

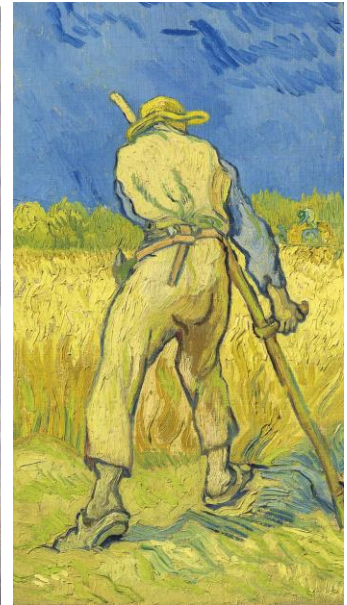
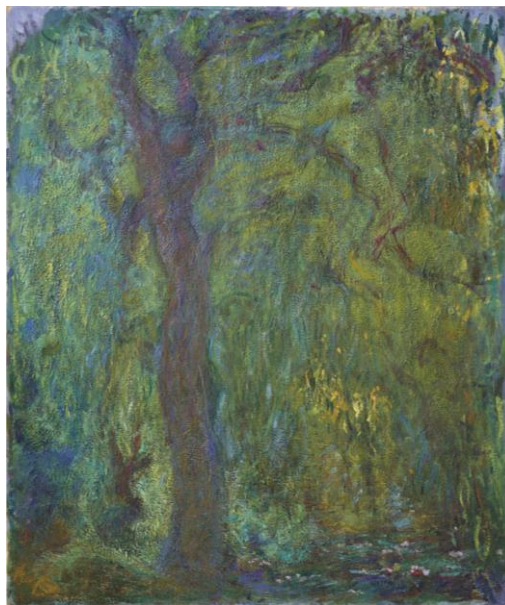
CHRISTIE'S

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MAX BECKMANN, CLAUDE MONET,
PABLO PICASSO, EGON SCHIELE
AND VINCENT VAN GOGH

CHRISTIE'S *IMPRESSIONIST AND MODERN ART EVENING* SALE

27 JUNE 2017



Pablo Picasso, *Femme écrivant (Marie-Thérèse)*, 1934, (estimate: £25,000,000-40,000,000)

Claude Monet, *Saule pleureur*, 1918-19, (estimate: £15,000,000-25,000,000) and

Vincent van Gogh, *Le moissonneur (d'après Millet)*, 1889, (estimate: £12,500,000-16,500,000)

London – The *Impressionist & Modern Art Evening Sale* on 27 June, part of 20th Century at Christie's, a series of sales that take place from 17 to 30 June 2017, will be led by a group of masterpiece paintings by Max Beckmann, Claude Monet, Pablo Picasso, Egon Schiele and Vincent van Gogh. Claude Monet's *Saule pleureur* (1918-19, estimate: £15,000,000-25,000,000) is arguably one of the best of a series of ten works depicting the weeping willows surrounding Monet's famous lily pond at Giverny, five of which reside in museum collections. Stripped of water and sky and painted with a heavily impastoed surface, the abstraction of Monet's late works was a powerful influence on a generation of American abstract expressionist artists. A visionary approach is also seen in the allegory of Max Beckmann's political masterpiece *Birds' Hell (Hölle der Vögel)* (1937-1938, estimate on request), a searing indictment of the Nazi Party and a personal outpouring of anguish akin to Picasso's *Guernica* (1937), while Egon Schiele's *Einzelne Häuser (Häuser mit Bergen)* (1915, estimate: £20,000,000-30,000,000) is a cityscape used to convey human emotion, expressing the duality of life and decay, nature and humanity. Vincent van Gogh's *Le moissonneur* (1889, estimate £12,500,000-16,500,000) is one of a series of ten works executed after Jean-François Millet's *Les travaux des champs* – seven of which are in the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam – described by his brother Theo as "perhaps the finest things you've done".

Pablo Picasso's *Femme écrivain (Marie-Thérèse)* (1934, estimate: £25,000,000-40,000,000) completes the group of masterpieces from the June sale and is a radiant and intimate portrait that epitomises one of the finest periods of the artist's career. It represents the pinnacle of the artist's portrayals of one of his most celebrated muses.

Further highlights include Modigliani's *Cariatide* (1913, estimate: £6,000,000-9,000,000), which stands as an intriguing crossover work, straddling the boundary between Modigliani's two principal creative impulses of painting and sculpture. Following the success of February's sale of works from the Heidi Weber Museum Collection by Le Corbusier, *Mains croisées sur la tête* (1939-40, estimate: £1,200,000-2,000,000) is a painting that has a strong dialogue with the symbolic portraiture of Picasso. Hannah Höch's *Frau und Saturn* (1922, estimate: £400,000-600,000) is an intimate autobiographical work, created during a period of intense turmoil and upheaval in the artist's personal life and is one of the most significant works by Höch to come up at auction. The Evening Sale is followed by the *Impressionist & Modern Works on Paper* sale, which takes place on 28 June, and the *Impressionist & Modern Art Day Sale*, also on 28 June at King Street. The online-only sale *Impressionist & Modern Art* is open for bidding from 19 to 29 June and *Picasso Ceramics* is live from 20 to 30 June 2017. All of the work will be exhibited in London from 17 to 30 June 2017.

IMPRESSIONIST AND MODERN ART EVENING SALE HIGHLIGHTS

MONET

Painted between 1918 and 1919, *Saule pleureur (illustrated, page one)* is one of a series of ten monumental and powerfully emotive paintings, each of which depict one of the majestic weeping willow trees that lined Monet's famed waterlily pond at his home in Giverny. Following the death of the artist's eldest son, in 1914, Monet had been working with a fearsome resolve on what came to be known as his *Grandes décorations*. Born from an earlier idea to create an immersive decorative scheme based on his waterlily paintings, this ambitious, all-consuming and ground-breaking project consisted of paintings on a scale never before seen in the artist's career. The formidable vertically of the weeping willow series has come to represent the artist's resolve and patriotic fervour at the conclusion of the First World War.

MAX BECKMANN

Birds' Hell (Hölle der Vögel) (illustrated, right) is 'an allegory of Nazi Germany. It is a direct attack on the cruelty and conformity that the National Socialist seizure of power brought to Beckmann's homeland. Its place in Beckmann's oeuvre corresponds to that occupied by *Guernica* in Picasso's artistic development. It is an outcry as loud and as strident as an artistic *Weltanschauung* would permit. Not since his graphic attacks in *Hunger* and *City Night* in the early twenties had Beckmann resorted to such directness, such undisguised social criticism. *Birds' Hell* is Beckmann's *J'accuse*' (S. Lackner, Max Beckmann, New York, 1977, p. 130). Please see the full press release [here](#). Scottish actor Alan Cumming



Max Beckmann, *Birds' Hell*, 1938, (estimate on request)

responds to the painting by reciting W. H. Auden's *Epitaph on a Tyrant*, which can be viewed [here](#).

PICASSO

Painted on 26 March 1934, *Femme écrivant (Marie-Thérèse)* (*illustrated, page one*) dates from the pinnacle of Marie-Thérèse's supreme reign in Picasso's art. 1934 was a particularly prolific year for Picasso and was the final period that the pair spent wrapped in the uninterrupted bliss of their love. While Marie-Thérèse most often appears as a sensuously reclining, somnolent nude or a stylised vision enthroned in a chair, a passive object of adoration, in the present work Picasso has depicted her in an upright, active state, engaged in the act of writing a letter – a common form of exchange that Marie-Thérèse and the artist used to express their affection amidst the secrecy of their relationship. Please see the full press release [here](#).



MODIGLIANI

Executed in 1913, *Cariatide* (*illustrated, left*) is a rare example of Amedeo Modigliani's painterly practice during this early period of his artistic career, in which he focused primarily on sculpture. One of only a handful of oil paintings which explore the form of a sculpted caryatid, the present work illustrates the complex working process that lay behind each of the artist's three-dimensional projects in stone. Creating countless drawings and sketches before ever taking his hammer to a block, these studies offered Modigliani a forum in which to experiment and visualise the ideas that swirled around his head, before translating them into sculptural form.

VAN GOGH

Painted at Saint-Rémy in September 1889 at a critical moment in the penultimate year of Vincent van Gogh's life, *Le moissonneur (d'après Millet)* (*illustrated, page one*) pays homage to the artist whom he most admired and respected: Jean-François Millet. Charged with intense colour and electrifying brushwork, this painting dates from the beginning of one of the most prolific periods of Van Gogh's career, a stage that saw an almost miraculous outpouring of work in the midst of the artist's episodic yet ever-increasing mental breakdowns that punctuated the final years of his life. Please see the press release that discusses Schiele and Van Gogh's work [here](#).

Amedeo Modigliani, *Caritrade*, 1913,
(estimate: £6,000,000-9,000,000)

LE CORBUSIER

Painted in 1939 and completed a year later, Le Corbusier's *Mains croisées sur la tête* (*illustrated, left*) marked a new direction in the artist's plastic oeuvre. Standing at a metre high, this large painting presents a glorious kaleidoscopic array of bright, radiant colours in the middle of which a heavily stylised mask-like face emerges. This is the first of a series



of works in which Le Corbusier explored both the physiognomy of the human face as well as the complex psychological nuances that lay behind his conception of the human form.

Le Corbusier, *Mains croisées sur la tête*,
1939-40, (estimate £1,200,000-2,000,000)



HANNAH HÖCH

Painted in 1922, *Frau und Saturn* (illustrated, left) focuses on a trio of otherworldly, mystical figures, and may be seen as a personal reflection on the tumultuous romance Hannah Höch shared with fellow Dada artist, Raoul Hausmann, which had ended the same year as the painting's creation. Höch took the difficult decision to terminate two pregnancies during their time together and it is this internal conflict, this unfulfilled wish to have a child, which shapes *Frau und Saturn*. At the heart of the composition sits the glowing, red figure of a woman cradling a young child, an imaginary self-portrait of the artist, caught in a moment of intimacy as she touches her cheek against the baby's head, while behind her the menacing figure of Hausmann emerges glowering from the dark shadows of the background.

Hannah Höch, *Frau und Saturn*,
1922, (estimate, £400,000-600,000)



SCHIELE

Einzelne Häuser (Häuser mit Bergen) (illustrated, left) is one of the finest of Egon Schiele's great series of psychological landscapes painted in 1915. Depicting an isolated group of distinctly weather-worn houses huddled together against a bleak, open landscape, the painting is one of a magnificent series of landscape visions that articulate a mood of existential melancholy and rank amongst the very best of Schiele's works. Please see the press release that discusses Schiele and Van Gogh's work [here](#).

Egon Schiele, *Einzelne Häuser (Häuser mit Bergen)*,
1915, (estimate: £20,000,000-30,000,000)

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