

CHRISTIE'S

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POST-WAR AND CONTEMPORARY ART EVENING AUCTION '20TH CENTURY AT CHRISTIE'S'

12 FEBRUARY 2020



Andy Warhol, *Muhammad Ali*, 1977, estimate: £3,000,000-5,000,000

London – Christie's [Post-War and Contemporary Art Evening Auction](#) will take place on 12 February 2020, continuing '20th Century at Christie's'. From the collection of Richard L. Weisman, Andy Warhol's 'Athletes', comprised of ten 40-by-40-inch multicoloured portraits of athletes, is highlighted by *Muhammad Ali* (1977, estimate: £3,000,000-5,000,000). This follows the successful sale of works from the collection at Christie's in New York in November 2019. The seminal series is presented alongside *Flowers* (1964, estimate: £1,000,000-1,500,000), which is offered as part of 'Art for Future: Selected Works from the UniCredit Group'. A further focus on Andy Warhol includes *Knives* (1982, estimate: £2,500,000-3,500,000), a razor-sharp chorus of beauty and menace, and *Brillo Soap Pads Box* (1964, estimate: £300,000-500,000) which was originally held

in the collection of Leo Castelli. Three works by Jean Dubuffet from the 1950s, 60s and 70s not only trace the artistic development throughout the artist's career but culminate in *Panorama* (1978, estimate: £2,000,000-3,000,000), from the final decade of the artist's life where he employs the pictorial devices seen in his works since the 1940s. Albert Oehlen's *Mission Rohrfrei* (1996, estimate: £1,800,000-2,500,000) is among the most abstract and explosive of Oehlen's 'Remixes', displaying the artist in freewheeling improvisatory flow. Coinciding with a survey of contemporary painters at London's Whitechapel Gallery, 'Radical Figures', a group of works by Dana Schutz, Tschabalala Self and Cecily Brown showcase new directions in expressionism as artists tackle subjects of political and social significance. Jordan Casteel's *Mom* (2013, estimate: £180,000-250,000) is a poignant tribute to the artist's mother, Lauren Young Casteel.

[The Post-War and Contemporary Art Day Auction](#) will take place on 13 February while [First Open: Post-War and Contemporary Art Online](#), a dedicated online-only auction, will be open for bidding from 7 to 18 February. Selected works will be on view from 8 to 13 February with viewing by request from 14 to 18 February. The works from the Evening and Day Auctions will be on view in the King Street galleries from 8 to 12 February 2020.



ANDY WARHOL

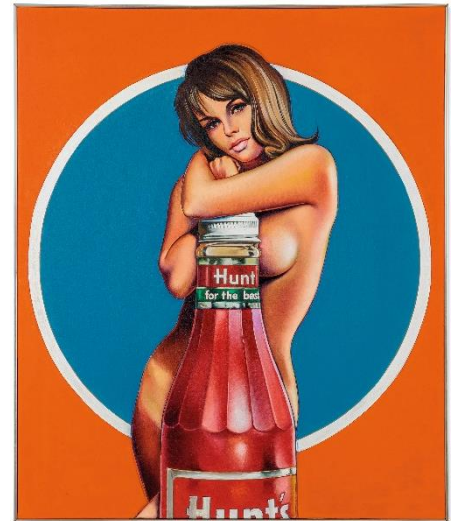
In 1977, the collector Richard L. Weisman approached Andy Warhol with an idea. He believed there was a new breed of superstar ripe for the artist's inimitable gaze: the athlete. The prospect of a new pool of celebrity subjects was hugely exciting for Warhol. Thus, the Athletes series was born. Described as 'truly iconic' by The New York Times, Andy Warhol's legendary depiction of Muhammad Ali captures a meeting of giants. The group also includes *Pelé* (estimate: £300,000-500,000), *Chris Evert* (estimate: £200,000-300,000), *Kareem Abdul-Jabbar* (estimate: £220,000-280,000), *Tom Seaver* (estimate: £120,000-180,000), *O.J. Simpson* (estimate: £200,000-300,000), *Jack Nicklaus* (£150,000-200,000), *Rod Gilbert* (£200,000-300,000), *Willie Shoemaker* (estimate: £250,000-350,000) and *Dorothy Hamill* (estimate: £200,000-300,000). *Knives* (1982, estimate: £2,500,000-3,500,000, *illustrated above, right*) is a monumental work from one of Andy Warhol's most important late series. A trio of kitchen knives is silkscreened nine times in vibrant colour against a deep, black ground. Violet, green, lilac, orange, turquoise, yellow, blue and a vivid, bloody red light up the blades like fireworks in a night sky. Further works from the Weisman Collection saw excellent results when they were sold at Christie's, New York in November 2019.

Christie's is delighted to have been appointed by UniCredit to manage the selected sale of artworks from Austria, Germany and Italy. The proceeds will be primarily used to support the further roll-out of the group's

Social Impact Banking (SIB) initiatives. The remaining balance will be dedicated to other relevant projects, including the support of young artists. Beginning with the Post-War and Contemporary Art auctions in October 2019, a number of artworks have already been presented at various Christie's international salerooms. Highlights have included an outstanding group of works by Gerhard Richter – led by a major *Abstraktes Bild* from 1984 – as well as pieces by artists such as Yves Klein, Enrico Castellani and Ernst Wilhelm Nay. Works from the bank will continue to be offered across a range of marquee week sales in 2020, and we are delighted to present Andy Warhol's *Flowers* (1964, estimate: £1,000,000-1,500,000, *illustrated above, left*) as part of the Post-War and Contemporary Art Evening Auction this February. Held for over two decades in Leo Castelli's personal collection before it was acquired by the present owner in 1987, *Brillo Soap Pads Box* (1964, estimate: £300,000-500,000) marks the moment that Andy Warhol joined forces with the supreme gallerist of the Pop era.

MEL RAMOS: FROM THE COLLECTION OF RICHARD L. WEISMAN

An icon of West Coast Pop art, *Hunt for the Best* (1966, estimate, £300,000-500,000) is a seminal nude by Mel Ramos. Previously owned by Richard Weisman's parents, Frederick and Marcia – famously immortalised in David Hockney's *American Collectors* (1968) – the work was commissioned by Frederick Weisman, and hung for many years in his home office in the Hollywood hills.



JEAN DUBUFFET

A joyous cacophony of figures, shapes and spaces, *Panorama* (1978, estimate: £2,000,000-3,000,000, *illustrated below, left*) is a striking example of Jean Dubuffet's 'Théâtres de mémoire' ('Theatres of memory'), the reflective series created in the final decade of the artist's life. Each component, rendered in striking monochrome, conjures the visual language of earlier series in Dubuffet's career: there are the playful human figures that had populated his work since the 1940s, echoes of the swirling, cellular 'Hourloupe' language he conceived in 1962, and snatches of the scribbled 'Parachiffres' of 1974. Painted on 4 September 1961, *La robe à boutons* (estimate: £1,200,000-1,800,000) is the first and largest in a sequence of five distinct character portraits that punctuate Dubuffet's legendary 'Paris Circus' series. With its raw painterly terrain spiked with jewelled flashes of red and green, *Autour la maison* (estimate: £1,100,000-1,600,000) is a mesmeric composition from the 'Lieux cursifs' series that occupied his output between April and September 1957. Incised into the work's marbled earthen surface with a knife, a narrative sequence unfolds, like ancient graffiti carved into a rockface.



PAINTING IN THE 21ST CENTURY



Included in Tschabalala Self's acclaimed exhibition at the Frye Art Museum in 2019, *Spare Moment* (2015, estimate: £80,000-120,000) presents two resplendent characters who are set against a background of abstract eye-like forms, motifs that recur throughout her work. Self draws upon her experience of growing up in Harlem to confront issues surrounding race, sexuality and gender. By deliberately exaggerating her subjects' physical features, she highlights the stereotypes and expectations surrounding the black female body. A profusion of vibrant colour and fractured form, *Kissing in the Dump* (2004, estimate: £350,000-550,000, *illustrated, left*) exemplifies Dana Schutz's glorious brand of painterly breakdown. A couple embrace in a kaleidoscopic junkyard. The riot of garbage includes a chair, a frying pan and a discarded wreath; wires and mains plugs. Like many of her works, the present work depicts a subject that is unlikely to have been tackled in paint, conjuring

an escapist, humorous vision of romance among the wreckage. Jordan Casteel's *Mom* (2013, estimate: £180,000-250,000) captures the artist's mother in a moment of peaceful solitude, registering the play of light and shadow across her face, clothes and hands. A vast, erotically-charged vision spanning nearly three metres in width, Cecily Brown's *Girl Trouble* (1999, estimate: £1,400,000-1,800,000) is a bacchanal of fiery hues, enigmatic figural forms and rich, gestural abstraction. Rendered with intuitive, sensual brushstrokes, it demonstrates the orgiastic painterly language for which she is celebrated.

ALBERT OEHLER

Mission Rohrfrei (1996, estimate: £1,800,000-2,500,000, *illustrated page three, centre right*) is a spectacular early 'John Graham Remix' painting by Albert Oehlen. The series derives from Oehlen's obsession with an obscure painting by John Graham, a largely forgotten figure who played an important role in Surrealist and Abstract Expressionist circles in mid-century America. Undermining, critiquing and ultimately revitalising painting in a post-painting world, Oehlen dismantles his medium to expose its beating heart.

SIGMAR POLKE

With its shifting, illusory surface, Sigmar Polke's *Untitled* (estimate: £2,800,000-3,500,000, *illustrated, right*) is a mesmerising image of optical and erotic fantasy. Created in 2000, it was acquired shortly afterwards by the German tennis player and former Wimbledon champion Michael Stich, who gave it as a wedding present to his wife. The present work, unseen for many years, combines Polke's signature raster-dot technique with layers of interference pigment, reflecting a spectrum of shimmering metallic tones under varying light conditions.

POST-WAR AND CONTEMPORARY ART DAY AUCTION

The Day Auction on 13 February will also feature works included in the Whitechapel Gallery exhibition 'Radical Figures', presenting paintings by Tschabalala Self, Tala Madani and Dana Schutz. Further highlights include Michelangelo Pistoletto's *Paolo Mussat Sartor* (1962-88, estimate: £250,000-350,000), Sam Francis's *Blue and Black* (1954, estimate: £180,000-250,000) and Jean-Paul Riopelle's *Clairons* (1955-56, estimate: £180,000-250,000).



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About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had auction sales in the first half of 2019 that totalled £2.2 billion / \$2.8 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.

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