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THE **ITALIAN** SALE 2015

A Rich Selection of Works of Art
Across All Italian Art Movements

IN LONDON ON 16 OCTOBER



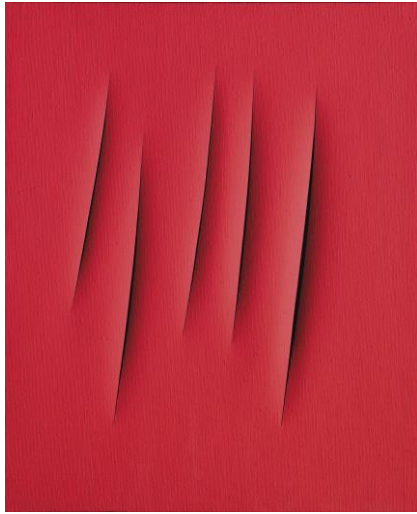
Alberto Burri

Rosso Plastica M1

Estimate: £2,000,000 – £3,000,000

London – Christie's season of Post-War & Contemporary Art auctions will be highlighted by the 15th edition of **The Italian Sale**, which will take place on 16 October in King Street following the Post-War & Contemporary Art Evening Auction. Subsequent to the record breaking successes of the Italian Sale last year, which realised £27.5 million, this year's edition will continue to represent a rich array of works across all artistic movements within Italian Art, with key works by Modern and Post-War artists such as Giorgio Morandi, Lucio Fontana, Alighiero Boetti as well as prominent Arte Povera artists such as Luciano Fabro, Michelangelo Pistoletto and Giulio Paolini. The sale is highlighted by Alberto Burri's *Rosso Plastica M1*, (£2,000,000 – £3,000,000, *illustrated above*), a masterpiece of Italian 20th century art, especially in anticipation of the artist's great retrospective at the Guggenheim Museum in New York which will be held from 9 October to 6 January 2016.

Created in 1961, this was one of the earliest of Burri's *Plastiche*, one of his most recognised series, which enjoyed a distinguished exhibition history, including a show at the Marlborough Galleries both in Rome in 1962-63 and then in New York in 1964, followed by a show in 1965 at the Museu de Arte Moderna in São Paulo and an exhibition at the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, in Lisbon, Portugal in 1966.



Following Burri's exploration, the sale will also feature an important selection of works by Lucio Fontana, including the present work: *Concetto spaziale, Attese* (estimate: £1,000,000 – 1,500,000, *illustrated left*). With five slashes rhythmically slicing through the brilliant scarlet canvas, *Concetto spaziale, Attese* is from one Lucio Fontana's largest and most important series, the *tagli* or cuts, which he first began in 1958. Executed in 1964, this work displays Fontana's most iconic gesture: the cut, which served as the embodiment of the artist's Spatial explorations. With this emphatic gesture, Fontana, one of the central pioneers of post-war avant-garde art, was reflecting the technical and scientific developments of the space age, exploring the infinite in a quest to understand the universe.

The Sale features a rich selection of Arte Povera works, with the present highlights illustrated from left to right: Luciano Fabro's *Italia dell'Emigrante*, a silhouette of Italy made out of long winding strips of copper and suspended on a ceiling overhanging the viewer (executed in 1981, estimate: £600,000 - £800,000). Coming to the market for the first time, this sculpture was acquired directly from the artist by the present owner in 1981; Giulio Paolini's *Casa di Lucrezio*, executed in 1981–1984 (estimate: £150,000 - 200,000). The *Casa di Lucrezio* works were all inspired by the drawing of a labyrinth found on a pillar in the 'Casa di Lucrezio' in Pompeii. The



significance and meaning of this classical labyrinth - evidently of some importance for the citizens of Pompeii in A.D. 79 - is unknown having been lost in the passage of time. As such it served as an ideal prompt for Paolini, whose art centres around the concept and articulation of human creativity as an eternal open-ended continuum - one that exists beyond the confines of time, place and medium; and Michelangelo Pistoletto's *Lei e Lui Abbracciati (Michelangelo e Maria)*, from the artist's renowned mirror paintings series (estimate: £800,000 - £1,200,000).



Reflecting the legacy of Arte Povera, Christie's Italian Sale is pleased to offer a selection of works by Mario Merz, Giovanni Anselmo and Giulio Paolini from the collection 'Double Vision' from an important Italian Private Collection. Showcasing the passion, curiosity and vision of a remarkable Italian collector, this selection captures the diverse currents of the exciting and multifaceted international art scene during the 1970s and 1980s. Presented as a stand-alone single owner auction within First Open/LDN in September, with additional lots spread across The Italian Sale and Post-War and Contemporary Art Evening, Day and Amsterdam auctions throughout October and November, *Double Vision* explores the consolidation of one of art history's most enduring themes: the mimetic relationship between art and life. The group of Arte Povera works which feature in the Italian Sale encapsulates this

concept of double vision: blurring the boundaries between art and life, as seen in the work of Mario Merz, with his *Piccolo Caimano* executed in 1979 (estimate: £500,000 – £800,000, *illustrated above left*) which broke down centuries-old pictorial convention, radically expanding and refiguring the possibilities of art. Following the record breaking result of a similar work by the artist sold last year at Christie's sale 'Eyes Wide Open: An Italian Vision' in February 2014, *Piccolo Caimano* is a rare work with great provenance, an opportunity for discerning collectors not to miss.

AUCTION

Friday 16 October 2015
to follow the Post-War & Contemporary Art Evening Auction
8 King Street, St. James's
London SW1Y 6QT

VIEWING

Christie's
8 King Street, St. James's, London SW1Y 6QT
Saturday 10 October 12 noon - 6.00 pm
Sunday 11 October 12 noon - 6.00 pm
Monday 12 October 8.30 am - 6.00 pm
Tuesday 13 October 9.00 am - 5.00 pm
Wednesday 14 October 9.00 am - 5.00 pm
Thursday 15 October 8.30 am - 7.00 pm
Friday 16 October 9.00 am - 4.00 pm

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Please click [here](#) for the complete eCatalogue

Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and do not reflect costs, financing fees or application of buyer's or seller's credits.

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