

CHRISTIE'S

RESULTS | LONDON | 7 DECEMBER 2023

CLASSIC WEEK

Christie's Evening Sales Total

£34,125,850 / \$42,896,193 / €39,756,615

**Comprising:
*Old Masters Part I Sale***

Ancient to Modern Art from the Mougins Museum of Classical Art, Part I

***The Sam Josefowitz Collection: Graphic Masterpieces by Rembrandt van Rijn*
100% sold with 87% of works selling above high estimate**

**Sales led by
Canaletto's previously unpublished pair of Venetian *vedute* masterpieces**

21% of New Registrants were Millennials



Old Masters Part I Sale

Auctioneer: Jussi Pykkänen



**Ancient to Modern Art from the Mougins
Museum of Classical Art, Part I**

Auctioneer: Olivia Ghosh



**The Sam Josefowitz Collection: Graphic
Masterpieces by Rembrandt van Rijn**

Auctioneer: Jussi Pykkänen

London – Christie's *Classic Week* Evening sales – [Old Masters Part I](#), [Ancient to Modern Art from the Mougins Museum of Classical Art, Part I](#), [The Sam Josefowitz Collection: Graphic Masterpieces by Rembrandt van Rijn](#) – realised a combined total of £34,125,850 / \$42,896,193 / €39,756,615, achieving sell-through rates of 84% by lot and 90% by value. The top lots of the evening were Canaletto's previously unpublished pair of Venetian *vedute* masterpieces which fetched £9,740,000 / \$12,243,180 / €11,347,100 (estimate: £8,000,000-12,000,000) and Michael Sweerts, *A portrait of the artist (?), presenting the Virgin in Prayer* which realised £1,734,000 (estimate: £400,000-600,000). 21% of new registrants were millennials; the breakdown of buyers by region was: 53% EMEA / 43% Americas / 4% APAC; these auctions mark a strong opening to *Classic Week* London.

OLD MASTERS PART I SALE

The **Old Masters Part I Sale** realised £21,906,820 / \$27,536,873 / €25,521,445. Among the top lots of the sale were:

- **A pair of unpublished Venetian masterpieces, in excellent condition, by the world-renowned titan of vedute painting, Canaletto:** *Venice: The Mouth of the Grand Canal from the East*, and *The Molo, with the Piazzetta and the Doge's Palace, from the Bacino*, realised £9,740,000. Painted in about 1734, when Canaletto was at the height of his powers, the calibre of these paintings is comparable to the great sequence of views on the Grand Canal now in the Royal Collection. They were offered from a private UK collection
- **Ingenious in its deception, unpublished and previously unknown to scholars:** Michael Sweerts' *A portrait of the artist (?), presenting the Virgin in Prayer* sold for £1,734,000 against an estimate of £400,000-600,000
- From **The Collection of Sam Josefowitz: A Lifetime of Discovery and Scholarship, Rembrandt Harmensz. Van Rijn's** *Christ crucified between the two Thieves: 'The Three Crosses'*, sold for £1,225,800. (For the results of the full group from **The Collection Of Sam Josefowitz, including the standalone Graphic Masterpieces sale**, please see the dedicated sale section below)

Maja Markovic, Head of Old Masters Part I, London: "This auction, which included works of great quality, rarity and originality, achieved the highest December total in London since 2019 and a 67% increase year on year. The works in the sale garnered much excitement, with the build-up to the auction drawing many visitors to the view in London, following preview tours in New York, Hong Kong, Amsterdam and Paris. The result achieved for the outstanding masterpieces by Canaletto affirmed Christie's dominance of the market for this artist. The unique rediscovery by Sweerts (for whom Christie's set a world record at auction in July 2023) fascinated collectors from all categories for both its technical skill and compositional ingenuity, achieving over four times its low estimate. This sale displayed the demand for rare works that are notable for their singularity, condition and freshness to the market."

For the full results of the *Old Masters Evening Sale* please click [here](#).

ANCIENT TO MODERN ART FROM THE MOUGINS MUSEUM OF CLASSICAL ART, PART I SALE:

Christie's *Ancient to Modern Art from the Mougins Museum of Classical Art, Part I* realised a total of £4,302,900 / \$5,408,745 / €5,012,879. Among the top lots of the sale were:

- **Sir Antony Gormley's** *Reflection II*, two cast iron body forms from an edition of three plus two artist's proofs, realised £730,800 exceeding the high estimate after prolonged and very competitive bidding on the phones
- **Damien Hirst's** *The Severed Head of Medusa*, 2013, number two from an edition of three, sold for £567,000. This sculpture is among the defining works from Hirst's celebrated project *Treasures from the Wreck of the Unbelievable*. An extraordinary meditation on art, myth and humanity, it stands as an icon of one of the twenty-first century's most ambitious technical and conceptual artistic undertakings

- **A Roman marble torso of a man**, circa 1st Century B.C. – 1st Century A.D. – of imposing muscular build, possibly depicting the legendary hunter Meleager, the Greek hero who killed the Calydonian boar – sold for £403,200

Amelia Walker, Christie's London Specialist Head of Private and Iconic Collections and **Claudio Corsi, Christie's London Specialist Head of Ancient Art & Antiquities**, commented: *"Standing high above the entrance of the Mougins Museum of Classical Art, Sir Antony Gormley's arresting 'Reflection II' was the star of this first auction in the landmark series of six sales being held of the collection at Christie's, achieving £730,800, well over the high estimate. Strong results for both ancient and modern, including Damien Hirst's 'The Severed Head of Medusa', which realised £567,000, and the Roman marble male torso, which realised £403,200, are testament to Christian Levett's passionate collecting and pioneering vision. The timeless appeal of the Classical world, which has inspired artists across millennia and continues to enthral art lovers today, was demonstrated in bidding by younger generations of collectors who were attracted to the diverse array of works across the sale - 67% of new bidders and buyers were millennials. We are now looking forward to the Arms and Armour Part I sale at Christie's New York on 30 January 2024."*

For the full results of *Ancient to Modern Art from the Mougins Museum of Classical Art, Part I Sale* please click [here](#).

THE SAM JOSEFOWITZ COLLECTION: GRAPHIC MASTERPIECES BY REMBRANDT VAN RIJN

The Sam Josefowitz Collection: Graphic Masterpieces by Rembrandt Van Rijn realised £7,916,130 / \$9,950,575 / €9,222,291, with an exceptional sell-through rate of 100% by lot, more than doubling the low estimate. This marks the highest total for an Old Masters Print sale since 1985, with 87% of lots selling above their high-estimate.

Highlights from the Collection included:

- ***Saint Jerome in an Italian Landscape*** sold for £1,552,500 after ten minutes of bidding
- ***The Shell***, 1650, Rembrandt's only etched still life, realised an exceptional price of £730,800 (estimate: £80,000-120,000) after competitive bidding in the room and on the phone
- ***Woman sitting half dressed beside a Stove***, one of the great treasures of the Sam Josefowitz Collection, is half domestic genre scene, half study of a female nude, and one of the most atmospheric of Rembrandt's prints, sold for £504,000
- Few artists depicted themselves as regularly as Rembrandt. ***Self-Portrait leaning on a Stone Sill*** sold for £201,600, and is considered the largest, and grandest of his self-portraits in print. ***Self-Portrait leaning forward: Bust*** sold for £113,400

Rembrandt Highlights included in Old Masters Part I:

- ***Christ crucified between the two Thieves: 'The Three Crosses'*** 1653 realised £1,225,800
- ***The Three Trees***, one of the most celebrated and memorable landscapes in the history of art, sold for £869,400 against an estimate of £300,000-500,000

The Collection achieved world record prices for 51 different subjects out of the 73 lots sold across the two sales.

Tim Schmelcher, International Specialist, Prints and Multiples, Christie's London: *"Sam Josefowitz is celebrated as one of the greatest Prints collectors of the 20th century and the results at Christie's are testament to his passion, connoisseurship and vision. Having established the record for a Rembrandt print in 2018, we were delighted that records for subjects were set across the evening, highlighted by Three Trees, Saint Jerome in an Italian Landscape and The Woman sitting half-dressed beside a Stove. What particularly resonated for Sam was the virtuosity, imagination and deep humanity he found expressed in Rembrandt's etchings. These universal notions continue to enrapture our clients, reflected by registered bidders from 22 countries participating in the sale. The depth of bidding witnessed demonstrates the strength of the market for old master prints. This is quite simply the greatest ensemble of Rembrandt's graphic oeuvre in private hands and the market responded enthusiastically. We look forward to a further selection from this fabled collection in 2024."*

The combined total for the Rembrandt prints offered from this illustrious collection across the two sales on 7 December, including the works in the Old Masters Part I sale, is £10,200,330 / \$12,821,815 / €11,883,384.

For the full results of *The Sam Josefowitz Collection: Graphic Masterpieces by Rembrandt Van Rijn* please click [here](#).

For further commentary on the sales from Maja Markovic, Amelia Walker and Tim Schmelcher, please watch the post-sales analysis [here](#).

For saleroom images, please see the Dropbox link [here](#).

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* 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.

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