

# CHRISTIE'S

PRESS RELEASE | LONDON  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | 12 OCTOBER 2020

## POST-WAR AND CONTEMPORARY ART EVENING AUCTION

[NOW AVAILABLE TO BROWSE ONLINE](#)

CHRISTIE'S 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY: PARIS TO LONDON SERIES  
22 OCTOBER 2020

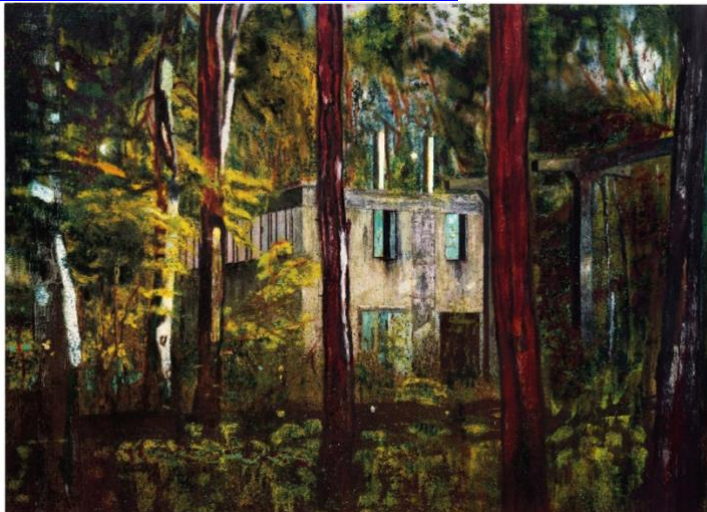
### AUCTION HIGHLIGHTS

[DAVID HOCKNEY, \*Portrait of Sir David Webster\*](#)



David Hockney's *Portrait of Sir David Webster* (illustrated left) is an exquisite tribute to Sir David Webster, the former General Administrator of the Royal Opera House and a defining influence. Painted in 1971, it depicts Webster in the artist's studio, seated upon a Mies van der Rohe 'MR' chair before a glass table. The painting is being offered by the Royal Opera House with an estimate of £11-18 million. Proceeds from the sale will contribute towards vital funding required by the world-renowned arts venue to alleviate the financial impact of coronavirus, the most serious crisis the organisation has had to face. This will allow the Royal Opera House not just to survive but to thrive in its future programming. Rendered on a grand scale, the work unites Hockney's flair for human observation with his lifelong passion for opera. From 1975 until 1992, David Hockney would design sets for venues including Glyndebourne, the Metropolitan Opera in New York and the Royal Opera House itself. Painted at the height of Hockney's naturalistic phase, profoundly demonstrated in his double portraits of this time, *Portrait of Sir David Webster* is a testament to Hockney's expert handling of light and colour.

[PETER DOIG, \*Boiler House\*](#)



Peter Doig's iconic *Boiler House* (1993, estimate in the region of £13 million, illustrated left) is a masterwork from his seminal series of *Concrete Cabins*. During the 1990s, the artist painted nine large-scale depictions of Le Corbusier's abandoned Unité d'Habitation at Briey-en-Forêt in Northern France, giving rise to his largest and most distinctive thematic cycle. *Boiler House* stands alone within the series, capturing the building that Le Corbusier designed to house the Unité's coal boiler. Included in Doig's landmark 2008 retrospective at Tate Britain, it is a triumph of painterly bravura and psychological tension. The building's angular geometries loom large within the thicket, yet Doig's kaleidoscopic surface causes it to shift in and out of focus, approximating the abstract sensation of looking back through time. Laced with art historical resonance – from Cézanne, Bonnard and Munch to Mondrian and Richter – it celebrates the theme of memory that lies at the heart of Doig's *oeuvre*.

## MARINA ABRAMOVIĆ, *THE LIFE*



Marina Abramović's *The Life* (2018-19, estimate: £400,000-800,000, *illustrated left*) is a revolutionary fusion of art and technology, premiered at London's Serpentine Gallery in February 2019 and will be the first work of its kind to be offered at auction. It allows viewers to have an intimate digital encounter with Marina Abramović herself via a wearable spatial computing device. A dimensional photographic capture of the artist – like a hologram – appears, performing a unique, meditative and altogether entrancing piece within a roped off five-metre circle before evaporating into thin air. Unlike Virtual Reality, Mixed Reality allows the other visitors and gallery space to remain visible at the same time, creating a unique interactive experience. Abramović's pioneering use of this evolving technology reflects her longstanding interest in the limitations of the human body and mind: an enquiry that, since the 1970s, has given rise to one of the world's greatest artistic careers.

## BRITISH ARTISTS



At the core of the auction, is a strong representation of British post-war artists, including two works by Francis Bacon, a remarkable 1964 painting by Auerbach, and a meticulous work on paper by Lucian Freud. *J.Y.M. in the Studio III* by Frank Auerbach (1964, estimate: £800,000-1,200,000) depicts a female figure, reclining in a chair with her legs outstretched and hands crossed in her lap. It is brought to life in a dramatic black-and-white chiaroscuro spiked with hints of ochre, teal and purple. *Untitled (Interior Drawing, The Owl)* (1945, estimate: £800,000-1,200,000) is a beautiful early drawing by Lucian Freud of a taxidermied barn owl in a glass case, resting on a wooden chair. *Santa Monica Boulevard* (1978, estimate: £1,700,000-2,500,000) by David Hockney is a vibrant cosmopolitan vision, saturated in bold, vivid hues. Francis Bacon's *Head of Man* (1959, estimate: £4,000,000-6,000,000, *left*) is a rare early example of the jewel-like portrait heads that would come to define Francis Bacon's practice. The group is completed by Bacon's *Study from the Human Body* (19991, estimate: £4,500,000-6,500,000. Painted four months before his death, it is the last of three large-scale portraits depicting the young artist Anthony Zych – the second of which is held in the Scottish National Museum of Modern Art, Edinburgh.

## CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS



Recently featured in the Whitechapel Gallery's acclaimed 2020 exhibition 'Radical Figures: Painting in the New Millennium', Daniel Richter's *Tarifa* (2001, estimate: £350,000-550,000, *left*) demonstrates his extraordinary contribution to figurative painting. The composition is based on a news stories about African migrants from 2000. *Fidelity* (2010, estimate: £100,000-150,000) is a powerful and timely painting by Titus Kaphar, based on a painting by Thomas Gainsborough, which once hung in Number 10 Downing Street. Steven Shearer's *Brother* (2005, estimate: £120,000-180,000) is the first of a fraternal trio, with *Brother II* and *Brother Sammoth* being completed the same year. Capturing the idealism, awkwardness and hero-worship of youth, Shearer's pictures glow with the magical atmosphere and vivid colours of Symbolist, Fauvist and Romantic painting.

## PRESS CONTACT

Sara Macdonald | +44 (0)20 7752 3136 | [saramacdonald@christies.com](mailto:saramacdonald@christies.com)

### About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had auction sales in 2019 that totalled £4.5 billion / \$5.8 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and international expertise. Christie's offers around 350 auctions annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from \$200 to over \$100 million. Christie's also has a long and successful history conducting private sales for its clients in all categories, with emphasis on Post-War & Contemporary, Impressionist & Modern, Old Masters and Jewellery. Alongside regular sales online, Christie's has a global presence in 46 countries, with 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, Hong Kong, and Shanghai.

*\*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 and are reported net of applicable fees.*

###

FOLLOW CHRISTIE'S ON:

