup> June, and on view until 13<sup>th</sup> July, the cross-platform exhibition will also be available online until 31<sup>st</sup> August and includes works by Tracey Emin, Lucian Freud, Alice Neel, Suzanne Valadon and many more.

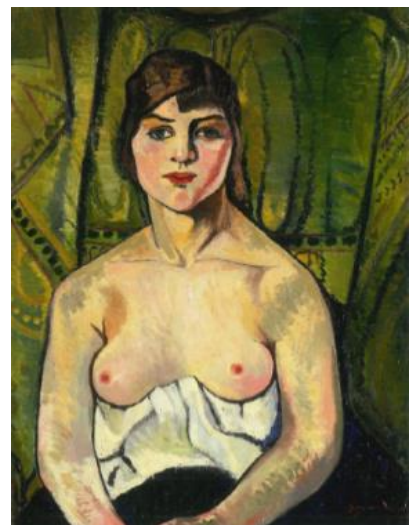
The exhibition will aim to engage with artists that investigate, reclaim and celebrate the many iterations of self as a unique bodily, societal and psychological experience.

One of the highlights of the exhibition is Alice Neel's portrait *Nancy*, depicting her daughter-in-law, and is on loan in the exhibition. Likely painted while Nancy was already pregnant, Nancy would soon become the subject of Neel's famed series of pregnant sitters and new mothers. *"She could keep up a really interesting conversation, she was concentrating on painting and trying to keep the subject loose and not frozen. The conversation was very animated, but she never stopped painting."* - Nancy Greene

Neel described herself as "a collector of souls," referring to her deep and emotional introspection of those who posed for her. She had a particular interest in working with those who were not typically painted such as pregnant women, people of colour, labour leaders, children and members of the LGBTQ+ community. What is so distinctive about *Nancy* and Neel's practice as a whole is that her portraits are timeless and focus on the individuality of each subject.

Neel has recently been the subject of a major travelling retrospective exhibition in Paris (The Centre Pompidou) and London (Barbican Art Gallery) in 2022-2023. Her works continue to make top prices at auction, with Christie's having set the top four records for the artist, most recently in May 2023 with [\*The De Vegh Twins\*](#) achieving the second highest price at auction for work by Neel, selling for over \$2.5M.

Painted in 1917 Suzanne Valadon's *Femme aux seins nus (Autoportrait)* is an important loan in the exhibition. Living in Montmartre with her son throughout the 1880s and 1890s, she posed for some of Renoir's most significant masterpieces, also serving as model to Toulouse-Lautrec, and Pierre Puvis de Chavannes. Valadon was self-taught and this radical portrait was painted when she was 52, the first of a series of candid nude self-portraits painted at a time when it was considered scandalous for a woman to paint herself bare, and defying the traditional version of the idealised, sensual female body. Baring her breasts both as a symbol of courage, beauty and vulnerability, Valadon would go on to challenge the status quo with alternative representations of the female body, foregrounding interrogatory self-portraits by post-war artists such as Alice Neel, Caroline Coon and Tracey Emin. Christie's has achieved the three highest records for Valadon's work at auction, and all top five auction records have been achieved in the global market since 2020, indicating renewed collecting interest in her work.



SUZANNE VALADON (1865-1938)  
*Femme aux seins nus (Autoportrait)*  
oil on canvas  
25 ¼ x 19 ¾in. (64 x 50cm.)  
Painted in 1917  
With thanks to our lenders, a notable private European collection



MARC CHAGALL (1887-1985)  
*Autoportrait pour Tine*  
 gouache, India ink, coloured ink, oil  
 pastel and graphite on paper  
 10 ¼ x 7 ⅞ in. (26 x 19.9 cm.)  
 Executed in 1965

In a self-portrait by Marc Chagall he faces forward, making direct eye-contact with the viewer, a painting on his easel in the background featuring a woman in a red dress that evokes his second wife Valentina Brodsky, to whom the dedication and title of the work most likely refer to as "Tine". The gouache was painted in 1965, a time of deep contentment and professional recognition, much of which was spent in the South of France with his loving partner.

Another central work in the exhibition is Lucian Freud's *Portrait of a Man*. This work depicts Bernard Walsh, the renowned restaurateur and owner of Wheelers, one of Lucian Freud's favourite Soho restaurants. A popular haunt for artist's at the time, Freud would frequent Wheelers and spend long meals with the likes of Francis Bacon and Frank Auerbach. Freud frequently painted those who were close to him, and with *Portrait of a Man*, the significance of Bernard Walsh in the artist's life is clear.



TRACEY EMIN (B. 1963)  
*You Carried my Soul*  
 acrylic on canvas  
 72 x 72in. (183 x 183cm.)  
 Painted in 2019

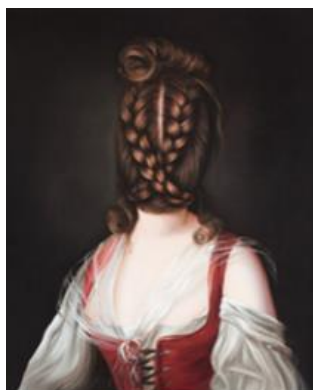
Contemporary highlights include Tracey Emin's 2019 *You Carried my Soul*, depicting Emin's most iconic, recognisable and revisited motif: the figure of a reclining nude (on loan). Throughout her painting practice, Emin explores the notions of love, longing, personal tragedy and a sense of physical vulnerability. Painting, a medium that the artist previously abandoned in 1990, has been consistently connected to the artist's own bodily experience throughout her life. Emin moved back to her hometown of Margate in 2017, where she has recently opened a studio with an artist's residency programme. Christie's set the record for a painting by Emin last year when [Like a Cloud of Blood](#) sold for £2.3M.

*Portrait of Carol Rama* (overleaf) is a striking example of Ewa Juszkiewicz's distinct surrealist portraits and an ode to Italian painter Carol Rama, her signature braided hairstyle prominently displayed.

Often basing her portraits on little-known works, or canvases that were lost or destroyed, Juszkiewicz deliberately obscures her sitters' identities, replacing their heads with fungi, hair, flowers, insects and drapery. In doing so, she seeks to provoke new associations, liberating her female protagonists from the male gaze and forcing them into bold confrontation with the viewer. They are no longer quiet, pristine specimens, but sensory, metamorphic hybrids, each alive with stories and secrets. By transforming her classical subjects into surreal apparitions, Juszkiewicz prompts the viewer to reflect upon the role of women in historical portraiture.



## Other Exhibition Highlights:



EWA JUSZKIEWICZ (B. 1984)  
*Portrait of Carol Roma*  
oil on canvas  
19¼ x 15½in. (50 x 40cm.)  
Painted in 2014



ZENG FANZHI (B. 1964)  
*Mask*  
oil on canvas  
28 ½ x 21 ¾in. (71.5 x 55.5cm.)  
Painted in 1999



LUCIAN FREUD (1922-2011)  
*Portrait of a Man*  
oil on canvas  
20 x 16in. (50.8 x 40.6cm.)  
Painted circa 1955

[Images available here](#)

### About the National Portrait Gallery

Christie's is taking part in Portrait Mode with the new National Portrait Gallery this June to mark the reopening of the Gallery on 22 June following a major transformation project. Activity across the UK and internationally will highlight the amazing range of portraits on show in collections, galleries and other spaces, showcase great artists past and present and inspire people to get creative and share their own portraits. Find out more at [npg.org.uk/portraitmode](https://npg.org.uk/portraitmode).

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### About Christie's

- Founded in 1766, Christie's is a world-leading art and luxury business. Renowned and trusted for its expert live and online auctions, as well as its bespoke private sales, Christie's offers a full portfolio of [global services](#) to its clients, including art appraisal, art financing, international real estate and education. Christie's has a physical presence in 46 countries, throughout the Americas, Europe, Middle East, and Asia Pacific, with flagship [international sales hubs](#) in New York, London, Hong Kong, Paris and Geneva. It also is the only international auction house authorized to hold sales in mainland China (Shanghai).
- Christie's [auctions](#) span more than [80 art and luxury categories](#), at price points ranging from \$200 to over \$100 million. Christie's has sold 8 of the 10 most important single-owner collections in history, including the [Paul G. Allen Collection](#)—the most valuable collection ever offered at auction (November 2022). In recent years, Christie's also achieved the world record price for an artwork at auction ([Leonardo da Vinci's \*Salvator Mundi\*](#), 2017), for a 20th century artwork ([Andy Warhol's \*Shot Sage Blue Marilyn\*](#), 2022) and for a work by a living artist ([Jeff Koons' \*Rabbit\*](#), 2019). Christie's [Private Sales](#) offers a seamless service for buying and selling art, jewellery and watches outside of the auction calendar, working exclusively with Christie's specialists at a client's individual pace.
- Following the groundbreaking 2021 sale of the first digital art NFT ever offered by a global auction house ([Beeple's \*Everydays\*](#)), Christie's recently launched the first [fully on-chain auction platform](#) dedicated to exceptional NFT art. As an industry leader in digital innovation, Christie's also continues to pioneer new technologies that are redefining the business of art, including the use of hologram technology to tour life-size 3D objects around the world, and the creation of viewing and bidding experiences that integrate augmented reality, global livestreaming, buy-now channels, and hybrid sales formats.
- Christie's is dedicated to advancing [responsible culture](#) throughout its business and communities worldwide, including achieving sustainability by reducing our carbon emissions by 50% and pledging to be net zero by 2030, and actively using its platform in the art world to amplify under-represented voices and support positive change.
- Browse, bid, [discover](#), and join us for the best of art and luxury at: [www.christies.com](https://www.christies.com) or by downloading Christie's apps.

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

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