

LONDON

THE ART OF THE SURREAL

EVENING SALE

Tuesday 4 February 2014

CHRISTIE'S





THE ART OF THE SURREAL — EVENING SALE

*Tuesday 4 February 2014
at 7.00 pm immediately following the Impressionist and Modern Art Evening Sale*





Magritte









INTERNATIONAL IMPRESSIONIST, 20TH CENTURY, MODERN BRITISH AND CONTEMPORARY ART AUCTIONS

AUCTION CALENDAR 2014

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4 FEBRUARY

IMPRESSIONIST/MODERN ART EVENING AUCTION

LONDON, KING STREET

4 FEBRUARY

ART OF THE SURREAL EVENING AUCTION

LONDON, KING STREET

5 FEBRUARY

IMPRESSIONIST/MODERN WORKS ON PAPER AUCTION

LONDON, KING STREET

5 FEBRUARY

IMPRESSIONIST/MODERN ART DAY AUCTION

LONDON, KING STREET

7 FEBRUARY

IMPRESSIONIST/MODERN ART AND PICASSO CERAMICS

LONDON, SOUTH KENSINGTON

11 FEBRUARY

POST-WAR & CONTEMPORARY ART EVENING AUCTION

LONDON, KING STREET

12 FEBRUARY

POST-WAR & CONTEMPORARY ART DAY AUCTION

LONDON, KING STREET

26 FEBRUARY

PRINTS COLLECTION

LONDON, SOUTH KENSINGTON

19 MARCH

INTERNATIONAL MODERN ART

DUBAI

19 MARCH

OLD MASTER, MODERN & CONTEMPORARY PRINTS

LONDON, KING STREET

20 MARCH

MODERN BRITISH & IRISH ART

LONDON, SOUTH KENSINGTON

25 MARCH

MODERN WORKS ON PAPER

PARIS

26 MARCH

IMPRESSIONIST/MODERN ART

PARIS

28 MARCH

POST-WAR & CONTEMPORARY ART

LONDON, SOUTH KENSINGTON

2 & 3 APRIL

MILAN MODERN & CONTEMPORARY ART

MILAN

7 & 8 APRIL

POST-WAR & CONTEMPORARY ART

AMSTERDAM

16 APRIL

PRINTS & MULTIPLES

LONDON, SOUTH KENSINGTON

6 MAY

IMPRESSIONIST & MODERN ART EVENING AUCTION

NEW YORK

7 MAY

IMPRESSIONIST & MODERN WORKS ON PAPER AUCTION

NEW YORK

7 MAY

IMPRESSIONIST & MODERN ART DAY AUCTION

NEW YORK

4 & 5 JUNE

ART D'APRÈS-GUERRE ET CONTEMPORAIN

PARIS

9 JUNE

MODERN BRITISH & IRISH ART EVENING AUCTION

LONDON, KING STREET

10 JUNE

MODERN BRITISH & IRISH ART DAY AUCTION

LONDON, KING STREET

17 JUNE

MODERN ART

AMSTERDAM

24 JUNE

IMPRESSIONIST/MODERN ART EVENING AUCTION

LONDON, KING STREET

25 JUNE

IMPRESSIONIST/MODERN WORKS ON PAPER AUCTION

LONDON, KING STREET

25 JUNE

IMPRESSIONIST/MODERN ART DAY AUCTION

LONDON, KING STREET

26 JUNE

PICASSO CERAMICS

LONDON, SOUTH KENSINGTON

27 JUNE

IMPRESSIONIST/MODERN ART

LONDON, SOUTH KENSINGTON

1 JULY

POST-WAR & CONTEMPORARY ART EVENING AUCTION

LONDON, KING STREET

2 JULY

POST-WAR & CONTEMPORARY ART DAY AUCTION

LONDON, KING STREET

9 JULY

OLD MASTER PRINTS

LONDON, KING STREET

17 SEPTEMBER

OLD MASTER, MODERN & CONTEMPORARY PRINTS

LONDON, KING STREET

18 SEPTEMBER

MODERN & CONTEMPORARY PRINTS

LONDON, SOUTH KENSINGTON

22 SEPTEMBER

SWISS ART

ZURICH

15 OCTOBER

MODERN BRITISH & IRISH ART

LONDON, SOUTH KENSINGTON

16 OCTOBER

POST-WAR & CONTEMPORARY ART EVENING AUCTION

LONDON, KING STREET

16 OCTOBER

THE ITALIAN SALE

LONDON, KING STREET

17 OCTOBER

POST-WAR & CONTEMPORARY ART DAY AUCTION

LONDON, KING STREET

25 OCTOBER

IMPRESSIONIST/MODERN ART

PARIS

4 & 5 NOVEMBER

POST-WAR & CONTEMPORARY ART

AMSTERDAM

5 NOVEMBER

IMPRESSIONIST & MODERN ART EVENING AUCTION

NEW YORK

6 NOVEMBER

IMPRESSIONIST & MODERN WORKS ON PAPER AUCTION

NEW YORK

6 NOVEMBER

IMPRESSIONIST & MODERN ART DAY AUCTION

NEW YORK

19 NOVEMBER

MODERN BRITISH & IRISH ART EVENING AUCTION

LONDON, KING STREET

20 NOVEMBER

MODERN BRITISH & IRISH ART DAY AUCTION

LONDON, KING STREET

3 & 4 DECEMBER

ART D'APRÈS-GUERRE ET CONTEMPORAIN

PARIS

4 DECEMBER

OLD MASTER, MODERN & CONTEMPORARY PRINTS

LONDON, SOUTH KENSINGTON

12 DECEMBER

MODERN BRITISH & IRISH ART

LONDON, SOUTH KENSINGTON

16 DECEMBER

MODERN ART

AMSTERDAM

Subject to change

18/12/13

THE ART OF THE SURREAL EVENING SALE

TUESDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2014

AUCTION

Tuesday 4 February 2014

at 7.00 pm immediately following the Impressionist and Modern Art
Evening Sale

PROPERTIES FROM

The Collection of
the Late Mrs. T. S. Eliot
Property Sold by Decision of the
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Thursday	30 January	10.00am - 4.30pm
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Saturday	1 February	12.00 noon - 5.00pm
Sunday	2 February	12.00 noon - 5.00pm
Monday	3 February	9.00am - 4.30pm
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[30]



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101 MAN RAY (1890-1976)

Le trop-plein

signed, dated and titled 'Man Ray Apr 29 1937 Le trop-plein' (lower right)

pen and ink on paper

13 ¾ x 10 ½ in. (34.8 x 26.8 cm.)

Executed on 29 April 1937

£50,000-70,000

\$82,000-115,000

€60,000-84,000

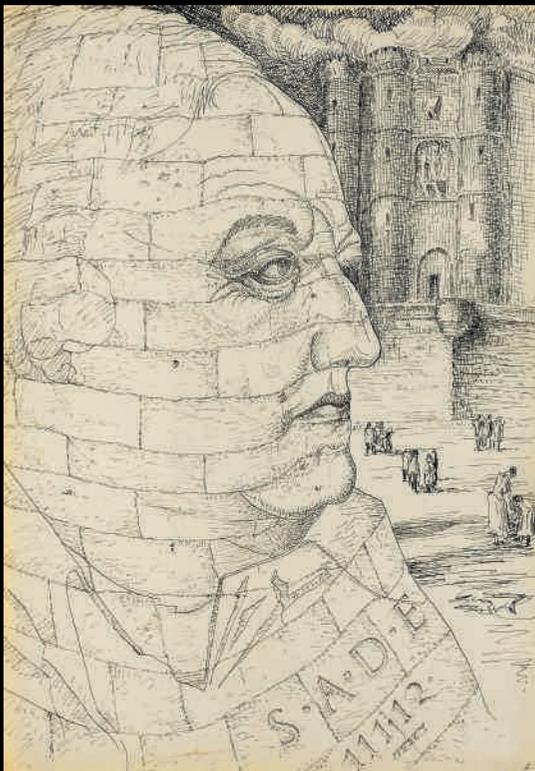
PROVENANCE:

Altman Collection, by April 1964.

Anonymous sale, Pandolfini Casa d'Aste, Florence,

4 December 2012, lot 207.

Acquired at the above sale by the present owner.



Man Ray, *Marquis de Sade*, 1936, sold, Sotheby's New York, 3 November 2011, lot 321, \$866,500.



Man Ray Apr 29 1937
le trop-plein



PROPERTY FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE LATE MRS. T.S. ELIOT

In her own right Valerie Eliot was an esteemed editor, astute collector, dedicated philanthropist and supporter of literature and the arts. Yet she spent her life 'in continual surrender...to something more valuable' (Eds. Kermode, F., *Selected Prose of T.S. Eliot*, taken from 'The Music of Poetry', *Essays of Generalisation* (1918-1930), Faber and Faber, London 1975, p. 40). She was entrusted by Thomas Stearns Eliot to be the sole protector of his legacy – a role that was first and foremost of her concerns and the driving force behind her professional and personal choices.

Born in Leeds and educated at Queen Anne's School in Caversham, Esmé Valerie Fletcher first encountered the work of T.S. Eliot when she heard Sir John Gielgud's recording of *Journey of the Magi* as a schoolgirl of fourteen. She decided that she wanted to seek out TSE and work with him and she did, becoming his secretary when he was a director at the well-known publishing house Faber and Faber in 1949. It was not until 1957 and after a long and successful professional relationship that the couple married in secrecy at St. Barnabas' Church in Kensington and thereafter lived in a flat in Kensington Court Gardens.

The flat became the backdrop for their happy marriage and following the death of TSE in 1965, Valerie often reminisced about their time together. She delighted in recalling the auspicious occasions when Igor Stravinsky and Groucho Marx visited them and equally the 'prosaic' (*Ibid.*, p. 113) moments shared reading aloud in front of the fire. Every habit, every daily routine was a way of keeping her 'beloved Tom' alive. From the gin and tonic before supper to dining at the Connaught and the Savoy Grill, Valerie continued throughout her life to do the things they had done together. In death their devotion to one another remained absolute. Eliot left instructions for Valerie to be buried with him in East Coker, a village in Somerset to which Eliot's ancestry can be traced and the eponym of the second of Eliot's *Four Quartets*. The lines of Eliot's poem published in 1940, long before they met, seem to prefigure the devotion which belied the years that separated them: 'Love is most nearly itself/When here and now cease to matter.' (Eliot, T.S. *Four Quartets: East Coker*, from *Collected Poems 1909-1962*, Faber and Faber, London, 1963, p. 203, reproduced here by kind permission of the T.S. Eliot Estate.)

It was perhaps the enduring strength of their professional relationship, however, that precipitated Eliot's decision to entrust the safeguarding of his legacy and the editing and publishing of his correspondence to her. In the many years that followed his death she scoured the globe for letters penned by TSE that she purchased, often at great expense, from auction houses and private collections. John Bodley of Faber and Faber assisted her in this enterprise for a time to ensure that as comprehensive a collection as possible could be established before being meticulously edited and published. The undertaking was enormous and by 1988

Valerie was still working on Volume I (letters dated 1898-1922). This was subsequently revised after her tracing a vast quantity of additional material (some two hundred letters in total) and re-issued to coincide with the publication of Volume II. It was a huge undertaking to track down, acquire, edit and publish as many letters she could, and Valerie dedicated herself to the task for the rest of her life. Volume IV (1928-29), co-edited with John Haffenden, was published in January of this year, just two months after her death, and the important work of collating and editing future volumes continues today. In her professional capacity as an editor Valerie showed levels of attention to detail, mental acuity and thoroughness of approach that were undoubtedly the traits that led TSE to trust her implicitly with preserving the legacy of his work and the important task of bringing his prolific epistolary life to a new readership.

The collection of Valerie Eliot, though formed almost entirely following the death of her husband, would seem as indivisible from her relationship with the poet and man as any other aspect of her life. It was the huge success of the West End musical *CATS* (based

on Eliot's *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats*) that allowed her to collect fine art over the course of twenty years. Valerie's spirited collecting in the late '80s and early '90s was motivated by both a rigorous academic interest in art and a deeply personal and aesthetic response to the works themselves.

In addition to editing, Valerie spent a large part of her personal time and wealth supporting charitable organisations and promoting contemporary British poetry. In 1990 she established the Old Possum's Practical Trust, a charitable organisation supporting literary, artistic, musical and theatrical projects and institutions. In 1993 Valerie provided the funds for the inaugural Poetry Book Society's now highly coveted award – The T.S. Eliot Prize for Poetry – a practice she continued throughout the remainder of her life. In addition, she was

one of the London Library's most significant benefactors, providing the funds for its latest development and new wing, T.S. Eliot House. She was made Vice-President of the Library in 2009. TSE's working library and first editions have been bequeathed to Magdalene College and the archive of letters which Valerie collected so devotedly throughout her life is to be retained by the T.S. Eliot Estate to ensure the important work of editing and publishing further volumes of Eliot's correspondence continues. It is a fitting tribute and a mark of her magnanimity that the proceeds from the sale of her art collection go towards ensuring future of the Old Possum's Practical Trust. In her multifarious roles as esteemed editor, talented collector and devoted wife, Valerie Eliot displayed throughout a 'fidelity to thought and feeling' (Eds. Kermode, F., *Selected Prose of T.S. Eliot*, taken from 'The Metaphysical Poets', *Essays of Generalisation* (1918-1930), Faber and Faber, London, 1975, p. 62) worthy of Eliot's delight.



Mr & Mrs T.S. Eliot, an Angus McBean Photograph.

λ102 RENÉ MAGRITTE (1898-1967)

Le regard intérieur (The inner gaze)

indistinctly signed 'Magritte' (lower left);
signed 'René Magritte' and titled (on the reverse)
gouache on paper
18 x 14 in. (45.8 x 35.6 cm.)
Executed in 1949

£500,000-700,000

\$820,000-1,100,000

€600,000-830,000

PROVENANCE:

Mr P. Demaerel and Mrs M.L. Demaerel, Belgium;
their Estate Sale, Sotheby's, London, 27 June
1995, lot 36.

Acquired at the above sale by Mrs T. S. Eliot.

EXHIBITED:

New York, Brooklyn Museum, *International Water
Colour Exhibition: Fifteenth Biennial*, May - June
1949, possibly no. 26c (titled "The Inner Eye").

LITERATURE:

Letter from Magritte to Iolas, 24 October 1949.

Letter from Iolas to Magritte, 12 December 1949.

Letter from Iolas to Magritte, 16 December 1949.

H. Torczyner, *Magritte, Ideas and Images*, New
York, 1977, no. 333, p. 269 (illustrated p. 162;
titled "La grande feuille aux oiseaux" and dated
circa 1948).

D. Sylvester, S. Whitfield & M. Raeburn, *René
Magritte: Catalogue raisonné*, vol. IV, *Gouaches,
Temperas, Watercolours and Papiers Collés,
1918-1967*, London, 1994, no. 1305, p. 127
(illustrated).



René Magritte, *La troisième dimension*, 1942.
Sammlung Moderne Kunst, Pinakothek der
Moderne, Munich.





René Magritte, *Le rendez-vous*, 1948, sold, Christie's, New York, lot 62 (\$3,106,500).

In *Le regard intérieur*, a host of exotic birds sit perched in a plant – only this plant, instead of being a tree, is one of René Magritte's iconic tree-leaves. These had emerged in his paintings in 1935, first making their appearance in *La géante*, and had subsequently been a recurring motif, often going through variations and juxtapositions that gave this poetic invention new energy. Here, the tree-leaf's impossibility is made vivid by the addition of this aviary, which appears to tap into the legacy of Flemish and Netherlandish paintings by Old Masters such as Frans Snyders, bringing to the fore Magritte's irreverent attitude towards the revered artists of the past. Not only do the birds add flashes of rich colour to the composition, but they also serve to illustrate the paradoxical 'depth' of the picture: the birds are arranged on 'branches' which are in fact the veins of this giant, essentially flat, leaf. Thus, in *Le regard intérieur*, Magritte has managed to play with the entire nature of painting, disrupting the perspective of the picture by presenting the 'tree' as a flat surface upon which the birds are sitting. Considering this deceptively complex play of perspective, it seems only too appropriate that an earlier exploration of the birds on a tree-leaf was entitled *La troisième dimension*. That work was lent from the Theo Wormland collection to the Staatsgalerie moderner Kunst, Munich, which since became a bequest.

Another related picture from 1948, only a year before *Le regard intérieur* was created, was given the title *Le rendez-vous*, perhaps reflecting the addition of stormy sea in the background. Where *La troisième dimension* had featured the leaf shown almost in silhouette against a background of pure sky, leaving it effectively without context, in *Le regard intérieur*, there is a wall leading to the sea; meanwhile, monumental *bilboquets* are standing in a huddle to the left of the composition. Upon the wall is a glass of still water, a continuation of the fluid theme of the sea, adding to the interplays and resonances that vibrate throughout this picture, enhancing its discreet lyricism.

Magritte's vision depended on unusual and unexpected associations that brought about a deeper understanding of the mysteries of our own existence. *La géante* had been one of the first works in which Magritte had begun to explore his 'elective affinities'. In his earlier works, prompted by the epiphany he had experienced when he had seen Giorgio de Chirico's



Frans Snyders, *The Bird's Concert*, circa 1630-40. Hermitage, St. Petersburg, Russia.

masterpiece *Le chant d'amour*, Magritte had presented mysterious juxtapositions of unlikely objects or impossible landscapes. Suddenly, inspired in part by a vision in which he saw the bird in a cage in a room in which he stayed replaced by an egg, he understood that it was by exploring the relationships between the elements of our universe that he could tap into their inherent mystery. So it was that the tree-leaf had come into existence, a solution to the 'problem' of the tree. In *Le regard intérieur*, he has added a new dimension to that 'problem', by showing the impossibly exotic range of birds roosting upon a giant leaf. Meanwhile, he has also added another 'elective affinity' between the water in the glass and in the sea. While there is nothing 'impossible' about the juxtaposition of these two items, Magritte has nonetheless managed to present them in such a way that they become all the more expressive of the mystery of the world. In this way, he is stripping away all the assumptions about our surroundings that we are too apt to make, encouraging us to view our universe afresh.

For Magritte, perhaps because trees so often serve as a natural habitat for birds, the association between flora and avian fauna was one that he explored in a number of ways. Indeed, as well as showing birds perching impossibly within giant leaves, he also create a chimeric hybrid, the 'Leaf/Bird', as opposed to the 'Bird/Leaf' of *Le regard intérieur*. In those images, for instance *L'île au trésor* of 1942, it was the capacity of flight for the birds that Magritte disrupted, rooting them to the ground and changing their feathers for leaves.

The year after Magritte had painted *Le regard intérieur*, his friend, the poet Louis Scutenaire had written a commentary upon *Le rendez-vous* which equally applies to this picture: 'To make sure of killing them in the hunt, man would shoot showers of arrows into the animals he painted on the walls of caves. Today, he restores life to the leaf by showering it with birds' (Scutenaire, quoted in D. Sylvester (ed.), S. Whitfield & M. Raeburn, *René Magritte Catalogue Raisonné*, vol. II, London, 1993). This commentary appears to play with both the notion of the three-dimensionality of the motif and also with the sheer vivacity embodied in the firework-like display of colours of the exotic birds in *Le regard intérieur*.

λ103 RENÉ MAGRITTE (1898-1967)

Le palais des souvenirs (The palace of memories)

signed 'Magritte' (upper right)
oil on canvas
18¼ x 15 in. (46.2 x 38.2 cm.)
Painted in 1939

£400,000-700,000
\$660,000-1,100,000
€480,000-830,000

PROVENANCE:

Simon Harcourt-Smith, London.
Hanover Gallery, London, by whom acquired from
the above *circa* 1965.
Bodley Gallery, New York.
Acquired from the above by the father of the
present owner, *circa* 1975.

EXHIBITED:

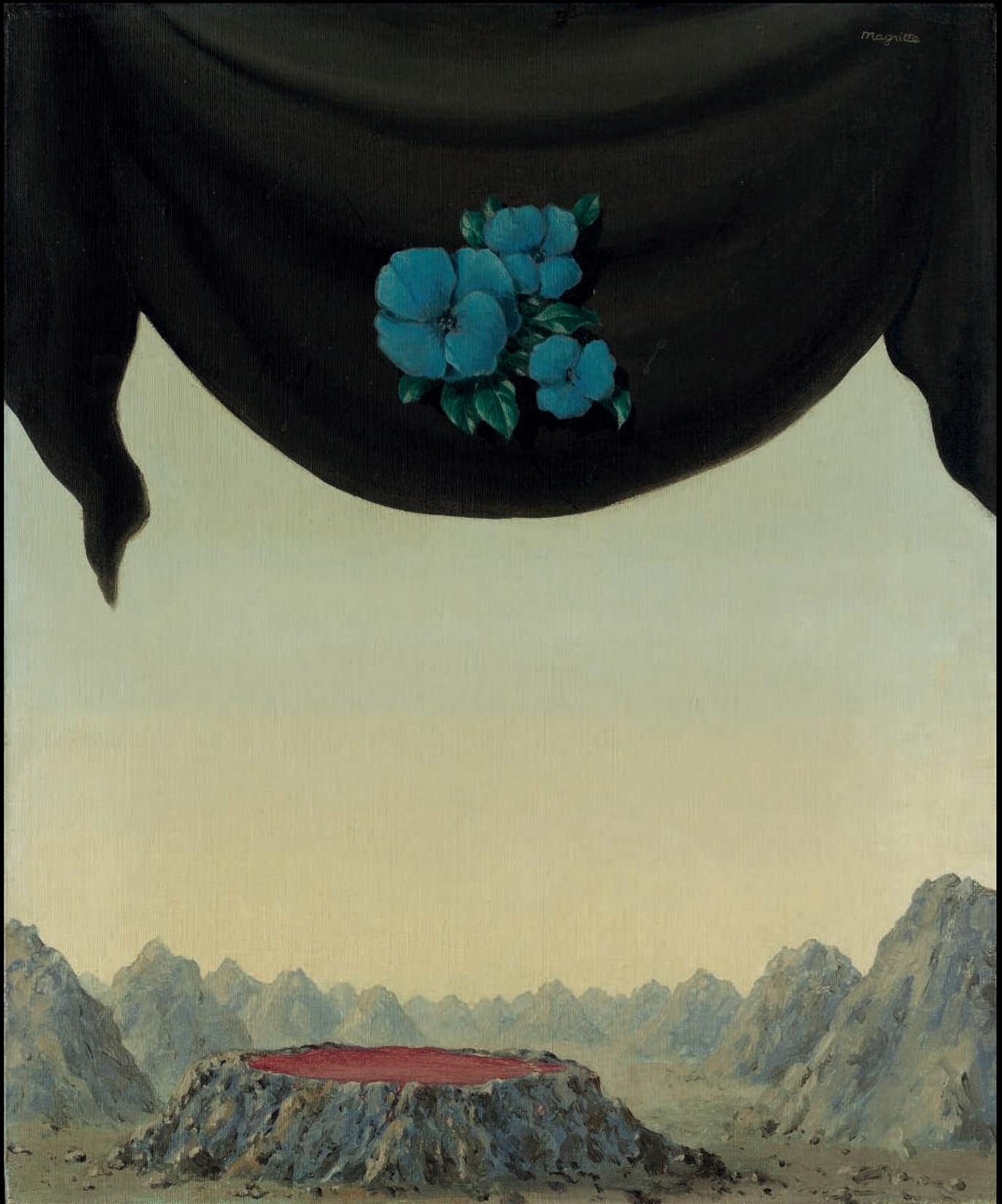
London, Hanover Gallery, *The Poetic Image*, June -
September 1966, no. 24 (illustrated).

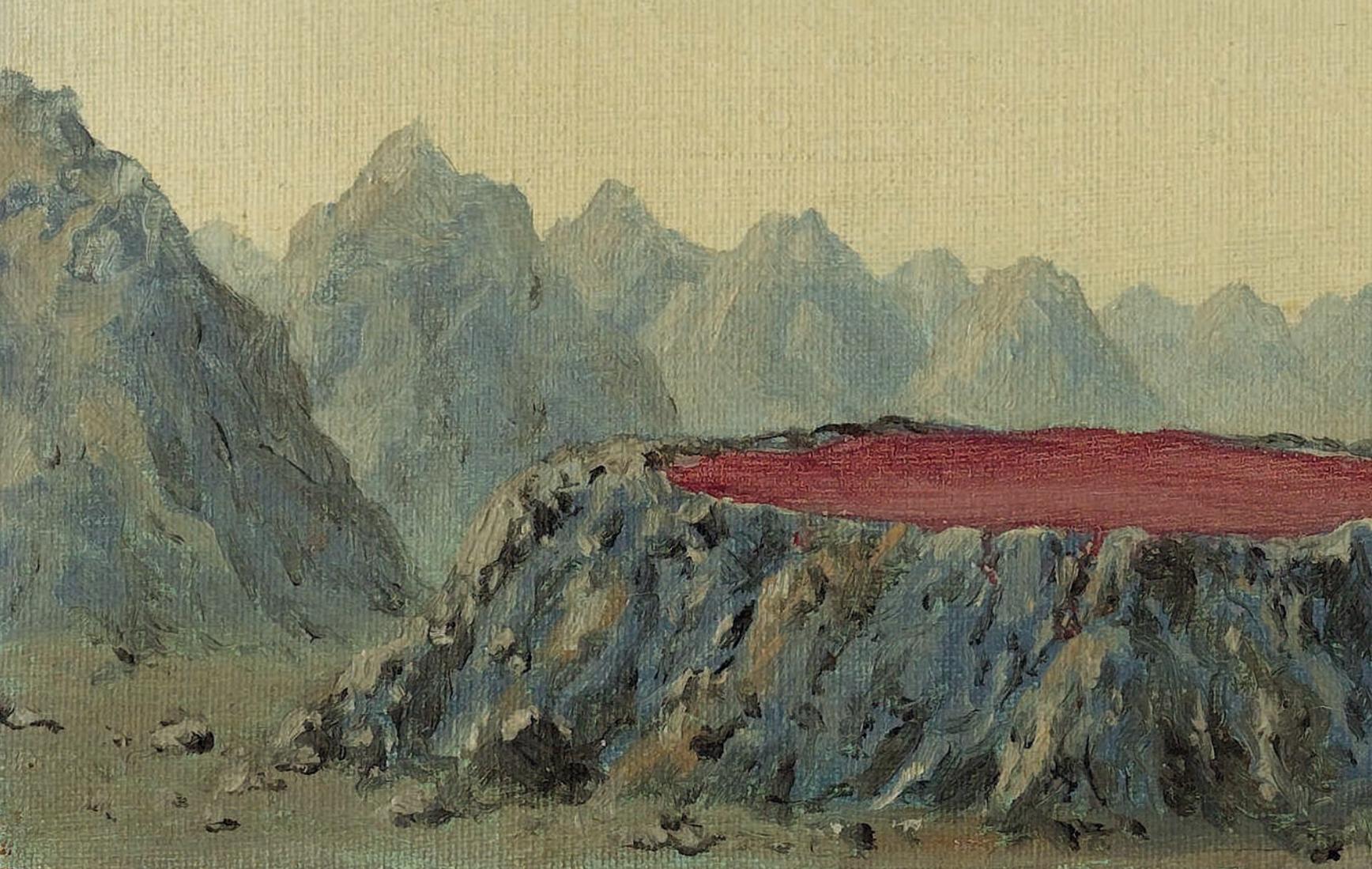
LITERATURE:

E. Langui, 'Kunstleven te Brussel: René Magritte' in
Vooruit, 21 May 1939, p. 8.
Exh. cat., *Exposition Gimpel & Hanover*, Basel,
1966, illustrated on the cover.
D. Sylvester & S. Whitfield, *René Magritte*,
Catalogue raisonné, vol. II, *Oil Paintings & Objects*,
1931-1948, London 1993, no. 471, p. 275
(illustrated).



René Magritte, *La Constellation*, 1942, sold, Christie's,
New York, 4 May 2010, lot 69 (\$2,770,500).





In *Le palais des souvenirs*, René Magritte plunges the viewer into a scene of infinite mystery: underneath and beyond a theatre curtain is a vast, rocky landscape of crags stretching into the distance. Looking like a crater filled with lava and dominating that vista is a rock formation that resembles Magritte's images of chopped trees which would emerge in 1951 in *Les travaux d'Alexandre*. This introduces the theme of petrification that would recur in Magritte's art, the notion of the transformation between the elements as seen in his 1936 work, *Le précurseur*, in which a mountain range resembles an eagle. In *Le palais des souvenirs*, the pool of red within the crater adds another dimension to this switch between animal, vegetable and mineral. Meanwhile, against the curtain itself, hovering in the foreground, is a bunch of blue flowers which reminds us of some heraldic motif. This picture was formerly owned by Simon Harcourt-Smith, a diplomat and author whose father, Sir Cecil, had been the first director of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, as well as a key advisor to the Royal Collection. Simon Harcourt-Smith wrote books, screenplays and articles on the movies - indeed, the art historian John Richardson at one point wrote film reviews for him.

Le palais des souvenirs was painted in 1939, and as such appears to be the first of a string of works in which Magritte explored the theme of the landscape behind a theatre curtain. Indeed, this marked a new entry of the curtain into Magritte's compositions:

formerly, curtains tended to be shown either in the context of a window or as stand-alone objects in a landscape. This had been the case in *Le monde poétique*, a work from the 1920s which Magritte had revisited, creating a new version for Edward James in 1937. Perhaps this had brought the theme of the curtain back to Magritte's mind. Certainly, in 1940, he would return to the stage curtain device in *La belle de nuit*, in which a landscape reminiscent of the flatter parts of Belgium or of Holland is shown, allowing the sky to dominate the composition. Another oil from the same year, *Le spectacle de la nature*, shows another country scene beyond the curtain: two trees in a lush, verdant prairie; that picture is now in the Staatsgalerie Moderner Kunst, Munich, where it forms part of the Theo Wornland Collection. In that picture, in place of the flowers in *Le palais des souvenirs* floats a solitary leaf.

The fact that these pictures were signed by the artist in 1940 implies that *Le palais des souvenirs*, which was dated '1939', may have been painted towards the end of that year. This was a momentous turning point in the life of Magritte and in the history of much of the world as well, as it marked the beginning of the Second World War. *Le palais des souvenirs* may thus date from after the declaration of war, yet before the invasion of Belgium and its subsequent Occupation, which began in May the following year. Perhaps, then, *Le palais des souvenirs* was



painted against the backdrop of the *drôle de guerre*, the 'Phoney War', when little military action was taking place yet many of the nations of Europe were clearly pitted against each other. The Second World War would come to inspire Magritte to negotiate new means of representing his Surreal vision: he sought to respond to the conflict in a number of ways, often expunging any overbearing sense of the psychological oppression that was so naturally caused by it. In *Le palais des souvenirs*, by contrast, the sombre tone of the landscape underneath the curtain may hint at his own anxieties. At the same time, the theatrical posturing of the various nations may have helped to inspire the theatrical theme.

In *Le palais des souvenirs*, the fact that the curtain implies some infinite theatre hints at a new way of looking at life itself. In this way, it chimes with Magritte's constant quest to bring about an epiphany in his viewers, to point them towards a new understanding of the magical and mysterious qualities of the world around us. Everything, Magritte appears to be saying, is spectacle. Everything is illusion.

Magritte's use of the curtain in this picture invoked a device that had been employed by a number of the Old Masters as a *trompe-l'oeil* way of drawing the viewer into the composition, pointing to the artifice of the scene, and also showcasing their own ability

to paint something as lifelike as the drapery hanging in front of a picture; this was the case, for example, in several of the pictures of Johannes Vermeer. Magritte's play with the nature of the picture surface was given great scope by his use of similar devices, be it in the bunched stage curtain of *Le palais des souvenirs*, the velvet backdrop of *Le plagiat*, pierced by the landscape-silhouette of the flowers dominating the composition, or even the numerous images of naked women next to long curtains such as *La chambre de la fée* and *L'aimant*.

In those pictures, Magritte reintroduced the theme of the nude which he had explored in his earlier painting, *La magie noire*, but added this curtain element, playing with the various implied textures of the elements depicted. Magritte appears to have used the curtain device again and again after introducing it in *Le palais des souvenirs*. In it, he had found a means of adding a level of dialogue concerning the entire nature of art, of representation and of painting. By creating a perspectival landscape of seemingly colossal proportions in the background, with the curtain in the foreground, Magritte is deliberately bringing our attention to the entire process of imitation that underpins the act of painting itself. He is pointing to the artifice of his own profession, celebrating it. And the flowers floating in the foreground add a garnish, a flash of flair, that both emphasises and finalises this process of revelation.

PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE LONDON COLLECTION

λ104 FRANCIS PICABIA (1879-1953)

Transparence (Samson et Dalila)

signed 'Francis Picabia' (lower left)

oil on canvas

25 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 21 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (65.4 x 54.4 cm.)

Painted *circa* 1935-1937

£100,000-150,000

\$170,000-240,000

€120,000-180,000

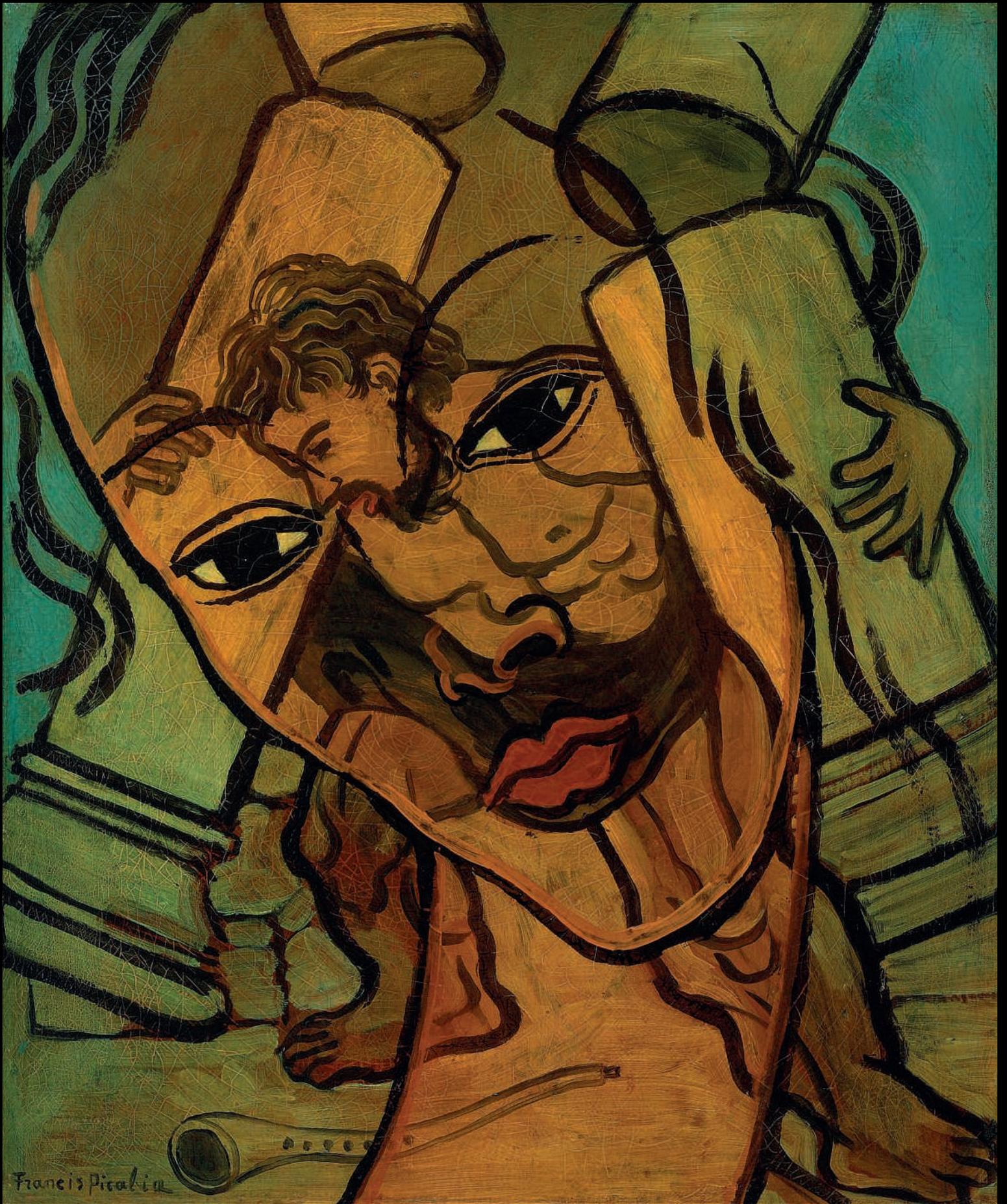
PROVENANCE:

Acquired by the grandfather of the present owner
in the 1950s.

The *Comité Picabia* has confirmed the
authenticity of this work.



Sandro Botticelli, *The Birth of Venus*, 1486. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.



λ105 RENÉ MAGRITTE (1898-1967)

L'esprit et la forme (Spirit and form)

signed 'Magritte' (upper right)
watercolour, black crayon, pencil and paper collage on paper
18% x 14¼ in. (46.7 x 36.2 cm.)
Executed in 1961

£350,000-550,000

\$580,000-900,000

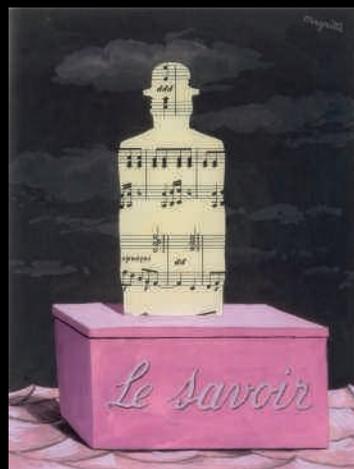
€420,000-660,000

PROVENANCE:

Lou Cosyn, Brussels, by whom probably acquired directly from the artist.
Renée Lachowsky, Brussels.
Private collection, Brussels, by whom acquired from the above in 1961, and thence by descent to the present owners.

LITERATURE:

D. Sylvester, ed., S. Whitfield & M. Raeburn, *René Magritte, Catalogue Raisonné*, vol. IV, *Gouaches, Temperas, Watercolours and Papiers Collés 1918-1967*, London, 1994, no. 1637, p. 312 (illustrated).



René Magritte, *L'Usage de la parole*, 1961, 27 x 19cm, sold, Sotheby's, London, 19 June 2006, lot 43 (\$791,127).

L'esprit et la forme was executed in 1961 and dates from the period when René Magritte had turned once more to the collage format that he had used to such great effect in his early works. Indeed, as was the case in some of his early collages, Magritte has used the cut-up paper from sheet music - in this case, apparently a waltz - as he had in the previous examples (see D. Sylvester (ed.), S. Whitfield & M. Raeburn, *René Magritte Catalogue Raisonné*, vol. IV, London, 1994, p. 312). Here, Magritte has added to the leaf-tree and *bilboquet*, which resembles a chess piece, by creating the impression of a cracked wall on the right and a jigsaw-like arrangement of forms at the top and the bottom - it is as though they were mysterious, semi-geometric stalactites and stalagmites, locking together at the bottom but seemingly coming apart at the top and tumbling down the composition. Any sense of perspectival depth is deliberately disrupted by the use of the sheet music: the collage element

is emphatic of the artifice of the entire composition.

It was in part through the collages of Max Ernst that Magritte had begun to understand the magical and mysterious juxtapositions that were to become the foundation of his entire Surreal aesthetic. As he recalled of the revelation that the German artist's example had provided, in words that are as pertinent to *L'esprit et la forme* as they were to his early collages:

'Max Ernst superbly demonstrated, through the shattering effect of collages made from old magazine illustrations, that one could easily dispense with everything that had given traditional painting its prestige. Scissors, paste, images, and some genius effectively replaced the brushes, colours, model, style, sensibility and the divine afflatus of artists' (Magritte in 1938, quoted in H. Torczyner, *Magritte: Ideas and Images*, trans. R. Miller, New York, 1977, p. 214).

Magritte



PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE SWISS COLLECTION

λ*106 MAX ERNST (1891-1976)
Untitled (La ville entière)

signed 'max ernst' (lower right)
oil on paper
9 1/8 x 12 1/8 in. (23.2 x 30.8 cm.)
Painted in 1935

£60,000-90,000
\$98,000-150,000
€71,000-110,000

PROVENANCE:

Private collection, Zurich, by whom acquired directly from the artist, and thence by descent to the present owners.

EXHIBITED:

Bern, Kunsthalle, *Max Ernst*, August - September 1956, no. 63.
Zurich, Kunsthaus, *Arnold Böcklin, Giorgio de Chirico, Max Ernst: eine Reise ins Ungewisse*, October 1997 - January 1998, no. 200.
Zurich, Kunsthaus, *Hélène de Mandrot et la Maison des artistes de La Sarraz*, February - April 1999.

LITERATURE:

W. Spies, S. & G. Metken, *Max Ernst, Oeuvre-Katalog: Werke 1929-1938*, Cologne, 1979, no. 2216, p. 339 (illustrated).



Max Ernst, *La ville entière*, 1933. Tate Modern, London.



λ*107 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

L'Oiseau-nocturne (Nocturnal Bird)

signed 'Miró' (lower right); signed 'Joan Miró',
dated '30-8-939' and titled (on the reverse)

oil on canvas

16¼ x 10⅝ in. (41.3 x 27 cm.)

Painted on 30 August 1939

£1,000,000-1,500,000

\$1,700,000-2,400,000

€1,200,000-1,800,000

PROVENANCE:

Private collection, Zurich, and thence by descent to the present owners.

EXHIBITED:

Basel, Kunsthalle, *Joan Miró*, March - April 1956, no. 48.

London, Tate Gallery, *Joan Miró, Painting, sculpture and ceramics*, August - October 1964, no. 164; this exhibition later travelled to Zurich, Kunsthhaus, October - December 1964.

Barcelona, Fundació Joan Miró, *Impactes, Joan Miró 1929-1941*, no. 77, p. 127 (illustrated p. 109).

LITERATURE:

J. Prévert & G. Ribemont-Dessaignes, *Joan Miró*, Paris, 1956, p. 144 (illustrated).

J. Dupin, *Joan Miró, Life and Work*, London, 1962, no. 527, p. 540 (illustrated p. 339).

G. Weelen, *Miró*, Paris, 1984, no. 157, p. 117.

J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró, Catalogue raisonné, Paintings*, vol. II, 1931-1941, Paris 2000, no. 618, p. 224 (illustrated).



Joan Miró, *Autoportrait I*, 1937-38. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Miró painted *L'Oiseau-nocturne* in the village of Varengeville-sur-Mer, Normandy, on the Channel coast, during a sojourn that lasted from mid-August 1939 through late May 1940. He made his first painting there on 22 August (*Jeune fille courant*, Dupin, no. 614), and completed *L'Oiseau-nocturne* on the 30th. These canvases marked the beginning of an astonishing sequence of works Miró went on to create in Varengeville, culminating in the first of the celebrated wartime Constellations on 21 January 1940 (*Le Lever du soleil*; Dupin, no. 628), followed by nine more (Dupin, nos. 629-637) before the artist and his family fled south in late May to avoid air raids and approaching German forces during the invasion of France. 'All the works of this period, inspired directly or indirectly by the place where they were conceived, are of capital importance,' Jacques Dupin declared (J. Dupin, *Miró*, Paris, 2012, p. 237). He added the assessment of the influential American critic Clement Greenberg, who claimed that during this period Miró's work 'reached then what I consider to be its greatest height so far' (C. Greenberg, *Miró*, New York, 1948, p. 27).

Note the date of *L'Oiseau-nocturne* in this distinguished line of pictures—30 August 1939. Less than forty-eight hours later, in the early morning light of 1 September, the German Luftwaffe bombed military targets in Poland, as mechanized armored units overran that nation's feeble border defenses. On 3 September Great Britain and France, under treaty with the Polish government, declared war on Germany. It was then not quite twenty-one years

after the end of the First World War that a second cataclysmic conflict quickly engulfed Europe.

The ferocity of the German onslaught came as a shock, although Miró and many others knew that such a terrible event was imminent and inevitable. Indeed, 1939 had begun badly for Miró and his Spanish friends — on 26 January Franco's fascist legions occupied Barcelona, the last stronghold of the Loyalist republic, bringing the bloody civil war in Spain to its tragic conclusion. The growing momentum toward an all-out European conflict rose to a head on 23 August, when the German and Soviet foreign ministers signed a non-aggression pact, signaling that some momentous military undertaking would soon come to pass. The French government decreed a general mobilization three days later.

Miró's concerns during this ominous period were primarily two-fold: he sought to engage his creative work in the tumultuous events of the day, while preserving for himself and his work, his wife and daughter some viable measure of safety and well-being. 'The outer world, the world of contemporary events, always has an influence on the painter,' Miró declared in the *Cahiers d'Art* issue of April-May 1939. 'The horrible tragedy that we are experiencing might produce a few isolated geniuses and give them an increased vigor. If the powers of backwardness known as fascism continue to spread, however, if they push us into the dead end of cruelty and incomprehension, that will be the end of





Joan Miró, *L'Échelle de l'évasion*, 31 January 1940. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

all human dignity... There is no longer an ivory tower. Retreat and isolation are no longer permissible. What counts now in a work of art is...how it implicates lived facts and human truth in its upward movement' (in M. Rowell, ed., *Joan Miró: Selected Writings and Interviews*, Boston, 1986, p. 166).

Precautions were also in order, and would soon take precedence over such idealistic pronouncements. Miró, possibly as early as July, had placed his work in storage, and sometime by mid-August relocated himself and his family to Varengeville, where Braque had made his country home. Miró had visited Varengeville the previous summer as a guest of the architect Paul Nelson, for whose home he had executed a trio of mural paintings (Dupin, no. 605). This time he rented a cottage on the Route de l'Eglise called the Clos de Sansonettes. 'I was working very well in this beautiful country, and here we are, now plunged into this nightmare,' he wrote to his New York dealer Pierre Matisse on 25 August, lamenting the inexorable slide towards war (in C. Lanchner, *Joan Miró*, exh. cat., The Museum of Modern Art New York, 1993, p. 334).

Dupin recorded the pictures done prior to the Constellations as comprising two distinct sets, which he classified as *Varengeville I* and II. *L'Oiseau-nocturne* belongs to the first group of five small canvases done on what Dupin described as a 'raspberry red' background during August-September. *Varengeville II*, done in October-November, consists of nine paintings executed directly on raw burlap in larger dimensions than the first set. In these later works Miró practiced an increasingly dense graphism of linear signs, leading directly into the all-over configuration of imagery that characterizes the Constellations. The use of the raw burlap as a ground lends the *Varengeville II* paintings a darker aspect than the luminously carmine first set, an indication that more troubled thoughts had beset the painter as with each passing week the wartime situation appeared increasingly dire. On 17 September Soviet armies invaded Poland from the east. Crushed on both sides between the two totalitarian powers, with Warsaw suffering

under devastating air attacks — while the Western allies were powerless to help — the Polish government surrendered on 27 September.

One may characterize the reddish paintings of the *Varengeville I* set as the calm before the storm, but bearing ominous signs of menace in the offing. A great black bird, with an alarmingly distended phallic appendage, here fills the night sky over the form of a great earth mother. 'The backgrounds are very suggestive: impregnation of red in the first series,' Dupin wrote, '...the colour is very intense: these touches are like sparks in the night' (*op. cit.*, 2012, p. 243). 'Red sky at morning,' the old saying goes, 'shepherd take warning.' If he were gazing eastward, Miró has caught sight of a black sun rising on the horizon, an inauspicious sign. Or if looking westward, the setting black sun, as if burnt out, lightless and cold, may betoken a world destined to become barren and lifeless. Nevertheless, the overall import of the imagery is visionary in a truly cosmic dimension, and so strikingly animated that Miró projects more a sense of profound mystery and wonderment than any inclination toward foreboding and despair.

Indeed, during the first months of the war in France, apart from a few air raids and limited ground incursions, the western front remained relatively quiet, a lull or reprieve that the British and French dubbed 'the phony war.' The French military felt secure in the strength of their Maginot line, a vast network of supposedly impregnable fortresses that faced the Rhine. Varengeville likewise provided for Miró at least a temporary sense of refuge, a 'splendid isolation' from events of the day, in which he could paint. He and his family walked along the Channel beaches at night, reveling in the vast array of stars, constellations and galactic swirls, which he rendered in *L'Oiseau-nocturne*. 'At Varengeville-sur-Mer, in 1939, I began a new stage in my work which had its source in music and nature,' the artist explained to James Johnson Sweeney in 1948. 'I felt a deep desire to escape. I closed myself within myself purposely. The night, music, and the stars began to play a major role in suggesting my paintings' (M. Rowell, ed., *Joan Miró: Selected Writings and Interviews*, Boston, 1986, p. 209). The image of *l'échelle de l'évasion*, 'the ladder of escape,' does in fact provide the title for both a *Varengeville II* painting (Dupin, no. 626), and the second of the *Constellations* (31 January 1940; Dupin, no. 629).

Because of the war, none of the Varengeville paintings could be included in Miró's first ever retrospective, which James Johnson Sweeney curated for the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and was viewed November 1941-January 1942. The *Constellations*, shipped from Barcelona (where, after a spell in Palma, Mallorca, Miró spent most of the rest of the war) were first seen at the Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York, in January-February 1945. Both exhibitions had a major impact on the young American painters who would constitute the pioneering post-war New York School. Concluding his text for the 1941 MoMA retrospective catalogue, Sweeney praised Miró for having 'carried on most consistently those researches which have brought western painting from the austere disciplines of cubism to new forms and new evocations... Miró's vitality, laughter, naïve lyricism and love of life are, today, auguries of the new painting in a new period which is to come' (*Joan Miró*, exh. cat., the Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1941, p. 78).



PROPERTY FROM A PRIVATE SWISS COLLECTION

λ*108 MAX ERNST (1891-1976)

Portrait de Walter Gropius

signed, titled and inscribed 'Portrait de W. Gropius par Max Ernst' (on the reverse)

red and black ink on roof tile from Chateau La Sarraz

14 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 6 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 1 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (35.8 x 17 x 3 cm.)

Executed in August 1935

£40,000-70,000

\$66,000-110,000

€48,000-83,000

PROVENANCE:

Private collection, Zurich, a gift from the artist, and thence by descent to the present owners.

EXHIBITED:

Zurich, Kunsthaus, *Max Ernst*, March - April 1963.

Berlin, Neue Nationalgalerie, *Max Ernst, Die*

Retrospektive, March - May 1999, no. 121

(illustrated); this exhibition later travelled to

Munich, Haus der Kunst, June - September 1999.

Basel, Museum Tinguely, *Max Ernst. Im Garten der*

Nymphe Ancolie, September 2007 - January 2008.

LITERATURE:

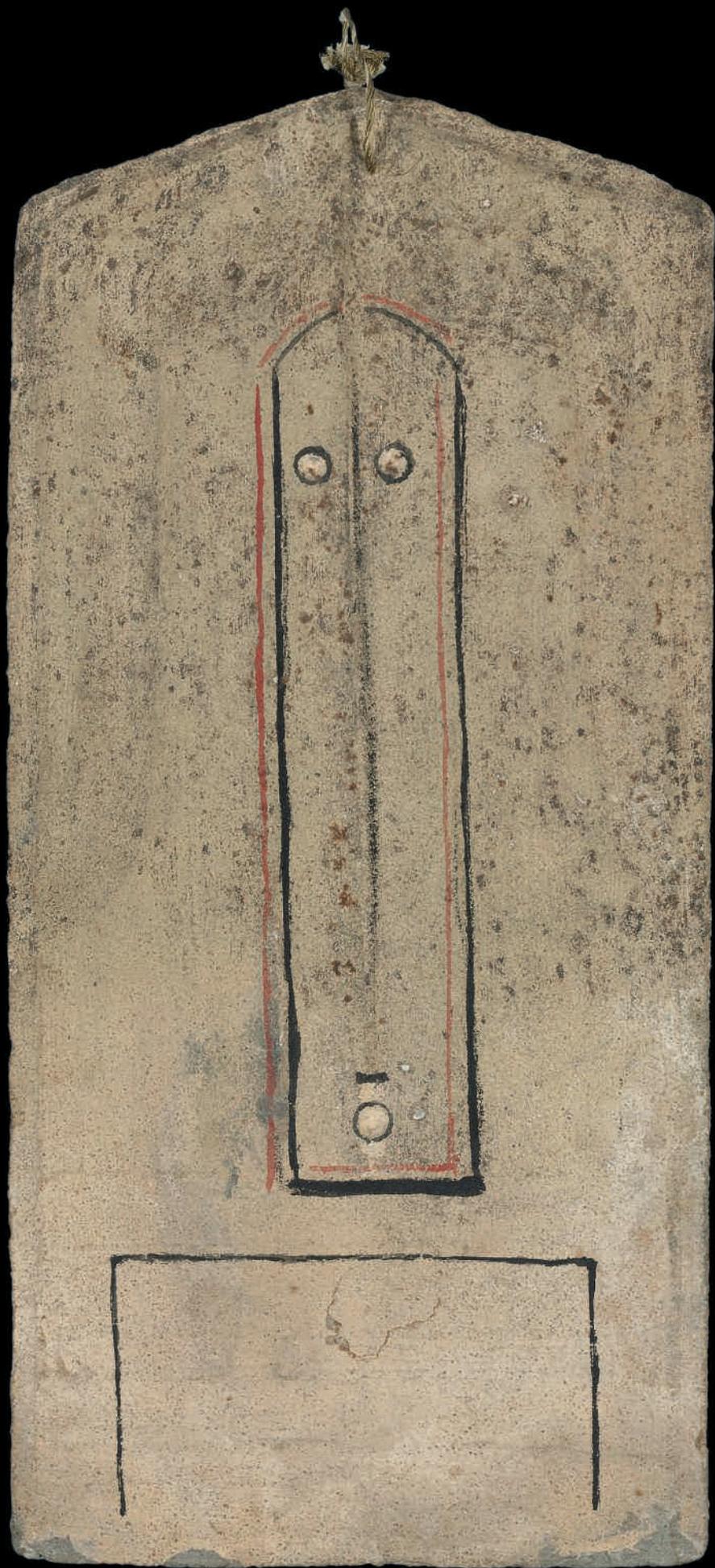
W. Spies, S. & G. Metken, *Max Ernst, Oeuvre-*

Katalog: Werke 1929-1938, Cologne, 1979, no.

2144, p. 297 (illustrated).



Alternative views of the present lot.



λ*109 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

Tête d'homme IV (Head of a Man IV)

signed and dated 'Miró. 4.31.' (lower right);

titled and numbered 'IV' (on the reverse).

oil on canvas

23⁷/₈ x 26¹/₈ in. (60.5 x 66.1 cm.)

Painted in April 1931

£250,000-350,000

\$410,000-570,000

€300,000-410,000

PROVENANCE:

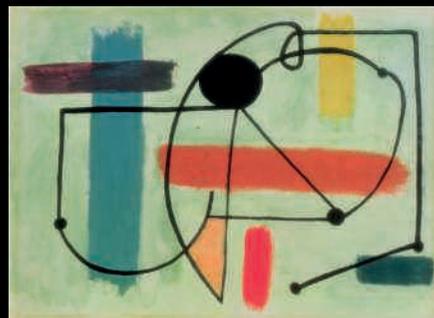
Christian Zervos, a gift from the artist *circa* 1931.
Private collection, Zurich, by 1949, and thence by
descent to the present owners.

EXHIBITED:

Bern, Kunsthalle, *Joan Miró, Margrit Linck i Oskar Dalvit*, April - May 1949, no. 15, p. 7.
Basel, Kunsthalle, *Joan Miró*, March - April 1956, no. 32 (illustrated on the catalogue cover).
London, Tate Gallery, *Joan Miró, Painting, sculpture and ceramics*, August - October 1964, no. 91, p. 30 (illustrated pl. 18b, titled 'Head of a Man II'); this exhibition later travelled to Zurich, Kunsthhaus, October - December 1964.
Tokyo, National Museum of Modern Art, *Joan Miró*, August - October 1966, no. 38, illustrated p. 51; this exhibition later travelled to Kyoto, National Museum of Modern Art, October - November 1966.
Munich, Haus der Kunst, *Elan vital oder das Auge des Eros*, May - August 1994, no. 497 (illustrated upside down fig. 336).
Basel, Fondation Beyeler, *Calder Miró*, May - September 2004, no. 101 (illustrated p. 115).
Vézelay, Musée Zervos, 2007, on loan.

LITERATURE:

J. Dupin, *Joan Miró, Life and Work*, London, 1962, no. 270, p. 522 (illustrated).
J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró, Catalogue raisonné, Paintings*, vol. II, 1931-1941, Paris, 2000, no. 350, p. 31 (illustrated).
'Miró s'installe à Vézelay' in *L' Yonne républicaine*, 15-16 September 2007, illustrated.



Joan Miró, *Torse de femme nue*, August 1931.
Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia. The Louise and Walter Arensberg Collection.

The narrative of production in Miró's *oeuvre* continually followed a process that alternated between creation, de-creation and re-creation. During the late 1920's the artist declared he wanted to "assassinate painting," and to this end pursued a plan of attack in which he often resorted to severely reduced formal means, the use of lowly materials, the construction of three-dimensional objects, or simply any approach to making art that stood apart from—and indeed undermined—the conventionally practiced technique of painting in oil on canvas, even in its then most advanced modernist guise. The large pictures that Miró had done during 1930 mark an extreme phase in this furious process of "successive destructions" that constitutes his concept of "anti-painting"; these are some of his wildest, most unaccountable creations (Dupin, nos. 318-322). Because "Miró himself has asserted that he wanted to kill painting," Georges Bataille observed, "the decomposition was pushed to the point where nothing remained but some formless blotches on the cover (or, if you prefer, on the tombstone) of painting's box of tricks. Thereafter, little colored and mad elements irrupted anew, which, today, have disappeared once more in his pictures, leaving only the trace of one knows not what disaster" (quoted in *Joan Miró: Painting and Anti-Painting*, exh. cat., The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2008, p. 89).

The year 1931, however, brought a new phase of renewal in this cyclic process. To mark this change Miró created during April several roughly schematic renderings of the head itself, the present painting and two others (Dupin, nos. 348-349), which appear to brim with excited vibrations of gestating ideas for the future. Emphatic lines of black paint weave in and about the pale, loosely washed ground, corralling

small flashes of pure color, "clearing the way," as Dupin noted, "for a new more affirmative, more powerful style which will subject lyrical flights to the rigorous control of the plastic artist. Poetry remains the supreme goal of Miró's art, but his means for attaining it became richer and more complex. In short, his purpose became that of disciplining expression by opposing to lyricism the fruitful resistance of rigorous structures" (*Miró*, Paris, 2012, p. 161).

These *Têtes d'homme* are the progenitors of the extended series of paintings on Ingres paper that Miró created during the summer and early autumn of that year (Dupin, nos. 362-392). The artist described his method in a 1978 interview with Lluís Permanyer: "I painted this way after having become obsessed with 'assassinating painting.' I wanted to eliminate at the root an entire decrepit art, the old conception of painting, so that another art, more pure and authentic, would be born. So it was a question of a 'positive crime'... I demanded a complete purity of spirit. I executed works from that period without any previous sketches... I did exactly what Matisse said to do and in a more profound way than the surrealists: I let myself be guided by my hand. Then I added the color. Color was very important in these works, because the black lines were very strong and left large white spaces; then I added the spots in oil to give the colors a maximum of richness and above all to achieve the creation of an atmosphere. Since the topic did not seem sufficiently clear, I almost always used realistic titles that came to me as I worked on the canvas and the composition led me to represent a man or a woman. I never did it in reverse, tying the work to the title" (quoted in *Joan Miró 1883/1993*, Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona, 1993, p. 280).



λ*110 CARLO CARRÀ (1881-1966)

Solitudine

signed and dated 'C. Carrà 917' (lower left)

oil on canvas

36 x 21⁷/₈ in. (91.5 x 55.5 cm.)

Painted between 1917 and 1926

£2,500,000-3,500,000

\$4,100,000-5,700,000

€3,000,000-4,100,000

PROVENANCE:

Private collection, Zurich, by whom acquired directly from the artist circa 1926, and thence by descent to the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Milan, Galleria Chini, *Mostra personale del pittore futurista Carlo Carrà*, December 1917 - January 1918 (probably in the first state).

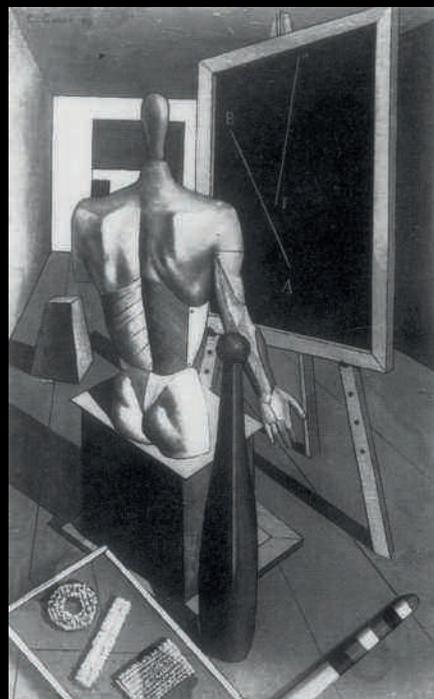
Galleria L'Epoca, May - June 1918.

Zurich, Kunsthaus, *Italienische Maler*, March - May 1927, no. 15.

Sasso Marconi, *La Casa dell'Arte, Carlo Carrà, Mostra del Centenario, 100 dipinti e 35 disegni dal 1900 al 1966*, February - April 1981, no. 19 (illustrated).

Milan, Palazzo Reale, *Carrà, Mostra antologica*, April - June 1987.

Rome, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, *XIII Esposizione Quadriennale d'Arte, "Valori Plastici"*, October 1998 - January 1999, no. 50, p. 312 (both first and final state illustrated p. 35; final state illustrated again p. 222)..



Carlo Carrà, *Solitudine*. First state, published in *Valori Plastici*, no. 1, 1921.

LITERATURE:

The artist's Archives: photo of the work in its first state (signed and dated upper left 'C. Carrà 1917').

"L'Illustrazione medica italiana", 1921 (first state illustrated, titled 'Impressioni dell'ospedale neurologico "Villa del Seminario" a Ferrara').

M. Broglio, ed., *Valori Plastici, Anno III*, no. 1, Rome, 1921 (first state illustrated, signed and dated upper left 'C. Carrà 919').

A. Soffici, *Carlo Carrà, Arte Moderna Italiana*, vol. XI, Milan, 1928 (illustrated).

G. Cerrina, "Carlo Carrà" in *La Provincia di Bolzano*, 26 November 1932.

V. Costantini, *Pittura italiana contemporanea*, Milan, 1934, pp. 394 & 426 (illustrated p. 221).

R. Huyge, *Histoire de l'art contemporain*, Paris, 1935.

C. L. Ragghianti, *Carrà* in "Critica d'arte", 1936.

R. Longhi, *Carlo Carrà*, Milan, 1937 (illustrated pl. VII).

M. Masciotta, "La pittura metafisica", in *Letteratura*, 1941.

G. Pacchioni, *Carlo Carrà*, Milan, 1945 (illustrated pl. 11).

J. Thrall Soby, *Twentieth Century Italian Art*, New York, 1949.

L. Vitali, *Preferenze*, Milan, 1950.

C. Zervos, *Cahiers d'art I*, Paris, 1950.

R. Carrieri, *Pittura e scultura d'avanguardia in Italia*, Milan, 1950.

U. Apollonio, *Pittura Metafisica*, Venice, 1950 (first state illustrated).

C. Cardazzo, *Carrà*, Venice, 1952.

W. Schmalenbach, *Grosse Meister Moderner Malerei*, Lucerne, 1957.

R. Modesti, *Pittura italiana contemporanea*, Milan, 1958.

M. Valsecchi, *La pittura metafisica*, Milan, 1958.

M. Valsecchi, *Carrà*, Milan, 1962.

E. Cecchi, *Carrà*, in Exh. Cat., *Carrà*, Milan, 1962.

S. Branzi, "Carlo Carrà", in *L'osservatore*, 1962.

G. Ballo, *La linea dell'arte italiana*, Rome, 1964.

M. Carrà, *Carrà, Tutta l'opera pittorica*, vol. I, 1900-1930, Milan, 1967, no. 3/17, p. 585 (illustrated p. 315).

M. Carrà & P. Bigongiari, *L'opera complete di Carrà, dal futurismo alla metafisica e al realismo mitico, 1910-1930*, Milan, 1970, no. 72, p. 91 (illustrated pl. XXI).

C. Giedion-Welcker, *Schriften 1926-1971*, Cologne, 1973, no. 38 (illustrated).

C. Carrà, *La mia vita*, Rome, 1981, pp. 137 & 138.

Exh. cat., *Carlo Carrà*, Rome, 1994, p. 131 (both first and final state illustrated).

F. Rovati, *Carrà tra futurismo e metafisica*, Milan, 2011, no. 26, p. 122 (first state illustrated).



C. C. Wright 1917



Giorgio de Chirico, *Il Profeta*, 1915. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.



Giorgio de Chirico, *Il filosofo e il poeta*, 1914. Private collection.

Solitudine (Solitude), despite its title, is an important testimony to one of the most intense, most influential encounters in the history of Italian modern art. First started in the middle of the First World War, in a withdrawn hospital outside Ferrara, the painting commemorates one of the most significant years in the career of Carlo Carrà, when in 1917 he met and worked closely with Giorgio de Chirico. Carrà worked on the painting between 1917 and 1926 at the latest, the year in which the work was acquired by the family of the present owner in its second, current state. While *Solitudine* testifies to the intellectual bond that Carrà and de Chirico shared that year, the work also states Carrà's singularity, expressing some of his deepest beliefs about art and situating his metaphysical art into an orbit distinct from that of de Chirico's.

Set in the enclosed space of a bare room, the scenery in *Solitudine* appears as reminiscent of a science lesson. Left alone with these objects of contemplation, the viewer is confronted with the serious tools of learning: a blackboard displaying an unfinished geometry theorem and an assembled anatomy model. Yet, depicted in the foreground, a bright red skittle breaks this solemn atmosphere of pedagogy, introducing instead a symbol of play, instability, and childhood. Two worlds seem thus to collide in this placid scene of abandoned activity, in which human presence has been replaced by the powerful poise of some commanding objects.

Dated 1917 by the artist, *Solitudine* was started around the time of Carrà's encounter with de Chirico. Their meeting was fostered as much by a mutual friend – the painter Ardengo Soffici – as by fate. In January 1917, Carrà was assigned to the 27th Infantry Regiment, serving in Pieve di Cento, near Ferrara. In February, he received a letter from Soffici lamenting the fact that he had not been deployed in Ferrara: 'It is a real shame that you were not sent to Ferrara. There you would have met the de Chirico brothers'. He nevertheless urged him: 'If you go to Ferrara, you absolutely have to look for them' (Soffici, Letter to Carrà, 16 February 1917, quoted in M. Pasquali, 'Carrà e Ferrara, 1917', pp. 89-96, in *Carlo Carrà 1881-1966*, exh. cat., Rome, 1994, p. 91). De Chirico and his brother Alberto Savinio had in fact arrived in Ferrara in 1915, serving in the same regiment to which Carrà had been assigned. A couple of weeks later, de Chirico and Carrà made their first written contact. De Chirico wrote to him: 'I regret not having found you; I would have liked you to see some of my most recent paintings' (De Chirico, letter to Carrà, 27 February 1917, quoted *ibid.*, p. 91). In March, however, the two painters had finally met. In a triumphal letter to his friend Carrà, Soffici cheered: 'My dearest friend, I was told by de Chirico that you have finally met and that he has great respect for you and that he loves you' (Soffici, letter to Carrà, 28 March 1917, quoted *ibid.*, p. 92). In the following weeks, Carrà and de Chirico met again, exchanging opinions and planning to publish an album of their works together.

Ultimately, however, Carrà and de Chirico's artistic friendship would be precipitated by the trauma of war. In April, de Chirico was hospitalised at the Military Neurological Hospital in Ferrara, as 'neurasthenic'. Two weeks later, Carrà arrived at the same hospital suffering psychic depression. Their illnesses proved to be a blessing in disguise: withdrawn from the horrors of war and able to share their anxieties, the two painters had the chance to sublimate their disquieting feelings, working closely together on a series of paintings, destined to become highly influential for generations to come. In May, Carrà wrote in a letter: 'I'm living through these days of military bestiality with a dear friend and together we sustain each other in order not to end up in despair. Here we can have that bit of calm that allows us to work on our paintings' (Carrà, Letter to Gherardo Marone, 5 May 1917, quoted *ibid.*, p. 92). *Solitudine* was born in that context of unexpected calm, in which the troubled days of war still resonated in waves of angst and consternation. It is very interesting, in fact, that the

first title of *Solitudine* was *Impressioni dell'Ospedale Neurologico "Villa del Seminario" a Ferrara* (Impressions of the Neurological Hospital "Villa del Seminario" in Ferrara), a more narrative and descriptive account of the seminal moment in Carrà's life, defined by the almost surreal elimination of the war dramas in the estranged atmosphere of the neurological hospital. The evolution from this first title to *Solitudine* (Loneliness) which is also in itself a very metaphysical state of mind, is also symptomatic of this process of simplification from one state to the final, from a narrative preoccupation to a more pure solution, in line with Valori Plastici.

In its composition, *Solitudine* bears the sign of Carrà and de Chirico's strong artistic bonding. Presenting a mannequin staring at an enigmatic board, the painting is reminiscent of two compositions de Chirico executed a few years earlier: *Le Vaticinateur* (1915) and *Le Poète et le philosophe* (1914-1915). Both works evoke the intimate, mystical world of creation through the figure of a contemplative mannequin and the hypnotic abyss of a blackboard. Through those paintings de Chirico wished to evoke the figure of the artist as a seer, as the interpreter of the enigma of existence, revealing a new hidden dimension. In 1917, Carrà wrote to Soffici: 'together with de Chirico, we discuss and paint new realities', suggesting that by then he too shared de Chirico's approach to art (Carrà, Letter to Soffici, 5 June 1917, quoted *ibid*, p. 92). Re-elaborating a theme explored by de Chirico to express the role of the metaphysical painter, *Solitudine* might have served Carrà as the gateway to *Pittura Metafisica*, preparing the ground for works such as *La camera incantata* (1917), *Madre e figlio* (1917) and *La musa metafisica* (1917).

In its distilled composition and linear structure, *Solitudine* ultimately expresses Carrà's individual perspective on *Pittura Metafisica*, manifesting his very personal approach to figurative painting. The work as it appears, in fact, constitutes a second state, the changing of the composition revealing how Carrà distanced himself from de Chirico. A reproduction of the painting in its earlier state was published in 1921 in *Valori Plastici*, the influential art review published by Edita and Mario Broglio, to which Carrà, de Chirico and Savinio contributed extensively. The composition shown there was more elaborate: surrounding the mannequin was a series of abandoned, out-of-proportion objects much reminiscent of de Chirico's still life compositions from 1916-1917. In particular, Carrà placed a tray of biscuits in the foreground, a detail which de Chirico himself had lifted from the shop windows of Ferrara the previous year. The perspective of the room appears more vertiginous, an impression which is reinforced by the oblique orientations of the coloured baton on the floor and of the blackboard. Overall, that first state aimed to achieve the same spatial ambiguity that de Chirico was exploring in his paintings at the time.

Carrà eventually reintroduced stability and balance into the picture through a series of changes, certainly completed before 1926, date in which the painting was acquired by the family of the present owner in its present state. Reworking *Solitudine*, Carrà lowered the furthest wall in order to reduce the foreshortening of the room and straightened the plane of the blackboard, bringing it almost parallel to the background. He also elongated the pedestal of the mannequin, giving its figure more élan and stability, and erased all other elements except for the skittle, which – of reduced dimensions – now serves as the central, vertical point of focus for the whole composition. Through these changes, Carrà gave the composition rigour and symmetry, two principles that remained extraneous to de Chirico's works of the period.

The differences in Carrà and de Chirico's compositions are reflected in the written accounts the two artists left on their art. For de Chirico, *Pittura Metafisica* had to escape all 'human limits: logic and common sense', in order to enter 'the regions of childhood vision and dream'. De Chirico



The present lot



Carlo Carrà, *Madre e figlio*, 1917. Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan.



Carlo Carrà, *La camera incantata*, 1917. Pinacoteca di Brera, Milan.



Carlo Carrà, *L'idolo ermafrodito*, 1917. Private collection.

specified: 'it is most important that we should rid art of all that it has contained of recognizable material to date, all familiar subject matter' (G. de Chirico, 'Mystery and Creation', pp. 60-61, in C. Harrison, P. Wood, eds., *Art in Theory 1900-1990*, Oxford, 1992, p. 60). By contrast, Carrà wrote: 'Ordinary things reveal those forms of simplicity that indicates a upper state of the soul, which constitutes all the secret magnificence of art' (C. Carrà, 'Delle cose ordinarie', in *Classici dell'arte: L'Opera Completa di Carrà*, Milan, 1970, p. 86). While de Chirico strived to capture a different reality beyond the quotidian and inspired by the irrational strong sensations of dreams, Carrà maintained a more intellectual approach, rooted in the unexpected amazement provoked by simple things. Even though in 1917, Carrà let the objects and figures of de Chirico's *Pittura Metafisica* invade his work, the two different states of *Solitudine* illustrate how he eventually filtered them through a personal lens, shaped by his own sense of artistic tradition.

Carrà's involvement with *Pittura Metafisica* in 1917 was paralleled by a growing interest for the masters of the Renaissance, which in fact permeates *Solitudine*. In 1916, leaving behind him his Futurist experience, Carrà published two studies in *La Voce*, one dedicated to Giotto (*Parlata su Giotto*), the other to Paolo Uccello (*Paolo Uccello Costruttore*). Later on, he explicitly acknowledged the link between his interest in Renaissance art and his involvement with *Pittura Metafisica*: 'with *Pittura Metafisica* (...) we tried to re-establish that superior equilibrium that we had found so magnificently expressed in the work of Piero [della Francesca]' (C. Carrà, quoted in A. Monferini, 'Il platonismo di Carrà e le opera metafisiche tra il 1916-1919', pp. 81-88, in *Carlo Carrà 1881-1966*, exh. cat., Rome, 1994, p. 87). Viewed from this perspective, Carrà's mannequins acquire a different meaning from those of de Chirico's. While in de Chirico's paintings the mannequin conveys the dread of a machine impending onto the human form, in Carrà it embodies an

effort to understand and intellectualise the human form. Maurizio Calvesi traced the influence of the plates featured in Dürer's treatise on human proportions in paintings such as *Solitudine*: divided into modules, the mannequin expressed Carrà's desire – as it had been Dürer's – of understanding the world through its art, grasping the hidden rules of nature. *Solitudine* opened the way to works such as *L'Idolo Ermafrodito*, in which the scientific appearance of the mannequin has given form to a more humanised, idealised form, reminiscent of the eternal figures of Renaissance art. Triggered by his encounter with de Chirico, Carrà's metaphysical phase allowed the artist to develop his own sense of tradition, in which the force of Renaissance art found a new way into Modernity.

If *Solitudine* in its second state signalled Carrà's independence from de Chirico's *Pittura Metafisica*, its first state would however prove to be one of the most influential images for the European avant-garde. The reproductions of Carrà's metaphysical works in *Valori Plastici* grabbed the attention of artists such as Max Ernst, Salvador Dalí and George Grosz, providing them with a language they could use in order to express their fascination for the uncanny and for the malaise in modern society. In the 1920s, Carrà pushed forward that sense of historical continuation expressed in the second state of *Solitudine*, adhering to the 'retour à l'ordre' in order to explore tradition in a more overt way. Telling the story of Carrà and de Chirico's encounter, while tracing Carrà's personal trajectory, however, *Solitudine* remains one of the most emblematic works of *Pittura Metafisica*, marking the dawn of Modernism. Just after Carrà had met de Chirico, Soffici exulted: 'After the war we will achieve great and marvellous things' (Soffici, Letter to Carrà, 28 March 1917, quoted in M. Pasquali, 'Carrà e Ferrara, 1917', pp. 89-96, in *Carlo Carrà 1881-1966*, exh. cat., Rome, 1994, p. 92). First started before the end of the war, *Solitudine* proves instead that, already in 1917, that moment had arrived.



λ111 GIORGIO DE CHIRICO (1888-1978)

Leone e leonessa in riva al mare

signed 'g. de Chirico' (upper right)

oil on canvas

21¼ x 25½ in. (54 x 65.5 cm.)

Painted in 1926-1927

£120,000-180,000

\$200,000-290,000

€150,000-210,000

PROVENANCE:

Galleria Tega, Milan.

Waddington Galleries, London.

Acquired from the above by the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Milan, Palazzo Reale, *De Chirico. Gli anni Venti*, March - April 1987, p. 232 (illustrated p. 233).

Tokyo, Garden Museum of Fine Art, *Giorgio de Chirico 1920-1950*, July - August 1993, no. 26, p. 125 (illustrated p. 62; dated '1926-1927'); this exhibition later travelled to Osaka, Natio Bijutsukan, August - September 1993 and Hiroshima, Fukuyama Museum of Art, October - December 1993.

This work is sold with a photo-certificate from the *Fondazione Giorgio e Isa de Chirico*, Rome.



Giorgio de Chirico, *Cavalli in riva al mare*, 1929. Sold, Christie's, London, 18 October 2013, lot 103 (\$683,767).

Painted between 1926 and 1927, *Leone e leonessa in riva al mare* presents a rare, unique variation of a theme largely explored by Giorgio de Chirico in the 1920s: horses by the sea. In the catalogue of the 1987 exhibition *De Chirico, gli anni Venti*, Maurizio Fagiolo dell'Arco qualified the picture as 'A unique work in the history of de Chirico's career' (*De Chirico: gli anni Venti*, exh. cat., Milan, 1987, p. 232). Evoking exotic scenery, the picture appears as a fascinating, yet reverential portrait of lions, presented as powerful, stately and symbolic creatures. They seem to roam this idealised and intellectualised perception of Antiquity: a world made of vast seas, glorious ruins and profound meanings. The intense red tones of the palette are characteristic of de Chirico's paintings of the 1920s and are reminiscent of the earthy colours used in Roman mural painting, once again evoking the great civilizations of the past.

In 1926, de Chirico returned to Paris, where the enigma of his early *Pittura Metafisica* had preceded him, igniting the imaginations of the Surrealists. By the mid-1920s, however, de Chirico had abandoned his earlier style to explore new compositions which conjured a universe

animated by the myth of Antiquity and by epic scenes. Although new works such as *Leone e leonessa in riva al mare* left the Surrealists surprised, they aroused the enthusiasm of intellectuals such as Jean Cocteau and collectors such as Léonce Rosenberg. In 1928, Rosenberg commissioned de Chirico with the decoration of the living room of his luxurious Parisian apartment. The project was part of an ambitious decorative cycle that Rosenberg had devised, bringing together some of the most boldly creative artists of the time, namely Francis Picabia, Fernand Léger and Max Ernst. On that occasion, Rosenberg and de Chirico planned a series of Roman gladiatorial combat scenes. On one of the panels, de Chirico returned to the theme of the lions first explored in *Leone e leonessa in riva al mare*, choosing to depict a violent fight between gladiator and lions, revealing his continued interest in the theme: lions – savage, yet noble creatures associated with Classical art, biblical scenes and the wild – were a subject for de Chirico, and are here shown, dignified in an ageless setting that taps into his notion of cyclical time.



λ*112 MAX ERNST (1891-1976)

Le soleil sur terre

signed 'max ernst' (lower right)

oil on paper

10½ x 8½ in. (27 x 22 cm.)

Painted in 1960

£50,000-80,000

\$82,000-130,000

€60,000-95,000

PROVENANCE:

Alexander Iolas Gallery, New York.

Thomas Gibson Fine Art, London.

Galerie Beyeler, Basel.

Acquired from the above by the family of the present owner in 1971.

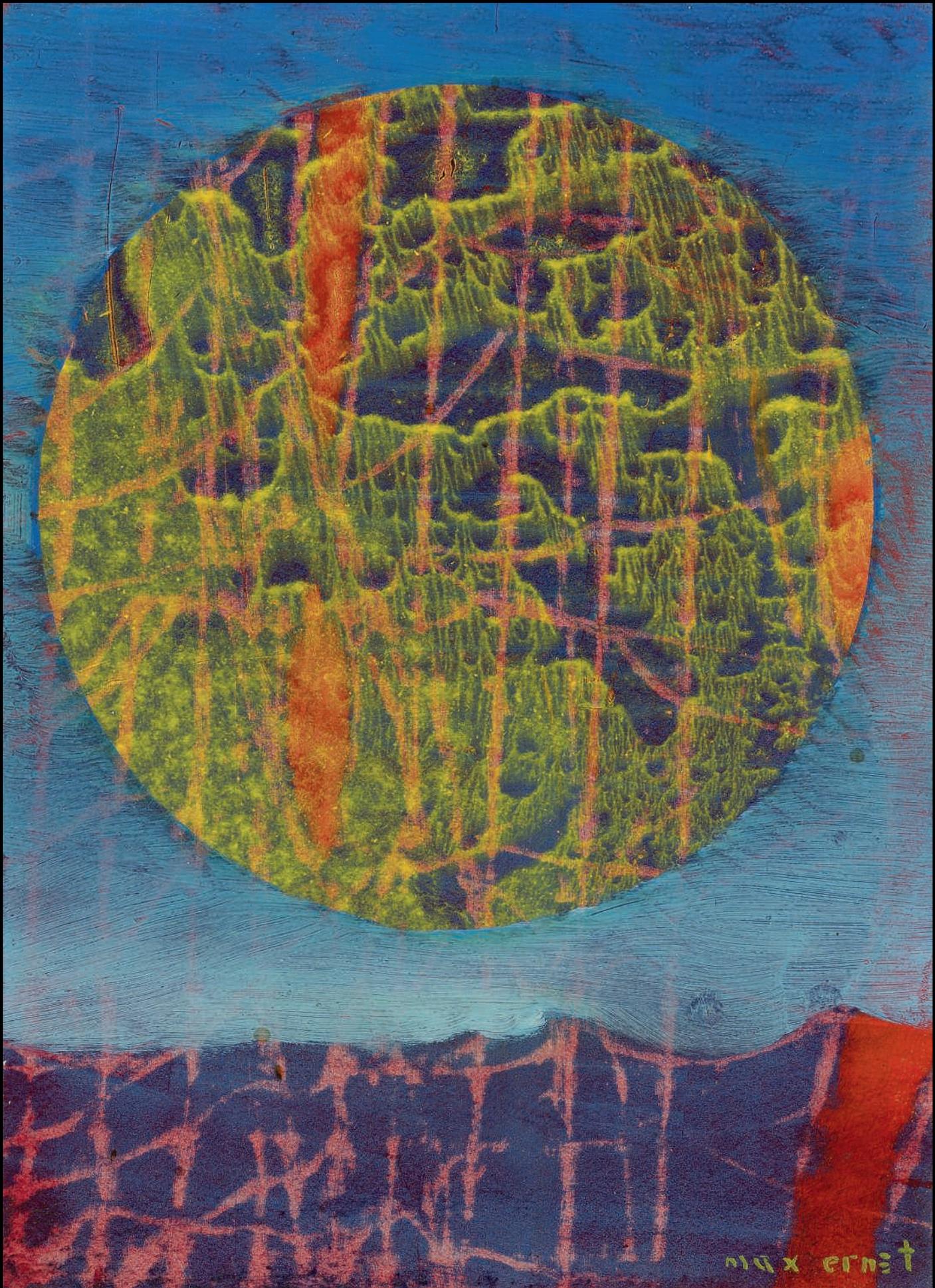
This work will be included in the forthcoming eighth volume of the *Max Ernst catalogue raisonné* currently being prepared by Werner Spies, Sigrid Metken and Jürgen Pech.

Max Ernst's *Le soleil sur terre* shows a large, darkly glowing sun rising against a lapis sky, with a craggy, almost lunar landscape below. Through this work run electric streaks of red; meanwhile, a latticework of yellow-green veins appear to make up mysterious organic continents upon the surface of the orb. This work has a nocturnal atmosphere, yet is filled with a pulsating sense of colour and crepuscular light.

Ernst often began his works by taking existing patterns and forms and manipulating them. This was the case with his *frottage* and *decalcomania* pictures, which allowed chance-driven shapes to emerge which the artist would then shape to his will, prompted by his subconscious and the suggestions that emerged in his mind. In *Le soleil sur terre*, Ernst in actual fact used one of his own earlier works as a springboard for creativity, a lithograph entitled *La forêt, à l'aube* of 1958. He has taken a section of the lithograph and

rotated it, colouring and overpainting some of the existing forest-like structures; over this are the complex patterns of the sun and the sky, which resemble the grain of wood, hinting that Ernst has combined a number of techniques in this picture, revealing his constant drive for innovation. At the same time, it is intriguing to find Ernst taking the momentum of his earlier work and allowing it to find a new incarnation in this brooding Surreal skyscape.

Le soleil sur terre was created over half a decade after Ernst's return to Europe, having spent a number of years in the United States of America during and after the Second World War. While living there, he had spent time with his wife Dorothea Tanning; the landscape of Sedona appears to have infused *Le soleil sur terre*, as well as the forest-like forms of his pre-war pictures, which often had hints of the forests of his native Germany.



max ernst

λ*113 PAUL DELVAUX (1897-1994)

La Vénus endormie

signed and dated 'P. Delvaux 10.43' (lower right)

oil on canvas

29 1/8 x 62 1/8 in. (74 x 158 cm.)

Painted in October 1943

£1,200,000-1,600,000

\$2,000,000-2,600,000

€1,500,000-1,900,000

PROVENANCE:

Robert Giron, Brussels, by 1945.

Roger Vanthournout, Belgium, by 1973.

Private Belgian Collection, by whom acquired from the above; sale, Christie's, London, 21 June 2005, lot 48.

Acquired at the above sale by the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Brussels, Palais des Beaux-Arts, *Rétrospective Delvaux*, December 1944 - January 1945, no. 36.

Charleroi, Salle de la Bourse, *XXXIe Salon du cercle royal artistique et littéraire de Charleroi: Rétrospective Paul Delvaux*, March - April 1957, no. 47.

Lille, Palais des Beaux-Arts, *Exposition rétrospective des œuvres de Paul Delvaux*, November - December 1966, no. 18 (illustrated; dated 1944).

Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, *Paul Delvaux*, April - June 1973, no. 29, p. 131 (illustrated pp. 67 & 131).

Knokke-Heist, Casino, *Rétrospective Paul Delvaux*, June - September 1973, no. 23 (illustrated pp. 61 and 125).

Ostend, Museum voor Moderne Kunst, *From Ensor to Delvaux, Ensor, Spilliaert, Permeke, Magritte, Delvaux*, October 1996 - February 1997, p. 352 (illustrated).

Brussels, Royal Museum of Fine Arts of Belgium, *Paul Delvaux 1897-1994*, March - July 1997, no. 52, p. 109 (illustrated).

Himeji, Himeji City Museum of Art, *From Ensor to Delvaux*, October - April 2001, no. 69 (illustrated pp. 156-157); this exhibition later travelled to Sakura, Sakura City Museum of Art; Tokyo, Isetan Museum of Art; Osaka, Daimaru Museum and Okazaki, Okazaki City Museum.

Brussels, Musée d'Ixelles, *Paul Delvaux, aux sources de l'œuvre*, October 2010 - January 2011, no. 104, illustrated.

LITERATURE:

A. Eggermont, 'Les Arts Plastiques' in *Le Thyrsé*, Brussels, 15 February 1945, p. 53.

R. Gaffé, *Paul Delvaux ou les rêves éveillés*, Brussels, 1945, p. 34 (illustrated pl. 18).

C. Spaak, *Paul Delvaux*, Antwerp, 1948, no. 11, p. 16 (illustrated).

Exh. cat., *XXXVe Salon du Cercle Royal Artistique et Littéraire de Charleroi*, Palais des Beaux-Arts, Charleroi, 1961 (illustrated).

Exh. cat., *Rétrospective Paul Delvaux*, Galerie Krugier, Geneva, September - October 1966, illustrated.

P.A. De Bock, *Paul Delvaux, L'homme, le peintre, psychologie d'un art*, Brussels, 1967, no. 58, p. 292 (illustrated p. 120).

J. Vovelle, *Le Surréalisme en Belgique*, Brussels, 1972, p. 188 (illustrated).

R. Hammacher, 'Interview avec Paul Delvaux' in Exh. cat., *Paul Delvaux*, Rotterdam, 1973, pp. 16-17.

'Ausstellungen: Paul Delvaux Tentoonstelling 14 April - 17 June', in *Bulletin Museum Boymans-Van Beuningen*, Rotterdam, April 1973, no. 4, p. 26.

P. Sager, 'Paul Delvaux' in *Das Kunstwerk*, Stuttgart-Berlin-Cologne-Mayence, May 1973, vol. XXVI, no. 3, p. 41.

M. Butor, J. Clair, & S. Houbart-Wilkin, *Delvaux, Catalogue de l'oeuvre peint*, Brussels, 1975, no. 131, pp. 201-202, illustrated p. 202.

B. Emerson, *Delvaux*, Paris, 1985, p. 118 (illustrated).

M. Rombaut, *Paul Delvaux*, Barcelona, 1990, no. 46, p. 126 (illustrated).

Exh. cat., *Delvaux and antiquity*, Museum of Contemporary Art, The Basil and Elise Goulandris Foundation, Andros, 2009 (illustrated p. 12).





Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres, *Odalisque with a Slave*, 1839-40. Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University Art Museums, Bequest of Grenville L. Winthrop.



Paul Delvaux, *La Vénus endormie*, 1944. Tate Modern, London.



Paul Delvaux, *La voix publique*, 1948. Musées Royaux de Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels.

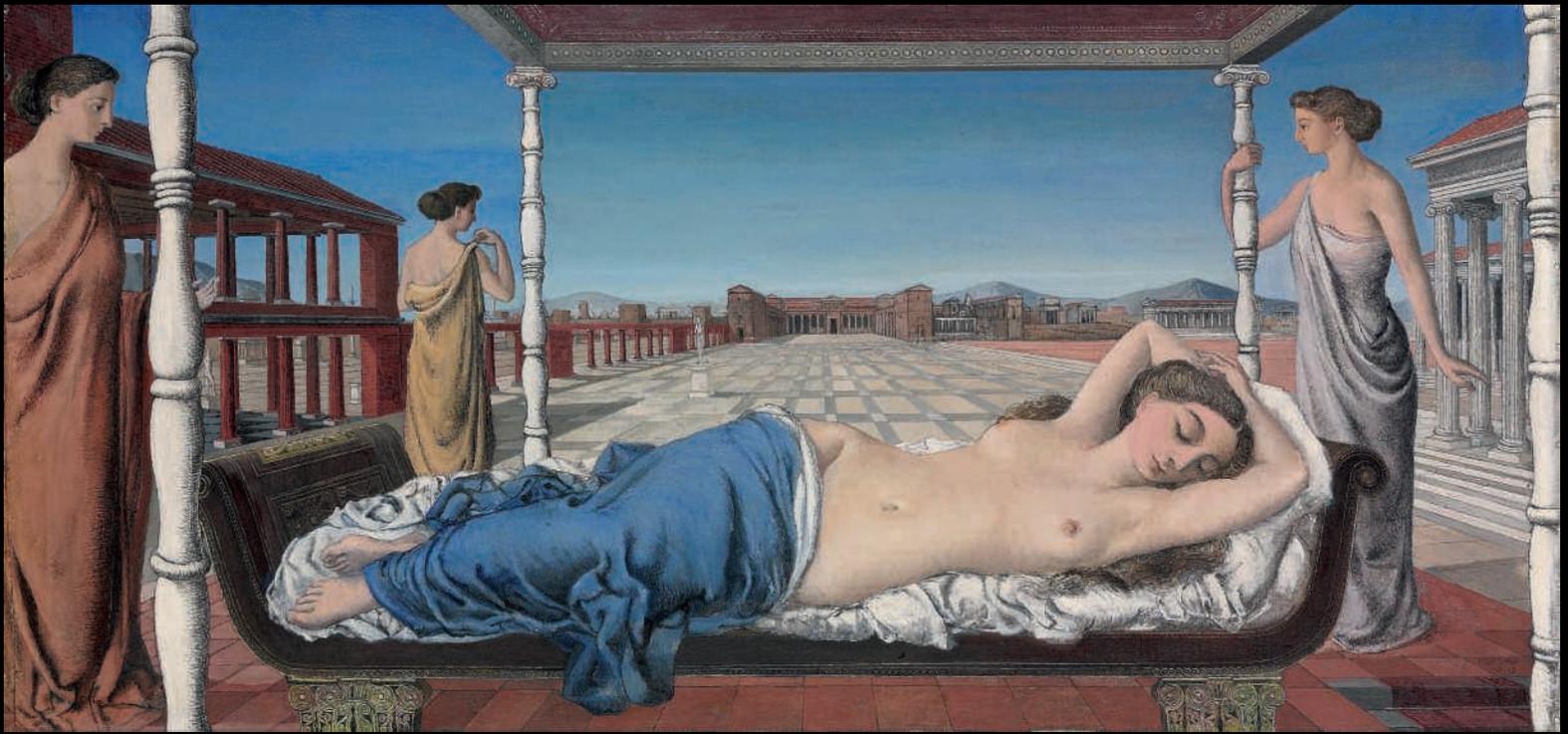
Painted in 1943, *La Vénus endormie* is a deeply absorbing and poetic vision of one of Delvaux's most celebrated themes, dating from his greatest period. Asleep outdoors in the midst of a vast and impossible classical temple complex, the Venus of the title is the object of veneration and worship. Strange supplicants, like priestesses, surround her, each seemingly oblivious to the others' presence as they assume their ritualistic positions on the terrace. It is in this disjointedness that Delvaux's art derives its unique power. Unlike the Surrealists, Delvaux invents relatively little, choosing instead to create a peculiarly otherworldly atmosphere in his paintings by the Romanesque idealisation of his women, their apparent lack of relation on to the other, and their dreamlike existence in a perfectly ordered pseudo-classical architectural landscape. These all combine to conjure up a vision of a world filled with its own, unique haunting poetry.

Delvaux's art benefited from two great epiphanies, both of which came within the space of a few years of each other. One was his exposure to Surrealism and the art of Giorgio de Chirico. However, by far the greatest influence was the *Grand Musée anatomique ethnologique du Dr P. Spitzner*. In the midst of a bustling fair, this was a dark and gloomy exhibition of models and curiosities. Skeletons and automatons were crowded within the gloomy confines alongside wax reproductions of diseased organs. Delvaux was struck by Spitzner Museum's gloom in the midst of the fun and frolics of the fair, and he repeatedly insisted that this strange contrast was the original and most influential inspiration for his pictures.

Amongst all the objects on display was the model of a sleeping Venus, much celebrated in the exhibition's cataloguing:

'Reclining Venus, modelled from life. Artistic masterpiece that was awarded two medals at the Vienna Exhibition. The first... for the remarkable progress it achieved in the art of modelling; the second for the ingenious mechanism inside the breast giving the subject the appearance of being alive. This masterpiece surpasses anything that has been done previously and uniquely justifies the use of these three words: ART, SCIENCE, PROGRESS' (Spitzner cataloguing, quoted in *Paul Delvaux 1897-1994*, exh.cat., Brussels, 1997, p. 17).

Of all the exhibits in the Spitzner Museum, the Venus in particular fascinated Delvaux, and he returned many times to see it again and again. Even before his exposure to Surrealism, he tried to capture its strange qualities in several early pictures. The figure of the Sleeping Venus would recur again and again as the focus of some of his greatest paintings. *La Vénus endormie* is one of a small group of paintings on the subject that were executed in the early 1940s, the high-point of his art, when he began to consolidate his unique visual poetry. He distilled the juxtapositions of Magritte and the atmosphere of de Chirico, mixing them with his haunting memories of the Spitzner Museum, to create paintings that were striking in their confidence and their discreet novelty. The quality of the works from this rich, early period is reflected in the number of paintings, including several on the same theme as *La Vénus endormie*, that are in museum collections throughout the world, not least the Tate in London. The quality of these works,



The present lot.

and the attention that they gained, was reflected in Delvaux's increasing recognition both in Belgium and internationally. This resulted in his first major retrospective taking place in 1944 in Brussels. The importance of *La Vénus endormie* is reflected in its inclusion in this retrospective, only the year after it was painted.

Delvaux's treatments of *La Vénus endormie* as a subject vary hugely, be it in the features of the Venus or in the arrangements and scenery around her. The painting on the same theme in the Tate, for instance, has a markedly oppressive atmosphere of containment, with a skeleton looming in the foreground. However, regardless of these differences, Delvaux was insistent that 'All my Sleeping Venuses originate there... [They are] an exact transcription of the Sleeping Venus of the Spitzner Museum, but with Greek temples or with models - anything you like. It is different, but the understanding is the same' (Delvaux, quoted in *Paul Delvaux 1897-1994*, exh.cat., Brussels, 1997, p. 18). That the Venus motif derives from his memories of an automaton adds to the eerily ambiguous of the vision before us, Delvaux deliberately introducing the unsettling possibility of the Venus being a simulacrum, sharpening the hallucinatory quality of the image.

Despite their lack of relation the one to the other and their statuesque coolness, Delvaux did not believe that the austerity of his female figures excluded the possibility of his works being erotic. The reclining young woman in *La Vénus endormie* is prone in her sleep both to the gaze of the viewer, and to whatever menaces might lurk in her world. Nothing is arbitrary in Delvaux's art, and the half-naked figure in this picture is expressly erotic:

'Naturally there is eroticism. Without eroticism I would find painting impossible. The painting of the nude in particular. A nude is erotic even when indifferent, when glacial. What else would it be? The eroticism of my work resides in its evocation of youth and desire' (Delvaux, quoted in *Paul Delvaux 1897-1994*, exh.cat., Brussels, 1997, p. 23). By deliberately introducing the confusing presence of this eroticism to the cool and rational architecture of *La Vénus endormie* and the ritualistic positioning of the bystanders, Delvaux reinforces the painting's atmosphere of incongruity and its intense strangeness.

This evocation of a hidden yet epic world hovering just beyond the veil of our vision and understanding is one of the greatest legacies of de Chirico's art in the paintings of Delvaux. While the classical architecture recalls the piazzas and towers of de Chirico's metaphysical masterpieces, it is the strange and potent quality of *stimmung* that Delvaux mainly gleaned from his predecessor. Delvaux has distilled a new version of the timelessness and stillness of de Chirico's painting to evoke a world that cannot exist within our realm of being. This timelessness, the absence of history and of movement in *La Vénus endormie*, is all the more pertinent considering the historical backdrop against which *La Vénus endormie* was painted, with Belgium still under Nazi control. During this time, Delvaux avoided Brussels as much as possible, staying instead in Knokke. Thus the world of the Venus appears to exist parallel to the stressful world of its inception, for despite the alien architecture and the alien rituals at work in that world, it is the flat, shadowless light of off-season Belgian resorts that permeates *La Vénus endormie*.

λ114 RENÉ MAGRITTE (1898-1967)

Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit (The hunters at the edge of night)

signed 'Magritte' (lower right); titled (on the reverse)

oil on canvas

31 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 45 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (81 x 116 cm.)

Painted in 1928

£6,000,000-9,000,000

\$9,800,000-15,000,000

€7,100,000-11,000,000

PROVENANCE:

Galerie L'Époque (E.L.T. Mesens), Brussels, by August 1928.

Galerie Le Centaure (P.G. van Hecke), Brussels, by whom acquired from the above in January 1929.

E.L.T. Mesens, Brussels, by whom acquired in 1932 at the liquidation of the above.

Claude Spaak, Brussels, by 1933 and until at least June 1934.

E.L.T. Mesens, London.

William and Noma Copley, Chicago, by whom acquired from the above circa 1956-1957.

Acquired from the above by the present owner on 19 October 1978.

EXHIBITED:

Brussels, Galerie l'Époque, *René Magritte*, January 1928.

Brussels, Salle Giso, *E.L.T. Mesens & E. van Tonderen présentent seize tableaux de René Magritte*, February 1931, no. 12, p. 12.

Brussels, Palais de Beaux-Arts, *Exposition René*



René Magritte, *Les jours gigantesques*, 1928. Sold, Christie's, London, 20 June 2012, lot 56 (\$11.4m).

Magritte, May – June 1933, no. 9.

Brussels, Palais de Beaux-Arts, *Exposition*

Minotaure, May – June 1934, no. 70.

New York, Julien Levy Gallery, *René Magritte*, January 1938, no. 7.

Knokke, Casino Communal, *Ve festival belge d'été, expositions René Magritte-Paul Delvaux*, August 1952, no. 9.

Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum, *Dertien belgische schilders*, October – November 1952, no. 57.

Brussels, Palais de Beaux-Arts, *René Magritte*, May – June 1954, no. 21, p. 25.

Venice, *XXVII Biennale di Venezia*, June – October 1954, no. 35, p. 227.

Antwerp, Stedelijke Feestzaal-Meir Antwerpen, *Kunst van heden, salon 1956*, October 1956, no. 102, p. 11.

Little Rock, Arkansas Art Center, *Magritte*, May – June 1964.

Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, *René Magritte, Le mystère de la réalité*, August – September 1967, no. 21, p. 74 (illustrated p. 75).

Stockholm, Moderna Museet, *René Magritte*, October – November 1967, no. 15, p. 6.

New York, Sidney Janis Gallery, *Magritte*, December 1977, no. 2.

Brussels, Palais des Beaux-Arts, *Rétrospective Magritte*, October - December 1978, no. 75 (illustrated); this exhibition later travelled to Paris, Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, January - April 1979.

Humblebaeck, Louisiana Museum, *René Magritte*, September 1983 – January 1984, no. 31, p. 49.

London, The Hayward Gallery, The Southbank Centre, *Magritte*, May – August 1992, no. 37 (illustrated); this exhibition later travelled to New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, September – November 1992, Houston, The Menil Collection, December 1992 – February 1993, and Chicago, The Art Institute, March – May 1993.

Dusseldorf, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, *René Magritte*, Die Kunst der Konversation, November 1996 – March 1997, no. 3, p. 253 (illustrated p. 89).

Paris, Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, *La révolution surréaliste*, March – June 2002, p. 437 (illustrated p. 186).

Paris, Galerie nationale du Jeu de Paume, *Magritte*, February – June 2003, p. 76 (illustrated p. 77).

New York, The Museum of Modern Art, *Magritte, The Mystery of the Ordinary, 1926-1938*, September 2013 – January 2014, no. 53, p. 247 (illustrated p. 114).

LITERATURE:

Letter from Paul Nougé to René Magritte, in *Lettres surréalistes*, April 1928, no. 145.

Postcard from René Magritte to E.L.T. Mesens, 22 August 1928.

Variétés, Brussels, no. 7, 15 November 1928, p. 365 (illustrated).

A. De Ridder, *La jeune peinture belge, de l'impressionnisme à l'expressionnisme*, Antwerp, 1929.

L. Scutenaire, *Magritte*, Chicago, 1958, no. 34.

P. Waldberg, *René Magritte*, Brussels, 1965, p. 128 (illustrated).

Exh. cat., *Magritte*, London, 1969, p. 60.

A.M. Hammacher, *René Magritte*, London, 1974, p. 90 (illustrated p. 91).

R. Calvocoressi, *Magritte*, Oxford, 1984, no. 22 (illustrated).

D. Sylvester & S. Whitfield, *René Magritte, Catalogue Raisonné*, vol. I, *Oil Paintings, 1916-1930*, Antwerp, 1992, no. 228, pp. 279-280 (illustrated p. 279).

D. Sylvester, J. Bouniort & M. Draguet, *Magritte*, Houston, 2009, p. 185 (illustrated).

S. Gohr, *Magritte, Attempting the Impossible*, Antwerp, 2009, no. 188, p. 128 (illustrated).





René Magritte, *L'assassin menacé*, 1926. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.



René Magritte, *Jeune fille mangeant un oiseau (le plaisir)*, 1927. Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf.

René Magritte's *Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit* is one of his iconic early Surrealist paintings, having featured in many of the most important monographs and exhibitions dedicated to his work, beginning within his own lifetime. Indeed, already only a few years after it was painted, it was being included on a regular basis in exhibitions of Magritte's pictures, to which it was lent by a succession of owners who were closely involved with Magritte himself: Gustave Van Hecke, E.L.T. Mesens, Claude Spaak and, from the mid-1950s, William Copley. *Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit* was painted in 1928, during the time that Magritte was based in Paris in order to be closer to the Surrealist group around André Breton. That year was the most fruitful of Magritte's entire career, reflecting the sense of enlightenment that had descended upon him as he created masterpiece after masterpiece, tapping into a rich seam of ideas and inspiration. It is a reflection of the importance of these early Surreal works by Magritte that so many of them are now in museum collections around the world. Of the pictures that Magritte painted in 1928, only around one fifth were painted on the large scale of *Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit*, which was done in the largest format of canvas that he used that year, indicating his appreciation of the importance of its subject.

Many of the works that Magritte created in and around 1928, during his stay in the French capital, combined the poetic transformations of the everyday world that had already become his hallmark with a certain dark intensity, and even violence. Looking at several pictures from this period, for instance the two versions of *Les jours gigantesque* which appears to show a struggle as a prelude to a rape, *Les amants* with its heads covered in winding sheets, or *L'idée fixe* with its stalking hunter in one of the quadrants of the composition, there was a clear under- or over-tone of suspense, anxiety or violence at play. This

may reflect Magritte's own personality, his preferences and his background; at the same time, it appears in tune with Breton's diktat, published in *Nadja* the same year *Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit* was painted, that, 'Beauty will be CONVULSIVE or will not be at all' (A. Breton, *Nadja*, R. Howard, trans., New York, p. 160). Robert Hughes summed up the 'convulsive' energy of *Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit* when he declared:

'for panic, one need go no further than Magritte's *Hunters at the Edge of the Night*, 1928, with its two stocky, armed and booted chasseurs writhing in apprehension at the sight of an empty horizon. We see their fear but, inexplicably, not what they are afraid of' (R. Hughes, 'Introduction', pp. 5-8, *The Portable Magritte*, New York, 2001, p. 7).

In the catalogue raisonné of Magritte's works, it was suggested that the atmosphere of *Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit* may owe itself to the works of Edgar Allan Poe. Magritte devoured his writings, not least in the famous translation by Charles Baudelaire, and several of his pictures appear to make references to them. In *Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit*, the walls may recall those in *The Pit and the Pendulum*, a short story about a victim of the elaborate torture techniques of the Spanish Inquisition, at the end of which hot walls are enclosing him, approaching ever closer (see D. Sylvester (ed.), S. Whitfield & M. Raeburn, *René Magritte Catalogue Raisonné*, vol. I, London, 1992, p. 279). Certainly, the crepuscular light appears to hint at the departing day and the oncoming night, adding a somewhat Gothic dimension to the scene with the hunters, who have themselves become the hunted, caught as though in some monumental trap. They are held fast by the wall into which their own bodies appear to have been partially absorbed: the hunter on the left has lost his foot, while the other's head is missing, seemingly immured. These fragmentary figures recall the intriguing overlapping man



René Magritte, *L'idée fixe*, 1928. Nationalgalerie, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.



The present lot.

and woman of *Les jours gigantesques*, showing their common heritage. Indeed, in the catalogue raisonné of Magritte's works, it has been surmised that *Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit* was painted after *Les jours gigantesques* and was part of an almost narrative development that arced through his pictures that year, in this case ending at *Le genre nocturne*, a missing painting that shows a woman covering the void where her head should be with her hands, while standing next to a void in the wall.

In *Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit*, the sense of tension is accentuated by the bulk of the figures, adding a sheer physicality to their efforts to free themselves. This struggle is likewise made all the more mysterious and dramatic by the gap to the right, where the barren landscape stretches towards the distant, glowing horizon. The corner of wall at which these hunters are standing is made all the more enigmatic by this contrast between confinement and space. According to a letter apparently written by Magritte's friend Paul Nougé around April 1928 and almost certainly discussing this picture and therefore giving its date some certainty, that composition may have changed at some point: 'Thank you so much for drawing me a picture of your latest canvas. I find it absolutely remarkable,' he wrote to the artist.

'I admire the care you have taken to particularise the event, to endow it, by the precision of certain details, with the maximum of concrete reality, thus guaranteeing, to my mind, the intensity of its effect. I also commend the precaution you have taken to eliminate that third figure which might have produced the impression of a "well-made" picture. I understand this all the better since I have often had occasion to modify in a similar way prose pieces whose perfection was becoming embarrassing, because I felt it might charm or arrest attention to the detriment of what I really wanted to achieve' (Nougé, quoted *ibid.*, p. 279).

Reducing the composition to only two figures accentuates the

terror through the contrast with the spacious landscape. At the same time, it introduces the theme of duality that runs like a thread through so much of Magritte's work from the period, be it in images that contain repeated motifs, such as his portrait of Nougé, or his earlier works, *La pose enchantée*, *La fin des contemplations*, or in pairings such as the man and woman in *Les jours gigantesques* or the couple in *Les amants*. In *Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit*, the two figures recall the book-end-like assailants in *L'assassin menacé*, now in the Museum of Modern Art, New York. In this way, by reducing his subjects to a dualism or dichotomy, Magritte was able to tap into some of the fundamental aspects of human nature, ageless themes which are given new momentum in his works, viewed from new perspectives. Even the concept of the wall, such an everyday element of life, becomes mysterious and dangerous in Magritte's universe, trapping these hunters and suffocating one of them. The solid aspects of our existence become mutable and magical. As Magritte wrote to Nougé the year before he painted *Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit*:

'I think I have made a really striking discovery in painting. Up to now I have used composite objects, or else the placing of an object was sometimes enough to make it mysterious... I have found a new potential in things - their ability to become *gradually* something else, an object *merging into* an object other than itself' (Magritte, quoted in J. Helfenstein & C. Elliott, "'A Lightning Flash Is Smoldering beneath the Bowler Hats": Paris 1927-1930', pp. 70-87, A. Umland, ed., *Magritte: The Mystery of the Ordinary 1926-1938*, exh. cat., New York, 2013, p. 73).

Nowhere is this more clear than in *Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit* with the men being absorbed by the wall; Magritte has also managed to add a terrifying dimension to this forced juxtaposition of two separate concepts, man and material.



René Magritte, *Portrait de Paul Nougé*, 1927. Private Collection.



Magritte and his wife as the painter and his model, photographed at Le Perreux-sur-Marne, 1928. Galerie Isy Brachot, Brussels-Paris.

Magritte made a second version of *Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit*, which was painted by 1936, was exhibited several times, and was owned by Mesens; it was destroyed while in storage in London during the Second World War (see D. Sylvester (ed.), S. Whitfield & M. Raeburn, *René Magritte Catalogue Raisonné*, Vol. IV, London, 1994, app. 131, pp. 322-23). By an intriguing twist, Nougé would serve as the model when Magritte revisited the theme of the hunter whose body is partially caught in a wall in a subsequent variation, his 1943 picture, *La gravitation universelle*. That work was based on a photograph that Magritte took, showing Nougé in hunting garb by the wall. The fact that Magritte returned to this subject against the backdrop of the Occupation reveals his own understanding of the ability of this theme to convey feelings of intense anxiety and entrapment, both then and earlier, when he created *Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit*.

Looking at *Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit* in comparison with *La gravitation universelle*, it becomes clear that the former is a far more stylised work, with its stocky hunters. The physicality of these figures, which featured in a number of pictures from the period, adds to the pathos of their plight, as they are trapped regardless of the implied strength of their bodies; this effect is heightened by the large size of the picture. These forms are almost expressionistic in their distortions and hint at the possibility, discussed by numerous authors including David Sylvester, that Magritte had been influenced partly by reproductions of the frieze showing the battle of the Lapiths and

the Centaurs from the Temple of Zeus at Olympia. Certainly, the missing body parts recall ancient statuary, while the incredible sculptural quality of these squat hunters also recalls the Greek frieze, with its figures shown in high relief. At the same time, the depiction of the subjects also recalls Pablo Picasso's works from the early 1920s; living in Paris at the time, it is reasonable to suppose that Magritte would have been able to see those works as well as Picasso's more recent Surreal output.

Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit was sent by Magritte from Paris to the Galerie de L'Epoque in Brussels later in 1928. Indeed, on 22 August, he wrote Mesens a note thanking him for letting him know that 'The Hunters is in perfect condition' (Magritte, quoted in Sylvester, *op. cit.*, 1992, p. 279). This shows an early title that had been adopted for the work; later, it was referred to by Magritte as *Les chasseurs condamnés*, while Nougé suggested *compromis* instead. However, by the time it was exhibited publicly for the first time in 1931, the title had reached its current form.

That exhibition took place at the Salle Giso in Brussels and was quite an event. It marked the return of Magritte from Paris the previous year. On the occasion, a number of his more recent works were shown - strangely, few of the pictures from 1928 had been shown in galleries, although *Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit* had already been published in *Variétés*, the short-lived review edited by the work's then owner, Van Hecke, having been kept by him from the stock of the then-dissolved Galerie L'Epoque. In 1930, Magritte had tired of Paris and in particular of the strictures of the Surreal movement there, which followed



René Magritte, *Les amants*, 1928. Australian National Gallery, Canberra



René Magritte in front of *Le Joueur secret*, 1927.

Breton too rigorously for the Belgian artist's liking. He appears to have actively sought out an occasion to squabble with Breton and then, following this, left. He was clearly keen to leave his years of Parisian Surrealism behind him: he apparently burnt many of his photographs, letters and documents from the period with his friend Louis Scutenaire. Indeed, the incinerated objects even included an overcoat, a mark of his desire to eradicate certain memories (see S. Gablik, *Magritte*, London, 1992, p. 65).

Magritte's return to Brussels was fêted with an exhibition that certainly underlined his Surreal credentials. According to a review, the show in which *Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit* was first revealed, having been lent by Van Hecke alongside fifteen other works mainly from Nougé, was opened in a spectacular manner:

'The first guests were surprised to find the hall plunged in darkness, and two lackeys in scarlet livery and with powdered hair standing on either side of an enormous lighted candle. A double metronome ticked away the while in the empty silence.

'About one o'clock in the morning, some fifty guests, among whom could be discerned up to three Surrealists, including two dissidents, crowded around the buffet, where whisky and gin were flowing freely. A gramophone began playing barrel-organ tunes, and M. Créten-George opened the ball, and was followed by all the bright young things.

'It was only at a very late hour that the assembled guests, intrigued by the ecstatic look which Mlle Solange Moret from the Casino was gazing intently at the walls, suddenly discovered

hanging there some pictures belonging to M. Nougé, painted by M. Magritte. A concert of praise was immediately organised under the brilliant direction of M. Gustave van Hecke' (*Le rouge et le noir*, 18 February 1931, reproduced in D. Sylvester (ed.), S. Whitfield & M. Raeburn, *René Magritte Catalogue Raisonné*, vol. II, London, 1993, p. 9).

In fact, it appears that the valets had their faces painted green; the music was discordant for part of the soirée as different tunes were being played simultaneously on four gramophones, and early in the morning, the lights were raised so that the pictures on the walls, including *Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit*, became visible. The evening clearly passed well, not least for Magritte, about whom it was written elsewhere:

'The painter M... who was the hero of the evening, danced a great deal. To demonstrate his ardent love of the people, he granted a waltz to one of the liveried valets, and then performed the java with the cloakroom attendant. She was, in fact, extremely charming... Which goes to show that Surrealists are not stuck-up' (*Midi*, 12 February 1931, quoted *ibid.*, p. 9).

Two years later, *Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit* was included in a one-man show held at the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels; this was one of the few pictures from the period that had previously been exhibited. By then, *Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit* was lent by Magritte's friend, Claude Spaak. The pair had met in 1931, and Spaak would become an important supporter of Magritte's work as well as a prominent collector. Spaak also



Pablo Picasso, *La Lecture de la lettre*, 1921. Musée Picasso, Paris.

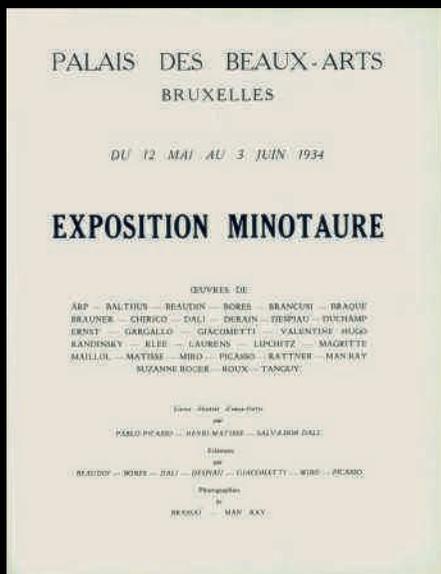


René Magritte, *La fin des contemplations*, 1927. The Menil Collection, Houston.

lent *Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit* to an exhibition dedicated to the predominantly Surreal review, *Minotaure*, in 1934, also held at the Palais des Beaux-Arts. On this occasion, the picture was shown alongside a formidable selection of works by a wide range of artists including Constantin Brancusi, Salvador Dalí, Marcel Duchamp, Max Ernst, Alberto Giacometti, Man Ray, Henri Matisse and Picasso (see *ibid.*, p. 26).

In the 1950s, *Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit* was acquired by William Copley. Although Copley had initially shown little interest in art, in 1948 he and his brother-in-law John Ploydardt, an artist and animator for Walt Disney, together set up an art gallery (see S. Cochran, 'Passing the Hat: René Magritte and William Copley', pp. 75-79, S. Barron & M. Draguet, *Magritte and Contemporary Art: The Treachery of Images*, exh. cat., Los Angeles, 2006). Although the Copley Gallery which they founded in Beverly Hills was short-lived, it was nonetheless influential, exposing Magritte and a number of other Surreal artists to the West Coast. At the same time, for Copley, who was a man of independent means, it provided a springboard into the world of the Surreal. He would financially back each exhibition by buying works, and was introduced to a number of the artists who had fled France for the United States during the Second World War.

Eventually, after the closure of the gallery, Copley accompanied Man Ray to Europe and lived in France for a decade. Copley himself had become an artist in his own right by this time. During that time, he was introduced to Magritte, with whom he had already corresponded and whose works he had already collected. Apparently, the initial meeting was a disappointment: Copley was surprised, after the flamboyance of the Parisian Surrealists, to find a man wearing respectable bourgeois garb. But soon he was fascinated by Magritte's uniform, which often served as a foil to his outrageous acts and visionary art. Indeed, Copley himself would pay Magritte the ultimate compliment by adopting the iconic bowler hat as part of his own outfit in later years. This was a mark of the esteem in which he held Magritte, which also became the basis of their friendship. It is a tribute to their relationship that *Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit* would remain in Copley's collection for over two decades.



Exposition Minotaure, Palais des Beaux-Arts Bruxelles, du 12 mai au 3 juin 1934.



λ115 SIMON HANTAÏ (B. 1922)

Espaces engourdis

signed and dated 'Hantaï 1950-51' (upper centre) ;

titled (on the reverse)

oil on canvas

29¼ x 29⅞ in. (74.4 x 74.3 cm.)

Painted in 1950-1951

£50,000-80,000

\$82,000-130,000

€60,000-95,000

PROVENANCE:

Galerie Jean Fournier, Paris.

Private Collection, Monaco.

Acquired from the above by the present owner.

This work is recorded in the Galerie Jean Fournier Archive under no. CF.1.0.29.

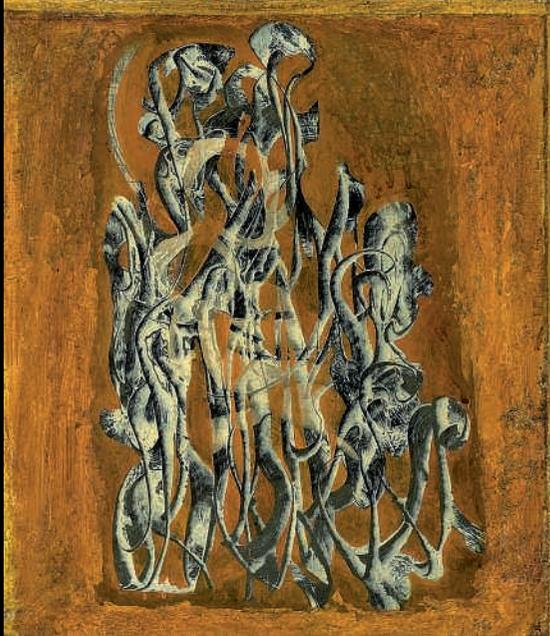
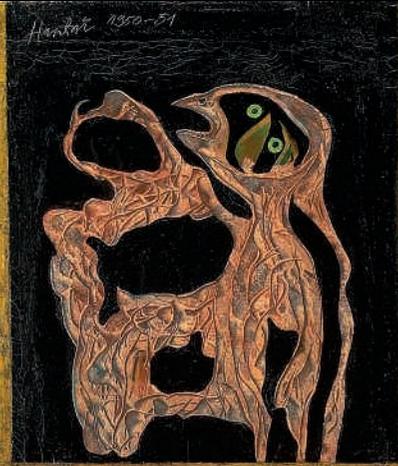
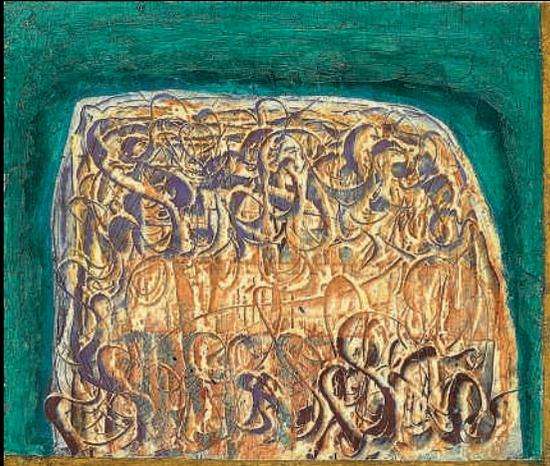
Executed around 1950-1951, *Espaces engourdis* marks the beginning of Simon Hantaï's career in Paris. In its technique and imagery, the picture is at the origin of Hantaï's artistic development, containing the first seeds of his distinctive late style. Divided into nine sections, *Espaces engourdis* appears as a tour de force of the *decalcomania* technique, filled with churning biomorphic creations. Exploring a wonderful range of tonal gradations, the artist stretched the suggestive potential of oil painting to its very limit: painting over intricate patterns, Hantaï unveiled a series of monsters, shapes and threadlike structures. The title – 'Numb Spaces' – evokes the suspended, deep world of dreams.

In 1948, together with his wife Zsuzsa, Hantaï arrived in Paris. He first had planned the trip following the award of a scholarship on the part of the Hungarian ministry of culture. Yet in July, Hungary was forced under the control of Russia's Communist Party and Hantaï's scholarship was revoked. At the time of the political

unrest, however, the artist had already reached Italy: from there he thus decided to continue his journey to Paris against the odds, by then as an exile. Arriving in Paris, Hantaï discovered a new art world: he met Elsa Triolet and Tristan Tzara and saw the works of artists such as Henri Matisse, André Masson, Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee and Jean Dubuffet. In one of the first letters the artist wrote home, Hantaï admitted: 'I know now that I have badly tackled painting in Hungary (...) I'm working hard and I am searching for myself (as an artist)' (quoted in *Simon Hantaï*, exh. cat., Paris 2013, p. 268).

In 1950 – around the time he executed *Espaces engourdis* – Hantaï visited a retrospective of Max Ernst at the Galerie René Drouin. There he saw Ernst's *Vox Angelica* (1943), a painting which for its division in squares may have influenced Hantaï's *Espaces engourdis*. More significantly, however, Hantaï must have been fascinated by Ernst's technique of *frottage*, *grattage* and *decalcomania*. The textures, the marvellous play of merging

hues and the incised details present in *Espaces engourdis* is reminiscent of Ernst's painting technique, placing Hantaï in the orbit of Surrealism in post-war Paris. The spiralling forms of the picture, however, are Hantaï's own invention and they may have been triggered by a black and white photograph of a mummy which the artist had cut from a magazine that same year. The folds and creases of the mummy may have inspired Hantaï's forms and elaborated spinning formations. Fifty years later, remembering that image, Hantaï would say: 'everything is already there, although never seen nor thought' (quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 269). In 1952, the forms present in *Espaces engourdis* would expand and develop further occupying the whole space of works such as *Peinture* (1952, Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou). Evoking the history of Surrealism, *Espaces engourdis* marks Hantaï's entrance in the post-war Paris art scene and the beginning of his mature work.



λ*116 RENÉ MAGRITTE (1898-1967)

L'utopie (Utopia)

signed 'Magritte' (lower right); titled and dated '1945' (on the reverse)

oil on canvas

23¾ x 31½ in. (60.4 x 80.3 cm.)

Painted in 1945

£500,000-800,000

\$820,000-1,300,000

€600,000-950,000

PROVENANCE:

Achille Chavée, La Louvière, by whom acquired directly from the artist.

Justin Rakofsky, Brussels, by whom acquired from the above, *circa* 1954.

Anonymous sale, Sotheby's, London, 10 December 1969, lot 85.

Marlborough Fine Art, London, by whom acquired at the above sale.

Private collection, London, by whom acquired before 1993, and thence by descent; sale, Christie's 24 June 2008, lot 72.

Acquired at the above sale by the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

La Louvière, Maison des Loisirs, *René Magritte expose*, March - April 1954, no. 19.

Brussels, Musée de Ixelles, *Magritte*, April - May 1959, no. 63.

London, Marlborough Fine Art, *Magritte*, October - November 1973, no. 50, p. 93 (illustrated).

LITERATURE:

Letter from Magritte to Chavée, 6 June 1945.

Letter from Magritte to Chavée, 25 June 1945.

R. Magritte, *Dix tableaux de Magritte précédés de descriptions*, Brussels, 1946.

P. Waldberg, *René Magritte*, Brussels, 1965, p. 342 (illustrated p. 97, dated '1953').

D. Sylvester, *René Magritte: catalogue raisonné*, vol. II, *Oil Paintings and Objects, 1931-1948*, London, no. 586, p. 356 (illustrated).





René Magritte, *La vie heureuse*, 1944. Sold, Sotheby's, New York, 2 May 2012, lot 69 (\$1,538,500).



René Magritte, *L'empire de la réflexion*, 1942. Sold, Sotheby's, New York, 3 November 2008, lot 66 (\$1,202,500).

Painted in June 1945, Magritte himself described the scene in *L'utopie* in his publication, *Dix tableaux de Magritte précédés de descriptions*, published the following year. There, he explained that, 'The rose is alone on an island' (R. Magritte, quoted in D. Sylvester, *René Magritte Catalogue Raisonné*, vol. II, London, 1993, p. 356). This sense of the solitude of the flower, already emphasised by the span of the distant horizon and the vastness of the ocean, is thus reinforced by Magritte's statement and his own declared intention. How did the rose reach this island? This strange and solitary bloom is a glimpse of the poetic and the mysterious, even the miraculous, and is all the more striking as an image of hope in the wake of the Occupation of Belgium, which had only recently ended.

The promontory and the rose in *L'utopie* appear to have been painted in the mock-Impressionist style that Magritte referred to as *Surréalisme en plein soleil*. Where his earlier works had deliberately avoided a sense of 'style' in the rendering of their strange and incongruous subjects, he now added an extra layer of the incongruous by emphasising the painting's status as a subjective representation of the world, while also taking advantage of the association between Impressionism

and Realism. He thus introduced a tension between a style of painting associated with capturing a moment of fleeting 'reality' and his own surreal, poetic universe, while also providing a glimpse of sunlight during the dark days of the Second World War. At the same time, he revelled in shocking even his most ardent followers by deliberately and irreverently adopting a style that was then associated with bourgeois taste. Magritte's Surrealism was intended to jolt his viewers out of a complacent understanding of the world around them, but he was aware that his own admirers and followers had developed expectations of his works. *L'utopie* and its sister-works of sunlit Surrealism shocked his viewers out of their complacent understandings of his pictures and of the universe alike.

The first owner of *L'utopie* was Achille Chavée, a writer, friend of Magritte and leading member of the Hainaut group of Surrealists who owned several of the artist's pictures. During the period that *L'utopie* was painted, the pair collaborated extensively on a large exhibition of Belgian Surrealism that was held at the Galerie des Editions La Boétie in Brussels, an exhibition that was dominated by Magritte's own works, a fitting reflection of his importance to Surrealism in that nation.



117 ARSHILE GORKY (1904-1948)
Untitled (Composition)

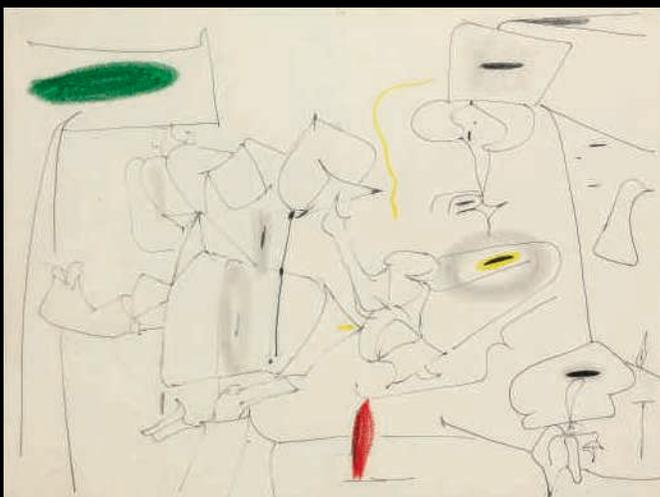
pencil and wax crayon on paper
18⁷/₈ x 25¹/₈ in. (48 x 63.8 cm.)
Executed *circa* 1945

£40,000-70,000
\$66,000-110,000
€48,000-83,000

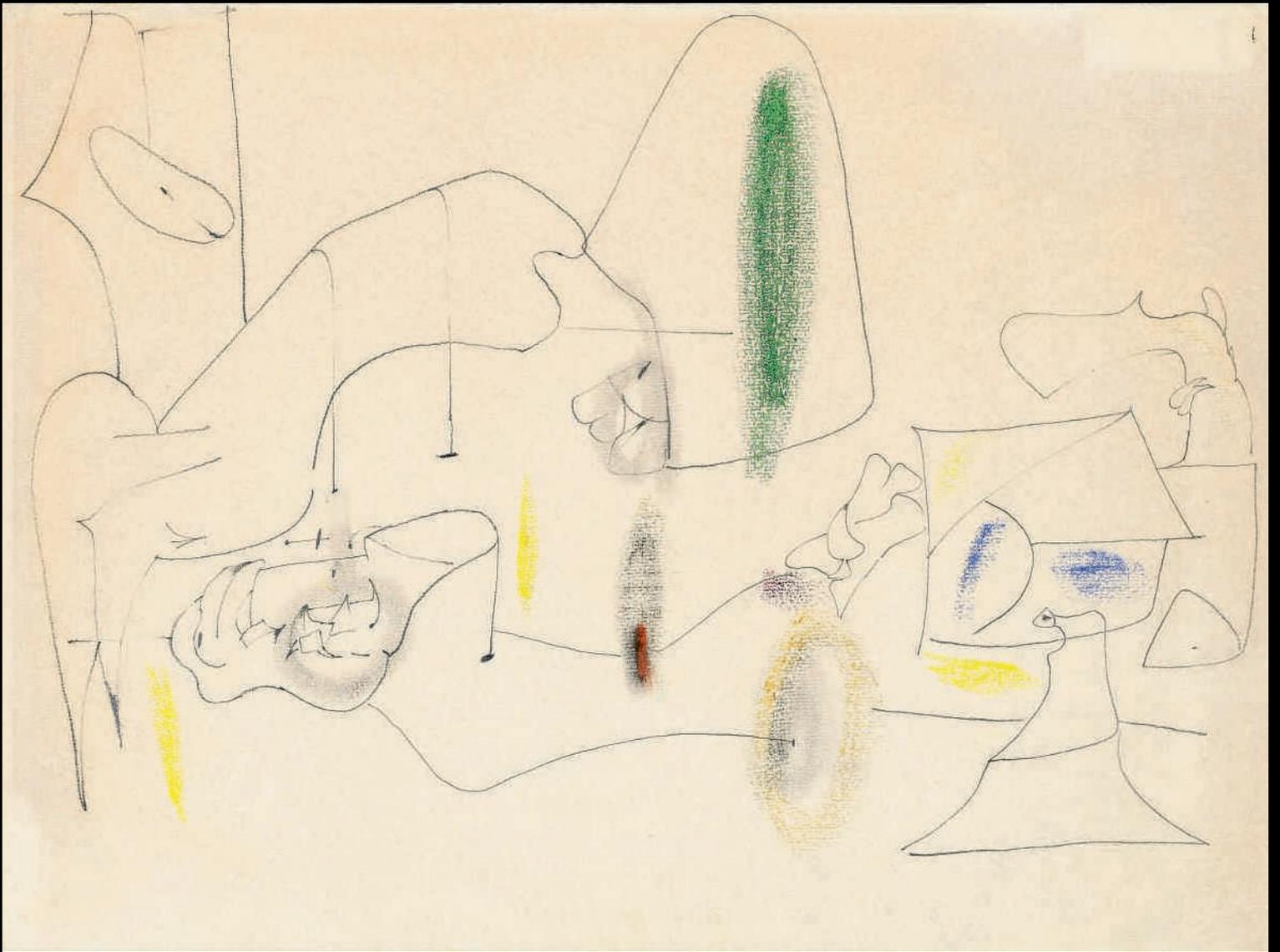
PROVENANCE:

Agnes Gorky Fielding, New York, by whom gifted
to the present owner in Ronda, Spain, in 1980.

This work is recorded in the Arshile Gorky
Foundation Archives under no. D1150.



Arshile Gorky, *Delicate game (study)*, *circa* 1946. Sold, Christie's, New York, 9 November 2011, lot 69 (\$422,500).



λ118 RENÉ MAGRITTE (1898-1967)
Le calligraphe (The calligrapher)

signed 'Magritte' (lower right); titled (on the reverse)
oil on canvas
12 x 14¾ in. (30 x 40 cm.)
Painted in 1958

£400,000-700,000
\$660,000-1,100,000
€480,000-840,000

PROVENANCE:

Edgard Goldmuntz, Antwerp.
Anne Alphond, a gift from the above.
Private collection, Brussels, circa 1987;
sale, Christie's, London, 25 June 2002, lot 42.

LITERATURE:

Letter from Magritte to Bosmans, 10 January
1959, in R. Magritte, *Lettres à André Bosmans
1958-1967*, Paris, 1990, pp. 24-25.
D. Sylvester, *René Magritte, Catalogue raisonné*,
vol. III, *Oil Paintings, Objects and Bronzes 1949-
1967*, London, 1993, no. 891, p. 301 (illustrated).

'The act of painting is performed
in order that poetry appears and
not in order to reduce the world
to a variety of its material aspects.
Poetry does not forget the mystery
of the world: it is not just a
means of evasion nor food for the
imagination, it is presence of mind.'

(R. Magritte in *Rhétorique*, June 1963).



René Magritte, *A la rencontre du plaisir (Towards Pleasure)*, 1950. Sold,
Christie's, London, 6 February 2013, lot 121 (\$2,518,782).



λ*119 MAX ERNST (1891-1976)

Le Sénégal

signed with the initials 'M E' (lower right)
oil on cement-board
48⁷/₈ x 46¹/₈ in. (124 x 117 cm.)
Painted in Summer 1953

£700,000-1,000,000
\$1,200,000-1,600,000
€830,000-1,200,000

PROVENANCE:

Danie Oven, Paris.
Anonymous sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 4 December 1957, lot 82.
Anonymous sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 25 May 1959, lot 48.
Galleria Toninelli, Milan.
Acquired from the above by the father of the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

New York, Lawrence Rubin Greenberg Van Doren Fine Arts, *Max Ernst*, February 2006.

LITERATURE:

W. Spies & S. & G. Metken, *Max Ernst, Werke 1939-1953*, Cologne, 1987, no. 3035, p. 368 (illustrated).

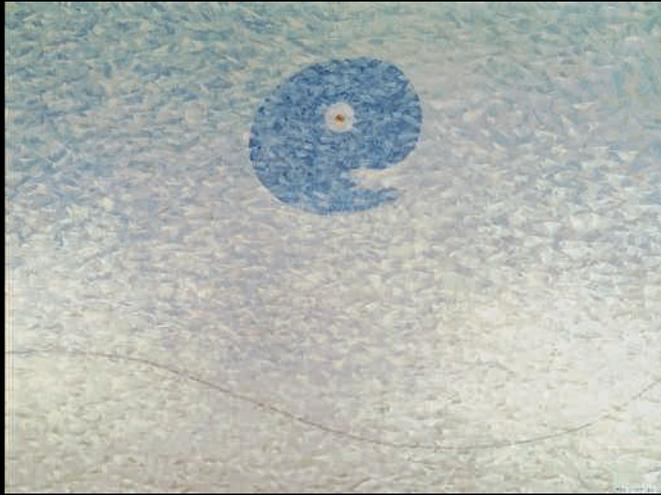


James Thrall Soby, Max Ernst, surrounded by 'kachina' dolls on the terrace of Hale House, the brownstone located at Beekman Place, at East Fifty-first Street in Manhattan that he shared with Peggy Guggenheim, c. 1942. Museum of Modern Art, New York

Max Ernst painted *Le Sénégal* in the Summer of 1953, shortly after his decisive return to Europe and to Paris. There, he had taken up the offer of the use of a studio from the American artist and sometime collector, William Copley, whose Copley Galleries in Beverly Hills had shown a retrospective of Ernst's work a few years earlier. The return to Europe resulted in a watershed in Ernst's art, as he found himself once more surrounded by the centuries-old tradition of painting. Where earlier, he had worked against this tendency, the consummate rebel, now he embraced *facture* in a way that he had not previously. This resulted in works that, while retaining the involvement of chance and inspiration in their origin and execution, nonetheless often featured an apparent response to the history of art against which he had hitherto seemed to campaign. As John Russell wrote, while explaining the importance of the pictures Ernst created in 1953: 'Having stood up, in his own way, to the challenge of the great museums of Europe he suddenly revealed himself as attentive, in his early sixties, to the poetry of light' (J. Russell, *Max Ernst: Life and Work*, London, 1967, p. 162).

Le Sénégal appears bathed in such a sense of light: the central motif, a mysterious totemic figure whose torso resembles a large, languid eye, is shown against a light ochre background, lending it an earthy air. The organic strands of flesh-like forms



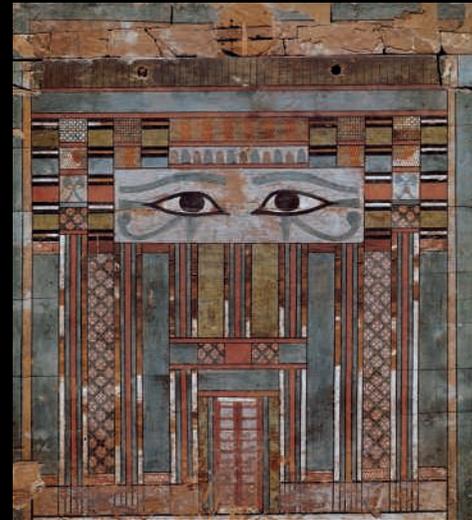


Max Ernst, *Le Cri de la Mouette*, 1953. Menil Collection, Houston

that comprise the figure seem almost symmetrical, as though this image were in part the result of a Rorschach-like folding of paper. However, the nature of the board that serves as this picture's support and the sheer scale, as well as the areas that are not in fact mirrored directly from one side to the other, indicate insistently that this was not the case. Nonetheless, it hints at the automatism, the accidents, that so often led to the inception of Ernst's works.

Ernst had returned to Europe in 1953, having made a brief and unsatisfactory tour a few years earlier. At that point, Europe was still very much suffering in the wake of the Second World War. Ernst himself had experienced some of the conflict during his internment and subsequent escape from France. At that point, he was in a precarious position: as a German, he was considered an undesirable alien by the French; nonetheless, he had also been denounced by the Nazis and therefore expected no warm reception from his compatriots. He was spirited to the United States of America by Varian Fry, with the help of Peggy Guggenheim, whom Ernst married. Soon after arriving in the States, Ernst was introduced to the artist Dorothea Tanning; this marked the beginning of a relationship that brought about his bitter divorce from Guggenheim and his final marriage to Tanning, which would last for almost three decades until his death. Theirs was a strong and intense partnership which was partly forged in the arid landscape of Arizona, where they lived for several years before his return to Europe.

That stay in the United States had a huge impact on Ernst. He was fascinated by the native American culture that he found in Arizona and managed to befriend a number of them, particularly members of the Hopi tribe. The tribal art of Arizona, which Ernst collected assiduously, influenced the totemic figures that appeared in his pictures from that time, and this continues to be the case in *Le Sénégal*. At the same time, the fact that this picture's composition focuses entirely on its central component, rather than enmeshing it within a textured and detailed backdrop, as was the case in many of the pictures he had created in Sedona, marks a break with the developments in America. Instead, this composition can be seen perhaps to relate to *Le cri de la mouette*, from the same year, now in the Menil Collection, Houston. In



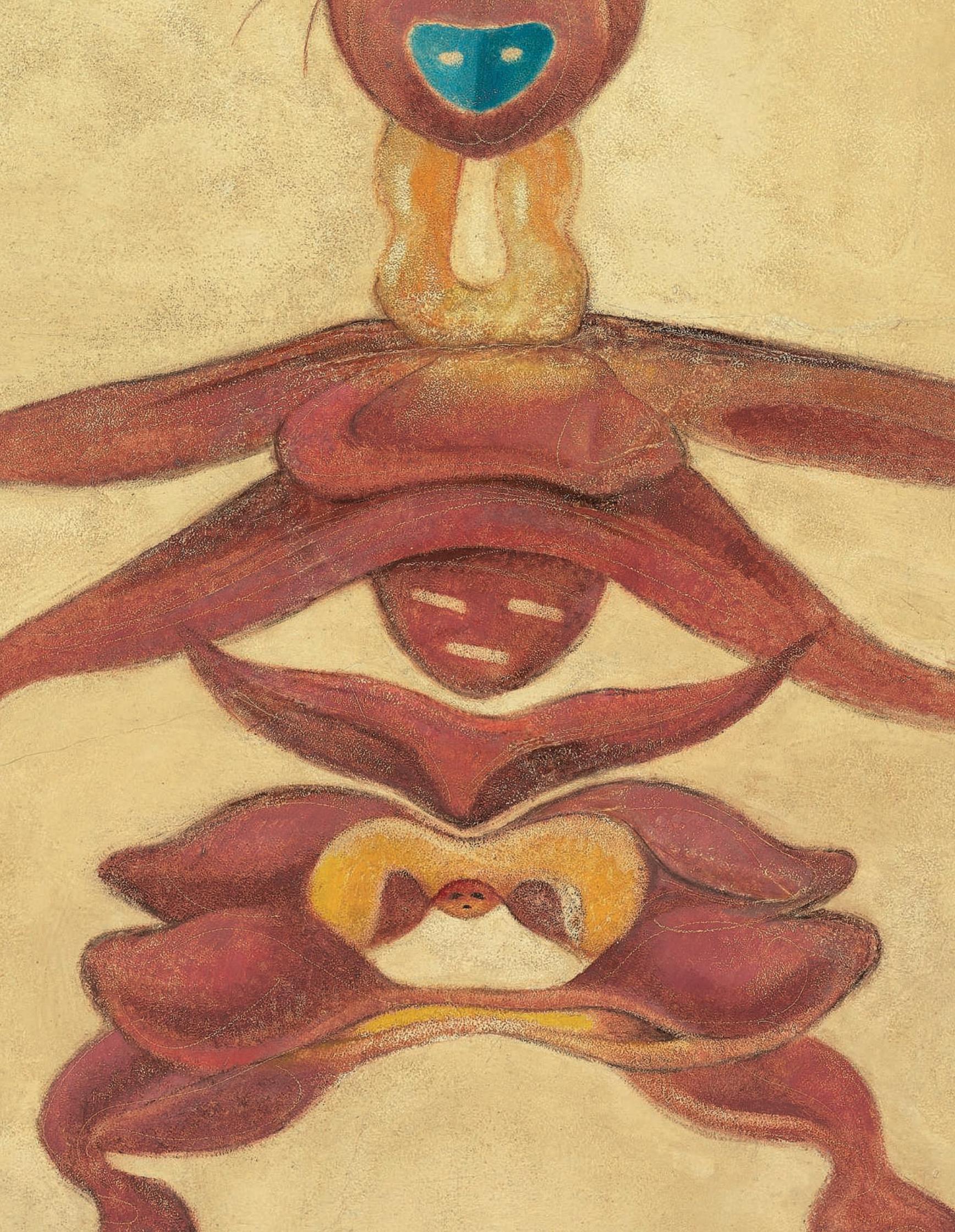
Facade of a house with magic eyes, Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

both works, the coloured motif is emphasised through its contrast with the warm luminosity of the background.

The title of *Le Sénégal* implies that Ernst may also have been looking at cultures other than the native Americans when he was painting it. Only the year before, he had lectured at the University of Hawaii on the importance of tribal art from a number of cultures upon modern art; while he improvised his lectures, this reflects the importance of a number of other cultures upon his work. Looking at *Le Sénégal*, the figure that dominates the picture echoes the forms of some African tribal sculptures. At the same time, the large eye that forms so much of its body appears to invoke some pagan, non-European mysticism. It is a savage descendant of the Eye of Horus, the ancient Egyptian amulet, an earthy, bodily gaze that holds the viewer in scrutiny, an all-seeing eye.

Regarding Senegal itself, in the biographical notes that Ernst wrote and which are reproduced in a number of the exhibition catalogues devoted to his work, Ernst referred only glancingly to the Senegalese, mentioning the guards who had watched over him and 2500 other prisoners when they were being moved from the French internment camp in which he had been held, on the brink of invasion. However, Ernst had several contacts with Senegal. Indeed, *Le Sénégal* was painted for his Senegalese friend, Danie Oven, who also owned a now-missing sister-work with a more squat design. In addition, Ernst was one of the supporters of non-European adepts of Surrealism, including the Senegalese poet and politician, Léopold Sédar Senghor, who became a friend of the artist. Senghor would later become the first president of the newly-independent Senegal; Dorothea Tanning, recalled a trip she made to his country shortly after Ernst's death when she was presented to Senghor:

'in this amazing, blazing, crazy, hard-to-believe place (Dakar) on the edge of the Sahara, I meet Léopold Senghor, poet dear to Paris surrealists, now president of his country. He is receiving our party; it is my turn. Yes, he remembers his friend Max Ernst, and quotes him on the spot: "*A bas l'art. Vive la mode*" ("Down with Art. Long life fashion"), adding, with a dry smile, that it was premonitional, non? And this is Senegal!' (D. Tanning, *Between Lives: An Artist and her World*, New York, 2001, pp. 298-99).



λ120 RENÉ MAGRITTE (1898-1967)

Le vases communicants (Communicating vessels)

signed 'Magritte' (lower right); signed 'Magritte René MAGRITTE', dated 1946 and titled (on the reverse)

gouache on paper
14 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 19 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (35.8 x 49.6 cm.)

Executed in 1946

£400,000-700,000

\$660,000-1,100,000

€480,000-840,000

PROVENANCE:

Alex Salkin, Brussels.
Iolas Gallery, New York.
Sidney Janis, New York, by whom possibly acquired from the above.
Private collection, New York; sale, Sotheby's, New York, 27 May 1976, lot 266.
Nicholas Tooth, by whom acquired at the above sale.
Christian Fayt, Knokke-Heist, by whom acquired from the above.
Galerie Isy Brachot, Brussels, by whom acquired from the above.
Christian Fayt, Knokke-Heist, by whom acquired back from the above.
Sala Dalmau, Barcelona, by 1979.
Private collection, Barcelona, by whom acquired from the above; sale, Christie's, London, 7 February 2005, lot 77.

EXHIBITED:

New York, Hugo Gallery, *René Magritte*, April 1947, no. 29.
Beverly Hills, Copley Galleries, *Magritte*, September 1948, no. 21.
Paris, Grand Palais, Foire internationale d'art contemporain, Galerie Isy Brachot, *Magritte*, October 1977, no. 10.
Knokke-Heist, Christian Fayt Art Gallery, June - July 1978, no. 34.

LITERATURE:

Letter from Magritte to Alex Salkin, 2 January 1947.
P. Tyler, in Exh. cat., *René Magritte*, New York, 1947.
Letter from Magritte to Alexandre Iolas, 21 April 1947.
Letter from Alex Salkin to Alexandre Iolas, 3 May 1948.
Letter from Alex Salkin to Alexandre Iolas, 13 January 1949.
D. Sylvester (ed.), S. Whitfield & M. Raeburn, *René Magritte, Catalogue raisonné*, vol. IV, *Gouaches, Temperas, Watercolours and Papiers Collés, 1918-1967*, London, 1994, no. 1197, p. 64 (illustrated).

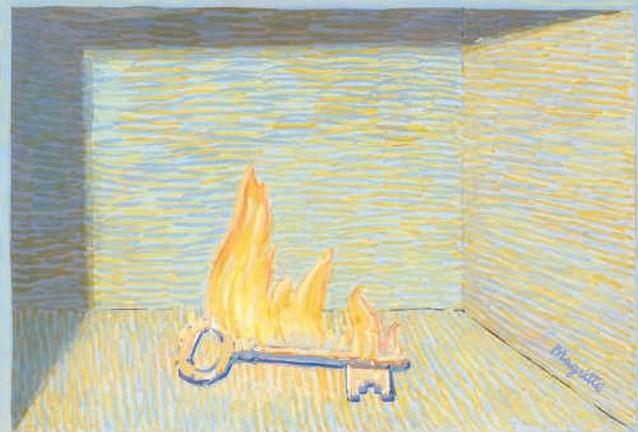
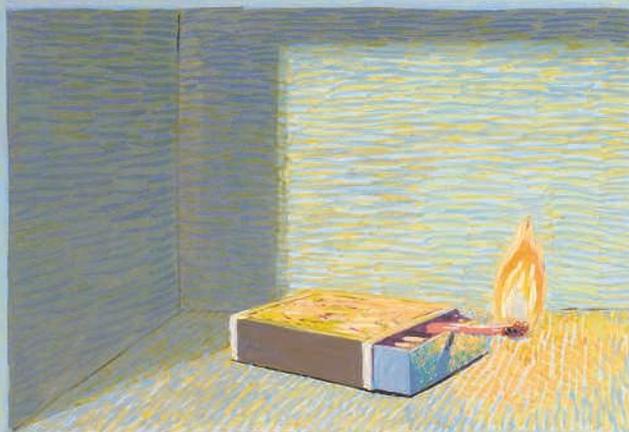
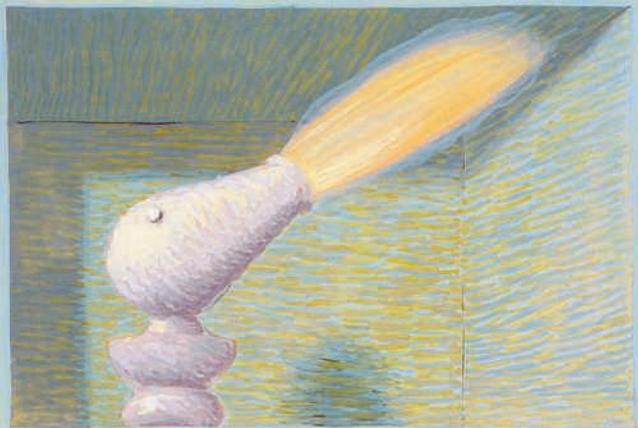
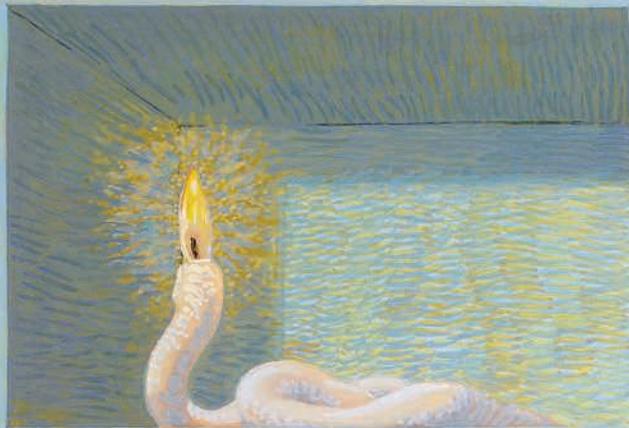
Executed in 1946, *Les vases communicants* presents the viewer with four burning elements: the taper-like candle and the matches which are associated with fire, the key and *bilboquet* which are not. In a parody of the workings of the human mind, Magritte has presented these elements in a wooden cabinet, each categorised and arranged as though by

some Surrealist collector according to hidden criteria that are beyond our grasp. An impossible and alien logic lies behind this *wunderkammer* of the impossible.

Taking its title from an essay on dreams written by André Breton, *Les vases communicants* explicitly appears to investigate the processes of thought and understanding inherent in our waking, and sleeping, comprehension of the world. 'A title,' stated Magritte, 'justifies' the image by completing it. Nietzsche also said 'there is no thought without language'. Could the painting that affects us be a language without thought?' (Magritte, 1943, quoted in H. Torczyner, *Magritte: Ideas and Images*, trans. Richard Miller, New York, 1977, p. 203). The disjointed, seemingly associated elements in *Les vases communicants* certainly bear all the hallmarks of being language without thought, echoing other works in which Magritte placed words and objects in strange compartments while pointing to the hollow limitations of words, and their inability to truly convey meaning or a true idea of the objects they describe. This was a subject that was of great interest to Magritte, and which he frequently tackled both in his painting and in his writing, not least in his famous illustrated essay *Les mots et les choses*. In *Les vases communicants*, Magritte takes elements both familiar and uncanny, places them in a deliberately banal context, and thereby stingingly attacks human communication, categorization, and the arbitrary composition of our thoughts.



René Magritte, *Le musée d'une nuit*, 1927. Private collection.



λ121 YVES TANGUY (1900-1955)

Dangers des courants

signed and dated 'Yves Tanguy 1938' (lower right)
oil on canvas
10¼ x 13¾ in. (27.3 x 35 cm.)
Painted in 1938

£450,000-650,000

\$740,000-1,100,000

€540,000-770,000

PROVENANCE:

F. C. Boldsen, Copenhagen, and thence by descent; sale, Christie's, London, 27 June 1994, lot 31.

Acquired by the present owner in 1994.

EXHIBITED:

London, Guggenheim Jeune, July 1938.

The present intention of the Yves Tanguy Committee is to include this work in the revised edition of the *catalogue raisonné* of his paintings and gouaches.



Yves Tanguy, *Je te retrouve objet trouvé*, 1938. Sold, Christie's, New York, 4 November 2013, lot 32, \$1,085,000.

Dangers des courants is an exquisite subaquatic mindscape by Yves Tanguy painted in 1938. Mysterious pebbles are scattered across the soft expanse, which recalls the sandy bed of the sea or a desert. Shapes resembling jellyfish in their spectral, bubble-like forms emerge among these other objects, as well as twig-like assemblages that appear sculptural. Tanguy has created a rich interplay of texture and colour with the amorphous elements in this picture, revealing the automatism that he so valued as well as the intense lyricism of his Surreal vision and the meticulous craftsmanship that such jewel-like detailing involved.

The title, *Dangers des courants*, appears to hint at the maritime theme that is invoked by these jostling forms. Tanguy himself had spent two years in the Merchant Navy and related strongly to the sea. His pictures often had a marine quality, with the soft light, off-set by the crisp shadows, and the distorted sense of distance. This impression of the seabed was more marked before his move to the United States of America, when rocks and the desert became more of an inspiration. In *Dangers des courants*, the range of components are visions of some

impossible aquatic realm: these forms appear as creatures, a mysterious bestiary. They teeter on the brink of recognition, alien yet somehow knowable, be it in the arm-like strands of the right-hand stick-creation or the more globular forms elsewhere.

Dangers des courants relates to three other pictures of the same title and format, all of which were shown in one of Tanguy's early one-man exhibitions, held at Guggenheim Jeune in London in the same year that the picture was painted. Peggy Guggenheim became romantically involved with Tanguy around this time; in addition, it seems that Kay Sage, whom he would later marry, entered his orbit then, acquiring one of his pictures, perhaps from that show. On that occasion, a catalogue had been published with a foreword by André Breton, which he had written for a Paris show that had taken place earlier that year, which he ended with the words: 'Yves Tanguy, the painter of fearful aerial, subterranean and maritime elegance, the man in whom I see the moral adornment of our time: my charming friend' (A. Breton, *Surrealism and Painting*, London, 1965, p. 175).



λ*122 MAX ERNST (1891-1976)
Loplop de mauvaise humeur (Loplop in a bad mood)

signed 'Max Ernst' (lower right)
oil on canvas
25¾ x 21½ in. (65.4 x 54.5 cm.)
Painted in 1929

£1,200,000-1,600,000
\$2,000,000-2,600,000
€1,500,000-1,900,000

PROVENANCE:

Galerie André-François Petit, Paris.
Galleria Galatea, Turin, *circa* 1969.
Private collection, Milan.
Private collection, United States.
Acquired from the above by the present owner,
circa 2004.

EXHIBITED:

Paris, Galerie André-François Petit, *Obsessions et Visions*, May - June 1968, no. 21 (illustrated).
Turin, Galleria Galatea, *Selezione 9*, June - July 1969 (illustrated).
Munich, Haus der Kunst, *Max Ernst: Retrospektive*, 1979, no. 199 (illustrated p. 290).

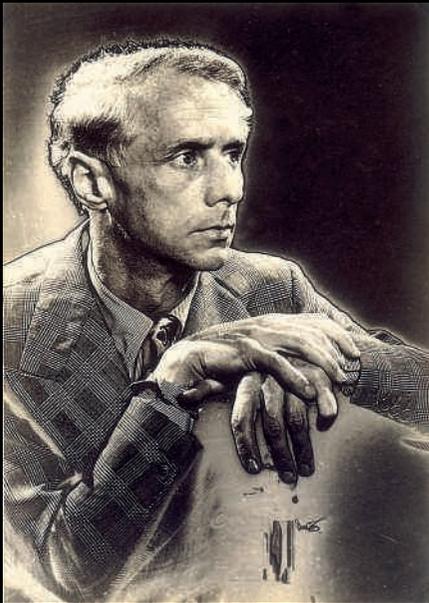
LITERATURE:

W. Spies, S. & G. Metken, *Max Ernst Werke 1929-1938*, Cologne, 1979, no. 1691 (illustrated).
W. Spies, *Max Ernst: The Artist's Other Self*, London, 1983, p. 185, no. 37 (illustrated).



Pablo Picasso, *Le studio*, 1927-28. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

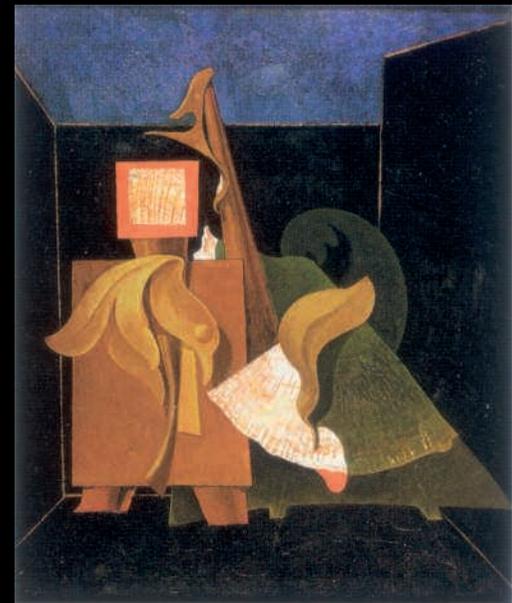




Man Ray, Portrait of Max Ernst, c.1935. Israel Museum, Jerusalem. The Vera and Arturo Schwarz Collection of Dada and Surrealist Art.



Max Ernst, *Loplop présente une fleur*, 1930. Private Collection.



Max Ernst, *Zwei antropomorphe Figuren*, 1930. Kunst und Museumsverein, Wuppertal.

"My roamings, my itch, my impatience, my doubts, my beliefs, my hallucinations, my refusals to submit to any discipline including my own, the sporadic visits of perturbation, *ma soeur* (trouble, my sister), *La femme 100 têtes* (the hundred-headed woman) have not created a climate conducive to a serene and smiling life's work. My work is like my behaviour - not harmonious in the sense of the classical composers, not even in the sense of the classic revolutionaries. Subversive, uneven and contradictory, to the specialists of art, culture, manners, logic, morals, it is unacceptable" (Max Ernst, "Woman's Nakedness is Wiser than Philosopher's Systems", Cologne, 1970, cited in W. Spies, *Max Ernst: Loplop, The Artist's other Self*, London, 1982, p. 77).

Loplop de mauvaise humeur (Loplop in a bad mood) is one of a number of important but enigmatic works produced by Ernst in the late 1920s and early 1930s which centre around the mystical figure of "Loplop". Loplop was a mysterious bird-like creature that was to take many forms in Ernst's work of this period. Usually male though sometimes androgynous, Loplop was what Ernst later described simply as the "*Bird Superior*, a private phantom very much attached and devoted to me" (Max Ernst: *Cahiers d'Art*, Max Ernst edition, Paris, 1937, p. 24).

Loplop made his first appearances in Ernst's work in his collages of the late 1920s, and was soon recognised by the artist as a kind of alter-ego or mystic guide to the netherworld of his unconscious imagination. Birds had always played a profound part in Ernst's imagination. Throughout his life, he grew increasingly to look like one, and as a child, the bizarre death of his pet parrot at precisely the same moment his sister was born had a profound and long-lasting impact on him. As he recalled in his autobiographical notes of this strange event:

"A friend by the name of Horneborn, an intelligent piebald, faithful bird dies during the night; the same night a baby, number six, enters life. Confusion in the brain of this otherwise quite healthy boy (the young Ernst) - a kind of interpretation mania, as if the newborn innocent, sister Loni, had in her lust for life, taken

possession of the vital fluids of his favourite bird. The crisis is soon overcome. Yet in the boy's mind there remains a voluntary if irrational confounding of the images of human beings with birds and other creatures, and this is reflected in the emblems of his art" (Max Ernst, "Biographische Notizen", cited in exh. cat., *Max Ernst*, Zurich, 1962-3, p. 23).

The bird figure of Loplop became for Ernst, a kind of shamanic figure and talisman. As represented in this work, the figure of Loplop soon took on the role of intermediary in Ernst's art, and is often depicted presenting a canvas or work of art within the picture itself. In these works a game between reality and illusion is played similar to that of Picasso's late 1920s self-portraits of himself painting a model in his studio. In many of Ernst's Loplop paintings Ernst presents Loplop as if it were Loplop that was the creator and discoverer of the surprising images on show and is generously bringing his art to Ernst's attention. These works which depict Loplop as part bird-artist, part easel, part master of ceremonies, are a recurring format in Ernst's work of this period and were usually titled "Loplop presents..." They culminated in 1931 with the collage *Loplop presents members of the Surrealist Group*.

In *Loplop de mauvaise humeur* the figure of Loplop is once again presented as an easel onto which a more or less abstract composition of scraped grattage shapes reminiscent of Ernst's coquillage paintings has been arranged. The largely abstract composition of this painting-within-a-painting is echoed in the wider composition itself, with the head above the easel being formed out of the same scraped grattage technique. This extension of the painted technique out of the frame of the canvas adds a layer of ambiguity if not mystery to the work, compounded by the fact that on the presented canvas another snake-like figure of Loplop appears. From this it seems as if the normal boundaries between Loplop's world and the world of the artist, between the real and the imaginary, the tangible and the illusory have been broken down and interspersed.



λ*123 YVES TANGUY (1900-1955)

Sans titre

signed and dated 'YVES TANGUY 43' (lower right)

gouache on paper

7¼ x 9⅞ in. (18.4 x 24.4 cm.)

Executed in 1943

£60,000-80,000

\$98,000-130,000

€71,000-95,000

PROVENANCE:

Julien Levy Gallery, New York, by whom acquired directly from the artist after 1945.

Igor Stravinsky, New York, by 1963.

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.

Galerie de l'Île de France, Paris, by whom acquired on 19 May 1972.

Galerie Karsten Greve, Cologne.

Private collection, Switzerland, circa 1990.

Acquired from the above by the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Boston, The Institute of Modern Art, *100 Modern*

Pictures in water color, gouache and tempera

from eleven countries: Austria, Canada, England,

France, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Russia, Spain,

Switzerland, and the United States, May - July

1945, no. 33.

LITERATURE:

D. Marchesseau, J. Saucet, E. Filipacchi, *Yves Tanguy*, Paris, 1973, p. 57 (illustrated).

P. Waldberg, *Yves Tanguy*, Paris, 1977, pp. 227 & 347 (illustrated p. 226).

The present intention of the Yves Tanguy Committee is to include this work in the revised edition of the *catalogue raisonné* of his paintings and gouaches.



*124 DOROTHEA TANNING (1910-2012)

A Mrs. Radcliffe Called Today

signed and dated 'Dorothea Tanning '44' (lower right); titled (along the lower edge)

oil on canvas

18 1/8 x 15 1/2 in. (46.1 x 39.4 cm.)

Painted in 1944

£50,000-80,000

\$82,000-130,000

€60,000-95,000

PROVENANCE:

Thomas Fine Howard, New York, by 1948 and until 1983.

Acquired by the present owner in October 2006.

EXHIBITED:

St. Louis, City Art Museum, *38th Annual Exhibition*, February - March 1945, no. 74 (titled 'A Mr. Radcliffe called today').

New York, Julien Levy Gallery, *Recent Paintings by Dorothea Tanning*, January 1948, no. 14.

Knokke-Le Zoute, Casino Communal, *XXe Festival belge d'été, Dorothea Tanning*, June - August 1967, no. 3, p. 17 (illustrated).

Paris, Centre national d'art contemporain, *Dorothea Tanning*, May - July 1974, no. 6, p. 28 (illustrated).

LITERATURE:

D. Tanning, "Note Bibliographique", in *Dorothea Tanning*, Paris, 1966, p. 152.

P. Waldberg, "Dorothea Tanning et les enfants de la nuit", in exh. cat., *Dorothea Tanning*, Brussels, 1967, p. 8.

A. Bosquet, *La peinture de Dorothea Tanning*, Paris, 1966, no. 31, p. 155 (illustrated p. 31; dated 1945).

P. Waldberg, *Les demeures d'Hypnos*, Paris, 1976, pp. 314-318.

G. Plazy, *Dorothea Tanning*, Paris, 1976, p. 13 (illustrated).

J. Krichbaum & R. A. Zondergeld, *Dictionary of Fantastic Art*, London, 1977, p. 209.

J. Russell, "Le 'Moi' multiforme de Dorothea Tanning", in *Numéro spécial de XXe Siècle*, Paris, 1977, p. 51 (illustrated p. 49).

Exh. cat., *Dada and Surrealism reviewed*, London, 1978, p. 446.

D. Tanning, "Some parallels in words and pictures", in *Pequod: A journal of contemporary literature and*

literary criticism, New York, 1989, p. 173.

S. Wilson "Between lives", in exh. cat., *Dorothea Tanning, Between lives, works on paper*, London, 1989, pp. 7-8.

J. Russell, "The Several Selves of Dorothea Tanning", in exh. cat., *Dorothea Tanning*, Malmö, 1993, pp. 14, 15 (illustrated p. 14).

J. C. Bailly & R.C. Morgan, *Dorothea Tanning*, New York, 1995, p. 56 (illustrated pl. 9).

M. A. Caws, "Person: Tanning's self-portraiture" in *The Surrealist Look: An Erotics of Encounter*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1997, p. 92.

V. Carruthers, "Dorothea Tanning and her gothic imagination", in *Journal of Surrealism and the Americas* 5, no. 1, 2011, pp. 151-153 (illustrated fig. 6)

K. Conley, "Dorothea Tanning's Gothic Ghostliness" in *Surrealist Ghostliness*, Lincoln, Nebraska, 2013, p. 122.

Executed in 1944, *A Mrs. Radcliffe Called Today* dates from a period in Dorothea Tanning's career of direct involvement with Surrealism. Built around the structure of gothic arches and flying buttresses, the picture evokes a series of ghostly apparitions. Sinister tassels and locks of human hair populate the niches of the arches like a series of eerie human remains. In the claustrophobic space enclosed by the wall, a young girl – more evanescent than real – is running, her flaming red hair dishevelled and her white dress floating in the air. The darkness of the interior creates a stark contrast with the

light of the outside: dazzling and disorienting, it collapses all sense of time or duration. The repetition of the symbols – the red hair, the tassels – creates the impression of return, of a nightmarish cycle of events. Vulnerable, and at the same time empowered by her dominating presence in this unsettling space, the girl appears both as possible prey and predator.

In 1936, Tanning saw the exhibition 'Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism' organised at the Museum of Modern Art. The experience marked a pivotal moment in her career: in her biography Tanning described it as a 'real explosion, rocking me on my run-over heels. Here is the infinitely faceted world I must have been waiting for' (D. Tanning, *Between Lives*, New York, 2001, p. 49). In the next following years Tanning wished to reach Paris; the war however 'brought Paris to [her]' ('Questions pour Dorothea Tanning: entretien avec Alain Jouffroy, Mars 1974', pp. 43-52, in *Dorothea Tanning*, exh. cat., Paris, 1974, p. 43). Exiled from Europe, most of the Surrealists in fact arrived to New York; among them was Max Ernst, whom Tanning met in 1942 and eventually married in 1946. *A Mrs. Radcliffe Called Today* was thus executed in a moment of effervescent creativity: finally clear about the universe she wanted to explore and surrounded by artists who shared and understood her call, in the 1940s Tanning produced her most spectacular and memorable works.

A Mrs. Radcliffe Called Today appears as a homage to the woman who influenced Tanning's work the most. The title of the picture refers to Ann Radcliffe, an eighteenth-century novelist who pioneered the gothic genre. Her novel *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) narrates the story of a young woman escaping the disturbing castle of Udolpho. Evoking the sinister character of a Gothic fortress and portraying a fleeting image of a girl, *A Mrs. Radcliffe Called Today* appears to relate to the novel, which Tanning certainly read. Looking back onto her career, the artist would remember: 'In the forties I was in a kind of gothic mood. The mood of longing for a displacement, of another time, another place. I had read gothic novels at that time. They were permeated with this mist of mysterious and unpredictable atmospheres of places that I didn't know about...' (From interview with Roland Hagenberg, "Dorothea Tanning," *Art of Russia and the West*, No. 1 (March 1989), p. 31). In 1988, longing for the present work which the artist had sold in 1945, Tanning executed two collages evoking her desire to reunite with the picture, *Mrs. Radcliffe Called Again (Left No Message)* and *Still Calling Still Hoping*. Capturing a crucial moment in the artist's career and conceived as a direct homage to the gothic aspirations of her work at the time, *A Mrs. Radcliffe Called Today* is a compelling work triggered by that wave of Surrealism which invaded New York during the Second World War.



Max Ernst and Dorothea Tanning, who is lounging beside a piece of his sculpture in their garden at home, 1 January 1961. Photo: Claude Huston.



A MRS.

KADLIFE

CALLED TODAY

Handwritten signature and date

λ*125 SALVADOR DALÍ (1904-1989)

Sans titre: New Accessories (Apparitions et équilibres en perspectives)

signed and dated 'Gala Salvador Dalí 1943' (lower right)

oil on canvas

13 x 19 in. (33 x 48.3 cm.)

Painted in 1943.

£1,000,000-1,500,000

\$1,700,000-2,400,000

€1,200,000-1,800,000

PROVENANCE:

Gala Dalí, Cadaqués by 1943.

Private collection, Spain, by whom acquired from the above.

Jeffrey H. Loria & Co., Inc., New York, by whom acquired from the above.

Acquired from the above by the present owner in October 1997.

EXHIBITED:

West Hollywood, Louis Stern Fine Arts, *Imaginary Realities: Surrealism Then and Now*, September-November 1996, no. 3 (illustrated).

LITERATURE:

Vogue, 1 October 1943, p. 85 (illustrated), pp. 86-87).

R. Martin, *Fashion and Surrealism*, New York, 1987, p. 203 (detail illustrated).

R. Descharnes & G. Néret, *Salvador Dalí, The Paintings, 1904-1945*, Cologne, 1994, vol. I, p. 362, no. 819 (illustrated upside-down).

Exh. cat., *It's All Dalí: Film, Fashion, Photography, Design, Advertising, Painting*, Rotterdam, 2005, p. 30 (detail illustrated).

Exh. cat., *Salvador Dalí and the Magazines*, Casa-Museu Castell Gala-Dalí, Pubol, 2008, no. 124.

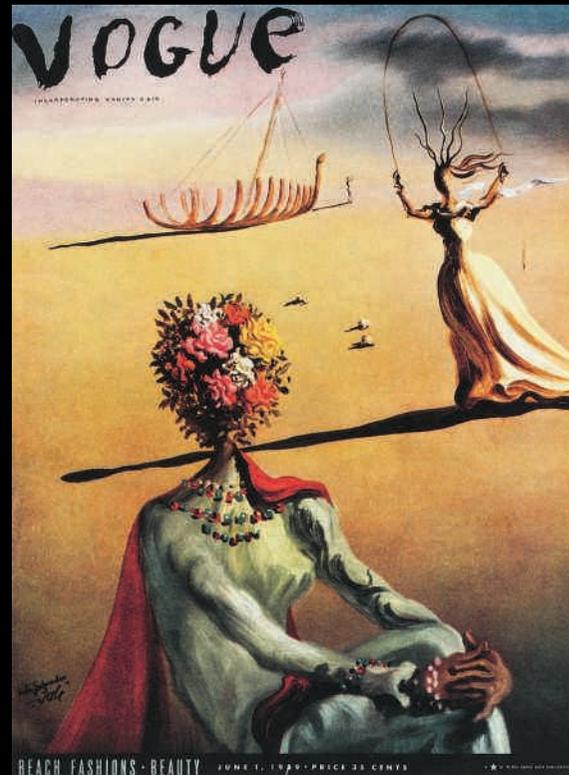


Gala with the Elsa Schiaparelli shoe hat, after designs by Salvador Dalí, 1936.
Photo: Andre Cailliet.





Giorgio de Chirico, *The Song of Love (La canzone d'amore)*, 1914. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.



Salvador Dalí, cover for *Vogue* (American edition), 1 June 1939.

Featured in *Vogue*, in the 1 October 1943 issue, *Sans titre: New Accessories* brings Salvador Dalí's universe into dialogue with the glamorous, ephemeral world of fashion, in which the artist basked during his stay in the United States as he collaborated with some of the most influential female designers of the century. With Dalinian pathos, the artist had in fact affirmed: 'The constant tragedy of human life is fashion, and that is why I have always liked to collaborate with Mlle Chanel and Mme Schiaparelli, just to prove that the idea of dressing oneself, the idea of disguising oneself, was only the consequence of the traumatic experience of birth... Fashion is also the tragic constant of history' (quoted in R. Descharnes, *Salvador Dalí*, New York, 1976, p. 116). Set in a typical *Dalíean* landscape, some fashion items are scattered over the rocks: of gigantic proportions, they perturb the semi-epical scenes unfolding in the background.

Sans titre: New Accessories was introduced in *Vogue* as follows: 'As an experiment, painter Dalí took along with him on a recent holiday a few modern fashion accessories – in order to see what part they might play in one of his new paintings. On the next pages is the imaginative result – accessories of today transposed into a mythological world'. Bridging the gap between fashion and art, works such as *Sans titre: New Accessories* exemplifies Dalí's complacent attitude towards popular culture: 'I feel no separation between myself as an artist and the mass of the people', he once

stated (Dalí, quoted in H. Crawford, "Surrealism and the Fashion Magazine", in *American Periodicals*, vol. 14, no. 2, 2004, p. 212). Playing with the desire of the magazine's readers, Dalí's transposed into the dream world of his universe the aspirations of the American middle-class. By depicting an inanimate glove or an enticing red woman slipper, Dalí was however arching back to the Surrealist idea of fetish, merging sexual desire with consumerist instinct.

Following the Nazi invasion of Paris, Dalí fled Europe for America in 1940, where he remained for the next eight years, immersing himself in contemporary American culture. He became known to the American audience as Surrealism's impresario and was increasingly viewed as the very personification and embodiment of Surrealism itself. Dalí's self-proclaimed "dazzling" fame and notoriety had led, as the artist remarked in his 1942 autobiography, to the receipt of "a shower of extravagant offers, each more unexpected than the last" (S. Dalí, *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*, New York, 1942, p. 344). Among these extravagant and unexpected solicitations were invitations and commissions to dress shop windows on New York's Fifth Avenue, design clothing and accessories, create advertisements and to illustrate articles for *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue*, as *Sans titre: New Accessories* commemorates.



Peter Paul Rubens
1943

λ126 OSCAR DOMÍNGUEZ (1906-1958)

Retrato de Roma

oil on canvas
47% x 35 in. (121 x 89 cm.)
Painted in 1933

£700,000-1,000,000

\$1,200,000-1,600,000

€830,000-1,200,000

PROVENANCE:

Anatael Hernández Izquierdo, Tacoronte, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, a gift from the artist in 1933, and thence by descent.
Acquired from the above by the present owner in 2006.



Oscar Domínguez, *Machine à coudre électro-sexuelle*, 1934-35. Sold, Christie's, London, 6 February 2013, lot 127 (£2,113,250).

EXHIBITED:

Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Museo Municipal, *Oscar Domínguez*, January 1968, no. 21.
Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno, *Oscar Domínguez Antológica 1926-1957*, January - March 1996, no. 9, p. 252 (illustrated p. 93); this exhibition later travelled to Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Centro de Arte La Granja, April - May 1996 and Madrid, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, June - September 1996.
Madrid, Fundación Caja, *Istmos: vanguardias españolas 1915-1936*, Madrid 1998, p. 113.
Madrid, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, *Huellas dalilianas*, July - October 2004, illustrated p. 112; this exhibition later travelled to Vitoria-Gasteiz, Artium, November 2004 - February 2005.
Marseille, Musée Cantini, *La Part du jeu et du rêve, Óscar Domínguez et le surréalisme 1906-1957*, June - October 2005, no. 10, p. 214 (illustrated pp. 87 & 214).
Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Fundación Pedro García Cabrera, *Islas raíces: visiones insulares en la vanguardia de Canarias*, 2005, p. 328.
San Cristóbal de la Laguna, Antiguo Convento de Santo Domingo, *La obra de Óscar Domínguez en las colecciones privadas canarias*, December 2006 - February 2007, no. 8, p. 107 (illustrated).
Madrid, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, on loan 2008-2013.

LITERATURE:

P. Waldberg, *Les demeures d'Hypnos*, Paris, 1976, p. 334 (illustrated).
F. Castro, *Óscar Domínguez y el Surrealismo*, Madrid 1978, no. 6, p. 116 (illustrated; titled "Retrato de la pianista Roma").
A. Zaya, *Oscar Domínguez*, Santa Cruz de Tenerife, 1992, p. 145 (illustrated).
Exh. cat., *Oscar Domínguez, Antológica 1926 - 1957*, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, 1995, no. 9, p. 252 (illustrated p. 93).
E. Guignon, *Óscar Domínguez*, Tenerife, 1996, p. 165 (illustrated p. 35).
Exh. cat., *Éxodo hacia el sur, Óscar Domínguez y ek automatismo absoluto 1938-1942*, Tenerife, 2006, p. 65 (illustrated).
Exh. cat., *Óscar Domínguez, El Surrealismo volcánico*, Paris, 2006, p. 26 (illustrated fig. 1).
Domingo Luis Hernández, ed., *Surrealismo Siglo 21*, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, 2006 (illustrated).
Exh., cat., *Una existencia de papel*, Madrid, 2011.
E. Becerra, *El Surrealismo y sus derivas: visiones, declives y retornos*, Madrid, 2013.

Ana Vázquez de Parga has kindly confirmed the authenticity of this work.





Domingo López, Roma, Domínguez, a friend and Eduardo Westerdahl, 1933.



Luis Buñel, Still from *Un chien andalou*, 1928.

Retrato de Roma is a historic painting by Oscar Domínguez, dating from the crucial moment just before he came into contact with the Parisian group of Surrealists. This picture has been widely published and exhibited and stayed in the hands of the same family for over seven decades, having initially been a gift from Domínguez to friends in Tenerife. It was presented to them in 1933, the year it was painted, only shortly before his 1934 introduction to André Breton and his circle. When he painted *Retrato de Roma*, Domínguez was staying in his native Tenerife, in the Canary Isles, having spent a great deal of time in his new base, Paris. Back in the Canary Isles, he had his first one-man exhibition, held at the Circolo de Bellas Artes de Tenerife, showing recent works painted largely in the French capital. It is an indication of the direction he had already adopted that *Retrato de Roma* was painted before his direct contact with the Surrealists, yet the picture is redolent with disjointed surreality, as well as the profound atmosphere of raw sexuality and violence that mark out the best of Domínguez' works. These qualities, as well as his incredible inventiveness, would lead to his being embraced so warmly by the Surrealists the following year. His works from this period served as a calling card for Breton.

Domínguez had travelled to Tenerife in 1933 in the company of his lover Roma Damska, a Polish pianist. Roma's vocation is indicated in this Surreal portrait of her by the piano against which she leans—and upon whose keys her dismembered hands

continue to play, hovering in the air mysteriously. Roma herself is looking aside, gazing into a middle distance as though wholly unconcerned by the removal of her arms. She has a static grace in her attitude that recalls ancient statuary; indeed, the lack of arms and the pose both appear to refer to the Venus de Milo, the famous Hellenistic marble of the goddess of love from the Louvre, Paris. Meanwhile, the sheet music propped upon the piano seems to comprise of an image of a 'Dragon Tree', a species native to the Canary Isles and a motif that appeared in a number of Domínguez' works. His paintings from Paris often contained near-lunar landscapes and fragmentary allusions to the dragon trees of his native isle, tying him to his home; in the case of *Retrato de Roma*, he appears to be responding to the juxtaposition of his Polish lover and Tenerife, where they were staying. Intriguingly, the tree came to be identified with Domínguez himself: Breton would come to nickname him the 'Dragonnier des Canaries', in part in reference to his physical bulk.

Looking at *Retrato de Roma*, it is clear that Domínguez has merged a number of influences. The piano is pertinent because of Roma's occupation, yet also appears to make reference to the works of his compatriot, the Surreal artist Salvador Dalí, whose own works had recently garnered much attention in Breton's circle. Looking at *Retrato de Roma*, with its floating, disembodied hands, one is reminded of Dalí's *Hallucination partielle. Six images de Lénine sur un piano*, painted two years earlier and now in the



Salvador Dalí, *Hallucination partielle. Six images de Lénine sur un piano*, 1931. Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.



The present lot.

Musée National d'Art moderne, Paris. Domínguez has brought his own violence to the scene, perhaps more in keeping with the tone of the film that Dalí had made with Luis Buñuel, *Un chien andalou*, in 1929. In that film, two pianos crowned with dead donkeys are shown at one point, being dragged by a man intent on an assault; meanwhile, in another scene, someone is seen from above, prodding a severed hand in a street. Domínguez appears to have absorbed some of these influences, having already been exposed to the works of the Surrealists while in Paris during the period in which he was developing his own unique style; in *Retrato de Roma*, the viewer can perceive the extent to which he may have digested those other strands of Surrealism and blended them together to create something that is wholly idiosyncratic, that sings with the landscape of the Canaries and with his own life, celebrating his lover in her striking red dress yet also channelling the psycho-sexual violence that formed such a strong current in his own life.

Domínguez' tendency to violence is often recalled in particular in association with a self-portrait by the Romanian Surrealist, Víctor Brauner, who showed himself with an eye missing. This would prove prophetic: during an argument with someone else, Domínguez threw a glass which hit Brauner and caused him to lose his eye. In a strange parallel, the violence of *Retrato de Roma* may also serve as a prelude to history as it played out: the catalogues of Domínguez' work often point out that Roma herself

was shot as a spy during the Occupation of Paris.

While *Retrato de Roma* has a brooding sense of violence, not least in the wounds to Roma's arms and hands, photographs taken during their time in attest to the fun that she and Domínguez had during their stay, not least those taken by the artist's friend Eduardo Westerdahl. It was Westerdahl, whose mother was Catalan and whose father was Swedish, who was the editor-in-chief of the *Gaceta de Arte*, a publication that would transcend its origins in the Canary Isles and become a major, cutting edge cultural publication during its brief existence, having been launched the year before *Retrato de Roma* was painted. Westerdahl was also instrumental in organising Domínguez' 1933 exhibition. Two years later, in part through the contacts that Domínguez forged in Paris, Westerdahl would also arrange the 1935 Surrealist exhibition at the Ateneo de Santa Cruz de Tenerife, on which occasion Breton himself visited the island. This reveals the speed with which Domínguez himself had risen to prominence within the Surreal group. In addition, he was one of the great champion of the *objet surréaliste* and the original Surreal pioneer of decalcomania, a technique that would be espoused by many of the Surrealists, and in particular Max Ernst. *Retrato de Roma* thus provides an intriguing insight into the streams of violence, place and sexuality that would soon come to cement his reputation during those trailblazing days of Surrealism.

λ127 RENÉ MAGRITTE (1898-1967)

Image à la maison verte (Image with a green house)

signed 'Magritte' (lower right); dated '1944' and titled (on the reverse).

oil on canvas

23 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 31 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (60 x 81 cm.)

Painted in 1944

£700,000-1,000,000

\$1,200,000-1,600,000

€840,000-1,200,000

PROVENANCE:

Pierre Andrieu, Paris, by whom acquired directly from the artist.

Galerie Isy Brachot, Brussels, by whom acquired from the above before 1977.

EXHIBITED:

Brussels, *Galerie des Editions de la Boétie, Surréalisme*, December - January 1945, no. 79.

Verviers, *Société Royale des Beaux-Arts, René Magritte*, August - September 1982, no. 23.

Paris, Grand Palais, Foire internationale d'art contemporain, Galerie Isy Brachot, *Magritte*, October 1977, no. 8.

Paris, Galerie Isy Branchot, *Magritte 1898-1967*, January - March 1979, no. 10 (illustrated); this exhibition later travelled to Brussels, Galerie Isy Brachot, March - May 1979.

Tokyo, Galerie des Arts, Shibuya, *René Magritte*, August - September 1982, no. 25; this exhibition later travelled to Toyama, Musée d'Art de la Préfecture, October 1982, and Kumamoto, Musée d'Art de la Préfecture, October - December 1982.

LITERATURE:

Letter from Magritte to Mariën, July 1944, in R. Magritte, *La Destination: lettres à Marcel Mariën, 1937-1962*, Brussels, 1977, no. 116.

Letter from Magritte to Mariën, 5 August 1944, in R. Magritte, *La Destination: lettres à Marcel Mariën, 1937-1962*, Brussels, 1977, no. 117.

Postcard from D. Sylvester & M. Draguet, Magritte, Brussels, 2009, p. 328 & 424 Magritte to Mariën, 22 August 1944, in R. Magritte, *La Destination: lettres à Marcel Mariën, 1937-1962*, Brussels, 1977, no. 126.

Letter from Magritte to Mariën, 22 August 1944, in R. Magritte, *La Destination: lettres à Marcel Mariën, 1937-1962*, Brussels, 1977, no. 127.

Postcard from Magritte to Mariën, 5 September

1944, in R. Magritte, *La Destination: lettres à Marcel Mariën, 1937-1962*, Brussels, 1977, no. 131.

"Jazz 47", in *America: revue France-Amérique-latinité*, no. 5, Paris, 1947 (illustrated p. 65).

Letter from Magritte to Andrieu, 7 July 1947. *Rhétorique*, no. 3, Tilleur-lez-Liège, September 1961 (illustrated pl. 2).

H. Michaux, *En rêvant à partir des peintures énigmatiques*, Montpellier, 1972, pp. 37-38.

D. Sylvester & S. Whitfield, *René Magritte. Catalogue Raisonné*, vol. II, *Oil Paintings and Objects, 1931-1948*, London, 1993, no. 569, p. 345 (illustrated).

R. Hughes, *The portable Magritte*, New York, 2002, p. 430 (illustrated p. 229).

D. Sylvester & M. Draguet, *Magritte*, Brussels, 2009, p. 328 & 424

'For the period I call "Surrealism in full sunlight," I am trying to join together two mutually exclusive things:

'1) a feeling of levity, intoxication, happiness, which depends on a certain mood and on an atmosphere that certain Impressionists - or rather, Impressionism in general - have managed to render in painting. Without Impressionism, I do not believe we would know this feeling of real objects perceived through colour and nuances, and free of all classical reminiscences...

'and, 2) a feeling of the mysterious existence of objects (which should not depend upon classical or literary reminiscences), which is experienced only by means of a certain clairvoyance' (Magritte, quoted in H. Torczyner, *Magritte:*

Ideas and Images, trans. R. Miller, New York, 1977, p. 186).

Image à la maison verte was painted in 1944 and belongs to René Magritte's so-called 'Renoir Period', which he preferred to call 'Surrealism in full sunlight'. Looking at *Image à la maison verte*, it is clear why Magritte chose this name: he has painted the tall houses of a Belgian cityscape, with the additional string instrument crammed between them as though on a giant bookshelf, with a swirling whirlpool of dabs of bright colour, creating a foaming paint surface that is in vivid contrast to the flatter, almost styleless *pictorial modus* he usually employed. Using this new style, during the early 1940s Magritte often revisited themes and motifs that had existed earlier in his works, making variations, for instance by using musical instruments as is the case here, while also bringing a new inventive scrutiny to his Magrittean universe. In this picture, the musical instrument is an old friend, yet serves as the solution to a new problem: the complex play of scales of this work, with the gargantuan violin thrust in between the houses, side-on, almost as though it were attempting to hide. Magritte aimed to promote a greater understanding of the mysteries surrounding us through twists to the expectations we have of the properties of our universe; at the same time, this subversive image is softened by its Impressionist palette and





René Magritte, *La découverte du feu*, 1936. Private Collection



René Magritte, *Un peu de l'âme des bandits*, 1960. Private Collection.

manner of execution: *Image à la maison verte* is thus made all the more insinuating through its very innocuousness. It is a mark of the striking nature of this concept that *Image à la maison verte* was featured in the book dedicated to musings on Magritte's works written by his fellow artist, Henri Michaux, *En rêvant à partir de peintures énigmatiques*, which was re-issued in a limited edition in 2012.

Magritte had developed his Impressionistic Surrealism during the previous year, in part as a response to the horrors of the Second World War. It was against the backdrop of the Occupation that Magritte had developed this style, which ran counter to the sense of doom and gloom that pervaded the works of so many of his contemporaries, and indeed the atmosphere prevalent at the time. For Magritte, turning to the light, colour and sensuality of Impressionism while retaining his own distinctive world view was a Gordian Knot solution that allowed him to move forwards. As he explained, 'The German occupation marked the turning point in my art. Before the war, my paintings expressed anxiety, but the experiences of war have taught me that what matters in art is to express charm. I live in a very disagreeable world, and my work is meant as a counter-offensive' (Magritte, quoted in S. Gablik, *Magritte*, London, 1992, p. 146).

Magritte had written to his friend Marcel Mariën at the end of July and beginning of August 1944 discussing his desire to find a solution to 'the problem of the town. A difficult problem, as always, at the beginning' (Magritte, quoted in D. Sylvester (ed.), S.

Whitfield & M. Raeburn, *René Magritte Catalogue Raisonné*, Vol. II, London, 1993, p. 345). It was in *Image à la maison verte* that he found his solution - at the end of August, he was able to send Mariën a note showing an illustration of the composition that would emerge in *Image à la maison verte*, then confirming that he had completed the work: 'I have done the picture with the double-bass (violin) in the space between the two houses in the new form I mentioned to you (shading off the image towards the edges)' (Magritte, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 345). It was at the beginning of September that year that British forces would liberate Brussels; this means that *Image à la maison verte* was painted at the very end of the Occupation that had brought Magritte's 'Surrealism in full sunlight' into existence. However, Magritte would continue to explore this visual idiom over the coming years, and indeed promoted his works from the period with great fervour.

That Magritte needed to promote them was in part because some of his former collectors and comrades did not appreciate the attempt to mingle subversion with joy that he was exploring in these pictures. In 1946, after the end of the Second World War, Magritte wrote a string of letters to André Breton discussing the pictures, explaining his justification in terms that hinted at a critique of the movement that Breton himself had founded. Recalling that Surrealism had tried to prophesy and bring about chaos and a new world order in the years leading to the war, Magritte wrote:

'The disarray, the panic that Surrealism tried to create so as to



René Magritte, *La main heureuse*, 1953. Private Collection.

call everything into question again, the Nazi cretins achieved that much better than we did, and there was no getting around it... In the face of widespread pessimism, I propose the search for joy, for pleasure. This joy and pleasure, which are so commonplace and yet so out of reach, seems to me to be up to us alone' (Magritte, 1946, quoted in H. Torczyner, *Magritte: Ideas and Images*, trans. R. Miller, New York, 1977, p. 187).

Magritte, in a subsequent letter, explained that he had sought out and found a new language that enabled him to combine aesthetic pleasure with subversive images revealing the chaos rife in the world: 'Provoking the "grave crisis of conscience" by means of charm (freshness, joy, the lights of sunlit poetry) leaves behind the "disturbing" illuminations that are so picturesque and pleasing to third-raters. Both charm and menace can be heightened by being united' (Magritte, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 188). In a sense, then, this *Renoir-esque* means of representation allowed Magritte's ideas to infiltrate all the more widely. In *Image à la maison verte*, Magritte has used his 'Surrealism in full sunlight' to show an urban view that is at odds with its Impressionistic manner of painting, creating an additional playful level of disruption.

In *Image à la maison verte* and its fellow *faux-Impressionist* pictures, Magritte was revealing his desire to paint works which spread joy, revealing a very different understanding of the role of the artist during a time of privations and suffering. While Breton had gone into exile in the United States of America, Magritte lived through the Occupation and had decided that a part of

his duty was to raise morale. He did this through the luminous palette of works such as *Image à la maison verte*, as well as his playful imagery. In this way, he was keeping the beacons of hope and humanity alive, rather than pointing to the horrors that abounded in the world at that time. For this reason, he exhibited some of the works as early as 1944, and showed more of them the following year in a momentous survey of Surrealism that he helped to organise at the Galerie des Editions La Boétie, where he showed alongside artists such as Hans Arp, Max Ernst, Oscar Domínguez and Victor Brauner, as well as compatriots including Paul Delvaux and Pol Bury, who took photographs including an installation shot in which *Image à la maison verte* can be seen.

While Breton found it hard to support Magritte's visions, others were impressed with their pictorial and conceptual power of his works from this time. Certainly, the poet Paul Nougé, himself one of the lynchpins of Belgian Surrealism alongside Magritte, appears to have endorsed them with his suggestion regarding the titles of the pictures, for which the artist often turned to the advice of his friends. As Magritte explained to Mariën, in a letter dated just after the Liberation of Brussels,

'Nougé thinks it is becoming difficult to find titles, because of the richer content of the recent pictures which are self-sufficient. So, as regards finding names, he proposes the following procedure as adequate: the violin in the little space where there is a green house would be called: *Image with a Green House*' (Magritte, quoted in Sylvester (ed.), *op. cit.*, 1993, p. 345).

λ*128 RENÉ MAGRITTE (1898-1967)
La recherche de l'absolu (The search for the absolute)

signed 'Magritte' (lower left)
gouache on paper
9³/₈ x 11¹/₂ in. (23.9 x 29.2 cm.)
Executed in 1960

£600,000-800,000
\$980,000-1,300,000
€710,000-940,000

PROVENANCE:

Private collection, Brussels, by whom acquired directly from the artist in 1960, and thence by descent;
sale, Christie's, London, 9 February 2011, lot 111.
Acquired at the above sale by the present owner.

EXHIBITED:

Mechelen, Kultureel Centrum, *Kunstbezit in ieders bereik*, March - April 1960.
Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, *René Magritte, Het mysterie van de werkelijkheid, Le mystère de la réalité*, August - September 1967, no. 99, p. 222 (illustrated p. 223, titled 'A la recherche de l'absolu'); this exhibition later travelled to Stockholm, Moderna Museet, October - November 1967, no. 72.
Lausanne, Fondation de l'Hermitage, *René Magritte*, June - October 1987, no. 95, p. 201 (illustrated; titled 'A la recherche de l'absolu'); this exhibition later travelled to Munich, Kunsthalle der Hypo-Kulturstiftung, November 1987 - February 1988, no. 109 (illustrated).

LITERATURE:

J. Meuris, *Magritte*, Paris, 1988, p. 155 (illustrated).
D. Sylvester (ed.), S. Whitfield & M. Raeburn, *René Magritte, Catalogue raisonné, Oil Paintings, Objects and Bronzes*, vol. III, 1947-1967, London, 1992, no. 1480, p. 227 (illustrated).





René Magritte, *La recherche de l'absolu*, 1940. Sold, Christie's, London, 22 June 2004, lot 34 (£878,850).



René Magritte, *Le banquet*, 1955-7. Sold, Christie's, New York, 9 May 2007, lot 7 (\$6,750,000).

An exquisite, autumnal gouache from 1960, *La recherche de l'absolu* shows one of René Magritte's most iconic and favoured motifs, the tree-leaf. However, where in his earlier explorations of this theme the leaf was green, standing gargantuan, absurd, magical and magnificent in its landscape, here it is denuded of 'foliage', the branches or veins the only remaining trace of its former verdant self. Nonetheless, the emphatic flatness of the leaf has been retained in this image, ensuring that Magritte's conceptual game remains in play. At the same time, appearing bare and thus allowing the pink glow of the sky to filter through its gauze of branches, *La recherche de l'absolu* attains a profound sense of visual lyricism that adds to the appropriateness of its title, itself taken from a celebrated novel by Balzac. It is a mark of the quality of *La recherche de l'absolu* that it has featured in several exhibitions including two international surveys of Magritte's work.

La recherche de l'absolu is a gouache reprisal of a theme that Magritte had first explored in 1940 in three paintings, one of which is now owned by the Ministère de la Communauté Française de Belgique, Brussels. In that work, the warm, pink crepuscular of the 1960 gouache is absent, replaced instead by a crisp, cool blue sky; of the two other versions from 1940, one shows the tree-leaf

stretching towards a star-specked sky and another replaces the sun with a sphere propped on the horizon, deepening the dialogue of flatness introduced by the flat leaf surface.

Looking at the evening view from 1940 which is now in public ownership, the composition is clearly similar: in both pictures, there is a distant band of mountains crested by a reddish sun. The bareness of the 1940 version of *La recherche de l'absolu* may reflect the atmosphere of the time. After all, it was painted towards the end of 1940, and therefore after the Nazi invasion and occupation of Magritte's native Belgium, which had taken place in May that year. At the beginning of the Second World War, Magritte had been concerned as to how to paint, and what to paint; he would later begin to create a number of works that were often filled with light and joy, leading through to his pseudo-Impressionist pictures; this response to the conflict was considered inappropriate by some, who felt that dark times called for dark artistic expression, yet it showed an incredible strength of will, as Magritte used his pictures to invoke wit, beauty and play against the backdrop of turmoil and conflict in which Belgium, and indeed much of the world, had been plunged. In this, he was working in a tradition that, despite its Surreal slant, was parallel to Claude Monet with



Caspar David Friedrich, *Easter Morning*, 1833. Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection, Madrid.



The present lot.

his *Nymphéas* in the First World War and Henri Matisse with his light-filled, sensual images during the Second. However, looking at *La recherche de l'absolu*, Magritte appears still to have been affected by the tone or anxieties of the time, as is reflected in that stark, cool image of the barren tree-leaf. It is a marked contrast to the lush opulence of the first leaf-tree, *La géante*, which had been painted only five years earlier. Nonetheless, Magritte's own enthusiasm for his 1940 examples of *La recherche de l'absolu* was palpable: in a letter to Claude Spaak written at the beginning of 1941, he described them as 'three very pure pictures' (Magritte, quoted in D. Sylvester (ed.), S. Whitfield & M. Raeburn, *René Magritte Catalogue Raisonné*, vol. II, London, 1993, p. 282). That self-same purity is clearly in evidence in this later gouache of *La recherche de l'absolu*.

By the time he revisited the theme of *La recherche de l'absolu* in 1960 in the present gouache, the tension of the Second World War was far in the past. Accordingly, his 1960 revisiting of the subject of *La recherche de l'absolu* has a romantic warmth to it that was lacking in its chillier 1940 incarnation. Indeed, the notion of the Romantic underpins this picture: it recalls some of the contemplative sunsets and sunrises captured with such poetry by the German painter Caspar David Friedrich. Indeed, the

contrast between the branches, or veins, of this tree-leaf against the pink sky recall his 1833 work *Easter Morning*, now in the Musée Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid. Deliberately invoking the visual language of Friedrich, Magritte has depicted his expansive landscape with a low horizon, leading into a meditative distance, with the single tree-leaf in the foreground acting as an anchor to the composition, serving as an analogue not for the trees of *Easter Morning*, but instead for the often solitary figures the German master used in the foregrounds of his pictures.

As well as looking back to the artists of the past, Magritte was clearly looking to his own past when he created this gouache. This may reflect the fact that, during most of 1960, the author Suzi Gablik lived with Magritte and his wife Georgette in Belgium while she carried out her research for a book on the artist. This would eventually be published in an extended form, several years after the artist's death, by Thames and Hudson, and remains an important and insightful survey of Magritte's works and thoughts, benefitting from Gablik's first-hand access to the artist. Perhaps this 1960 reprisal of the theme of *La recherche de l'absolu* was in part a result of the discussions with Gablik of the pictures that Magritte had created in decades past, and helped to bring these themes back to the forefront.

λ129 SALVADOR DALÍ (1904-1989)

Profile of Time

signed 'Dalí (on top of the base); stamped with the foundry mark and numbered 'CERA PERSA PERSEO SA MENDRISIO 2/8' (at the back of the base)
bronze with gold, green and brown patina
Height: 151.6 in. (385 cm.)
Conceived in 1977 and cast in 1984 in a numbered edition of eight plus four artist's proofs

£120,000-160,000

\$200,000-260,000

€150,000-190,000

PROVENANCE:

Opera Gallery, London.
Acquired from the above by the present owner in 2006.

LITERATURE:

R. & N. Descharnes, *Dalí, The Hard and The Soft, Spells for The Magic of Form, Sculptures & Objects*, Paris, 2004, no. 615, p. 238 (another cast illustrated).

Stratton Foundation, ed., *Dalí in the Third Dimension*, Turin, 2010 (another cast illustrated pp. 192-195 & 313).



Salvador Dalí, *Persistence of Memory*, 1931. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Restaging the theme of the melting clock on a grand, monumental scale, *Profile of Time* brings one of the most entrancing inventions of Salvador Dalí into the third-dimension. First conceived in 1977, the work was cast in 1984 in an edition of eight. Melting clocks had first made their appearance in Dalí's work in 1931, in the painting *The Persistence of Memory*, bought by the Museum of Modern Art in 1934. In his autobiography, the artist narrated the accidental genesis of that memorable image:

'We had topped off our meal with a very strong Camembert, and after everyone had gone I remained for a long time seated at the table meditating on the philosophic problems of the "super-soft" which the cheese presented to my mind. I got up and went into the studio, where I lit the light in order to cast a final glance, as is my habit, at the picture I was in the midst of painting. This picture represented a landscape near Port Lligat, whose rocks were lighted by a transparent and melancholy twilight; in the foreground an olive tree with

its branches cut, and without leaves. I knew that the atmosphere which I had succeeded in creating with this landscape was to serve as a setting for some idea, for some surprising image, but I did not in the least know what it was going to be. I was about to turn out the light, when instantaneously I "saw" the solution, I saw two soft watches, one of them hanging lamentably on the branch of the olive tree' (S. Dalí, *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*, New York, 1942, p. 317).

Over three meters high, *Profile of Time* transports Dalí's personal hallucination into the communal space of landscape. Towering above the viewer, the sculpture acts as a reminder of man's struggle with time. Melting away, the clock takes the shape of a human profile, reminiscent of the long head appearing in Dalí's seminal work *The Great Masturbator* (1929, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía), in itself a symbolic portrait of the artist. A tear slowly falls from his eye, lightly chiselled next to the tenth hour, possibly symbolising man's existence, inexorably in thrall to the passing of time.



130 MAN RAY (1890-1976)

Cadeau Modèle

signed, dated and titled 'Man Ray Cadeau Modèle 1960' (on the sides)

iron (ready-made)

Height: 6 $\frac{5}{8}$ in. (16.7 cm.)

Executed in 1960, this work is a unique variant based upon *Cadeau* of 1921

£40,000-60,000

\$66,000-98,000

€48,000-71,000

PROVENANCE:

Maurice Lefebvre-Foinet, Paris, a gift from the artist.

Josette Lefebvre-Foinet, Paris.

Private collection, Paris, a gift from the above in 2000.



Man Ray, *Cadeau*. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.





John Doe

Miró

SEVEN
DECADES
OF HIS ART

λ131 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

Untitled (Dancer)

signed and dated 'Miró 4-9-24.' (lower left)

pencil, pastel and watercolor on paper

24% x 18% in. (62 x 47.3 cm.)

Executed on 4 September 1924

£350,000-550,000

\$580,000-900,000

€420,000-650,000

PROVENANCE:

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.

Acquavella Galleries, Reno, Nevada (no. 1609 L).

Claude Kechichian, Paris.

Private collection, Japan.

Private collection, Lisbon, by whom acquired from the above in 2005.

EXHIBITED:

New York, Pierre Matisse Gallery, *Miró, early drawings and collages 1919-1949*, November - December 1981, no. 35.

Zurich, Kunsthaus, *Joan Miró*, November 1986 - February 1987, no. 28 (illustrated); this exhibition later travelled to Düsseldorf, Städtische Kunsthalle, February - April 1987.

New York, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, *Joan Miró*, May - August 1987, no. 22 (illustrated p. 82).

Saint-Paul-de-Vence, Fondation Maeght, *Joan Miró, rétrospective de l'oeuvre peint*, 1990, no. 86 (illustrated p. 48).

Yokohama, Yokohama Museum of Art, *Joan Miró, Centennial Exhibition, The Pierre Matisse Collection*, January - March 1992, no. 2 (illustrated p. 50).

Ferrara, Palazzo dei Diamanti, *Miró, la terra*, February - May 2008, no. 8, p. 125 (illustrated).

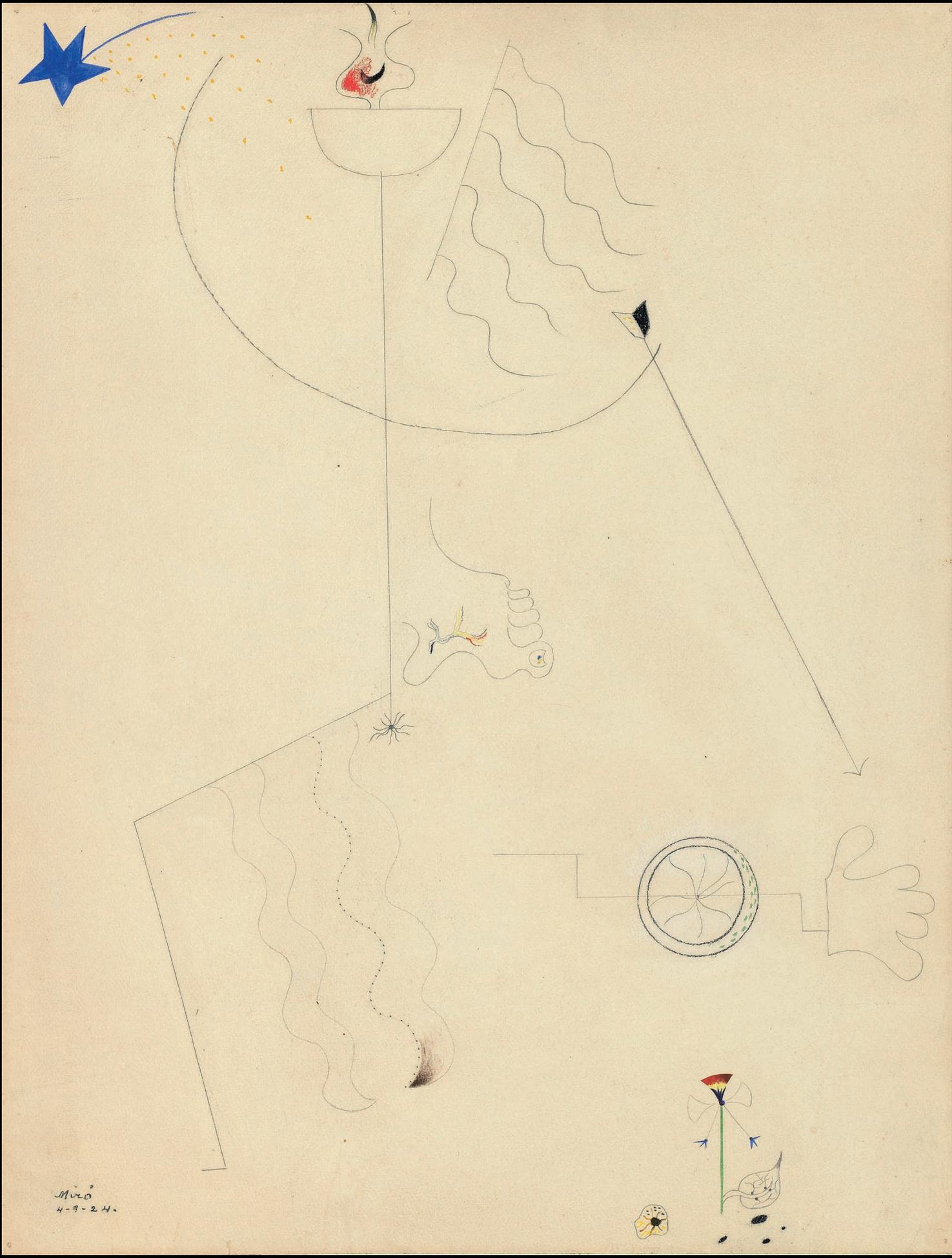
Palma de Mallorca, Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró, *Joan Miró, evocació de la imatge femenina*, p. 99 (illustrated; titled 'Danseuse'), December 2008 - March 2009; this exhibition later travelled to Valencia, Fundació Bancaja, March - June 2009.

LITERATURE:

J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró, Catalogue raisonné, Drawings*, vol. I, 1901-1937, Paris, 2008, no. 209, p. 106 (illustrated p. 107).



Joan Miró, *Danseuse espagnole*, 1924. Sold, Christie's, New York, 6 November 2001, lot 16 (\$8,916,000).



Museo
4-7-24.



Joan Miró, *Portrait d'une danseuse*, 1928. Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.



Joan Miró, *Paysan catalan à la guitare*, 1924. Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid.

Joan Miró created *Untitled (Dancer)* in September 1924, at a crucial turning point in his career. This picture dates from the beginning of the Surreal vision that was to become so iconic. It was only in 1921-1922 that he had created *La ferme*, a work largely founded on realism showing the countryside at Mont-Roig, which would provide a key to so many of his later works. Shortly afterwards, he began to break away from realism, instead looking elsewhere for his imagery. 'I have already managed to break absolutely free from nature and the landscapes have nothing whatever to do with outer reality,' he would explain of *The Tilled Field*. 'Nevertheless, they are more "Mont-Roig" than if they had been done "from nature." I always work in the house and use real life only as a reference' (Miró, quoted in J. Dupin, *Miró*, Barcelona, 1993, p. 96).

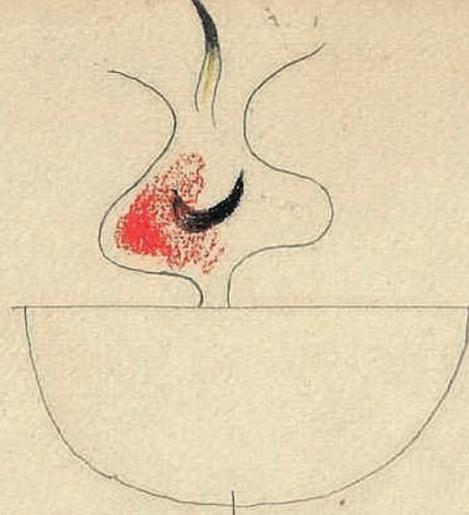
That same process is visible in *Untitled (Dancer)*, in which Miró has allowed the theme of the Spanish dancer, which runs like a thread throughout so much of his career, to be presented as an almost fragmentary agglomeration of hieratic signs. We see here the flowing hair, there a hand and in the middle of the composition a foot, hinting at the almost acrobatic, graceful movements of the subject. In the foreground is a small flower, a detail carried over from his *Danseuse espagnole* of the same year, yet here the signs have been reduced to a new pared-back eloquence, with all senses of mass and volume removed. In this sense, with the sheet left so boldly in reserve in order to add more impact to the range of signs that coalesce to convey the titular theme of the dancer, *Untitled (Dancer)* relates to some of the other pictures of the same year in which Miró explored his new-found aesthetic, such as *Maternité* or the various images of the *Tête de paysan catalan*, for instance the one in the National Gallery of Art, Washington DC. At the same time, it serves as a clear precursor for some of Miró's later explorations of the theme of the Spanish dancer, not least the collage example he made in 1928 using a hatpin, a cork and a feather to capture his subject.

By the time he created *Untitled (Dancer)*, Miró was living in Paris, the burgeoning capital of Surrealism. He had a studio in the rue Blomet. Gradually, since his arrival there in 1921 (he had visited the previous year in connection with an exhibition), he had

become exposed to more and more of the cultural figures who were to have such an impact upon the development of art and writing in the Twentieth Century, for instance Ernest Hemingway, the owner of *La ferme*. It was in 1924 that he met the great central figure of Surrealism, André Breton. Looking back on the period when *Untitled (Dancer)* was created, he was clearly aware of the immense watershed that was occurring in his work during the course of that year:

'The discovery of Surrealism coincided for me with a crisis in my own painting, and the decisive turning that, around 1924, caused me to abandon realism for the imaginary. In those days, I spent a great deal of time with poets, because I thought you had to go beyond the "plastic thing" to reach poetry. Surrealism freed the unconscious, exalted desire, endowed art with additional powers. Hallucinations replaced the external model. I painted as if in a dream, with the most total freedom' (Miró, quoted in *Joan Miró: 1893-1983*, exh. cat., Barcelona, 1993, p. 180).

Crucially, although Miró was often inspired by hallucinations and other impetuses, including his own material, he was painting with perhaps less appearance than might be supposed. Many of the works from the period, which appear to be the products of spontaneous associations and spontaneous actions, were in fact the products of carefully worked out compositions. Indeed, there was a preparatory drawing for the present work, inscribed with the word 'Danseuse', confirming the subject of *Untitled (Dancer)*. Some of his works from the previous years even featured grid-like bases, implying the scaling-up of his ideas. Miró was methodical and rigorous, as was evidenced by his various explorations of the figures of the peasants of his native Catalonia - or indeed its dancers. Yet at the same time, the sheer poetic whimsy of his vision is more than clear from *Untitled (Dancer)*, with its foot in the middle, its sense of rhythmic, flowing movement and even the swish of the flowing skirt that appears to be hanging from one leg. In this way, Miró has managed to create an image that vividly expresses its subject in a manner that is deeply personal to the artist himself, emerging from his own mind and imagination, and yet which perfectly conveys its intended theme, all the more so because of its visual musicality.



λ132 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

La Fornarina (D'après Raphaël)
La Fornarina (After Raphael)

oil on canvas
57¾ x 44⅞ in. (146.5 x 114 cm.)
Painted in 1929

£2,000,000-3,000,000
\$3,300,000-4,900,000
€2,400,000-3,500,000

PROVENANCE:

Galerie Pierre, Paris
Robert J. Schoelkopf, Jr., New York
Galerie Maeght, Paris.
Mr. and Mrs. Barry R. Peril, Rydale.
Private collection, Japan.
Private collection, Lisbon, by whom acquired from the above in 2005.



Raphael, *La Fornarina*, 1516. Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica Palazzo Barberini, Rome.

EXHIBITED:

Tokyo, Setagaya Art Museum, *Joan Miró 1918-1945*, July - September 2002, no. 41, p. 90 (illustrated p. 91); this exhibition later travelled to Nagoya, Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art, October - December 2002.
Paris, Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, *Joan Miró 1917-1934, La naissance du monde*, March - June 2004, p. 401 (illustrated).
New York, Museum of Modern Art, *Joan Miró, painting and anti-painting, 1927-1937*, November 2008 - January 2009, pl. 19, p. 67 (illustrated p. 66, titled 'Portrait of La Fornarina').
Palma de Mallorca, Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró, *Joan Miró, evocació de la imatge femenina*, December 2008 - March 2009; this exhibition later travelled to Valencia, Fundació Bancaja, March - June 2009.

LITERATURE:

J. Thrall Soby, *Joan Miró*, New York, 1959, p. 65 (illustrated).
J. Dupin, *Joan Miró, Life and Work*, London, 1962, no. 242 (illustrated pp. 229 & 520).
J. Lassaingne, *Miró*, Milan, 1963, pp. 60-61 (illustrated).
W. Rubin, *Dada and Surrealist Art*, London, 1969, p. 169.
W. Rubin, *Miró in the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art*, New York, 1973, note 5, p. 121 (illustrated fig. 36).
G. Picon, *Miró, Carnets catalans*, vol I, Geneva, 1976, p. 44 (illustrated).
G. Picon, *Joan Miró, Catalan Notebooks*, London, 1977 (illustrated p. 55).
P. Gimferrer, *Miró, colpir sense nafar*, Barcelona, 1978, no. 114, p. 117 (illustrated).
P. A. Serra, *Miró y Mallorca*, Barcelona, 1984, no. 48, p. 49 (illustrated p. 48).
G. Weelen, *Miró*, Paris, 1984, no. 119, p. 92.
J. Dupin, *Miró*, Paris, 1993, no. 160, p. 149 (illustrated).
P. Gimferrer, *The Roots of Miró*, Barcelona, 1993, no. 296, p. 152 (illustrated).
C. Lanchner, *Joan Miró*, New York, 1993, pp. 50 & 59.
J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró, Catalogue raisonné. Paintings*, vol I, 1908-1930, Paris, 1999, no. 311, p. 230 (illustrated).
J. Dupin, *Miró*, Paris, 2004, no. 160, p. 149.





Joan Miró, *Intérieur hollandais (III)*, 1928. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



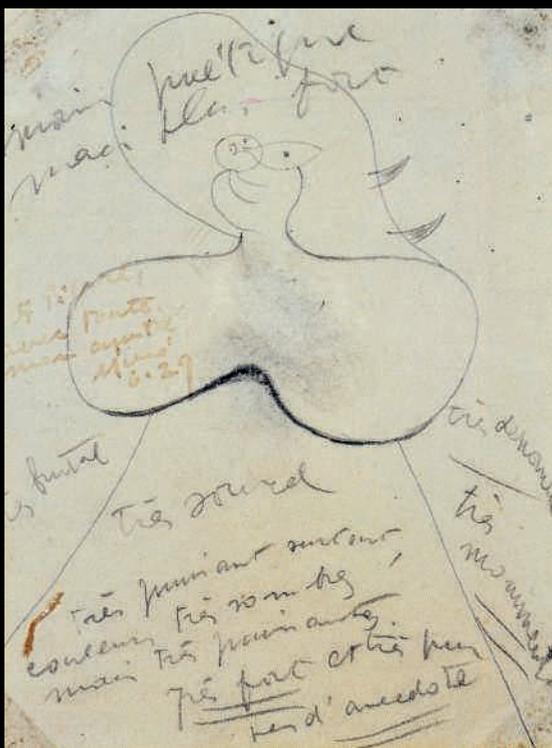
Joan Miró, *Intérieur hollandais (I) (D'après "Le Joueur de luth" d'Hendrick Maertensz Sorgh)*, 1928. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Mysterious and austere, *La Fornarina* belongs to an important series of imaginary portraits that Joan Miró executed in 1929, in his studio in Rue Tourlaque in Paris. Inspired by Raphael's homonymous portrait (c.1520, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Palazzo Barberini, Rome), the picture strikes for its economy of means and force of presence. A large figure rises in front of the viewer, like an erupting volcano in the night, red dots of lava scattered at her side. Assembled from a few colour-field shapes, this unusual creature seems to be smiling at the viewer with composed mockery. Adopting the format of official portraiture yet deploying the exaggerated lines of caricature, *La Fornarina* appears as the complacent portrait of a whimsical, ironic creature.

In the spring of 1928 – the year before he painted *La Fornarina* – Miró had travelled to Holland. During that two-weeks stay, the artist had visited the country's major museums, returning home with postcards illustrating the work of the Dutch Old Masters. Miró had been particularly fascinated by seventeenth century genre paintings for their neat sense of detail and subtle allusion to narrative. During the summer in Montroig, he then used those postcards as points of departure for a series of paintings known as the 'Dutch Interiors'. Although prompted by the works of the

Old Masters, the series was not conceived as a simple reworking of a given image, but it entailed a completely new re-imagination, the transposition of each of its elements into Miró's universe, in which they appeared transformed into fantastic ingredients. *Dutch Interior II*, for instance, can be related to Jan Steen's *The Cat's Dancing Lesson*, which Miró could have seen at the Rijksmuseum. Yet, under Miró's brush the scene has transformed into an extraordinary dance of organic and geometric forms, each forming the colourful, eccentric landscape of Miró's universe. Just after the Dutch Interiors, Miró painted the *Imaginary Portraits*, to which *La Fornarina* belongs, continuing the challenge for re-invention that the first series had required. In the *Imaginary Portraits*, however, the artist seemed to have added another rule to the game of transformation: austerity and concision (J. Dupin, *Miró*, Paris, 2012, p.144).

Within Miró's series of imaginary portraits, *La Fornarina* seals the last, conclusive stage of the artist's experimentation. Before executing *La Fornarina*, Miró had in fact painted three other portraits: *Portrait of Mrs. Mills in 1750*, *Portrait of a Lady in 1820* and *Queen Louise of Prussia*. Considered as a whole, the series appears as a self-challenging exercise in expressive



Joan Miró, *Dessin pour le portrait imaginaire de la Fornarina*, 1929. Private Collection.



The present lot.

concision, which progresses from canvas to canvas towards a resolute, distilled use of line and colour. According to Miró's friend and authority Jacques Dupin, *La Fornarina* remains the 'most mysterious' portrait of the series and the one in which Miró achieved the most 'extreme simplification' of forms (J. Dupin, *Miró*, Paris, 2012, p.148). While in *Portrait of Mrs. Mills in 1750* (The Museum of Modern Art) one can sense the pleasure the artist took in transforming the glamorous attire of the sitter into a swirl of decorative symbols - stars, ribbons, spirals - in *La Fornarina*, Miró constructed the character's pompous comic presence by coordinating a few flat areas of colours. This imaginary Fornarina stands in front of the viewer imposing in her presence, yet impenetrable in the subtle mechanism of her form.

Although apparently effortless, *La Fornarina* was the outcome of a serious, concentrated study of forms, lines and shapes. Even though referencing one of the most fascinating portraits in the history of art - Raphael's enigmatic *La Fornarina* - Miró's painting stands as the artist's own creation, to which the illustrious homonymous painting provided a point of departure, rather than a precise reference. Miró's sketchbook of the period documents the artist's own progressive search for perfect equilibrium of

form: over the pages the artist tried to dominate his own flow of invention, submitting each of his creations to scrutiny, until he reached the essence of his idea. From a more realistic image of a lady - with elaborate dress, recognisable face - Miró progressed towards a simplified, distilled image, erected through the expressive power of a few lines. The sensuous pose of the hand on the breast depicted in Raphael's *La Fornarina*, still visible in Miró's early sketch, suggested the shape of the two swelling breasts of his creature: the hand was absorbed into the black of the figure's body, while the upper part of the figure grew into a form with three round-edges - synthesising a head, two breasts and shoulders. All decoration disappeared from the dress, only two horns and a few red dots in the background remaining.

La Fornarina's face, however, reveals Miró's great sense of detail and invention: by synthesising and narrowing down forms Miró eventually ended up creating a new cosmos of symbols. The Fornarina's eyes have transformed into what appears as a comet crossing a galaxy: its tail in flames, the travelling star is about to cross a black hole, in which red contrails foresee her passage, while a bright white dot gravitates toward the edge. Miró arrived at this surprising image by first enlarging the right eye of the



Joan Miró, *Portrait de Mistress Mills en 1750 (D'après George Engleheart)*, 1929. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.



Joan Miró, *Portrait de la Reine Louise de Prusse*, 1929. Meadows Museum, Southern Methodist University, Aljur H. Meadows Collection, Dallas.

figure, as shown in one of the early sketches. From there, carried by his unconscious and instinct, he developed the sign further into a new, mysterious emblem.

Dressing one of his creatures 'in costume', with *La Fornarina* Miró might appear to be playing with ironic self-mockery. Yet for the artist the imaginary portraits series constituted a crucial exercise in a moment of self-critique and quest for new artistic developments. On one of the preparatory drawings for the painting, Miró pitilessly wrote, crossing out the sketch: 'too close to the spirit of my earlier works/still too realistic' (quoted in J. Dupin, *Miró*, Paris, 2012, p. 149). Passing the artist's strict critical judgment, in its final form *La Fornarina* must have appeared to Miró as something new, an opening onto new paths along which his art could develop further. On one of the final preparatory drawings for the work, Miró annotated his satisfaction and excitement: 'very monumental', 'very strong and very pure', 'no anecdote' (right: 'très monumental'; lower-centre: 'très fort et très pur / pas d'anecdote; as illustrated on the previous page). That breakthrough drawing featured in the collection of the Surrealists' leader André Breton, who, on the back of the sketch, religiously recorded: 'Drawing for La Fortarina [sic] portrait – it is the last

of Miró's "imaginary portraits" (after Raphael)' ('Dessin pour le portrait de La Fortarina [sic] – c'est le dernier "portrait imaginaire" de Miró (d'après Raphaël)'). Clearly, with *La Fornarina* Miró had found the powerful concision he was searching for. According to Dupin, the imaginary portrait series - and *La Fornarina* in particular - ranks among Miró's 'most fascinating successes', signalling the artist's uncompromising faith in the dictations of his unconscious (*ibid.*, p. 149).

If, in the series of imaginary portraits which *La Fornarina* concludes, Miró behaved like a genius yet wise pupil, submitting his own creative flow to a discipline inspired by the art of the past, just after the series he resorted to more drastic means, setting out to 'assassinate' painting in the 1930s with a series of aggressive, challenging works. *La Fornarina* concludes a great chapter in Miró's career, guided by the most enthusiastic flow of invention: the imaginary portraits, and *La Fornarina* in particular, marked – according to Dupin - 'the end of a period which (...) was characterised by a power of expression as spontaneous as may well be dreamed of and by unlimited confidence in the power of painting' (*ibid.*, p. 149).



The collage-drawings 1933 and 1936

Untitled and *Métamorphose* are both drawings by Joan Miró which incorporate collage elements. Created in 1933 and 1936 respectively, they date from two separate but related periods when Miró was clearly inspired by this medium and produced a range of works over the space of a couple of months. In the case of his 1933 collage-drawings, this was during his summer at Mont-Roig, in his native Catalonia. Jacques Dupin, in his authoritative monograph on Miró's work, explained that this was a period of pictorial relaxation for the artist after a prolonged and intensive painting campaign. The collage-drawings, then, were a playful form of release. In them, he used a range of found materials and combined them with the fluidity of his own incredible sense of line in order to conjure visions from his imagination that are nonetheless tethered in reality through their print objects. They clearly relate to the 'tradition' of collage that had been embraced so enthusiastically by the Surrealists, and in particular Max Ernst; yet they also reveal Miró responding in a different way to his own materials.

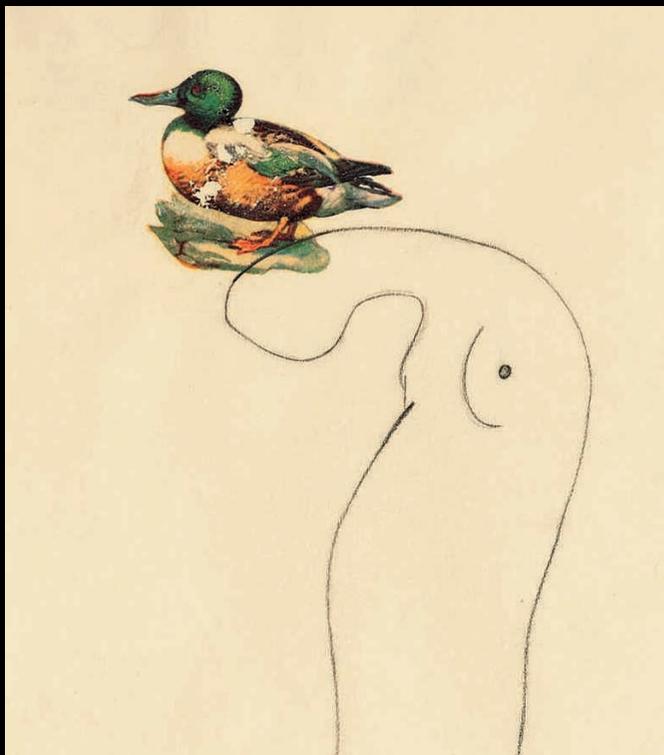
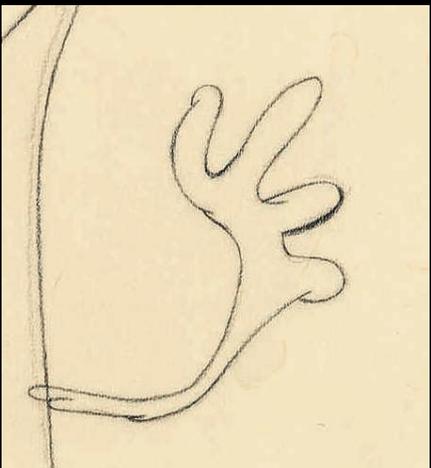
Miró already had some experience working with collage by the time he turned to his collage-drawings in the summer of 1933. As early as 1917, he had included a Japanese print as part of the backdrop of his portrait of his friend, E.C. Ricart. However, his true involvement with collage had emerged earlier in 1933, when he had begun creating works on paper by sticking cut-out images from various magazines, especially catalogues of hardware, and arranging them in seemingly random compositions. He would then use these as the springboards for larger paintings in which the original figurative forms of the machinery and other elements were abstracted and transmogrified, becoming distinctly *Miró-esque* elements within colourful works.

Those collages had initially been created while Miró was staying in his family home in Barcelona's Pasaje del Crédito, working in the tiny confines of the room he used as a studio there. By contrast, the collage-drawings such as *Untitled* were made during his time in Mont-Roig in the summer, in surroundings that were doubtless less confined, either physically or psychologically. And these appear not to have been made as preludes to paintings, as

had been the case earlier in the year, but instead as independent works in their own right. In these works, Miró went beyond the machinery images of his earlier works, instead selecting a playful range of sources, as is clear from the leg, women and bird that he has used in the composition of *Untitled*. These serve as highlights for the figures that are delineated by Miró's own drawings.

Miró's later collage-drawing, *Métamorphose* adopts a similar strategy: colourful birds and flowers articulate the two figures that have been captured through the deft and expressive use of a few lines. This demonstrates the nature of the 'metamorphosis' of the title, which Miró used for a number of these works: he has allowed the materials to transform themselves and their themes. The 1936 collage-drawings appear to have been made during the first months of the year, when Miró was based in Barcelona. This was a time of anxiety, as was reflected in his own pictures from the period, as the Spanish Civil War was on the brink of beginning. Tensions filled a number of Miró's works from the period. Nonetheless, the sense of lyrical whimsy that characterised his earlier collage-drawings is still in evidence in this image, in which what appears to be a couple, the man with a duck-crested proboscis and the woman decorated with flowers, are shown in an animated moment, perhaps in the middle of a discussion. Writing about the collage-drawings, Dupin explained, in terms that apply equally to *Untitled* and to *Métamorphose*:

'All things considered, they are surrealist montages of a sort, full of humour and freshness, and very much the masterpieces of this genre, not just because of the poetic state of grace they reflect, but even more so because of the very great plastic resources that Miró, along with Max Ernst, brought to the service of fantasy - something few artists are capable of doing. The drawing plays an essential part in them. The few pictures pasted on the white sheet suggest larger figures that he traced in quick and perfect arabesques. Miró's superiority over his surrealist friends in this domain also rests upon the candour and casualness with which he solicited chance; there is a constant felicity and ease in his "findings". His drawing plays with the grotesque like a cat with a mouse, being compassionate or ironical in turn' (J. Dupin, *Miró*, Barcelona, 1993, p. 180).



λ133 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)
Untitled (Drawing-Collage)

signed and dated 'Joan Miró. 10.8.33.' (on the reverse)
 black crayon and collage on paper
 24½ x 18¼ in. (62.2 x 46.4 cm.)
 Executed on 10 August 1933

£150,000-200,000
 \$250,000-330,000
 €180,000-240,000

PROVENANCE:

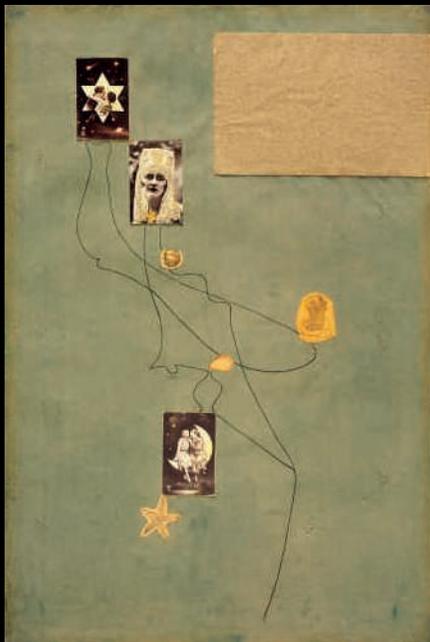
Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.
 Acquavella Galleries, Reno, Nevada (no. 233).
 Claude Kechichian, Paris.
 Private collection, Japan.
 Private collection, Lisbon, by whom acquired from
 the above in 2005.

EXHIBITED:

Yokohama, Yokohama Museum of Art, *Joan Miró, Centennial Exhibition: The Pierre Matisse Collection*, January - March 1992, no. 5 (illustrated p. 58).
 Palma de Mallorca, Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró, *Joan Miró, evocació de la imatge femenina*, December 2008 - March 2009; this exhibition later travelled to València, Fundació Bancaja, March - June 2009.

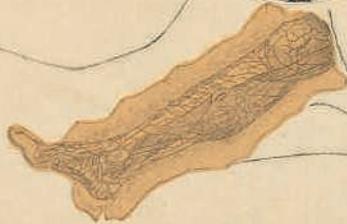
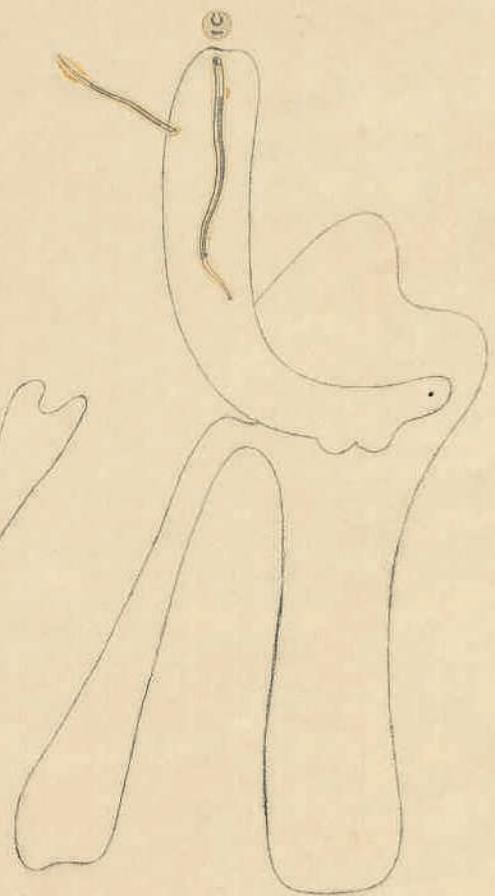
LITERATURE:

J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró, Catalogue raisonné, Drawings*, vol. I, 1901-1937, Paris, 2008, no. 382, p. 187 (illustrated).



Joan Miró, *Drawing-Collage*, 1933. The Museum of Modern Art. New York.

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λ134 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

Métamorphose (Metamorphosis)

signed 'Miró' (lower right); signed 'Joan Miró',
dated '23/3-4/4 36' and titled (on the reverse)
black crayon, pencil, paper collage and decalcomania on paper
18⁷/₈ x 25¹/₂in. (48 x 63.9 cm.)

Executed between 23 March and 4 April 1936

£130,000-180,000

\$220,000-290,000

€160,000-210,000

PROVENANCE:

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.

Acquavella Galleries, Reno, Nevada (no. 271).

Private collection, Japan, by whom acquired from
the above.

Private collection, Lisbon, by whom acquired from
the above in 2003.

EXHIBITED:

Ferrara, Palazzo dei Diamanti, *Miró, la terra*,
February - May 2008, no. 21, p. 138 (illustrated).

New York, Pierre Matisse Gallery, *Miró, early
drawings/collages 1919-1949*, November -
December 1981, no. 45 (illustrated).

LITERATURE:

J. Dupin, *Miró*, Paris, 1993, no. 196, p. 180
(illustrated).

J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró,
Catalogue raisonné, Drawings*, vol. I, 1901-1937,
Paris, 2008, no. 593, p. 286 (illustrated).



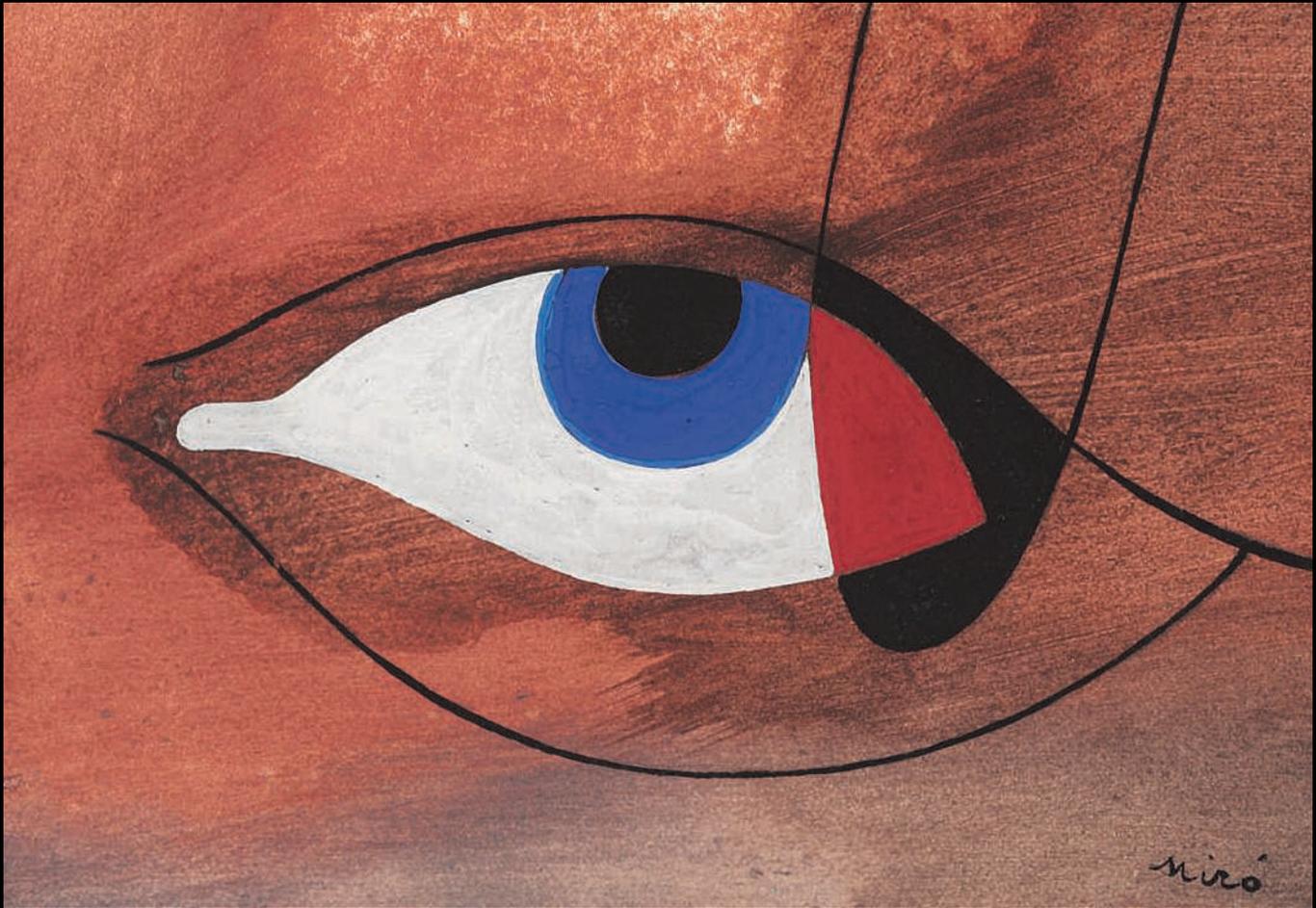
The enamel-like gouaches August - September 1935

'Harlequins, pipe smokers, stylish women sitting or standing, personages at the window, a gardener, a man with a bird, and various figures from diverse postures were the themes of the innumerable small-format gouaches that Miró painted beginning in 1935. They played on a geometry of triangles, quadrangles, or sprags that vied with organic forms that approached metamorphosis. Color was endlessly called upon with its pockets, washes, and drizzle. They precipitated a menacing storm-like atmosphere of erotic eruptions that raged and multiplied. Miró often painted with his finger. Following the example of a prehistoric artist, he once even imprinted his black ink-stained hand on the white ground of a sheet of paper. Words appeared, such as 'Réveil matin, chaîne, photo' (Alarm clock, chain, photo), on numerous 'signes et figurations' (signs and figures) where a simplified geometric writing style counterbalanced large, formless marks engorged with color. Broken lines and spots were added to lightening flashes, suns, and unidentified signs. All these sheets were titled and signed; their dates, consisting of the day, month, and year, were inscribed on the verso.'

(J. Dupin, 'Preface', pp. 7-13, in J. Dupin, A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró, Catalogue raisonné, Drawings*, vol. I, p. 11).



Detail of lot 137



Detail of lot 135



Detail of lot 136

λ135 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

Apparitions (Visions)

signed 'Miró' (lower centre); signed 'Joan Miró',
dated '30/8/35' and titled (on the reverse)

Gouache, pen and India ink over pencil on paper
12 x 14½ in. (30.5 x 36.8 cm.)

Executed on 30 August 1935

£450,000-650,000

\$740,000-1,100,000

€540,000-770,000

PROVENANCE:

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.

Acquavella Galleries, Reno, Nevada (no. 681)

Claude Kechichian, Paris.

Private collection, Japan.

Private collection, Lisbon, by whom acquired from
the above in 2005.

EXHIBITED:

Paris, Musée national d'art moderne, *Joan Miró*,
June - November 1962, no. 131.

London, Tate Gallery, *Joan Miró, Painting,
sculpture and ceramics*, August - October 1964,
no. 131; this exhibition later travelled to Zurich,
Kunsthaus, October - December 1964.

Yokohama, Yokohama Museum of Art, *Joan
Miró, Centennial Exhibition: The Pierre Matisse
Collection*, January - March 1992, no. 21
(illustrated p. 70).

LITERATURE:

J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró,
Catalogue raisonné, Drawings*, vol. I, 1901-1937,
Paris, 2008, no. 519, p. 252 (illustrated).



Joan Miró, *Apparitions*, 1935. Private Collection.





Joan Miró in Malaga, 1935.

Apparitions belongs to a series of gouaches Joan Miró executed during the summer of 1935. Executed on 30 August, the work forms a pair with another homonymous gouache, executed by Miró just one day before (J. Dupin, A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró: Catalogue raisonné. Drawings*, vol. I, no. 518). On a textured background of burnt earth washes, a few signs stand as the mysterious symbols of cave art. Connected to a sphere, an eye stands alone, as the esoteric sign of a lost, primordial magic ritual. Combining a geometric form with an organic one, Miró created a new alphabet of signs, whose whisperings only his unconscious was able to decipher. The eye depicted in *Apparitions* may symbolise the visionary power of the artist, able to unlock unconscious images and hidden meanings in the world around him. Gazing out from the paper, the eye turns this gouache into a work blessed with the power of sight: the viewer has become the object of observation, peered at from a distant, mystical world.



The title of the work – *Apparitions (Visions)* – may reveal something of the creative process that engendered it. Miró first used washes to bring alive the background, letting his instinct guide the development of shades and variations of tones. Drawing with ink, he then traced the lines and curves that the ground would inspire, which he then interpreted and completed with bright, opaque colours. Brought from the inner mind of the artist thus, an eye, a sphere, a strange little creature and an oblong fissure emerged on the surface. Determined by chance as well as by the artist's unconscious search for signs, *Apparitions* offers a fascinating insight into Miró's artistic universe, unpredictable in its combination of interpretation and creation.

In 1935 – the year Miró executed *Apparitions* – the artist was battling with the insurgence in his art of monstrous, menacing creatures. He dubbed these works his 'savage paintings' and 'they represent some of the artist's most direct and fierce compositions. Some of the gouaches Miró executed during the summer in 1935' – *Apparitions*

among them – nevertheless allowed the artist to find sanctuary from the tormented world his instinct was constantly forming in front of him. As Miró's friend and authority Jacques Dupin observed, in works such as *Apparitions*, Miró was able to succeed 'by force of will or trickery, to drive [the terrifying images] away or otherwise get free of them' (J. Dupin, *Miró*, Paris, 2012, p. 199). Even when compared with the other gouaches executed in August 1935, *Apparitions* is striking for the delicacy of its esoteric message: while in the other works, Miró found himself dealing with an array of sexually menacing creatures, with *Apparitions* the artist appears to have found – albeit for a brief moment – the inspired, mystical joy of his earlier works. Just after the summer during which *Apparitions* was executed, Miró would embark in a series of paintings on masonite and copper which constitutes the most extreme manifestation of his 'savage' period. On the brink of that wild revolt, *Apparitions* offers a rare moment of lightness, before Miró's universe was engulfed by a spiral of violent images, projected by his inner being against the noise and horror of the imminent Spanish Civil War.

λ136 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)
Nature morte au papillon (Still Life with Butterfly)

signed 'Miró' (lower left); signed 'Joan Miró',
 titled and dated '18/9/35' (on the reverse)
 gouache and India ink on paper
 12 x 14½ in. (30.5 x 36.8 cm.)
 Executed on 18 September 1935

£350,000-550,000

\$580,000-900,000

€420,000-650,000

PROVENANCE:

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.
 Acquavella Galleries, Reno, Nevada (no. 679).
 Claude Kechichian, Paris.
 Private collection, Japan.
 Private collection, Lisbon, by whom acquired from
 the above in 2003.

EXHIBITED:

Paris, Musée national d'art moderne, *Joan Miró*,
 June - November 1962, no. 129.
 Yokohama, Yokohama Museum of Art, *Joan
 Miró, Centennial Exhibition: The Pierre Matisse
 Collection*, January - March 1992, no. 22
 (illustrated p. 71).

LITERATURE:

J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró,
 Catalogue raisonné, Drawings*, vol. I, 1901-1937,
 Paris, 2008, no. 528, p. 256 (illustrated).



Joan Miró, *Tête d'homme et objets*, 1935. Denver Art
 Museum Collection: Gift of Charles Francis Hendrie
 Memorial, 1966.



λ137 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

Femme (Woman)

signed 'Miró' (upper centre); signed, dated and titled 'Joan Miró "Une Femme" 14/9/35.' (on the reverse)
gouache, pen and brush with India ink over pencil on paper
14½ x 12 in. (37 x 30.5 cm.)

Executed on 14 September 1935

£350,000-550,000

\$580,000-900,000

€420,000-650,000

PROVENANCE:

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York (no. ST 492)
Acquavella Galleries, Reno, Nevada (no. 682).
Claude Kechichian, Paris.
Private collection, Japan.
Private collection, Lisbon, by whom acquired from
the above in 2005.

LITERATURE:

J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró, Catalogue raisonné, Drawings*, vol. I, 1901-1937, Paris, 2008, no. 533, p. 258 (illustrated).



Joan Miró, *Femme*, 1935. Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Jaretzki, Jr., 1965.



λ138 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

Tête d'homme (Head of a Man)

signed 'Miró' (lower right); signed 'Joan Miró.',
dated '12-1-35.' and titled (on the reverse)

oil and ripolin on board

41¾ x 29½ in. (106 x 75 cm.)

Painted on 12 January 1935

£700,000-1,000,000

\$1,200,000-1,600,000

€830,000-1,200,000

PROVENANCE:

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.

Acquavella Galleries, Reno, Nevada (no. 211).

Private collection, Japan, by whom acquired from
the above.

Private collection, Lisbon, by whom acquired from
the above in 2003.

EXHIBITED:

Munich, Haus der Kunst, *Joan Miró*, March - May
1969, no. 43 (illustrated).

Washington D.C., Hirshhorn Museum and
Sculpture Garden, *Miró, Selected paintings*,
March - June 1980, no. 22, p. 71 (illustrated); this
exhibition later travelled to Buffalo, Albright-Knox
Art Gallery, June - August 1980, no. 22.

Yokohama, Yokohama Museum of Art, *Joan
Miró, Centennial Exhibition: The Pierre Matisse
Collection*, January - March 1992, no. 19, p. 67
(illustrated).

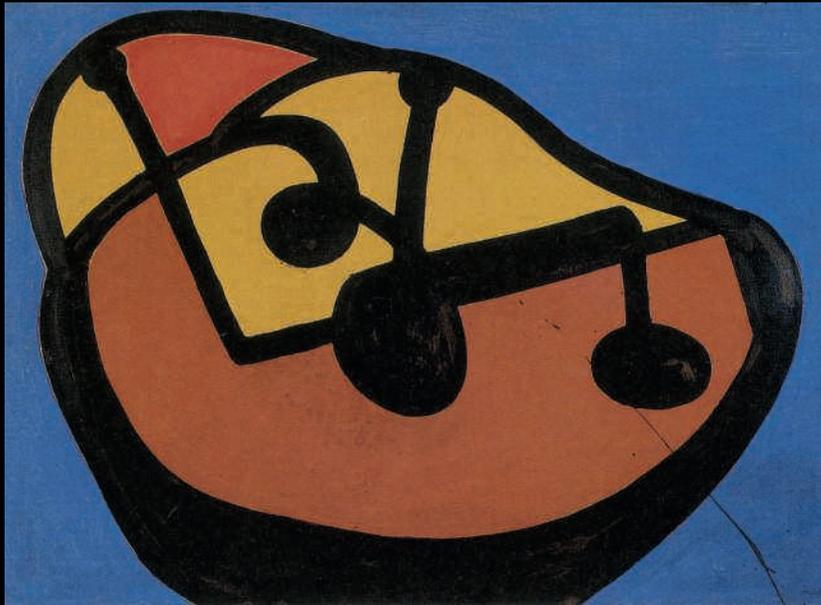
New York, Museum of Modern Art, *Joan Miró,
painting and anti-painting, 1927-1937*, November
2008 - January 2009, p. 168 (illustrated).

LITERATURE:

J. Dupin, *Miró*, London, 1962, no. 399, p. 531
(illustrated).

J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró,
Catalogue Raisonné, Paintings*, vol. II, 1931-1941,
Paris, 2010, no. 484, p. 123 (illustrated).





Joan Miró, *Tête d'homme*, 14 January 1935. Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid.



Joan Miró, *Danseuse*, 9 January 1935. Sold, Christie's, London, 30 June 1999, lot 512 (£331,500).

Painted at a time of growing political unrest, *Tête d'homme* is a bright, bold reinforcement of Miró's belief in the profundity and joy of abstract painting, of the exuberance to be found in looping, luminescent colour. Executed on 12 January 1935, almost four years to the day after he announced his wish to 'assassinate' painting, this work shows a complete return to the free enjoyment of paint. The lessons of Miró's 1920s experiments with Surrealism are evident, with its automatic-influenced spontaneity, refined and made mature. It appears decidedly un-Surrealist with its painterly, textured appeal to pure colour with bright pinks and yellow on a dark blue ground, and a title which ties *Tête* to a sort of figuration, to reality, after a spell of using the more non-committal title 'peinture' in the early 1930s.

This is one of a group of four works on board from between 9 and 14 January 1935: *Femme Assise*, *Danseuse*, and two entitled *Tête d'homme* – one in the collection of the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, the other being present lot. Behind this burst of action seems to be Miró's continued affection for the ballet, as the title of one of the series, *Danseuse*, suggests. He had completed a set of curtains, décor, costumes and objects for the 1932 Ballet Russes production *Jeux d'Enfants*, and was always to recall this project fondly, dreaming of 'uniting the movement of his lines to the plasticity of dancers, to the incessant metamorphosis of the figures formed through their combination' (Jacques Dupin, *Miró*, Paris, Flammarion, 2012, p. 169). In his sketchbooks of 1933 to 1935 these dreams of flowing lines are

realised while working towards a ballet named *Ariel*, based on a text by the Catalan poet J. V. Foix. Through 1933 and early 1934 Miró's work developed in spontaneous, multi-figure compositions, and these four large works seem to be the last evidence of his love of the vivacious arabesque for quite some time, focusing on a single, brave figure.

We can see this mini-series as two pairs: two men and two women. In contrast to the implied full-length portraits *Femme Assise* and *Danseuse*, the subjects of which seem to be floating lost amidst blue space, *Tête d'homme* and its sister work in the Reina Sofía occupy the entire picture, courageous, front-facing, and affirmative, maintaining fluidity in the line. They appear to be masters of space, powerful, unfrontational and benevolent. Yet there is something menacing overhanging the 12 January's *Tête* – the vague shape of a human figure in black against pink – that offers the greatest insight of the four into Miró's mindset and the state of Spain.

Tête d'homme came at a crisis point for Miró. The Paris art market was not quite back on its feet having been hit by the global aftershocks of the 1929 Wall Street Crash, and Miró was moving away from avant-garde Parisian circles to spend more and more time in Spain, travelling between his beloved country retreat Mont-roig and his mother's house in Barcelona, where he had established a studio. This set him in the midst of the miasma surrounding General Franco, who had brutally crushed the 1934 miner's strike and anarchist/communist uprising in the North, with



Joan Miró in his studio, 3 rue François Mouthon, Paris 1931. Photo: Thérèse Bonney. Archive Successió Miró.

the threat of further brutality to come. For Miró, as Dupin notes, 'the political attitude of an artist was a simple matter: he must emphatically refuse all collusion with social or political forces that represent regression or servitude'; his 'work is itself a form of action; by its very nature it is on the side of the freedom of spirit and all other freedoms' (Dupin, *op. cit.*, p. 167). Therefore this growing force of evil was unacceptable to dignity and humanity. Against this backdrop of political tension, the production of his ballet *Ariel* was cancelled.

The artist's initial response were his 'savage paintings', starting in October 1934 consisting of violently deformed figures in garish, stark colours, which continued until 1938. In retrospect, *Tête d'homme* seems like an oasis, a beautiful swansong of the bright world about to be engulfed. It has a primal spontaneity and joy, of a last, almost preventative, leaping of the spirit.

Miró was under no illusions as to the terror ahead, but he believed in the power of painting. Speaking to Georges Duthuit in 1936, Miró reiterated his belief in the profound reality, the raw power, of his own form of abstraction: 'As if the marks I put on a canvas did not correspond to a concrete representation in my mind, did not possess a profound reality, were not part of the real itself!' (Miró, quoted in G. Duthuit, 'Where are you Going Miró?', pp. 149–155, M. Rowell, ed., *Joan Miró, Selected Writings*, Boston, 1986, p. 150–151).

Tête d'homme is a testament to this sensual, concrete approach.

Painting is not merely a 'creation' for Miró, or an 'abstraction' from reality. Rather, his work is real in its truest sense – the painting of something profound, the 'secret laws of life and growth', reduced to 'summary, emphatic signs' (Dupin, *op. cit.*, p. 191; p. 189). Against the savage paintings and pastels, with their lurid, terrifying death masks and contorted figures, Miró sets the hopeful, lyrical light of the present lot. Not as an escape into 'pure form', but as a real, emphatic marker, a bulwark against savagery. Summoning his Surrealist heritage in the ability to concretise the insightful dream, Miró brings a kind of shield against ruin. Although aware of the growing dark – hinted at in the hanging, almost anthropomorphic shape – Miró still paints with solid, block, light colours, not as an escape into abstraction but as its opposite: the presentation of life.

Although the world descended into dark, the light never left Miró. In four sketchbooks dated 1964 and 1965 he resurrected *Ariel*, large sections of which hark back to the style of 1933–1935. Miró entrusted these notebooks to his friend and biographer Jacques Dupin to be choreographed. In the late 1960s and 1970s Miró's *oeuvre* begins to explode with works not dissimilar to the present lot, though now often incorporating the bird as a symbol of freedom and weightlessness, as in *Femme et oiseaux dans la nuit*, 1968, sold at Christie's King Street in 2010. The eventual ballet, with the wonderfully apt title *L'Uccello Luce*, opened on 25 September 1981 at the *Teatro La Fenice* in Venice. After a long wait, the power of *Tête d'homme* had triumphed.

λ139 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

Peinture (Painting)

signed 'Miró' (centre right)
oil, tempera, brush, pen and ink and pencil on board
30 x 25¼ in. (76.5 x 65.5 cm.)
Painted in 1935

£2,000,000-3,000,000

\$3,300,000-4,900,000

€2,400,000-3,500,000

PROVENANCE:

Georges Hugnet, Paris, by whom acquired directly from the artist.

Galerie Matignon, Paris.

Galerie Michael Haas, Berlin.

Welle Collection, Paderborn.

Private collection, Japan.

Private collection, Lisbon, by whom acquired from the above in 2006.

EXHIBITED:

Madrid, Sala de Exposiciones de la Fundación la Caixa, *Ver a Miró, La irradiación de Miró en el arte Español*, April - June 1993, p. 95 (illustrated);

this exhibition later travelled to Barcelona, Centre Culturel Fundació la Caixa, June - August 1993, and Gran Canarias, Centro Atlantico de Arte Moderno, September - October 1993.

Paris, Didier Imbert Fine Art, *Maîtres Espagnols*, 1995.

Kwangju, Korea, Museum of Contemporary Art, *Art as witness, First Biennale of modern and contemporary art*, September - November 1995, pp. 42-43 (illustrated).

Paris, Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, *Face à l'histoire, 1933-1996, engagement, témoignage, vision*, December 1996 - April 1997, p. 181 (illustrated; titled 'L'Époque').

Dusseldorf, Museum Kunst Palast, *Joan Miró, snail, woman, flower, star*, July - October 2002, no. 38, p. 235 (illustrated p. 170).

Ferrara, Palazzo dei Diamanti, *Miró, la terra*, February - May 2008, no. 22, p. 139 (illustrated).

Madrid, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, *Miró: earth*, June - September 2008.

Palma de Mallorca, Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró, *Joan Miró, evocació de la imatge femenina*, December 2008 - March 2009, p. 105 (illustrated); this exhibition later travelled to Valencia, Fundació Bancaja, March - June 2009.

LITERATURE:

J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró, Catalogue raisonné*, vol. II, 1931-1941, Paris, 2000, no. 502, p. 138 (illustrated).





Joan Miró, *Femme*, 1934. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.



Joan Miró, *Personnages devant la nature*, February 1935. The Louise and Walter Arensberg Collection, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia.



Joan Miró, *Tête d'homme*, 1935. Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.

With its searing, hallucinatory expressionism, *Peinture* ranks among Joan Miró's fascinating series of 'savage paintings', in which the artist's gave free rein to his most ferocious visual instincts. Executed in 1935, the work depicts a strange, threatening vision, to which fluorescent colours add a febrile atmosphere. As malleable as the viscous, colourful substance they inhabit, a group of mutant creatures is caught in a frenzy of sexual confrontation: threatening spiky forms are alternated with more phallic protuberances. Using smoother brushwork, Miró draws the viewer's attention to the swollen red sex of the creature in the middle, turning the symbol into the emotional fulcrum of the scene: a pair of menacing white teeth looms not far from it, while a black form separates it from the white phallic tale of the creature on the right. It is euphoria at its most threatening: communal and yet deeply self-interested. As Miró's friend and authority Jacques Dupin observed, works such as *Peinture* appears as the transpositions of the erotic delirium of the Comte de Lautréamont's *Chants du Maldoror* into Miró's universe, enacted by a multitude of his whimsical creatures (J. Dupin, *Miró*, Paris, 2012, p. 191).

Remarkable for its effect of dense, iridescent passages of colours, *Peinture* followed Miró's celebrated 1934 series of pastel drawings, foreseeing the series of 'savage paintings' on copper and masonite which the artist executed between 1935 and 1936. During the summer of 1934, Miró had executed a group of fifteen pastels, each illustrating menacing creatures with swelling bodies and protruding lumps. Exploiting the softness of the pastel, Miró had brought them to life with swift changes of bright colours, which emphasised the anomalous conformations of the bodies, heightening the alluring aggressiveness of their beings. Executed in oil on board, *Peinture* seems to transpose the effects Miró had so perfectly mastered in pastel into the realm of painting: built through contrasting layers, the colours merge and resonate one with the other, free-floating outside the figures' contours to construct on the surface a palpable, rich texture. Dupin observed: 'The first paintings on cardboard in 1935 are an extension from the pastels, but in oil the figures acquire dramatic heightening, appear in madder light, are more aggressive as presences' (*Ibid.*, p. 189). Although the brightness of the colours – and their dissociation from forms – would endure in Miró's 1935-1936 series of works on copper and masonite, the expressionist use of texture and brushwork displayed in *Peinture* seems to remain quite unique to this one work.

Although evoking a marvellous world of fantastic creatures, Miró's savage paintings – and *Peinture* among them – were deeply rooted in the distressing events Miró's native Spain was undergoing at the time. In 1935, during a period that would be later called the *bienio negro* (black biennial), tensions and violence were growing under the right-wing-influenced government of the Second Spanish Republic. In 1934, only a year before Miró painted *Peinture*, the government, guided by General Francisco Franco, had ferociously suppressed a miners' uprising in Asturias: Spain was precariously close to Civil War, which eventually erupted in July 1936. Although rooted in the artist's unconscious, works such as *Peinture* resonate with alarming premonitions of the violence of the period. Yet they remain in their essence self-referential, developing further that artistic universe that had populated Miró's art since the beginning of his career. As Yves Bonnefoy affirmed, Miró's creatures 'are not the kind of monsters that we are ready to see in other men, supposed to be evil and denounced by us as such (...) Miró's monsters come straight from his soul – they are in fact the dark part of every human soul, that well which he did not hesitate to uncover with his system of symbols' (Y. Bonnefoy, *Miró*, London, 1967, p. 22).



The paintings on masonite Summer 1936

The present collection contains six of the twenty-seven paintings on masonite that Joan Miró created during the Summer of 1936, at the point of the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. This group of works, several of which are in museum collections, is filled with a raw energy: Miró has used a variety of materials and gestures to create frantic signs; these are made all the more visceral by the warm glow of the rough, man-made background.

For some of the *Peintures*, as these pictures were all titled, Miró would paint on the smoother surface, for others turning the masonite around in order to have an even more textured backdrop upon which to work. The rough-hewn quality of both sides resulted in a range of gestural effects that was only underscored by the incredible range of materials that Miró used to create the pictures, including casein, tar and sand as well as oil paints. Indeed, several of them also incorporate stones which have been encrusted into the surface, bound within the paint, allowing the motifs to burst from the picture surfaces and thereby continuing Miró's exploration of different elements of *bricolage* and collage.

Looking at the surfaces of the masonite works in this collection, it becomes clear that they are a league away from the earlier, smaller pictures on the same support that Miró had created at the beginning of the year. In those previous pictures, he had used a range of colours to produce detailed, gem-like works packed with figures and monsters. Detail and precision reigned, as they did also in the simultaneous paintings he was making on copper. Those pictures contained figures and visions that were in part inspired by Miró's general sense of impending doom: he was living in Spain as it slid towards the Civil War. While unsure of quite what cataclysm was about to erupt, Miró was sure that a cataclysm would nonetheless come. It did so in July 1936, at the

beginning of the Summer during which the paintings on masonite were painted. Miró's awareness of all this was all the sharper because he was living in his native Catalonia, which was one of the great flashpoints of the conflict, not least because Catalan autonomy was a major source of disagreement between the left- and right-wing parties with which the sides became associated.

Now that the Spanish Civil War had begun, Miró devoted himself to his paintings on masonite, which are filled with torrid passages of paint and other material. This was in stark contrast to the controlled conflict in the earlier masonite pictures. Now, Miró appeared to be attacking the entire process of representation, taking his own visual language and disassembling it. As he himself said,

'Looking at the masonite *Peintures* from the summer of 1936, you can see that I had already reached a very dangerous impasse from which I saw no possible way out. - the war broke out in July 1936 and made me interrupt my work and close myself into my spirit; the premonitions I had that summer and the need to keep my feet on the ground by using realism took shape in Paris with the still life of a shoe' (Miró, quoted in R.S. Lubar, 'Paintings on masonite', pp. 200-13, A. Umland, *Joan Miró: Painting and Anti-Painting 1927-1937*, exh. cat., New York, 2009, p. 205).

With that still life, which was painted the following year and is now in the Museum of Modern Art, Miró created a work that had a mysterious sheen in its depiction of the objects on display, for instance the apple, the old shoe and the bottle. By 1937, the explosive energy and outburst of the paintings on masonite had already passed, ceding its primacy to the return of detail. However, while there is a huge contrast between the treatments of the pictures on masonite and *Nature morte au vieux soulier*,



Lot 140



Lot 141



Lot 142

they in fact share a certain reliance on preparation. Preliminary drawings exist relating to almost all of the paintings on masonite, even though clear differences emerged between the initial compositions and the reality of the larger works - as Miró himself explained, 'I did paintings that were far less geometrical than the drawings, because you understand, when I went on to the picture I worked with enamel paints, sand, substances of some thickness, and the medium conditioned the execution, making me deviate from the original plan' (Miró, quoted in G. Picon, *Joan Miró: Catalan Notebooks*, London, 1977, p. 101).

Many of the drawings that provided the foundations for the paintings on masonite dated from 1932, when Miró had helped Léonide Massine in the artistic direction of the ballet, *Jeux d'enfants*. Now, some of the mixed media techniques used in his design found themselves revived in the paintings on masonite, with their varied surfaces. In addition, ideas from his 1932 sketchbook relating to *Jeux d'enfants* found themselves gaining a new incarnation: he revisited themes used in that ballet, exploring them on the blank pages of the four year-old sketchbook. A case in point is the motif of the *amoureux en extase*, as identified in an annotation accompanying a sketch that had been drawn on a scrap of newspaper alongside colour directions for the costumes. A later sketch saw the formulation of the same motif which was then repeated with elegant and eloquent simplicity in *Peinture* (D&L;533). There are clear differences between the sketched out figures; however, they retain the contrast of forms that harks back to *Jeux d'enfants*, not least the phallic shape of the male lover and the circle at the centre. These are motifs that carry through several of the paintings on masonite; indeed, in one of the pictures, breasts, a phallus and the womb-like target are repeated, many of them in small bubbles (D&L;534). Elsewhere, other figures also appear, some of them more coherent than

others. It was only too apt that Miró should have turned to *Jeux d'enfants* for inspiration, as in some of his works from this group, he even used pictures made by his young daughter as sources, albeit none of the ones in this collection.

Miró planned to show the paintings on masonite in Paris before sending them to his New York-based dealer, Pierre Matisse. Showing his own acknowledgement of their importance, he wrote to Matisse with information about delivery:

'I'll be finished around October 15 with the paintings that make up this summer's stage. There will be 26 in all, in a 108 x 78 format, on masonite, which is a very solid material. These paintings are very powerfully expressive and have a great material force. I think I'll be able to take them to Paris myself toward the end of October and send them on to New York right after that' (Miró, quoted in *Joan Miró: 1893-1983*, exh. cat., Barcelona, 1993, p. 327).

It seems he was able to show a number of these works in Paris for a night, where they were fêted by supporters of the Republican cause: he wrote to a friend that when they were exhibited, there were 'Sardana dances in honour of Spain and Catalonia' (Miró, quoted in M. Daniel & M. Gale, 'The Tipping Point: 1934-9', pp. 73-91, Daniel and Gale, ed., *Joan Miró: The Ladder of Escape*, exh. cat., London, 2011, p. 85). Their raw, defiant energy was a clarion call for Miró's native Catalonia, which had ushered them into existence. Miró was in Paris, having left Spain, which ultimately he avoided for the duration of the Civil War, spending his time instead in the French capital, where he promoted the Republican cause in various ways, not least through helping to create a vast painting on celotex panels to be installed in their Spanish Pavilion, alongside the mercury fountain made by his friend Alexander Calder, and now housed in the Fundació Joan Miró in Barcelona, and Pablo Picasso's *Guernica*.



Lot 143



Lot 455 (Impressionist and Modern Art Day Sale, 5 February 2014)



Lot 454 (Impressionist and Modern Art Day Sale, 5 February 2014)

λ140 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

Peinture (Painting)

signed 'Miró' (lower left); signed 'Joan Miró', dated 'été 1936' and titled (on the reverse)

oil, casein, tar and sand on masonite

30¾ x 42½ in. (78 x 108 cm.)

Painted in Summer 1936

£700,000-1,000,000

\$1,200,000-1,600,000

€830,000-1,200,000

PROVENANCE:

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.

Acquavella Galleries, Reno, Nevada (no. 525).

Private collection, Japan, by whom acquired from the above.

Private collection, Lisbon, by whom acquired from the above in 2003.

LITERATURE:

J. Dupin, *Joan Miró, Life and Work*, London, 1962, no. 462, p. 536 (illustrated).

P. Gimferrer, *The roots of Miró*, New York, 1993, no. 556, p. 361 (illustrated, titled 'Painting on masonite').

J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró, Catalogue raisonné, Paintings*, vol. II, 1931-1941, no. 539, p. 165 (illustrated).



Joan Miró, *Peinture*, 1936. Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago. Gift of Florene May Schoenborn and Samuel A. Marx, 1950.



λ141 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

Peinture (Painting)

signed 'Miró' (upper left); signed 'Joan Miró.', dated 'été 1936.' and titled (on the reverse)
oil, casein and tar on masonite
30% x 42% in. (77.8 x 107.8 cm.)
Painted in summer 1936

£1,000,000-1,500,000

\$1,700,000-2,400,000

€1,200,000-1,800,000

PROVENANCE:

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.

Acquavella Galleries, Reno, Nevada (no. 521).

Private collection, Japan, by whom acquired from the above.

Private collection, Lisbon, by whom acquired from the above in 2003.

EXHIBITED:

Ferrara, Palazzo dei Diamanti, *Miró, la terra*, February - May 2008, no. 26, p. 143 (illustrated).

Madrid, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, *Miró: earth*, June - September 2008.

New York, Museum of Modern Art, *Joan Miró, painting and anti-painting, 1927-1937*, November 2008 - January 2009, pl. 106, p. 236 (illustrated p. 211).

LITERATURE:

C. Greenberg, *Miró*, New York, 1948, p. 78, illustrated pl. XL.

J. Dupin, *Miró, Life and work*, London, 1962, no. 455, p. 535 (illustrated).

J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró, Catalogue raisonné, Paintings*, vol. II, 1931-1941, Paris, 2000, no. 535, p. 162 (illustrated).



Joan Miró, *Peinture*, Summer 1936. Nagasaki Prefectural Art Museum, Nagasaki.



λ142 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

Peinture (Painting)

signed 'Miró' (upper right); signed 'Joan Miró', dated 'été 1936' and titled (on the reverse)
oil, casein, rock and sand on masonite
30% x 42% in. (77.9 x 107.8 cm.)
Painted in Summer 1936

£600,000-900,000
\$980,000-1,500,000
€710,000-1,100,000

PROVENANCE:

Galerie Maeght, Paris.
Galería Theo, Madrid.
Galerie Urban, Paris.
Private collection, Japan.
Private collection, Lisbon, by whom acquired from the above in 2003.

EXHIBITED:

Basel, Kunsthalle, *Joan Miró*, March – April 1956, no. 42.
London, Tate Gallery, *Joan Miró, Painting, sculpture and ceramics*, August - October 1964, no. 144; this exhibition later travelled to Zurich, Kunsthhaus, October - December 1964.

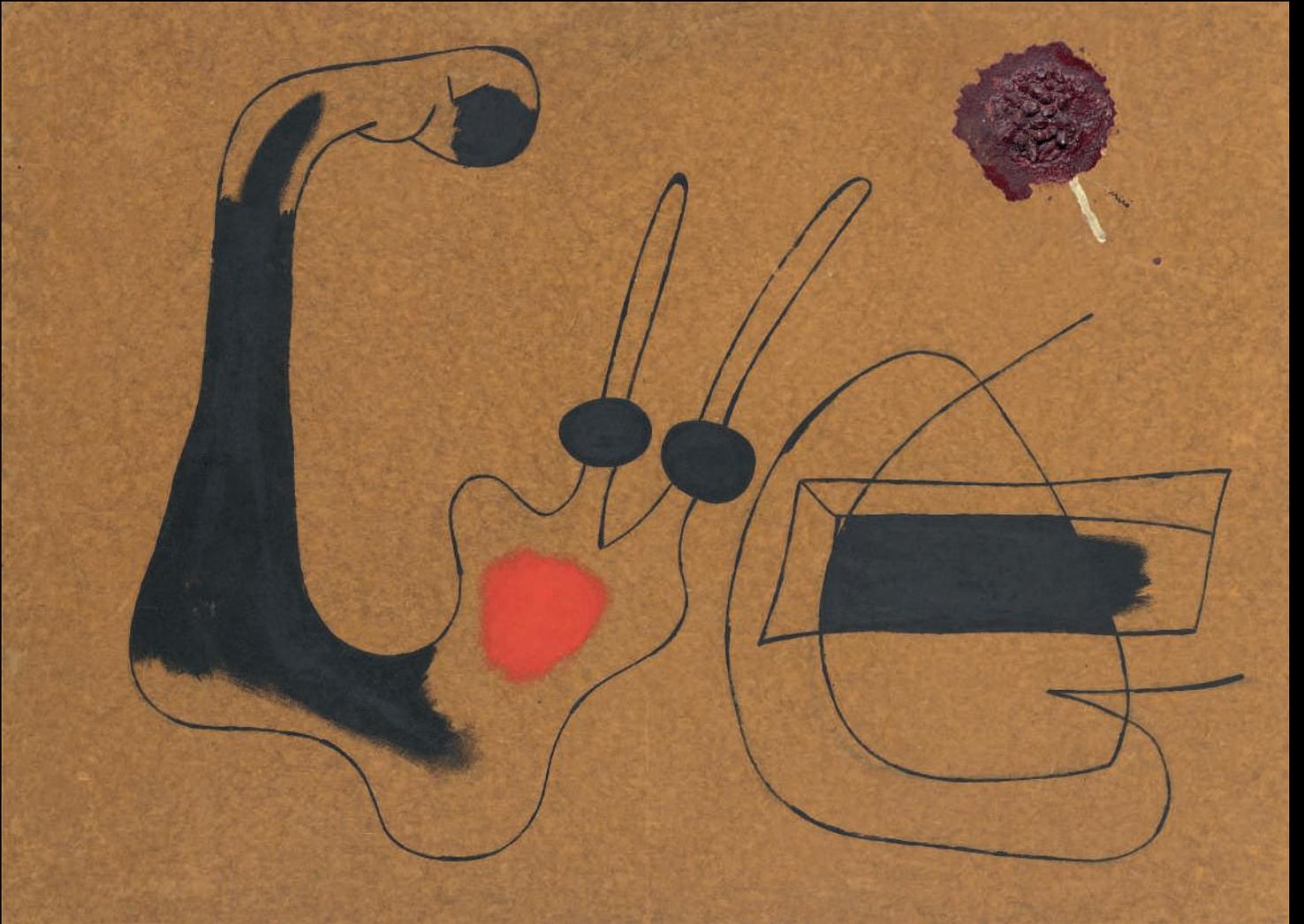
Knokke-Heist, Casino Communal, *XXIVe Festival belge d'été, Joan Miró*, June - August 1971, no. 24, p. 41 (illustrated; titled 'Peinture sur masonite').
Venice, XXXVII Biennale di Venezia, June – Octobre 1976, no. 944.
Madrid, Galería Theo, *Joan Miró*, May - June 1978, illustrated.
Barcelona, Galería Theo, February 1987, no. 11.
Ferrara, Palazzo dei Diamanti, *Miró, la terra*, February - May 2008, no. 24, p. 141 (illustrated).
Madrid, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, *Miró: earth*, June - September 2008.
New York, Museum of Modern Art, *Joan Miró, painting and anti-painting, 1927-1937*, November 2008 - January 2009.

LITERATURE:

J. Prévert & G. Ribemont-Dessaignes, *Joan Miró*, Paris, 1956, p. 141.
J. Dupin, *Miró, Life and Work*, London, 1962, no. 471, p. 536 (illustrated).
M. Bucci, *Miró*, Barcelona, 1970, no. 19 (illustrated).
M. Rowell, *Joan Miró, Peinture = poésie*, Paris, 1976, p. 66 (illustrated).
R. Penrose, *Joan Miró*, Paris, 1990, no. 59, p. 86 (illustrated).
P. Gimferrer, *The Roots of Miró*, Barcelona, 1993, no. 569, p. 362 (illustrated).
J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró, Catalogue raisonné*, Paintings, vol. II, 1931-1941, Paris, 2000, no. 532, p. 160 (illustrated).



Joan Miró with *Figures in front of a Metamorphosis*, Paris 1936.
Photo: A.E. Gallatin. Archive Successió Miró.



λ143 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

Peinture (Painting)

signed 'Miró' (centre); signed 'Joan Miró', dated 'été 1936' and titled (on the reverse)

oil, casein, sand and rock on masonite

30¾ x 42¾ in. (78 x 107.7 cm.)

Painted in Summer 1936

£500,000-700,000

\$820,000-1,100,000

€600,000-830,000

PROVENANCE:

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.

Acquavella Galleries, New York.

Private collection. Japan.

Private collection, Lisbon, by whom acquired from the above in 2005.

EXHIBITED:

Yokohama, Yokohama Museum of Art, *Joan Miró, Centennial Exhibition: The Pierre Matisse Collection*, January - March 1992, no. 27 (illustrated p. 75).

New York, Museum of Modern Art, *Joan Miró, Painting and Anti-Painting 1927-1937*, November 2008 - January 2009, no. 2008.1045.

LITERATURE:

S. Takiguchi, *Miró*, Tokyo, 1940, p. 43 (illustrated upside down).

J. Dupin, *Miró, Life and Work*, London 1962, no. 465, p. 536 (illustrated).

P. Gimferrer, *The Roots of Miró*, Barcelona, 1993, no. 561, p. 219 (illustrated fig. 376, p. 218).

J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró, Catalogue raisonné, Paintings*, vol. II, 1931-1941, Paris, 2000, no. 534, p. 162 (illustrated).



Joan Miró, *Peinture*, 1936. Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona



λ144 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

Signes et figurations (Signs and Figurations)

signed 'Miró' (lower left)
oil on tarred and sanded paper
38³/₈ x 48³/₄ in. (98.8 x 124 cm.)
Executed in 1936

£500,000-700,000

\$820,000-1,100,000

€600,000-830,000

PROVENANCE:

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.
Acquavella Galleries, Reno, Nevada (no. 2128).
Private collection, Japan, by whom acquired from the above by 1993.
Private collection, Lisbon by whom acquired from the above in 2006.

EXHIBITED:

Barcelona, Fundació Joan Miró, *Impactes, Joan Miró 1929-1941*, November 1988 - January 1989, no. 48, p. 126 (illustrated p. 80); this exhibition later travelled to London, Whitechapel Art Gallery, February - April 1989.
Yokohama, Yokohama Museum of Art, Joan Miró, Centennial Exhibition: The Pierre Matisse Collection, January - March 1992, no. 24 (illustrated p. 73).
Barcelona, Fundació Joan Miró, *Joan Miró 1893-1993*, April - August 1993, no. 133, p. 318 (illustrated p. 319).

LITERATURE:

J. Dupin, *Joan Miró, Life and Work*, London, 1962, no. 436, p. 534 (illustrated).
P. Gimferrer, *The roots of Miró*, New York, 1993, no. 652, p. 367 (illustrated).
J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró, Catalogue raisonné, Paintings*, vol. II, Paris, 2000, 1931-1941, no. 519, p. 151 (illustrated).

Against a warm, textured background, a cluster of ciphers in black paint are arranged, lending them a vivid intensity that is accentuated by their scale. Joan Miró's *Signes et figurations* was painted in 1936 and belongs to a rare group of works that he created during that period, using tarred paper which was coated in sand as a support, working in black paint to create a vivid range of signs upon the surface. The sandy texture of the tarred paper lends a sense of roughness and also of physicality; it tethers the pictures to the world of sensation, to the urban realm, and to graffiti; indeed, Miró himself referred to these works as 'tar-paper graffiti' (Miró, quoted in J. Dupin, *Miró*, Barcelona, 1993, p. 198). This connection with graffiti is reinforced by the glyphs themselves: here, a line, a cross, an oval and two pieces of what appears to be writing. Like the 'word' at the bottom, these oscillate on the brink of legibility and meaning, and are made all the more poignant and potent because of it. They become universal symbols, tapping into the flow of imagery that can trace its history back to the first human desire to

scrawl upon a surface, and are therefore raw expressions of communication. Discussing this small series of works, Dupin himself wrote in terms that reflect the artist's focus on the immediacy of graffiti and its relevance to Miró:

'For Miró graffiti are the necessary and purely graphic counter-point to the relative lethargy of painting and its structured space. As at Lascaux, or at Altamira, on a wooden shutter, or on the slate of a public urinal, the brutal confrontation between a gesture and a surface explodes the primitive sign, the sign's primacy, and the materiality of the trace. Colour modulation is replaced by grittiness, by surface resistance, its tar and sand, its gummy, grainy texture, which attract, upset, and arouse the painter's hand, before finally - which means, in the first instant of action - forcing the flash of improvisation. Certain graffiti yield a figure, or embryonic figures, letters, numerals, crosses, graphs, or schema - and sometimes they yield nothing. In the end, it is the violence itself, the peremptory evidence of the inscriptions that matters' (*ibid.*, pp. 198-99).

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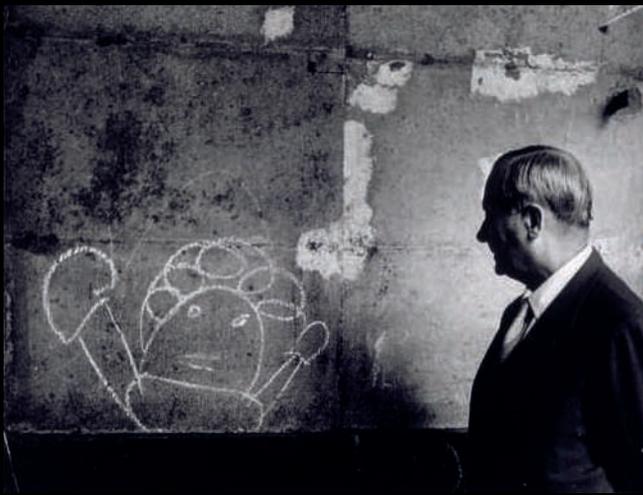
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Handwritten cursive text, possibly a signature or name, written in dark ink.



Horses and deer from the Caves at Altamira, c.15000 BC



Brassaï, *Miró devant un graffiti*, 1955. Private Collection.



Antoni Tàpies, *Croix noire sur ab*, 1975. Musée national d'art moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.

Towards the end of 1935, the year before *Signes et figurations* was painted, Miró had created a string of works on paper of the same title, often featuring compositions that were later echoed in the smaller number of pictures on tarred paper such as this. In addition, despite the seeming brutality and force of the gestures that have resulted in the image in this picture, Miró created preparatory drawings for some of these: there is a sheet in the Fundació Joan Miró that shows the same elements as are displayed in *Signes et figurations*, albeit in a slightly different arrangement, with the cross on its side.

The existence of that drawing demonstrates the fact that in many of Miró's works, the impression of spontaneity was deceptive. Although there were often pictures that were the result of an immediate and visceral sense of inspiration or movement, Miró was also a great planner and composer. Even some of his most seemingly gestural pictures, which appear to be the product of one enlightened, chance-driven moment, can be revealed to be based strongly upon preparatory images. This is the case in *Signes et figurations*: although the picture gives the impression of being like graffiti, and therefore the product of a set moment in time, it is in fact a scaled-up variation upon that earlier design.

The preparatory drawing is all the more intriguing because of the rotation of the cross that has occurred between its creation and the final appearance of *Signes et figurations*. Where initially it was on its side, now it has essentially become a crucifix, a symbol all the more potent in the run-up to the Spanish Civil War. This work was created while Miró was in Spain, where he found himself when the conflict did finally erupt. He had been plagued with worries and anxieties about the general crescendo of tension during this period, fearing some cataclysmic development. There is an air of protest and of the manic to *Signes et figurations* and its deliberately dumb symbols, as though the protests and demonstrations that were being held throughout Spain had broken out upon this picture surface.

This was a time of political turmoil in Spain, where he was living, and especially in his native Catalonia. The switch from one extreme form of government to another had created massive instability. Republicans had been in power briefly from the early 1930s and had managed to sever the heavily-entrenched ties between Church and State as well as introducing autonomy for Catalonia; however, in 1933, they had been replaced by a right-wing government which had immediately tried to rescind the reforms. They in turn were replaced in 1936 by another republican-led coalition, whose shambolic turn in power, undermined by their own ranks and those of the opposition, would ultimately prompt the military uprising led by General Franco, marking the beginning of the Spanish Civil War. In *Signes et figurations*, then, this cross may serve as a hint at the emptiness of the Church's powers, it may serve as a prelude to the grave markers that would be needed because of the impending conflict, but it may be a figure or a mere marker. With its reliance on open-ended yet pointed symbols such as the cross in particular, its backdrop of political protest and also its use of textured materials, *Signes et figurations* can be seen to foreshadow the works of another Catalan artist, Antoni Tàpies, showing Miró's enduring influence on his compatriots.



λ145 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

Le chant des oiseaux en automne (Birdsong in Autumn)

signed 'Miró' (lower right); signed 'JOAN MIRÓ', dated 'IX-1937' and titled (on the reverse)

oil on celotex

48 x 35⁷/₈ in. (122 x 91 cm.)

Painted in September 1937

£1,500,000-2,500,000

\$2,500,000-4,100,000

€1,800,000-3,000,000

PROVENANCE:

Galerie Pierre, Paris.

Galerie Urban, Paris.

Private collection, Japan.

Private collection, Lisbon, by whom acquired from the above in 2005.

LITERATURE:

J. Dupin, *Joan Miró, Life and Work*, London, 1962, no. 476, p. 537 (illustrated p. 328).

P. Gimferrer, *The Roots of Miró*, Barcelona, 1993, no. 1993, no. 660, p. 367 (illustrated).

J. Dupin, *Miró*, Paris, 1993, no. 238, p. 215 (illustrated).

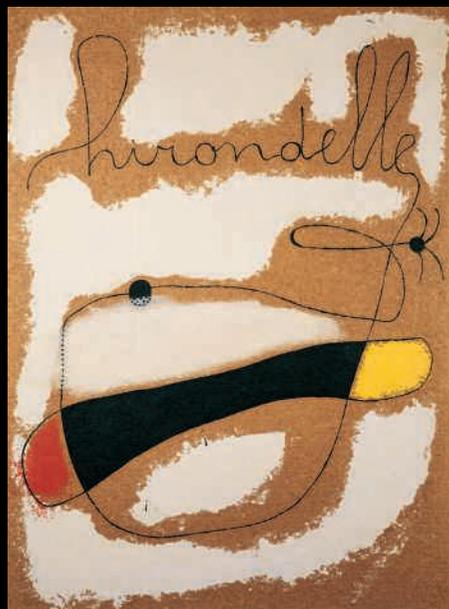
J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró, Catalogue raisonné, Paintings*, vol. II, 1931-1941, Paris, 2000, no. 566, p. 184 (illustrated).

Le chant des oiseaux en automne

belongs to a series of works on celotex

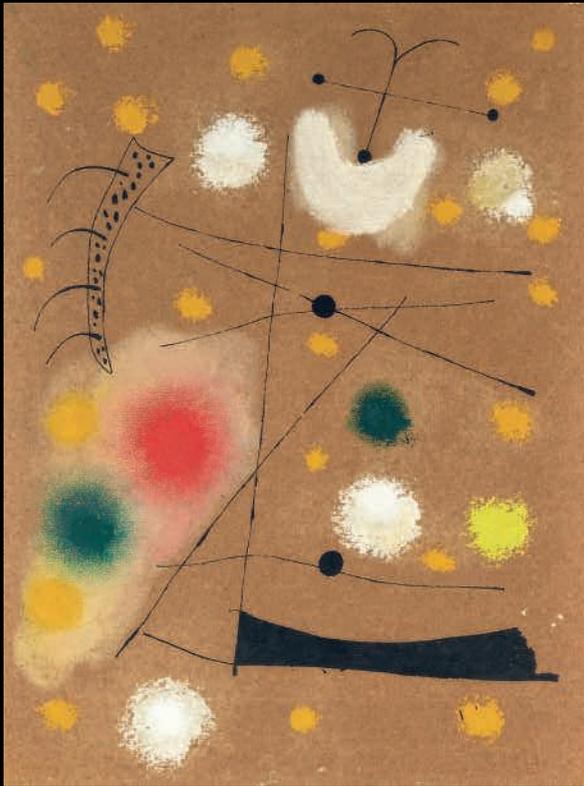
Joan Miró executed in 1937. Poetically evoking a flock of birds' salutation to the burgeoning autumn, the work appears as an assemblage of organic and geometric forms, which have thrived next to the colours of the sky, white and blue. Their beaks uplifted, the birds send the sinuous lines of their chant into the air, shaping the very form of the azure. A call to nature and its cycle, *Le chant des oiseaux en automne* also exemplifies Miró's resourceful and surprising use of signs, as the artist would affirm in 1948: 'For me a form is never something abstract; it is always a sign of something. It is always a man, a bird, or something else. For me painting is never form for form's sake' ('Joan Miró; Comment and Interview, by James Johnson Sweeney. In *Partisan Review* New York, February 1948', pp. 207-211, in M. Rowell, (ed.), *Joan Miró: Selected Writings and Interviews*, London 1987, p. 207).

Executed on celotex, *Le chant des oiseaux en automne* illustrates Miró's insatiable curiosity in exploring various media, which in the 1930s lead the artist to paint on a series of surprising and unusual supports. Between 1935 and 1936, Miró had painted on masonite, copper, tar paper and even cement. Following those

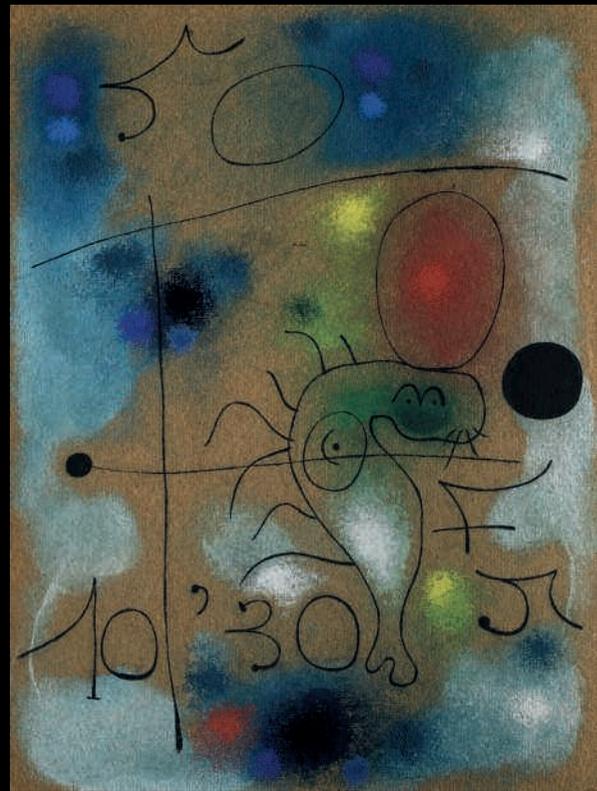


Joan Miró, *Painting ("hirondelle")*, 1937. Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid.





Joan Miró, *Peinture*, 1937. Sold, Christie's, London, 7 February 2005, lot 69.



Joan Miró, *Le Cirque*, September 1937. Meadows Museum, Southern Methodist University, Dallas.

experiments, *Le chant des oiseaux en automne* adds another material to the artist's plethora of daring essays, introducing a more delicate counterpart to the works on masonite: more finely textured, celotex allowed for a more graphic dimension in Miró's inventions. As an artist, Miró attached great importance to the medium and to the essence of the material. The tactile and visual property of the support played a great role in the free runs of inspiration that initiated each of Miró's works of art. In 1951, Miró stressed this idea: 'It's the medium that directs everything. I am against all intellectual research – anything that is preconceived and dead' ('Interview with Georges Charbonnier. French National Radio, 1951', pp. 217-224, *Ibid.*, p. 219). Spurred by Miró's encounter with celotex, *Le chant des oiseaux en automne* is the recording of a poetic dialogue between the artist's mind and the unpredictable turns which the material imposed on the artist's brush.

Medium, however, was not the only source of inspiration for *Le chant des oiseaux en automne*. The series of six works on celotex to which the picture belongs was indeed inspired by other accidental encounters. Miró's friend Jacques Dupin relates that the artist used some 'notes culled from the street' as starting point for his inventions (J. Dupin, *Miró*, Paris, 2012, p. 216). Perhaps inspired by graffiti – Miró was fascinated by these anonymous signs left on the city's walls – *Le chant des oiseaux en automne* recreates the spontaneity and the immediacy of a children scribble, urging to communicate with synthetic symbols the complexity of a narrative. Miró's search into the language of children and into the inhibited expression of graffiti signs was akin to the interests of the Surrealists. Intrigued by the anonymous language left by the city on its own walls, the Surrealist photographer Brassäi had started to photograph graffiti

in the 1930s, carrying out the project over thirty years. Some of his graffiti photographs were published by the Surrealists in *Minotaure* in 1933. Perhaps as a homage to their shared fascination for graffiti, in 1955 Brassäi photographed Miró in front of graffiti in the streets of Barcelona. Transforming the involuntary scribbles of the city into an image evoking nature, *Le chant des oiseaux en automne* is an example of Miró's great affinity for signs and of his intuitive talent for creating new visual languages, rich in resonances and meanings.

Within Miró's works of 1937, *Le chant des oiseaux en automne* strikes for its lyrical connotations and for the lively innocence of its signs. The artist's work from the second half of the 1930s, in fact, was marked by the appearance of terrifying deformation and threatening creatures: Miró free flowing lines seemed to be constantly driven by dark, unsettling forces. Within this context, the series of works on celotex and *Le chant des oiseaux en automne* in particular presents an unexpected joyful moment, characterised by an 'extreme gentleness' (*Ibid.*, p. 216). As Dupin defined them, 'They are a sort of a lull in the fighting and exhibit an unexpected incantatory power and a delicate simplicity' (*Ibid.*, p. 216). In 1937 Miró was living in Paris, where he had taken refuge when the Spanish Civil War had erupted the year before. He had thus returned to his second homeland as an exile, sensitive to the echoes of the war. It is not surprising to discover that the fragile calm expressed in works such as *Le chant des oiseaux en automne* would not last: as Dupin wrote, 'these celotex works (...) were born in a moment of calm that intervened between Miró's most painful works and an outburst of gouaches and drawings still to come, in which violent moods and formative invention will once again predominate' (*Ibid.*, p. 216).



nizo

λ146 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

Untitled

signed 'Miró' (lower right); signed and dated 'JOAN MIRÓ. mai 1937' (on the reverse)

gouache, pen and ink on paper laid onto card

18¾ x 22½ in. (47.5 x 56.2 cm.)

Executed in May 1937

£200,000-300,000

\$330,000-490,000

€240,000-350,000

PROVENANCE:

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.

Acquavella Galleries, New York.

Private collection, Japan, by whom acquired from the above.

Private collection, Lisbon, by whom acquired from the above in 2005.

LITERATURE:

J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró, Catalogue raisonné*, vol. I, 1901-1937, no. 738, p. 349 (illustrated).

Joan Miró created *Untitled* in May 1937, towards the beginning of what had essentially become a period of exile in Paris during the Spanish Civil War. The picture shows a group of vigorously-rendered figures, the lines threading their ways between exploding puffs of white gouache. There is a vivid contrast between the delicate, near-calligraphic black lines and the dabs of white that reveal Miró's continued fascination with his materials, and his ability to let them suggest a means of progressing with his image: process and gesture are lent a vivid primacy in *Untitled*.

To the right of *Untitled* is a single figure which appears bug-like, recalling the almost hallucinatory visions of Hieronymous Bosch; this contrasts with the rawer, grotesque physicality of the main body that stretches across so much of the picture surface, with its pendant breasts and massy head. The immediacy

of this deceptively simple figure was doubtless rooted in part in Miró's recent experiences drawing from life at the Grande Chaumière, where he had worked as a younger artist. Now, he had returned to the model, and this lent the works of the period an increased link to visual reality.

This return to the figurative universe partly reflected Miró's confrontation of the harsh realities at work during the carnage of the Spanish Civil War. *Untitled* was executed in May 1937, precisely in the midst of the period when Miró was working on his large-scale painting, *El segador*, or 'The Reaper'. This was a mural on celotex created for the Spanish Pavilion at the 1937 World Fair in Paris, where it was exhibited alongside Alexander Calder's mercury fountain and Pablo Picasso's *Guernica*. The Spanish Civil War, and the struggle of Catalonia in particular, which had been on the brink of autonomy under a reform parliament before having that hope retracted by a change of government, was all the more poignant for Miró as he felt unable to return to his native land, which was being rent apart in turmoil. Looking at the figures in *Untitled*, it is as though they too are reacting to the chaos of the conflict. The palette and the outstretched neck even hint at the influence of *Guernica* itself, recalling the head that peers in horror in Picasso's painting, or even the scream of the traumatised horse. Yet there is also a playful dimension to *Untitled*, which is filled with imagery which is both sexual and whimsical, reflecting the apparent frenzy with which Miró himself created it.



Pablo Picasso, Preparatory drawing for *Guernica*, 1937. Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid.



λ147 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

Painting

signed 'Miró' (lower right)
oil on canvas
22% x 196½ in. (56.7 x 499 cm.)
Painted in 1953

£2,500,000-3,500,000
\$4,100,000-5,700,000
€3,000,000-4,100,000



PROVENANCE:

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.
Acquavella Galleries, Reno, Nevada (no. 446).
Private collection, Japan, by whom acquired from the above.
Private collection, Lisbon, by whom acquired from the above in 2005.

EXHIBITED:

Yokohama, Yokohama Museum of Art, *Joan Miró, Centennial Exhibition: The Pierre Matisse Collection*, January - March 1992, no. 70 (illustrated pp. 106-107).

LITERATURE:

J. Dupin, *Joan Miró, Life and Work*, London, 1962, no. 838, p. 563 (illustrated p. 420).
J. Dupin, *Miró*, Paris, 1993, no. 316, p. 295 (illustrated pp. 294-295).
J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró, Catalogue raisonné, Paintings*, vol. III, 1942-1955, no. 939, p. 214 (illustrated pp. 214-215).

Executed in 1953, *Peinture* belongs to a series of large-scale works Joan Miró executed in the 1950s. He named those vertical and horizontal panels '*bandes*', emphasising their scroll-like unfolding; according to Jacques Dupin – the great authority on Miró's work – 'among them there are some of Miró's most beautiful and important works' (J. Dupin, *Miró*, Paris, 2012, p. 297). In *Peinture*, over a trembling azure background, Miró arranged a series of 'miroglyphs': evoking birds, insects and stars, they populate the surface with childhood-like spontaneity. Five-meters long, the work unrolls in front of the viewer like a frieze, yet no narrative seems to properly occur: rather, the viewer





Joan Miró painting in his studio.

finds himself to walk along the picture freely, accompanied by Miró's creatures, coexisting in space simultaneously like they first did in the artist's mind.

The horizontal format and formidable extended scale of *Peinture* evoke the public dimension of mural art. Miró was familiar with the format, since in 1947 he had executed a nine-meter-long canvas for the Gourmets Restaurant in Cincinnati. That mural painting was also developed on a blue, textured background, on which meticulous and linear creatures expanded, animating the whole surface. In order to execute the work, Miró travelled to New York for the first time; there he received another commission: Marcel Duchamp asked Miró to paint a frieze for the International Surrealist Exhibition planned that year in Paris. Painted on a long stretch of canvas, the frieze comprised a series of symbols drawn from the artist's universe and simplified in order to evoke the primordial signs of cave painting. Neither an easel painting nor a public commission, *Peinture* suggests that in 1953 Miró returned to mural painting as a way of stretching the limits of his work. The elongated form of the canvas required the artist to find a strong rhythm in the composition; at the same time the lack of narrative asked for an intuitive, spontaneous execution.

Together with another large canvas painted in 1953 and now held at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, *Peinture* opened a new chapter in the stylistic journey of Miró's art. Dupin defined it as an 'expansion tendency'. Leaving behind the precision of his

'elaborate style', Miró set out to loosen up control and explore a more instinctive approach. As Dupin wrote, 'Calling upon all his powers for direct, uncompromising expressiveness, he achieved a kind of improvisation, at once grandiose and rigorous' (J. Dupin, *Miró*, Paris, 2012, p. 292). In *Peinture*, Miró displayed the symbols in order to create a sense of rhythm in the composition: a long central black brushstroke divides the canvas into three parts, while two stars at each ends of the composition give a sense of symmetry. Yet the picture maintains a sense of floating free, developing its signs from left to right in a seemingly spontaneous sequence. The viewer's eye wanders freely, comforted by the underlying strength of the composition.

To achieve such an effect, in the *bandes* series Miró gave more emphasis to the background, letting the surface suggest the movements of the picture. As Dupin observed, 'the background served to create a storm-tossed atmosphere, generating sufficient electricity to put the painter in a hypnotic state in which he was able to transmit directly onto the canvas a deposit of inner energies notable for their crude, raw, expressiveness' (*ibid.*, p. 292). Miró himself described this approach, explaining the way he started painting in 1959: 'I start my paintings under the influence of a shock that I feel and that takes me out of reality. The cause of the shock can be a little thread coming loose from the canvas, a drop of water falling, this print that my finger leaves on the shiny surface of this table. Anyway, I need a starting point, even if it's



Joan Miró, *Peinture*, 1953. Musée national d'Art moderne - Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.



Joan Miró, *Peinture*, 1953. Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York.

only a grain of dust or a flash of light. This shape generates a series of things, one thing giving birth to another' ('Miró: I work like a gardener...', pp. 423-428, in *Joan Miró 1893-1993*, exh. cat., Barcelona, 1993, p. 425). In its horizontal unfolding of signs, *Peinture* expanded this approach into a new dimension, challenging the artist's creative power on a large scale.

Stretching over five meters, *Peinture* is a work that can equally be overwhelming absorbing for an individual or indeed inviting for a larger crowd. The same year Miró painted *Peinture*, he also executed another horizontal painting, of exactly the same dimensions (J. Dupin, A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró: Catalogue raisonné. Paintings*, vol. III, no. 940, p. 215; Collection Paule and Adrien Maeght). Miró might have intended the two works to form a pair in which to the blue of the present picture would be parallel by the earthy colours of its companion. Together, the two 'bandes' would have demanded a large space to be exhibited; this suggests that the artist might have hoped that the pair might find a public display. Miró had expressed his desire to work on a large scale as early as 1938; that year he had confessed: 'My dream, once I am able to settle down somewhere, is to have a very large studio, not so much for reasons of brightness, northern light, and so on, which I don't care about, but in order to have enough room to hold many canvases, because the more I work the more I want to work. I would like to try (...) to go beyond easel painting,

which in my opinion has a narrow goal, and to bring myself closer, through painting, to the human masses I have never stopped thinking about' ('I dream of a large studio. In *XXe Siècle* (Paris), May 1938', pp. 161-162, in Margit Rowell, (ed.), *Joan Miró Selected Writings and Interviews*, London, 1987, p. 162).

The 1947 Cincinnati commission had showed the artist that his poetic language could reach a large audience and that his whimsical signs were strong enough to fill vast spaces. The artist, however, would have to wait until 1956 for his dream of a 'large studio' to come true: that year, the architect Josep Lluís Sert completed Miró's studio in Palma de Mallorca. Finally, the artist had the space to tackle large, ambitious canvases. Works such as *Peinture*, however, suggests that already in 1953 and despite the constraints of his studio, Miró felt the need to expand his paintings onto a larger format. In a radio interview in 1951, Miró had in fact affirmed: 'I hope for a physical contact with people, with ordinary people, with all people' ('Interview. French National Radio (Georges Charbonnier), 1951', pp. 219-224, in M. Rowell, (ed.), *Joan Miró, Selected Writings and Interviews*, London, 1987, p. 217). Generously calling for a communal experience, *Peinture* conveys Miró's wish to open the doors of the magical world of his universe to a large, inspired audience.



λ148 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

Femme et oiseau (Woman and bird)

signed with the initial 'M' (lower left); signed 'MIRÓ.', dated '24/11/59.' and titled (on the reverse)

oil on canvas

45½ x 34¾ in. (115.5 x 88.2 cm)

Painted on 24 November 1959

£1,200,000-1,800,000

\$2,000,000-2,900,000

€1,500,000-2,100,000

PROVENANCE:

Galerie Maeght, Paris.
 Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York (no. ST. 4576).
 Thomas Amman Fine Art, Zurich.
 Galerie Urban, Paris.
 Private Collection, Japan.
 Private collection, Lisbon, by whom acquired from the above in 2005.

EXHIBITED:

New York, Pierre Matisse Gallery, *Miró 1959-1960*, October - November 1961, no. V (illustrated).
 London, Tate Gallery, *Joan Miró, Painting, sculpture and ceramics*, August - October 1964, no. 203; this exhibition later travelled to Zurich, Kunsthhaus, October - December 1964.
 Wichita, Kansas, Edwin A. Ulrich Museum of Art, Wichita State University, *Joan Miró, Paintings and graphics*, September - November 1978.
 Houston, The Museum of Fine Arts, *Miró in America*, April - June 1982, no. 90.
 Palermo, Palazzo Sant'Elia, *España, Arte Español 1957-2007*, May - September 2008, p. 146 (illustrated p. 147).

LITERATURE:

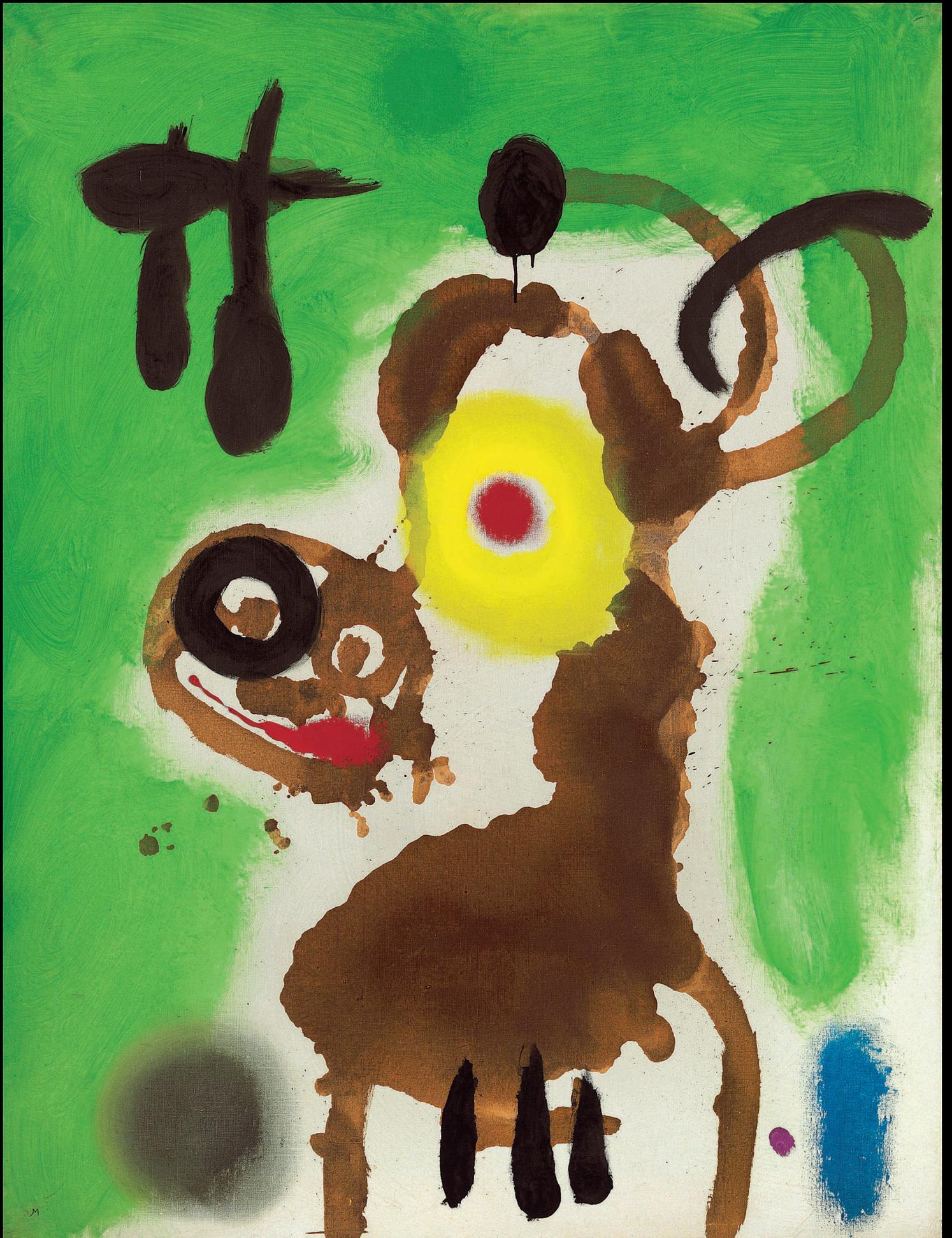
J. Dupin, *Miró, Life and work*, London, 1962, no. 890, pp. 466 & 567 (illustrated p. 467).
 W. Erben, *Joan Miró 1893-1983, The man and his work*, Cologne, 1988, p. 151 (illustrated).
 J. Dupin, *Miró*, Paris, 1993, no. 325, p. 304.
 J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró, Catalogue raisonné, Paintings*, vol. IV, 1959-1968, Paris, 2002, no. 1061, p. 52 (illustrated).
 J. Dupin, *Miró*, Paris, 2004, no. 325, p. 304.

'In *Woman and Bird* from November 1959... the artist began with a broad splash of umber by means of which he casually evokes the form of a woman. The personage is still a spot, random as to outline, uncertain as to silhouette. The vigour of the colour contrasts with the soft indifferenciation of the woman; it is as though she were unable to overcome the formless splash from which she was born. She exists, but hers is a wholly immanent form of life, bound to brute existence' (J. Dupin, *Miró*, Barcelona, 1993, p. 305).

Femme et oiseau is an historic painting that has featured in several important exhibitions of Joan Miró's work and which dates from his incredible return to painting, following almost half a decade during which he had largely explored other media. Looking at the sheer exuberance of *Femme et oiseau*, in which random splashes of colour have been manipulated in order to eke out the forms of the titular woman and bird, recurring motifs in Miró's works, it is clear that he has revelled in the return to painting after those years working on ceramics, prints and sculpture. Indeed, looking at the sheer variety of paintings that Miró created in 1959 and the following year, evidently he had regained his enthusiasm for oils on an incredible scale.

This 'return to painting' benefitted from

a combination of events and influences. In part, Miró had returned earlier that year to New York, where he had been honoured with a one-man retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art as well as receiving a prize from the Guggenheim Foundation, awarded by President Eisenhower. Revisiting New York, Miró may have been exposed once again to the avant garde of American painting that so fascinated him. Certainly, during this trip, he found himself in contact with the art world in which he had been immersed during the 1940s. Robert Motherwell used the occasion of the exhibition to celebrate Miró in an article in which he explained: 'Miró is not merely a great artist in his own right; he is a direct link and forerunner in his automatism with the most vital painting of today' (R. Motherwell, 'The Significance of Miró', pp. 121-23, B. Rose, ed., *Miró in America*, exh. cat., Houston, 1982, p. 122). In *Femme et oiseau*, that automatism is clearly on display in the forms that Miró has shaped from the barest impetus of randomly-applied colour, upon which he has hung an entire composition. Discussing his inspiration in an article published in 1959, the same year that *Femme et oiseau* was painted, Miró explained the role of chance and materials in dictating the direction that his pictures took:





Joan Miró and James Thrall Soby with the painting *The Farm*, 1959. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.



Franz Kline, *Nijinsky*, 1950. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

'I start my paintings under the influence of a shock that I feel and that takes me out of reality. The cause of the shock can be a little thread coming loose from the canvas, a drop of water falling, this print that my finger leaves on the shiny surface of this table. Anyway, I need a starting point, even if it's only a grain of dust or a flash of light. This shape generates a series of things, one thing giving birth to another thing. In this way, a bit of thread can set off a world. I arrive at a world starting with something apparently dead' (Miró, quoted in Y. Taillandier, 'Miró: I Work Like a Gardener', pp. 423-28, *Joan Miró: 1893-1983*, exh. cat., Barcelona, 1993, p. 425).

In an intriguing twist, the Abstract Expressionists, whom Miró himself had influenced, now came to exert their own influence upon him - as he explained, American painting 'showed me the liberties we can take, and how far we could go, beyond the limits. In a sense, it freed me' (Miró, quoted in J. Dupin, *Miró*, Barcelona, 1993, p. 303). Looking at *Femme et oiseau*, the materiality and gestuality both appear to accord with some of the advances that had been espoused by the younger generation of American artists, such as Jackson Pollock, whom he had known in New York and whose exhibition in Paris over half a decade earlier he had visited. At the same time, the primacy of the sign, of the female figure that dominates the canvas, recalls the glyphs of Franz Kline, even in its mysterious, expressionistic calligraphy. This calligraphy is itself in bold contrast to the finer symbol which hovers in the upper left corner, a pristine and elegant group of strokes which reveals Miró's continued ability to harness detail as well as chaos.

The incredible energy of Miró's return to painting was made all the more vivid by the contrast with some of the other works from the same year. Miró appears to have created works that were elegantly sparse, others that were filled with meticulous detail recalling his earlier pictures, as well as others featuring the

same raw, expressionistic quality in evidence in *Femme et oiseau*. Here, Miró explored the glyphs with which his work is usually associated, managing to capture some essence of form that gives a more direct sensation of the bird and the woman.

Miró's return to painting came about in part because of the creation of his new studio. Despite the fact that the new studio had been designed several years earlier, Miró's ability to work in it had taken some time to gestate, as Jacques Dupin explained:

'In 1938 he had written "I dream of a large studio." His wish was fulfilled in 1956 by his friend, the architect Josep Lluís Sert. On the terraced hill that rises above the beach of Calamayor, below a villa built in the local style, there now stands the splendid studio, with its audacious lines, yet still harmonising perfectly with the landscape and the architectural spirit of the island. Nevertheless, the studio was perhaps too beautiful and too new, and it at first bewildered Miró as much as it pleased him. It took him some time to domesticate it, to populate it, to animate it. In it he collected objects of every description brought back from farm courtyards, from his walks in the country, the village boutiques, or from the studios of local potters. From the beaches he brought back drift wood, stones and roots bleached and hardened by the sea's salt. Miró soon found himself surrounded by a company of fantastic, poetic or burlesque figures, many of them arrayed in "montages." Only then did he begin to feel at home: the studio was at last "lived in"' (J. Dupin, *Miró*, Barcelona, 1993, p. 303).

Now, however, this space gave him the freedom to work without being cramped, as he often had been in his earlier studios. At the same time, it was large enough that he could bring many of his older works out of storage and see them, analyse them, and in some cases either complete or indeed destroy them. This return to painting, then, also saw Miró confronting his own past, as well as using that past as a springboard for advances into the future.



λ149 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

Écriture sur fond rouge (Writing on Red Background)

signed with the initial 'M' (lower left); signed 'MIRÓ.'

dated '17/2/60' and titled (on the reverse)

oil on canvas

76¾ x 51 1/8 in. (195 x 130 cm.)

Painted on 17 February 1960

£1,200,000-1,800,000

\$2,000,000-2,900,000

€1,500,000-2,100,000

PROVENANCE:

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York (no. ST 4573).

Acquavella Galleries, New York.

Private collection, Japan, by whom acquired from the above.

Private collection, Lisbon, by whom acquired from the above in 2003.

EXHIBITED:

Yokohama, Yokohama Museum of Art, *Joan Miró, Centennial Exhibition: The Pierre Matisse Collection*, January - March 1992, no. 75 (illustrated p. 115).

Palermo, Palazzo Sant'Elia, *España, Spanish Art 1957-2007*, May - September 2008, p. 148 (illustrated p. 149).

LITERATURE:

J. Dupin, *Joan Miró, Life and Work*, London, 1962, no. 894, p. 568 (illustrated).

J. Perucho, *Miró y Cataluña*, Barcelona, 1969, no. 85, p. 111 (illustrated).

J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró, Catalogue raisonné, Paintings*, vol. IV, 1959-1968, Paris, 2002, no. 1078, p. 60 (illustrated).



Magdalenian Caves at Altamira. Two bisons, one of them crouching.

Executed in 1960, *Écriture sur fond rouge* marks Joan Miró's return to painting, after a space of four years: between 1955 and 1959, Miró had focused mostly on ceramics and printmaking, interrupting his painting activity almost entirely. Painted on a rusty red reminiscent of the surface of a cave, *Écriture sur fond rouge* appears to propose new writing signs: black, single-stroke marks are scattered on the surface, like graffiti on a wall. A few coloured blots of paint illuminate the surface like fluorescent lights, introducing a playful note to the more poetic, hermetic glyphs of the composition. Almost two metres high, the canvas confronts the viewer with sober spirituality.

In 1956 – four years before he painted *Écriture sur fond rouge* – Miró had finally obtained the 'large studio' he had been dreaming about since the 1930s. The white, virgin walls of the newly built studio in Palma de Mallorca, however, perplexed the artist, who, for the next few years, spent time collecting pieces of wood found on the beach and other abandoned objects in order to populate the space with friendly presences. Once the artist felt the studio had acquired character, he set out to paint again. Exploiting the large space finally at his disposal, Miró tackled large canvases, which he moved around the studio and developed simultaneously, watching signs and brushstrokes resonate from one canvas to another. A photograph documenting Miró working among his canvases at Mallorca shows

Écriture sur fond rouge in the fascinating space of that studio.

The move to the new studio, moreover, forced Miró to review his entire career: moving his paintings, drawings and prints from Barcelona to Mallorca, the artist had the chance to see again – in some cases after almost twenty years – his early works and to consider the development of his career until that point. The pictorial silence Miró maintained over the late 1950s was partly due to that unexpected and overwhelming reunion. Remembering the period, Miró explained in 1961:

'For several years before that I had stopped painting altogether, not only because I was involved in doing ceramics with Artigas in Spain, or doing engravings in Paris, or because of my move from Barcelona to Majorca in 1956. It was not so much the fact that I had to get used to my new surroundings as my encounter with work from an earlier period, work that spanned almost my whole life. In the new studio I had enough space for the first time. I was able to unpack crates of works that went back years and years. (...) I went through a process of self-examination (...) I was merciless with myself. I destroyed many canvases (...) My current work comes out of what I learned during that period' ('Comments by Joan Miró, by Rosamond Bernier. In *L'Oeil* (Paris), July-August 1961', pp. 257-260, in Margit Rowell, (ed.), *Joan Miró Selected Writings and Interviews*, London, 1987, p. 257).





The present lot in a photograph of Joan Miró in his studio, Palma 1960. Photo Bert van Bork. Archive Successió Miró.

Écriture sur fond rouge was born out of that period of strict self-examination: after the 'purge' of his earlier work, Miró was then ready to return to the canvas with renewed energy. The artist viewed his new paintings as opening a new chapter in his career. When questioned about the surprised reactions that his latest works had provoked in 1961, Miró replied by stressing the beginning of a new phase: 'That means that I am making my presence felt, a new presence, since all these paintings were done since 1959' (*Ibid.*, p. 257). Jacques Dupin – the authority on Miró's work – also perceived a change in the work of his friend: 'He thus had to look back over forty years of work, and the result of this was to send Miró off in new directions' (J. Dupin, *Miró*, Paris, 2012, p. 303).

New stimuli came not only from his own work, but also from the art of his time: in 1959 Miró travelled to New York, where the Museum of Modern Art had organised a retrospective of his work. The event brought about a new exchange between Miró and younger American artists: while his early works had certainly influenced the work of Abstract Expressionist artists such as Robert Motherwell, Arshile Gorky and William De Kooning, in turn Miró might now have felt a fascination for the young artists' use of colour field and gestural brushwork. According to Dupin, the artist's second trip to the United-States was indeed 'decisive' (*Ibid.*, p. 303). Works such as *Écriture sur fond rouge* show how

in the 1960s, Miró strived for a new *ampleur*, letting his signs expand across the space. 'The heavy graphism', Dupin explained, 'most often traced in an unbroken flow of black paint, does not repudiate Miró's world of forms, but it simplifies it by greater vehemence of gesture (...). The birds in space are now merely primitive ideograms of flight' (J. Dupin, *Miró*, Paris, 2012, p. 304).

Although Miró might have been inspired by his contact with American painting, his quest remained his own. The gestural dimension of *Écriture sur fond rouge* seems to relate to Miró's wish to be able to attain a personally significant, yet universal sign. In 1959, Miró affirmed: 'a deeply individual gesture is anonymous. Being anonymous, it allows the universal to be reached'. This idea might have been reinforced by Miró's visit of Altamira that same year, during which the artist had the chance to admire the powerful, mysterious depictions left by the world's earliest artist on the cave's walls. Although drawn from the symbolic vocabulary of Miró's universe, *Écriture sur fond rouge* expands the signs to the limit of pure, universal abstraction. Asked in 1961 in which direction his painting would develop, Miró replied: 'Where will my painting be going now? It will be emptier and emptier. I will continue to work on a very large scale' ('Comments by Joan Miró, by Rosamond Bernier. In L'Oeil (Paris), July-August 1961', pp. 257-260, in *Ibid.*, p. 259).



λ150 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

Personnage et étoiles dans la nuit (Figure and Stars in the Night)

signed 'Miró' (lower right); signed again, dated '17/II/65' twice, titled and numbered 'V' twice (on the reverse)
gouache, watercolor, crayon, pastel and paper collage on black paper
42 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 29 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (108.3 x 74 cm.)
Executed on 17 July 1965

£250,000-350,000

\$410,000-570,000

€300,000-410,000

PROVENANCE:

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.
Acquavella Galleries, Reno, Nevada (no. 214).
Private collection, Japan, by whom acquired from the above.
Private collection, Lisbon, by whom acquired from the above in 2003.

EXHIBITED:

New York, Pierre Matisse Gallery, *Miró sobre papel, oils, mixed media, collages, gouaches, watercolors, drawings, 1964-1971*, March - April 1972, no. 10 (illustrated).
Yokohama, Yokohama Museum of Art, *Joan Miró, Centennial Exhibition: The Pierre Matisse Collection*, January - March 1992, no. 87 (illustrated p. 127).

LITERATURE:

J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró, Catalogue raisonné, Drawings*, vol. III, 1960-1972, Paris, 2012, no. 1832, p. 105 (illustrated).

Joan Miró was a deft explorer of collage, having already experimented with the technique in the 1920s, during his involvement with the Surrealists. In *Personnage et étoiles dans la nuit*, executed in July 1965, Miró has returned to collage, exploring the textures of the materials that he has placed upon the paper background as well as the transformative power of the artist, as one object or sign metamorphoses into another. The use of these pieces of re-tasked paper add a textural wealth to the surface of *Personnage et étoiles dans la nuit*, which becomes three-dimensional, with the central figure emerging from the flat surface of the background, as though in relief.

In *Personnage et étoiles dans la nuit*, the person dominating the composition in fact comprises several separate images of faces

that have been juxtaposed and arranged in order to conjure the impression of the body of a human floating in space. The eyes and mouth of the face that was illustrated on the central element, the torso, are particularly evident. In this way, Miró has continued the tradition that had begun when, in 1936, he created a group of collages all entitled *Métamorphose*. He has managed to take images from other sources and to place them in a new context. He has thus converted them, removing their significance and thereby stripping them of their meaning as symbols, allowing him to 'assassinate painting' before turning them to a new purpose and meaning. Now, these metamorphosed faces are joined together to form a different figure.

Miró's poetic vision often involved stars and constellations, and these were subjects that he had repeatedly explored during the period around the creation of *Personnage et étoiles dans la nuit*. This subject may have gained a new impetus in 1965 due to the first space walk, which had been made by Russian cosmonaut Alexei Leonov in March that year. This may add a new dimension to the theme of the figure floating here among the stars - one of the white lines may even recall the 'umbilical chord' that connected Leonov to his spacecraft. Now, the stars that had been so distant and elusive for mankind over previous millennia appeared to be almost within reach. In *Personnage et étoiles dans la nuit*, the stars gleam with various light effects, some scrawled as white ciphers, others as spots radiating colours such as yellow and purple.



Astronaut Edward White, the first American to walk in space, during the Gemini IV mission, 3 June 1965.



λ151 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

Personnage (Personage)

signed 'Miró' and with the foundry mark 'CLEMENTI CIRE PERDUE PARIS' and numbered 'No 2' (at the bottom of the bar close to the stone base)

painted bronze

Height: 63 in. (160 cm.) (excluding base)

Conceived in 1967 and cast in an edition of six, five numbered from 0 to 4 plus one nominative cast

£400,000-600,000

\$660,000-980,000

€480,000-710,000

PROVENANCE:

Galerie Maeght, Paris.
 Waddington Galleries, London.
 Acquavella Galleries, New York.
 Weintraub Gallery, New York.
 Mr and Mrs David L. Wolper, Los Angeles.
 Private collection, Japan.
 Private collection, Lisbon, by whom acquired from the above in 2005.

EXHIBITED:

Barcelona, Antic Hospital de la Santa Creu, *Miró*, November 1968 - January 1969, no. 181, p. 72.
 Zurich, Kunsthaus, *Joan Miró. Das plastische Werk*, June - July 1972, no. 25, p. 48.
 Milan, Palazzo Dugnani, Palazzo del Senato, *Miró Milano, pittura, scultura, ceramica, disegni, sobreteixims, grafica*, 1981, p. 248 (illustrated p. 92).



Miró painting the eye of *La caresse d'un oiseau*, Fondation Maeght, Saint Paul 1967. Photo F. Català-Roca. Archive Successió Miró.

Montreal, The Museum of Fine Arts, *Miró in Montréal*, June - October 1986, no. 40 (illustrated pp. 106 & 247).

Madrid, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, *Miró escultor*, October 1986 - January 1987, no. 35 (illustrated p. 84); this exhibition later travelled to Barcelona, Fundació Joan Miró, January - March 1987, and Cologne, Museum Ludwig, April - June 1987.

Saint-Paul de Vence, Fondation Maeght, *Joan Miró, me'tamorphoses des formes, Collection de la Fondation Maeght*, no. 64 (illustrated p. 158).

LITERATURE:

J.J. Sweeney, *Joan Miró*, Barcelona, 1970, another cast illustrated pp. 223 & 227.

A. Jouffroy & J. Teixidor, *Miró Sculptures*, Paris, 1980, no. 111, p. 89 (illustrated).

Exh. cat., *Spanish sculpture 1982-1986*, Barcelona, 1987, no. 35 (another cast illustrated p. 84).

Fundació Joan Miró, ed., *Obra de Joan Miró*, Barcelona, 1988, no. 1484 (another cast illustrated p. 402).

Exh., cat., *Joan Miró Sculpture*, London, 1989, no. 13 (another cast illustrated p. 37).

Exh. cat., *Joan Miró, Skulpturen*, Munich, 1990, no. 39 (another cast illustrated).

Exh., cat., *Joan Miró, skulpturer*, Malmö, 1993 (another cast illustrated).

J. Brihuega, *Miró y Dalí: los grandes surrealistas*, Madrid, 1993, no. 2, (another cast illustrated p. 47).

P. Gimferrer, *The Roots of Miró*, Barcelona, 1993, no. 1194, (another cast illustrated p. 402).

Exh., cat., *Joan Miró, Zeichnungen und Skulpturen 1945-1983, Werke aus der Fundació Joan Miró*, Hamburg, 1996 (another cast illustrated p. 87).

Exh., cat., *Joan Miró: Zeichnungen und Skulpturen 1945-1983: Werke aus der Fundació Joan Miró*, Ludwigshafen, 2000, no. 60 (another cast illustrated p. 106).

E. Fernández Miró & P. Ortega Chapel, *Joan Miró, Sculptures, Catalogue raisonné, 1928-1982*, Paris, 2006, no. 99 (another cast illustrated p. 110).

'But he was also gathering objects, and wandering off impulsively into areas which opened uncertain paths and rich veins for innumerable new works; work I would call Assemblage-Sculpture. These works began with Miró slipping out of his studio, unseen, only to return with an impromptu harvest of objects – his bounty – without value or use, but susceptible, in his view, of combinations and surprising metaphors. All of these objects had been abandoned, thrown away or forgotten by nature and man alike, and Miró recognised them as his own. This refuse was the visionary's secret treasure, his infinitely rich deposit of insignificant objects, still imbued with the smells of the beach, construction site, dump or port where they have been found. (...) He was convinced that whatever his foot might stumble over on the edge of a path could very well overwhelm our world'

(J. Dupin, *Miró*, Paris, 2012, p. 374.)



λ152 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

Femmes et oiseaux (Women and Birds)

signed 'Miró' (centre right); signed again, dated '3/1/68' and titled (on the reverse)

oil on canvas

96½ X 49 in. (245.2 X 124.6 cm.)

Painted on 3 January 1968

£4,000,000-7,000,000

\$6,600,000-11,000,000

€4,800,000-8,300,000

PROVENANCE:

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York (no. ST 7700).

Acquavella Galleries, New York (no. 2424).

Private collection, Japan, by whom acquired from the above.

Private collection, Lisbon, by whom acquired from the above in 2003.

EXHIBITED:

Saint-Paul-de-Vence, Fondation Maeght, *Joan Miró*, 1968, no. 107 (illustrated, titled 'Femme et oiseau').

Barcelona, Antic Hospital de la Santa Creu, *Joan Miró*, November 1968 - January 1969, no. 113 (illustrated p. 119).

Yokohama, Yokohama Museum of Art, *Joan Miró, Centennial Exhibition: The Pierre Matisse Collection*, January - March 1992, no. 93 (illustrated p. 133).

Palermo, Palazzo Sant'Elia, *España, Spanish*

Art 1957-2007, May - September 2008, p. 151 (illustrated).

Palma de Mallorca, Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró, *Joan Miró, evocació de la imatge femenina*, December 2008 - March 2009, p. 129 (illustrated); this exhibition later travelled to Valencia, Fundació Bancaja, March - June 2009.

LITERATURE:

J. J. Sweeney, *Joan Miró*, Barcelona, 1970, no. 165 (illustrated).

J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró, Catalogue Raisonné, Paintings*, vol. IV, 1959-1968, Paris, 2002, no. 1275, p. 215 (illustrated).



Joan Miró, *Femme et oiseaux dans la nuit*, 1968. Sold, Christie's, London, 23 June 2010, lot 54 (£5,193,250).





Joan Miró in his studio.

Illustrating one of the most enduring and characteristic themes in Joan Miró's oeuvre, *Femmes et oiseaux* offers a poetic and important example of the freedom of execution and audacity with which the artist approached painting in the 1960s. On the occasion of Miró's seventy-fifth birthday in 1968 – the year *Femmes et oiseaux* was painted – a major retrospective was organized, shown first at Saint-Paul-de-Vence at the Fondation Maeght, then in Barcelona at the Antic Hospital de la Santa Creu and finally in Munich at the Haus der Kunst. The show featured a wide selection of works from Miró's career, but it also showcased his latest production, emphasizing the creative stride that still animated his

art. *Femmes et oiseaux* was exhibited on that occasion, both in Saint-Paul-de-Vence and Barcelona, where the show marked a memorable date: it was the first time in fifty years that Spain had dedicated an important exhibition to Miró.

Executed with broad brushstrokes and fluid lines, *Femmes et oiseaux* exemplifies the calligraphic dimension which Miró explored in his works in the late 1960s. In 1966, Miró had travelled to Japan, where Tokyo and Kyoto museums had organised a retrospective of his work. On that occasion, the artist had the chance to visit the country's museums and experience the local culture. The trip also rekindled Miró's interest in



Detail of the present lot

and admiration for calligraphy. In the years which followed, his lines became more ample, his signs more potent. In its verticality – which recalls the presence of a Japanese scroll – and in the intricate smoothness of its lines, *Femmes et oiseaux* evokes the artist's fascination for the oriental art of calligraphy. Miró himself acknowledged the connection in 1968: 'These long paintings, for example, evoke Japanese writing. That is because I feel deeply in harmony with the Japanese soul' (J. Miró quoted in 'Article (Excerpts), by Pierre Bourcier, in *Les Nouvelles Littéraires* (Paris), August 8, 1968', p. 275, in Margit Rowell, (ed.), *Joan Miró Selected Writings and Interviews*, London, 1987, p. 275).

The birds and women who inhabit *Femmes et oiseaux* were motifs that recurred, often in conjunction with each other, throughout his work, first appearing decades earlier and subsequently becoming important touchstones for the artist. Indeed, they came increasingly to the fore in the wake of his celebrated *Constellations*. In *Femmes et oiseaux*, birds and women have dissolved into round, embryonic forms, colliding and echoing each other at the centre of the picture. They evoke a fluid world of shifting entities, totemic presences and hybrid creatures of which Miró's unconscious, poetic gesture held the cues. The esoteric world from which *Femmes et oiseaux* emanates was hinted at by the artist when he declared: 'I believe in obscure



Joan Miró, *Femme VI*, 1969. Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid.



Joan Miró, *Mai*, 1968-1973. Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona.

forces. I believe in astrology. I am Taurus, with Scorpio in the ascendant. Perhaps that is why there are spheres and circles in many of my paintings – to evoke the governing planets' (J. Miró, quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 275). Inspired by calligraphy, yet governed by Miró's most recondite spiritual instincts, *Femmes et oiseaux* offers an intriguing, distinguished example of Miró's ability to widen and deepen his creative universe, plunging into the infallible vast ocean of his imagination.

In its gestural execution, *Femmes et oiseaux* not only illustrates Miró's fascination for calligraphy and ease of execution, but also stands as an example of the artist's fresh, inquiring response to one of the prevalent art movements of those years, namely Abstract Expressionism. Already in 1952, Miró had attended the Jackson Pollock exhibition at the Galerie Facchetti in Paris. Pollock's dripping technique encouraged Miró to explore gestural brushwork and expand his expressive means. 'It showed me a direction I wanted to take', Miró recalled, 'which up until then had remained at the stage of an unfulfilled desire' (J. Miró quoted in 'Interview with Margit Rowell Unpublished. Paris, April 20, 1970', pp. 279-280, in Margit Rowell, (ed.), *Joan Miró Selected Writings and Interviews*, London, 1987, p. 279). Following that

intuition, in *Femmes et oiseaux* Miró juxtaposed fuzzy, untamed areas of colour to vast areas of black and white, introducing an instinctive balance in the picture, determined by the artist's free gestural action on the canvas.

Developing an early theme into a new pictorial dimension, *Femmes et oiseaux* epitomises the great freedom which Miró discovered in his maturity. In the last twenty years of his life, Miró continued to draw from elements of his early career, yet he developed the characterising symbols of his art in new, audacious ways. Miró's friend and leading authority Jacques Dupin observed: 'The last two decades of Miró's works render impossible any attempt to define stages or isolate moments (...) The flow of Miró's works no longer followed a course fraught with capricious undulations, and marked by an alternating series of pauses and crises. Rather, they had found their way into a vast and complex delta, where any attempt at chronology no longer holds sway' (J. Dupin, *Miró*, New York, 1993, p. 326). *Femmes et oiseaux* offers a remarkable example of the whimsical, enthralling world of images that Miró had first introduced decades earlier and yet which continued to inspire him, prompting new innovations rendered with absorbing passion.



λ153 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

Personnages dans la nuit (Figures in the Night)

signed, dated and titled 'MIRÓ. 28/III/68' (on the reverse)

oil on canvas

84 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (215.5 x 30 cm.)

Painted on 28 March 1968

£500,000-700,000

\$820,000-1,100,000

€600,000-830,000

PROVENANCE:

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York (no. ST 7716).

Acquavella Galleries, Reno, Nevada (no. 618).

Private collection, Japan, by whom acquired from the above.

Private collection, Lisbon, by whom acquired from the above in 2006.

EXHIBITED:

Saint-Paul-de-Vence, Fondation Maeght, Joan Miró, 1968, no. 135.

Barcelona, Antic Hospital de la Santa Creu, *Miró*, November 1968 - January 1969, no. 139.

Yokohama, Yokohama Museum of Art, *Joan Miró, Centennial Exhibition: The Pierre Matisse Collection*, January - March 1992, no. 95 (illustrated p. 135).

LITERATURE:

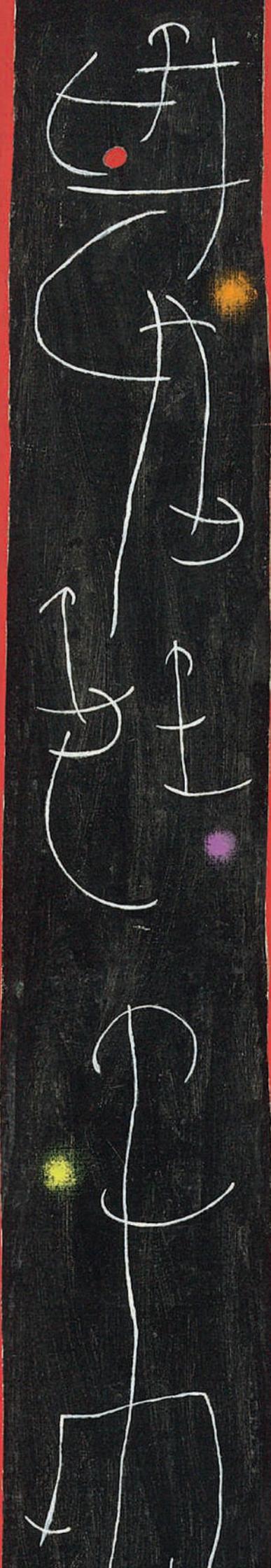
J.J. Sweeney, *Joan Miró*, Barcelona, 1970, no. 147 (illustrated).

J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró, Catalogue raisonné, Paintings*, vol. IV, 1959-1968, Paris, 2002, no. 1293, p. 230 (illustrated).



F. Català-Roca, *Miró con Sert, Artigas y otros en la Fundación Maeght, Saint-Paul-de-Vence, 1968*. Photographic Archive F. Català-Roca, AHCOAC.





Extending vertically like a stream of ideograms taken from a mysterious and unknown language, *Personnages dans la nuit* was executed by Joan Miró on March 28, 1968. Composed of a few lines and some occasional blots of paint, it is a work that seems to conflate painting with writing. The simplicity of the white signs is reinforced by the bright red frame in which the canvas, as a black stele, is placed. Delicate and fragile, the symbols seem to be ascending from the air, making an extemporaneous appearance in front of the viewer.

Repeated across *Personnages dans la nuit*, one finds one of the symbols which thrived in Miró's works from the late 1960s and 1970s: what appears to be a simple arrow. Bent, rearranged and combined, the sign seems to be used as the key element to the entire composition. Although the 'arrow' would become a central symbol in Miró's late work, its genesis was fortuitous and may be traced to a letter Miró received from the sculptor and friend Alexander Calder in 1958. On the envelope, Calder had in fact drawn a large red arrow, which Miró subsequently appropriated and developed through a series of sketches in his carnet. In the years that followed, Miró simplified the form more and more, until he arrived at the simple crossing of two curves. In 1966, the motif was used to compose one of the most important paintings of the period, *The Ski Lesson* (Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, Caracas). Two years later, with *Personnages dans la nuit*, Miró seemed to have wanted to explore its potential once more, this time pushing the symbol to its limit: distilled and dissociated from all colour, the sign is used to describe the presence of men in front of the vastness of a dark night.

Putting the sign to the ultimate test, *Personnages dans la nuit* is a beautiful, moving example of Miró's resilient exploration of his own language. As Jacques Dupin, the great authority on the artist, wrote: 'During this period Miró did not attempt to radically transform his own language, but to expand it, sometimes by stripping it down to the bare essential' (J. Dupin, *Miró*, Paris, 2012, p. 337). Contracted to its bare minimum, Miró's 'arrow' acquired its maximum meaning: at the center of the picture, the lines appear to trace the human form, an 'arrow' for the head, two for the arms, one for the sex and another for the foot. Such transformations of meaning illustrate how confident Miró had grown in his artistic expression, turning the elements of his work over and over in the pursuit of personal expression. 'The sign itself', Dupin remarked,

'was no longer the image's double, it was rather reality assimilated then spat out by the painter, a reality he had incorporated then liberated, like air or light' (*Ibid.*, p. 340).

The value of signs – which had been present in Miró's work since the very beginning of his career – acquired new emphasis after 1966, the year Miró visited Japan, having the chance to explore a culture he greatly admired. During his stay there, motivated by the opening of a major retrospective organised by the Tokyo and Kyoto Museums of Modern Art, the artist had occasion to visit temples and museums, witness a tea ceremony, a sumo wrestling match and meet local pottery makers and ceramicists. This direct contact with Japan rekindled Miró's fascination with calligraphy. Just two years after the artist painted *Personnages dans la nuit*, he recalled: 'I was fascinated by the work of the Japanese calligraphers and it definitely influenced my own working methods. I work more and more in a state of trance, I would say almost always in a trance these days. And I consider my work more and more gestural' ('Interview with Margit Rowell Unpublished, Paris, April 20, 1970', pp. 279-280, in Margit Rowell, (ed.), *Joan Miró Selected Writings and Interviews*, London, 1987, p. 279). Developing vertically like a scroll and distilling the image into a sort of writing, *Personnages dans la nuit* seems to establish a direct connection with Japanese calligraphy. Miró himself suggested the association: 'I paint what I am, perhaps what I was in another life. These long paintings, for example, evoke Japanese writing. That is because I feel deeply in harmony with the Japanese soul' ('Article (Excerpts), by Pierre Bourcier. In *Les Nouvelles Littéraires* (Paris), August 8, 1968', p. 275, in Margit Rowell, (ed.), *Joan Miró Selected Writings and Interviews*, London, 1987, p. 275).

In 1968 – the year *Personnages dans la nuit* was executed – Miró celebrated his seventy-fifth birthday. To mark the anniversary, a major retrospective of the artist's work was exhibited at three different sites: first in Saint-Paul-de-Vence at the Maeght Foundation, then in Barcelona at the Antic Hospital de la Santa Creu and finally in Munich at the Haus der Kunst. *Personnages dans la nuit* was exhibited both at Saint-Paul-de-Vence and in Barcelona: included in those major exhibitions, the very year in which it was painted, the work must have had a particular importance for Miró, conveying his deep conviction that language, signs and painting were linked by the same, primordial need for expression.



λ154 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

Toile brûlée 3 (Burnt Canvas 3)

signed 'Miró' (upper right); dated and numbered '4/XII/73. 3. 31/XII/73.' (on the reverse)

acrylic on canvas with burnt holes

76% x 51 ¼ in. (194.8 x 130.1 cm.)

Painted 4-31 December 1973

£1,200,000-1,800,000

\$2,000,000-2,900,000

€1,500,000-2,100,000



Verso of the present lot.

PROVENANCE:

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.

Acquavella Galleries, New York.

Private collection, Japan.

Acquired from the above by the present owner in 2003.

EXHIBITED:

Paris, Galeries nationales du Grand Palais, *Joan Miró*, May - October 1974, no. 168, p. 138 (illustrated p. 139).

Wichita, Kansas, Edwin A. Ulrich Museum of Art, *Joan Miró, Paintings and graphics*, September - November 1978,

Yokohama, Yokohama Museum of Art, *Joan Miró, Centennial Exhibition: The Pierre Matisse Collection*, January - March 1992, no. 108 (illustrated p. 146).

Ferrara, Palazzo dei Diamanti, *Miró, la terra*, February - May 2008, no. 57, p. 175 (illustrated).
Madrid, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, *Miró: earth*, June - September 2008.

London, Tate Modern, *Joan Miró, The ladder of escape*, April - September 2011, no. 147, p. 189 (illustrated).

LITERATURE:

A. Cirici, *Miró-Mirall*, Barcelona, 1977, recto and verso illustrated fig. 207 & 208.

J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró, Catalogue raisonné, Paintings*, vol. V, 1969-1975, Paris, 2003, no. 1552, p. 157 (illustrated).

Toile brûlée III belongs to a series of five burnt canvases Joan Miró executed between the 4 and 31 December 1973. Provocative and unseen in his work until then, the series was planned to be featured in the 1974 major retrospective organised by the Grand Palais in Paris. Miró had accepted the retrospective's proposal only under the condition of being able to exhibit beside his early, already established pictures his latest most experimental works; in view of that major project he worked steadily from 1969 to 1974, eventually including in the show one hundred works from his studio. Within that milestone retrospective, the 'Toiles brûlées' constituted the central piece of the exhibition's final room: suspended above the visitors, they ironically proclaimed the *grand final* to Miró's entire career. Of the five burnt canvases, *Toile brûlée III* is the one that has maintained most of its surface: instead of letting the flame corrode away the canvas in vast areas, Miró focused his attention on the effects that fire would





Joan Miró, *Toile brûlée I*, 1973. Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona.

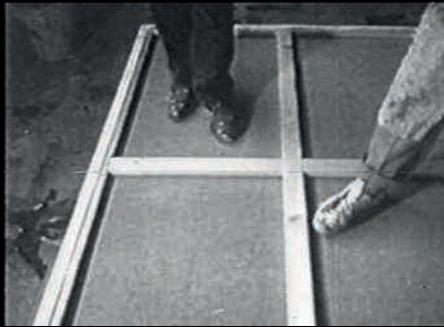
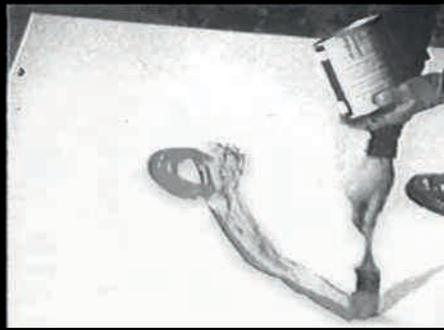
have on paint. Charred and scarred, *Toile brûlée III* is the work in which Miró incorporated fire to paint in the most coherent way.

Despite its spontaneous, instinctive appearance, Miró's *Toiles brûlées* underwent a long process of creation, on which the artist collaborated with Josep Royo, with whom that year he also produced his series of bold tapestries, the *Sobreteixims*. Francesc Catalá-Roca documented the creation of the burnt canvases in a film, *Miró 73. Toiles brûlées 1973*. First the canvas was cut, painted, and only after set on fire using some petrol and a flame. After this first phase, Miró would paint the work over, responding to the effects and the damages left on the surface by the flames. The canvas was then burnt once again: this time a blowtorch allowed the artist to control the areas he wished to burn. Contemplating the result of his violent action, Miró would bring to the work small amendments and retouches: he would cut the canvas further, correct the paint with his fingers, nail fragments of fabric to the stretchers. *Toile brûlée III* carries the marks of this process: fire left a burnt shadow on the canvas, while a fabric fragment was nailed to the central stretcher. Different layers of paint flakes can be seen on the consumed surface, while drips of paint captures Miró gestural activity on the canvas. The curved lines of the dripping at the bottom of the canvas reveal that Miró had started to work on the picture horizontally and that only after – perhaps perceiving something new in the marks left by the flame – he turned the canvas vertically, continuing to work with this orientation, as suggested by the vertical dripping visible on the right. The unforeseen effects of fire had suddenly transformed painting into something malleable: literally opening new horizons on the pictorial surface.

Works such as *Toile brûlée III* were not impromptu experiments, but rather the results of a premeditated idea. Miró's carnets reveal that the artist had took notes, documenting his thoughts on the project. He had planned four actions: 'I: Pour colours', 'II: Cuts', 'III: Tear and hang it', 'IV: Black spots' (quoted in W. Jeffett, 'From Miró Otro to the Burnt Canvases', pp. 181-190, in *Joan Miró: The Ladder of Escape*, exh. cat., London, 2011, p. 184). He also

annotated the mood of the series: 'with rage', 'improvised with rage' (*Ibid.*, p. 184). In this regard, Miró's burnt canvases carried into the 1970s a mission the artist had given himself as early as the 1930s; in 1931 Miró had declared: 'I personally don't know where we are heading. The only thing that's clear to me is that I intend to destroy, destroy everything that exists in painting' ('Spanish artists in Paris: Juan [sic.] Miró, by Francisco Melgar. In *Ahora* (Madrid), January 24, 1931', pp. 116-117, in Margit Rowell, (ed.), *Joan Miró Selected Writings and Interviews*, London, 1987, p. 116). In the late years of his career, Miró was thus still determined to shake the foundation of western painting: as his friend Jacques Dupin wrote, with the *Toiles brûlées*, 'Miró's accomplice was indeed a violent flame' (J. Dupin, *Miró*, Paris, 2012, p. 341). Dupin interpreted works such as *Toile brûlée III* as dramatic struggles between opposite forces: 'if the black referred to the forces of death, the red which Miró added as an echo of the flames' hot fires bring to mind the desire to live, and these two forces both confront and sustain one another' (*Ibid.* p. 341).

Miró's series of burnt canvases may have also had some political overtones. The very idea for the works might have originated in a newspaper clipping Miró conserved in his studio: it illustrated the Stock Exchange of Madrid attacked by some protesting students who had thrown on its façade buckets of paint, stones and fireworks. Next to the photograph of the martyred building Miró wrote: 'treat the big white canvases that I have in Son Boter [his studio] in this spirit. Burn them partially. Throw stones at them and stab them to break them open. Cut them into pieces. Pour on pots of paint. Walk on them' (quoted in W. Jeffett, *Ibid.*, p. 185). *L'Humanité*, the newspaper of the French Communist Party immediately grasped the potential political message of works such as *Toile brûlée III*; in a review of the 1974 Grand Palais retrospective in which the work was exhibited, Raoul-Jean Moulin wrote: Miró 'does not live in bliss. He is sensitive to the world, to the pulsation of his time, to the events which compel him to act. (...) This is not an intellectual attitude but a profound feeling, something like a cry of joy which delivers you from anguish' (quoted *Ibid.*, p. 186).



Stills from Francesc Català-Roca's film *Miró73*. *Toiles Brûlées* showing Miró creating his Burnt Canvases, 1973.

λ155 JOAN MIRÓ (1893-1983)

La Fête des oiseaux et des constellations (The Celebration of Birds and Constellations)

signed 'Miró' (lower right); signed 'MIRÓ.', dated '9/II/74' and titled (on the reverse)

oil on canvas

165½ x 16 in. (420.5 x 40.5 cm.)

Painted on 9 February 1974

£600,000-900,000

\$980,000-1,500,000

€710,000-1,100,000



Verso of the present lot (detail)

PROVENANCE:

Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York.
 Acquavella Galleries, Reno, Nevada (no. 173).
 Galerie Larock-Granoff, Paris.
 Private collection, Japan.
 Private collection, Lisbon, by whom acquired from
 the above in 2006.

EXHIBITED:

Paris, Galeries nationales du Grand Palais, *Joan Miró*, May - October 1974, no. 193.

LITERATURE:

A. Cirici, *Miró-Mirall*, Barcelona, 1977, no. 171,
 p. 154.
 J. Dupin & A. Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró*,
Catalogue raisonné, Paintings, vol. V, 1969-1975,
 Paris, 2003, no. 1572, p. 180 (illustrated).





Evoking two of the most enduring and most poetic themes in the art of Joan Miró, *La Fête des oiseaux et constellations* belongs to a series of works executed by the artist in 1974 in which black forms are combined with red, yellow and blue areas of flat colour. Over four meters high, the picture stands like a totemic presence, dominating over the viewer with its abstract forms, the repositories of some magical vision. The title of the work – ‘The Celebration of Birds and Constellations’ – suggests a vision of cosmic plenitude, evoking the flight of birds and the eternal stillness of the stars.

La Fête des oiseaux et constellations was exhibited in 1974 at the major retrospective organised at the Grand Palais, in Paris. Tracing the entire career of the artist, the exhibitions presented Miró’s early, established works, as well as his most recent, most experimental paintings. Miró had personally insisted on the inclusion of his latest works, sending more than one hundred works, on which he had been working since 1969, from his studio to the Grand Palais. *La Fête des oiseaux et constellations* was exhibited as part of a series of canvases conceived around vast, black shapes, complemented by flat areas of colour, mostly red, yellow and blue. Within the exhibition, the series stood as a new, formal experiment in which Miró intended to attain the symbols of his art through the interaction of flat areas of colours and superimposing planes. That same year, Miró explained his working method: ‘I work in stages – first stage, the blacks; with the other stages comes the rest, which is given to me by the blacks’ (*Ibid.*, p. 285).

The magic of the work’s title is reminiscent of Miró’s particular way of conceiving paintings as visual poems. A friend of poets such as Jacques Prévert and René Char, he declared ‘I read poetry every day’; likewise, with his paintings Miró was – in the words of Jacques Dupin – ‘on

the lookout for the sudden lightening flash of poetry which might tear through the skies of his painting' (J. Dupin, *Miró*, Paris, 2012, p. 432). The titles that at times accompany his paintings are indeed reminiscent of those unexpected, extraordinary unconscious verses which the Surrealists had discovered through automatic writing. They played a crucial role in Miró's art: 'I find my titles as I work, as I link one thing to another on my canvas. When I've found the title, I live in its atmosphere. The title becomes, for me, a one-hundred-percent reality, like a model, a woman lying down, for example, for someone else. The title is, for me, a precise reality' (J. Miró, 'Miró: I work like a gardener...', pp. 423-428, in *Joan Miró 1893-1993*, exh. cat., Barcelona, 1993, p. 425). With its festive, mystical atmosphere and ascending towards the sky, *La Fête des oiseaux et constellations* appears as an abstract ode to the celestial vault.

La Fête des oiseaux et constellations evokes two themes that are central to Miró's entire oeuvre: birds and stars. When asked in 1974 what he would paint after the retrospective at the Grand Palais had closed, Miró replied: 'What subjects will I deal with next? (...) there will be the *Women and Birds in the Night*. Where does this theme come from? Good Lord! Perhaps the bird comes from the fact that I like space a lot and the bird makes one think of space. And I put it in front of the night; I situate it in relation to the ground. It's always the same kind of theme, my kind of theme' ('"Miró: Now I work on the floor"', by Yvon Taillandier. In *XXe Siècle* (Paris), May 30, 1974', pp. 282-286, in Margit Rowell, (ed.), *Joan Miró Selected Writings and Interviews*, London, 1987, p. 283). Exploring two of the most enduring elements of Miró's universe through a new formal language, *La Fête des oiseaux et constellations* illustrates the artist's unrelenting transformation of signs and painting.

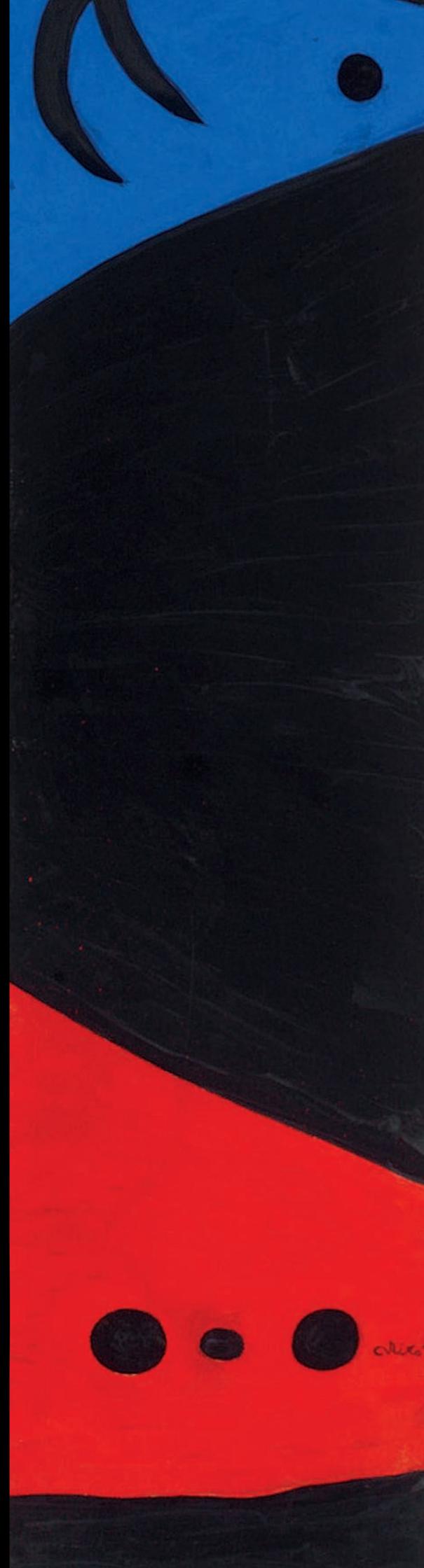


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ARTISTS' BIOGRAPHIES

Carlo Carrà (1881-1966)

Carlo Carrà discovered his passion for painting at the age of seven, when, forced to stay in bed by a long illness, he took up drawing to distract himself. At the age of twelve he became an apprentice in a team of decorators. The work allowed him to travel to Milan, London, Switzerland and, in 1900, to Paris for the Exposition Universelle. In 1906 Carrà made the choice of becoming an artist, enrolling at the Accademia di Belle Arti in Brera. In 1908, he met Umberto Boccioni, Luigi Russolo and Tommaso Marinetti with whom, in 1910, he signed the *Manifesto dei pittori Futuristi*. Fostering their artistic development, Marinetti sent Boccioni, Russolo and Carrà to Paris in 1911, where the artist met Guillaume Apollinaire, Amedeo Modigliani and Picasso. Carrà's discovery of Cubism went on to influence one of his greatest works, *Il Funerale dell'anarchico Galli*. During 1912 and 1914, Carrà collaborated with Giovanni Papini and Ardengo Soffici on the periodical *Lacerba*.

Taking some distance from the futurist aesthetic, between 1915 and 1916, Carrà became interested in Giotto, on whom he would publish an article in 1916 in *La Voce*. With the outbreak of the First World War, Carrà was sent to Ferrara, where he met Giorgio de Chirico and Alberto Savinio. Working closely with de Chirico, Carrà adhered to *Pittura Metafisica*, perpetuating in this new form his interest for the Italian primitives which his study on Giotto had deepened. In the following years, Carrà worked on the highly influential review *Valori Plastici*, on which his writings, as well as his works were frequently reproduced.

In 1933 Carrà signed the *Manifesto della pittura murale* with Mario Sironi, Massimo Campigli and Achille Funi. In 1936 he executed a mural for the Milan Triennale of decorative arts, while in 1938 he participated to the decorative scheme for the Palazzo di Giustizia in Milan, where his fresco still stands.

In 1941, Carrà was appointed professor of painting at the Accademia di Belle Arti in Brera, where his artistic career had begun almost forty years earlier. In 1945, the artist published an autobiography, *La mia vita*. He died in Milan in 1966.

Giorgio de Chirico (1888-1978)

Giorgio de Chirico was born in Volos, Greece in 1888. Amongst his earliest childhood memories are watching local people give votive offerings to the ancient ruins in the Greek countryside and of the people moving their furniture out of their houses whenever an earthquake threatened. At the age of eleven de Chirico was taught to paint by Gilleron - a local specialist in the art of painting antique sculptures. Utilizing these influences later in life de Chirico would become the instigator of the tradition of metaphysical painting and a seminal figure in the development of 20th Century art. Growing up in Italy, he studied art in Munich where he was strongly influenced by the painting of Arnold Böcklin and Max Klinger and the philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer and Friedrich Nietzsche. De Chirico exhibited for the first time in Paris in 1912 at the Salon d'Automme where he met Apollinaire, Picasso and Derain. After the war he articulated his theory of Metaphysical painting and Classicism in numerous essays, later distinguishing his art from that of Carrà who collaborated with him in 1917 in the formation of the Scuola metafisica. By the 1920s, de Chirico's work reverted to mythological narratives often influenced by Renaissance masters. From the late 1920s he divided his time between Italy and Paris, devoting himself to theoretical and literary activity. His work had a profound influence on the development of the so-called 'return to order' in the 1920s and the Neue Sachlichkeit tendency in Germany, but it is his early metaphysical paintings that he is best known. These poetic images fused with a pervasive sense of melancholy formed the blueprint from which almost all Surrealist painting is derived. After a very successful stay in the United States from 1935 to 1937, de Chirico ultimately settled in Rome in 1944. His late work began to reflect a more conservative taste, although he began repeating and adjusting many of his earlier metaphysical subjects. By the end of his artistic career, he had united the themes and style of his entire oeuvre in a way that proved highly influential for many Italian painters of the 1980s.

Salvador Dalí (1904-1989)

“At the age of six I wanted to be a cook. At seven I wanted to be Napoleon. And my ambition has been growing ever since”. (Salvador Dalí, *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*, St. Petersburg, Florida 1986, p.1).

Born in Figueras in 1904 the Catalan artist Salvador Dalí was given his first name, Salvador, after the name of his dead brother who had been born in 1901 and died twenty-two months later. According to Dalí the premature death of his brother cast an enduring shadow over his life. His father was a public notary with republican atheist views and his mother a devout catholic. Dalí's first recorded painting was a landscape in oils supposedly painted in 1910, when he was six years old. While studying at the San Fernando Academy of Fine Arts in Madrid, Dalí became close friends with the older poet Federico García Lorca and Luis Buñuel with whom he would later collaborate on the films *Un Chien Andalou* and *L'Age d'or*. Dalí's early paintings followed the styles of Impressionism, Pointillism and for the most part, Cubism. In 1926 he made his first trip to Paris, and on his second visit, his fellow Catalan Miró introduced him to the Surrealist group, whose activities Dalí had read about in a variety of periodicals. Welcomed by the Surrealists as a powerful new imagination Dalí became fully associated with the movement in 1929. Fusing the profound influence of Freud on his own deeply disturbed psyche with the painterly style of Tanguy's mysterious landscapes and images from his home town of Cadaques, between 1924 and 1936 Dalí created a powerfully Surreal visual language that culminated in his 'Paranoiac-Critical Method'. In the summer of 1929 Dalí met his future wife, muse and personal manager, Gala, when she visited him in Cadaques with her husband, the poet, Paul Eluard. Throughout this period Dalí's relationship with André Breton and the Surrealists grew increasingly strained until in 1934 he was expelled from the group; (partially for his right-wing sympathies). Between 1940 and 1948 Dalí lived in the United States, where he sought and gained great commercial success. His eager commercialism displeased Breton and led to him being anagrammatically being dubbed "Avida Dollars" by the French man. After 1945 and the explosion of the Atomic bombs Dalí seized upon the innovations of the post-war generations of painters, becoming deeply interested in Nuclear physics, biology and mathematics. At the same time he began to be increasingly interested in Christian devotional subjects merging his atomic theory and devout Catholicism into powerful modern religious paintings such as his "Madonna of Port Lligat" and "St John of the Cross". In the 1960s Dalí became concerned with *recherches visuelles*, exploring the optical mechanisms of illusion and the perceptions of images. The Theatre-Museu Dalí officially opened in 1974, and on his death in 1989, he bequeathed his estate to the Kingdom of Spain and the Independent Region of Catalonia.

Paul Delvaux (1897-1994)

Delvaux's art is infused by his childhood memories. From the first electric trams that he remembered passing his house and the skeleton in a cage at the local museum to the scientific characters from the Jules Verne novels that he read as a boy, Delvaux populated his largely nocturnal paintings with images that seemed to convey a sense of sleepwalking. Delvaux was born into a reasonably wealthy family and given what he described as a "complete" education largely on account of his doting but puritanically strict mother. He enrolled at the Academie des Beaux Arts in Brussels in 1920 to train as an architect but soon transferred to decorative painting. Eschewing Cubism in the early 1920s, in 1926 he was profoundly moved by seeing De Chirico's *Enigma of an Afternoon* and in the early 1930s he began to create pictures that attempted to generate the same sense of poetry and mystery. He was also profoundly influenced by the work of fellow Belgian artist René Magritte. A trip to Italy further helped establish his predilection for the classical and his art began to develop his taste for both the classical poise and the naked female body – something that had been heavily repressed during his adolescence. "Sleeping Venuses" and wandering nudes soon came to proliferate in the classical landscapes of his paintings. During the Second World War Delvaux began to paint skeletons animating his paintings – often acting out religious themes such as the Crucifixion and the Descent from the Cross.

Considered alongside Magritte as a leading exponent of the Belgian Surrealists Delvaux himself did not really regard his art as Surreal. Although for a long time he associated with the Belgian group of Surrealists led by E.L.T. Mesens, he considered his art to be a renewed form of classicism that sought to evoke the poetry of everyday life rather than an art that strictly adhered to Surrealist principles. In the mid 1930s he began to disassociate himself from the Surrealist group in favour of working alone.

He produced many of his most important works during the Nazi Occupation of Belgium in the Second World War as well as executing a number of remarkable large-scale mural commissions in the 1950s, including the decoration of the Knokke le Zoute casino and a completely illusionist interior in the Brussels house of Gilbert Perier. A collection of his work was opened in 1982 as the Musee Paul Delvaux at Saint-Idesbald, a small town on the North Sea coast, two years after the creation of the Fondation Paul Delvaux, Koksijde. He died in 1994.

Oscar Domínguez (1906-1957)

“In the isle of his birth, in the Canaries, he had a golden childhood, pampered to excess by his father who had sworn to his dying mother never to make him cry. He grew up careless among the birds, the black rocks, the strange flowers, under a sky of blue silk pierced by his opulence of an African sun.” (Oscar Domínguez cited in Domínguez, ex. catBrook Street Gallery, London, 1999, p. 3)

Oscar Domínguez first arrived in Paris to run his family business of fruit exportation in 1934 but after meeting André Breton and Paul Eluard, he joined the Surrealist movement. Domínguez became a key figure in the promotion of Surrealism in Spain and particularly in the Canary Islands when he contributed to the organisation of the Esposicion Internacional del Surrealismo in 1935 at the Ateneo in Santa Cruz De Tenerife. As with the other members of the movement Domínguez focused his attention on the subconscious and automatic processes of the human mind, later inventing the technique to which he gave the name ‘Decalcomania without a preconceived idea’ which made him famous. Deeply influenced by the work of both Picasso and Ernst, Domínguez’s work often relies on a highly personal symbolism. In 1957 he had an important retrospective in Brussels at the Palace de Beaux Arts; two years later he committed suicide.

Max Ernst (1891-1976)

In 1896, the young Max Ernst ran away from his authoritarian father; later, when he was found by some pilgrims, they mistook him for the Christ Child, a guise in which his father painted him, but Ernst was never the son his father wished for. A student of philosophy and psychology, Ernst was mobilized during the First World War, spending four years in the German artillery and fighting on the Western front. He later wrote of this traumatic period: ‘Max Ernst died on 1 August 1914. He returned to life on 11 November 1918, a young man who wanted to become a magician and find the myths of his time’ (Ernst, quoted in U.M. Schneede, *The Essential Max Ernst*, London, 1972, p.16). Ernst soon became involved with Dada, a non-rational protest against the ‘civilization’ that had caused the futile, orgiastic massacres of the War. His collages, often incorporating mechanical designs as core components, evoked his anger against the logic and mechanization that could lead to such a crisis. After meeting Paul Eluard in 1922, he moved to Paris. Under the sway of the metaphysical works of Giorgio de Chirico, Ernst became a core member of the Surrealist movement, exhibiting in its pioneering 1925 exhibition at the Galerie Pierre. He left the movement in 1938 because of Breton’s maltreatment of Eluard. Arrested as a dissident in the early 1940s, Ernst escaped to Spain, then the United States with the help of Peggy Guggenheim, his third wife. There, he met his last wife, the painter Dorothea Tanning. They moved to Sedona, Arizona and then returned to France after the Second World War where Ernst continued creating his own brand of mature Surrealist works. As well as collage and painting, Ernst developed various techniques facilitating his semi-automatic approach, for instance in ‘frottage’, he reinterpreted the shapes formed in rubbings of wood or brick, creating imagined images. The reinterpretation of ready-made designs remained crucial to Ernst’s artistic output, especially in his grattage, decalcomania and drip-painting works. His recurring forest scenes and more general preoccupation with nature are evidence of German Romanticism’s influence on him. These works embody the individualized brand of Surrealism peculiar to Ernst: he did not produce figurative illustrations of the Surreal nature of reality, nor automatic drawings tapping the subconscious, but instead, semi-consciously, produced expressive illustrations of the traumatized interior of 20th Century man.

Arshile Gorky (1904-1948)

Arshile Gorky (born Vosdanig Adoian) came to the world with a tragic beginning. Born in 1902 in the village of Khorkom, in an Armenian province of the Ottoman Empire, the artist grew up during ethnic persecution at the hands of Ottoman troops. In 1915, Gorky's family fled, embarking on an eight-day, hundred mile journey on foot to Russian Armenia. In 1918, threatened by the possibility of civil war, Gorky's family was once again forced to move; during the journey Gorky would see his mother dying from starvation in his arms. Despite the turbulence of this background, as a child Gorky manifested a strong passion for drawing; his sister Akabi remembered: 'He used to draw in his sleep. You could see his hand moving' (quoted in N. Matossian, *Black Angel*, London, 1998, p. 23).

In 1920 Gorky and his sister finally managed to emigrate to the United States: shortly after, the artist changed his name to Arshile Gorky - a tribute to the writer Maxim Gorky. In 1924 Gorky settled in New York, securing a teaching post at the New School of Design, where Mark Rothko was one of his students. In 1925, Gorky enrolled at the Grand Central School of Art, where he would start teaching soon after. An avid reader of art books and a regular visitor to museums, Gorky soon became familiar with the European Avant-garde, studying the works of Paul Cézanne, Pablo Picasso and Joan Miró in which he found inspiration.

With the outbreak of the Second World War and the arrival to New York of many exiled European artists, Gorky came in contact with some of the members of the Surrealist group. The meeting with the Surrealists' leader André Breton in particular was a crucial and influential encounter for Gorky. Artistically, the Chilean-born painter Roberto Matta would play a major role in the development of Gorky's career, encouraging the artist to explore biomorphic forms and automatic drawing. Fostered by the Surrealist approach, Gorky's 1940s works present a series of erotically-charged, organic forms, opening the path to the artist's fully-fledged artistic language and distinctive style. Just as Gorky's art was reaching its peak, a series of dramatic events precipitated the artist into desperation. A fire in his studio destroyed most of his works, leaving the artist traumatised and broken.

Moreover, an invasive cancer operation and a violent car crash further destabilised Gorky's health, preventing the artist from overcoming the loss of his work through intense activity. Troubled by marital tensions and still suffering both physically and psychologically from previous events, Gorky committed suicide on July 21, 1948. The strength and power of the works the artist achieved during his intense career, however, place him among the most influential artists for the development of American art. Drawing from the Surreal universe, Gorky's art catalysed the birth of Abstract Expressionism.

Simon Hantaï (1922-2008)

Born in Hungary in 1922, Simon Hantaï trained at the Hungarian Academy of Fine Arts. In 1948 the artist visited Italy, before arriving to Paris the year after, where he settled permanently. There, Hantaï had the chance to meet the Surrealists and see their works: on December 7 1952 he left Regarde in front of André Breton's door; Breton exhibited the work in the Surreal art gallery À L'étoile scellée, where he invited Hantaï to hold a personal exhibition the following year. Inspired by the Surrealist artists, Hantaï experimented with frottage, collage, découpage, Tachism and pliage, officially joining the Surrealist group around 1954.

The art of Jackson Pollock and the influence of Georges Mathieu eventually persuaded Hantaï that automatism could be only fully realised in abstract art. The artist started to explore gestural painting, using a spatula to model a canvas on which he had rubbed paint. This phase of his work was presented to the public with an exhibition at the Galerie Kléber in 1959.

Returning to a technique he had first explored in his Surrealist years, from 1960 onwards, Hantaï developed his painting through pliage, wishing to achieve anonymity in the abstract patterns the process left on the canvas. In 1976, the Musée national d'Art moderne organised a major, much-acclaimed retrospective of his work. Hantaï died in Paris in 2008.

René Magritte (1898-1967)

'During my childhood I used to play with a little girl in the old abandoned cemetery of a country town where I spent my holidays. We used to lift up the iron gates and go down into the underground vaults. Regaining the light again one day I found, in the middle of some broken stone columns and heaped-up leaves, a painter who had come from the capital, and who seemed to me to be performing magic' (Magritte, quoted in Suzi Gablik, *Magritte*, London, 1992, p.183). The other decisive event of Magritte's childhood was the discovery of his mother's body after she drowned (herself) in a river, which resulted in a legacy of haunting memories. Although espoused and endorsed by the French Surrealists and André Breton, René Magritte and the Belgian Surrealist movement that formed around him kept themselves at a wary distance. This distance encompassed every aspect of Surrealism, from lifestyle to ideology. At several points in his career he worked in advertising, and even set up his own agency, seeing no conflict between capitalism and art. Magritte was originally influenced by several movements and artists, particularly Cubism and Futurism, but it was Giorgio de Chirico's work, which he first saw in 1922, the same year he married his muse Georgette Berger, that caused him to break with his earlier style and led him to attempt to represent 'the naked mystery of things' in his art. In 1926 his career as artist was facilitated through a contract with the Belgian dealer Paul-Gustave Van Hecke. Magritte went to Paris in 1927, but his distance from French Surrealism was soon formalized after an altercation between Breton and Magritte when the former criticized Georgette for wearing a crucifix. Nonetheless, exposure to the Parisian Surrealists had solidified his artistic vision. During the Second World War, Magritte outraged his friends and fans by painting his 'vache' works, parodies of Impressionism, which were considered a betrayal of his true style but managed to shock and upset even the unshockable Surrealists. Magritte soon returned to his former style and continued painting until very near the end of his life, often revisiting themes he had explored in his earlier work with a more mature eye. Despite a remarkably low-key life, all the more remarkable when compared to many of the other Surrealists, the iconoclasm of Magritte's art and message was rivaled by few of his contemporaries.

Man Ray (1890-1976)

Born Emmanuel Rodnitsky, the son of a Russian-Jewish tailor in Philadelphia in 1890, he was brought up in New York. He adopted his well-known pseudonym as early as 1909 and graduated from high school with a scholarship to study architecture. He accepted the placement but never completed the course, choosing a more individual path and taking a series of unsatisfying jobs in order to support the artistic freedom he required.

A frequent visitor to Alfred Stieglitz's influential gallery, 291 on Fifth Avenue, Man Ray was introduced by the gallery to the world of international modern art; a visit to the Armory Show in 1913 cemented his interest in modern abstraction. During the First World War, he became instrumental, along with Duchamp, Picabia and the 291 circle in establishing a New York branch of Dada.

One of the pioneers of both Dada and Surrealism, Man Ray spent most of his adult life in Paris producing a vast array of work in a variety of different media. Quick to establish his reputation as an innovative photographer, Man Ray began to experiment with 'rayographs' and 'solarization', techniques that won him critical esteem from the Surrealists.

Aligning his technique with the high arts, Man Ray described the camera-less process as 'painting with light' a device that can be seen as a direct influence on the work of Maurice Tabard and Raoul Ubac. While best known for his photographic experimentation, Man Ray extended his *oeuvre* to include film, making a significant contribution to the avant-garde arena with *Emak Bakia* (1926), *L'Etoile de Mer* (1928) and *Les Mystères du Château de Dé* (1929) films, which all became classics of the Surrealist genre.

With the onset of war, Man Ray returned to America where he devoted his time to painting and the construction of his *Objets*. Yet after the war, having always received greater recognition in France than in his native country, he returned to Paris in 1951. One of the most inventive artists of the twentieth century, Man Ray's iconoclastic dictum, 'everything is art' is epitomised by the diversity of his creation and continues to prevail since the artist's death in 1976.

Joan Miró (1893-1983)

“The more I advance in life and the more I go back to my first impressions: I think that by the end of my life I will have rediscovered all the values of my childhood.” (quoted in *Miro on Mallorca*, by Barbara Catoir, Munich and New York 1995, p.7).

Joan Miró, the Catalan painter, sculptor, ceramist, poet and mythmaker was born in Barcelona to a family of skilled craftsmen. In 1912 he devoted himself to painting, studying at the Galí art school in Barcelona. Following this he attended classes at the Sant Lluch circle, where the architect and of the Art Nouveau style Antoni Gaudí had been a former student. In 1920 Miró settled in Paris and became interested in the activities of the Paris Dadaists, attending many of their performances and provocations. His work, however, maintained a strong nationalistic focus and was rooted in Catalan traditions and folk art. Between 1921 and 1922 Miró painted his first masterpiece “The Farm”. This truthful description of a Catalan farmyard, painted from memory was a “breakthrough” painting for the artist that led to a raw new style. In the following years Miró developed close friendships with André Breton, Paul Eluard, and Louis Aragon, and shared a studio space with André Masson, whose development of automatic writing was an important influence on his art. Under the influence of his Surrealist friends, the intimacy between painting and poetry became fundamental to Miró and his work in the 1920s grew increasingly literary. Moving from gritty Catalan realism towards the imaginary, Miró developed a radically new style that culminated in his “Dream Paintings” of 1925-27. Miró’s natural independence prevented him from conforming completely to strict Surrealist doctrine under the shadow of Breton, but his work continually appeared in Surrealist publications, such as *La Revolution Surrealism* and *Minotaure*, and was displayed in many Surrealist exhibitions. In 1929 Miró underwent a crisis of painting, which was followed by a period of collage making that led to a new departure in the 1930s and ultimately the creation of his remarkable series of “Constellations” in 1939. Spending his time between France and Spain, in 1941 Miró built a large studio in Palma de Mallorca that enabled him to work on the increased scale he had always dreamed of. In 1944 he established another new method of expression when he made his first terra-cotta sculptures and ceramics. These were followed in 1946 by his first bronzes. Between 1945 and 1959 Miró executed what he called his “slow paintings” and “spontaneous paintings”, and in 1970 was given the scope and the public place he had long needed to create a monumental ceramic, fifty meters long, for the façade of Barcelona airport. The *Fundació Joan Miró* was established by Miró in 1971 and officially inaugurated in 1976.

Francis Picabia (1879-1953)

As a child Francis Picabia had a toy scale in which he weighed the light and shadow falling on his windowsill. From this important childhood experiment Picabia learnt that darkness was heavier than light and this experience played an important part in shaping his profoundly pessimistic and often tragic view of life. Born in 1879 in his grandfather’s house in Paris to a French mother and a Cuban-born Spanish father, Picabia became an artist who was linked closely to most key issues and movements of the modern era. In 1888 Picabia entered the *École des Arts Décoratifs* and became close friends with Rodo (Manzana) Pissarro, who introduced him to his father, the painter Camille Pissarro. At the beginning of his career Picabia became well-known as an Impressionist painter and began to exhibit his paintings at the *Salon d’Automne* and *Salon des Indépendants*. Between 1908 and 1912 he sought a more personal manner of expansion and explored Neo-Impressionist, Fauvist, and Cubist styles. Significantly in 1908 Picabia met his future wife, Gabrielle Buffet, a music student who shared his interest in 19th century concepts of “correspondence”. By 1912 Picabia had developed a unique blend of Cubism and Fauvism which developed into an important form of abstract art motivated by the desire to express internal states of the mind or emotions. In this same year Picabia became close friends with Apollinaire who placed Picabia’s painting at the heart of the new Orphist movement. His wife’s money enabled Picabia to travel and in 1913 Picabia and his wife travelled to New York for the *Armory Show*, where Picabia exhibited at Alfred Stieglitz’s “291” gallery. Recklessly abandoning his army supply mission to the Caribbean Picabia became involved in the activities around “291” and with Marcel Duchamp formed a New York branch of the Dada movement. This period marked the beginning of Picabia’s machinist or mechanomorphic paintings in which machinery and technology were subverted and given sexual personae. In the summer of 1916 Picabia left New York to settle in Barcelona, where in 1917 he began the publication of the dadaist magazine entitled “391”. During the 1920s Picabia produced provocative paintings that incorporated matchsticks, curlers and buttons, and in 1923 he began to make “Dada collages”, which were followed by a series of paintings of “Monsters” and in the late 1920s, the “Transparencies”. During the early years of Surrealism Picabia took part in a number of important Surrealist exhibitions and also designed covers for and contributed many texts for *Littérature*, but he was always reluctant to become totally adherent to the movement. His extreme originality, extravagant nature and propagandist buffoonery exerted an important influence on the Surrealist movement during these years. In the 1930s his work grew more varied and became naturalistic, more frequently depicting nudes. It remained so until 1945 when Picabia resumed his distinctive abstract painting and poetry. In 1936 he took part in the highly important international exhibition of Dada and Surrealist works at the *Museum of Modern Art*, New York, organised by Alfred Barr, and in 1949 he held an exhibition of works he described as “sur-irrealist” at the *Galerie Denise René Drouin*. Picabia died in the same house he was born in, on the 30th of November 1953.

Yves Tanguy (1900-1955)

A few facts and a little imagination led many people to believe that the bed in which Yves Tanguy was born at the turn of the 20th Century had also belonged to Gustave Courbet. Tanguy grew up partly in Paris, partly in Brittany, where the strange mythical, geological surroundings and the rock formations of the many neolithic sites became a significant influence on the abstracted landscape paintings for which he is best known. The character and nature of these strange paintings were also shaped by a spell in the merchant navy and his posting with the army to the south of Tunisia. Throughout his life images of the sea played a central role in Tanguy's art, yet these influences lay dormant until he saw a painting by Giorgio de Chirico in a gallery window in 1923. At this point Tanguy decided to become a painter. He already had access to the avant-garde through friends like Pierre Matisse and Jacques Prévert, but his role at the forefront of artistic experimentation came with his acquaintance and ensuing friendship with André Breton, who would later proclaim him the only true, untainted Surrealist. Tanguy lived in Paris in Marcel Duhamel's infamous house at rue du Château, one of the great centres of Surrealist life and thought. He was a central figure in the movement until his departure for the United States at the outbreak of war. On travelling to the Western United States, Tanguy was interested to discover genuine landscapes similar to the geological, desert and marine topographies he had invented from imagination. He moved with his wife, the American painter Kay Sage, to a farm in Connecticut and continued painting there until his death. His works from this later American phase are characterized by brighter colours and less anxiety. Tanguy was one of the most important members of the Surrealist movement, to which he remained true in his art. His oeuvre therefore has a solidity and consistency uncommon in the work of many of his contemporaries.

Dorothea Tanning (b. 1910)

'When I was seven I drew a figure with leaves for its hair. Was I a tiny surrealist?' Born in Galesburg, Illinois, Dorothea Tanning decided to become an artist by the age of seven. When she was eighteen, Tanning became inspired by the decadent illustrations of Aubrey Beardsley and the writings of Gustave Flaubert and Théophile Gautier. Despite opposition from her family, she moved to Chicago to study fine art and then onto New York to finish her studies. Tanning's art was dramatically transformed after seeing the exhibition 'Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism' at the Museum of Modern Art. Following the exhibition, Tanning adopted a Surrealist style and began to paint dream-like self-portraits and spatially ambiguous compositions where half-naked young girls, exotic animals and strange creatures meet in bizarre encounters amidst familiar urban settings and domestic interiors. André Breton described such works as displaying 'a certain impropriety, circumscribed to the erotic area, which makes us rave in certain dreams'.

Late in 1942, Max Ernst visited Tanning's studio, saw a painting, (*Birthday*), and stayed to play chess. They would spend the next thirty-four years living and working together. Ernst and Tanning married in 1946 and moved to the remote town of Sedona in Arizona where they built a house and worked intensively. In 1953, Ernst returned to France with Tanning where the couple alternated between life in Paris and the seclusion of the Touraine and Provence. Tanning's work was less and less defined during this period, becoming more fluid and abstract with blurred outlines and shadowy depictions. She also began to work on a number of set and costume designs for the Georges Balanchine ballets *Night Shadow* and *Bayou*.

In the late 1960s, Tanning's work underwent another metamorphosis as she developed a more aggressive aesthetic that manifested itself in a group of stuffed sculptures made from material ornamented with lace and fur. These anthropomorphic works suggested ambiguous creatures and hybrids that were part human, part object. Since moving back to America in the 1970s following Ernst's death, Tanning has also written poetry. She lives in New York.

NOTES



NOTES



IMPORTANT NOTICES AND EXPLANATION OF CATALOGUING PRACTICE

IMPORTANT NOTICES

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Invoices will, as usual, be issued in Pounds Sterling. For the purposes of calculating the resale royalty the Pounds Sterling/Euro rate of exchange will be the European Central Bank reference rate on the day of the sale.

SHIPPING

It is the buyer's responsibility to pick up purchases or make all shipping arrangements. After payment has been made in full, Christie's can arrange property packing and shipping at the buyer's request and expense. Buyers should request an estimate for any large items or property of high value that require professional packing. A shipping form is enclosed with each invoice, alternatively buyers can visit www.christies.com/shipping to request a shipping estimate.

For more information please contact the Shipping Department at +44 (0)20 7389 2712 or via ArtTransport_London@christies.com for both London, King Street and London, South Kensington sales.

EXPORT OF GOODS FROM THE EU

If you are proposing to take purchased items outside the EU the following applies:

Christie's Art Transport:

If you use Christie's Art Transport you will not be required to pay the VAT at the time of settlement.

Own Shipper:

VAT will be charged on the invoice, refundable by the VAT Department upon receipt of the appropriate official documents sent to us by your shipper.

Hand-Carried:

VAT will be charged on the invoice. This will be refunded by the VAT Department upon receipt of the appropriate official document.

*, Ω or †

Starred, Omega or Daggered lots – A C88 can be obtained from Christie's Shipping Department. This document must be stamped by UK Customs on leaving the UK.

(no symbol) Margin Scheme – Please obtain a GB Tax Free form from the Cashiers. This document must be stamped by UK Customs on leaving the UK.

Starred or Omega lots must be exported within 30 days of the date of collection. All other lots not subject to import VAT must be exported within three months of collection, and proof of export provided in the appropriate form.

EXPORT/IMPORT PERMITS

Buyers should always check whether an export licence is required before exporting. It is the buyer's sole responsibility to obtain any relevant export or import licence. The denial of any licence or any delay in obtaining licences shall neither justify the rescission of any sale nor any delay in making full payment for the lot. Christie's can advise buyers on the detailed provisions of the export licensing regulations and will submit any necessary export licence applications on request. However, Christie's cannot ensure that a licence will be obtained. Local laws may prohibit the import of some property and/or may prohibit the resale of some property in the country of importation. For more information, please contact Christie's Shipping Department at +44 (0)20 7389 2828 or the the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council: Acquisitions, Export and Loans Unit at +44 (0)20 7273 8269/8267.

STORAGE AND COLLECTION

STORAGE & COLLECTION

While at King Street lots are available for collection on any working day, 9.00 am to 4.30 pm. All furniture, carpets and objects (both sold and unsold) not collected from Christie's by 9.00 am on the day following the auction will be removed by Cadogan Tate Ltd ("Cadogan Tate") to its warehouse at 241 Acton Lane, Park Royal, London NW10 7NP
Telephone: +44 (0) 800 988 6100
Email: collections@cadogantate.com

Lots will be available for collection on the first full business weekday after transfer to Cadogan Tate and every business weekday thereafter from 9.00am to 5.00pm. They are not available for collection at weekends or on Public Holidays. You may check on <http://collectmylot.com> if a lot is with Cadogan Tate and if any transfer or storage charges are due.

Lots may only be released by Cadogan Tate upon

- production of the 'Collection Order' obtained from the cashier's office at Christie's, 85 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 or Christie's, 8 King Street, London SW1
- payment of any charges that may be due to Cadogan Tate

Whether you are planning to visit in person or to send a carrier or agent to collect for you please telephone 020 8963 3923 at least 24 hours before collection and you can book an appointment for you or your carrier, deal in advance with all the formalities and make any necessary payments. Your property can then be pre-picked so it is ready and waiting upon arrival and the collection can be handled through Cadogan Tate's Fast Track procedure, avoiding possible queues and delays at busy times. If sending a carrier please ensure that they are provided with all necessary information,

your written authority to collect, the Collection Order and the means to settle any charges.

Property, once paid, can be released upon request to **Christie's Fine Art Storage Services (CFASS)** in London, New York or Singapore Free Port at any time, for environmentally controlled long term storage. For further details see below.

PAYMENT

Cadogan Tate's charges may be paid in advance or at the time of collection. Lots will not be released until all outstanding charges due to Christie's and/or CadoganTate Ltd are settled.

CADOGAN TATE'S BUSINESS TERMS & LIABILITY

The removal and/or storage by Cadogan Tate of any lots will be subject to its Standard Conditions of Business, copies of which are available from Christie's, 8 King Street, London SW1 or 85 Old Brompton Road London SW7

or by post or email from Cadogan Tate or online at <http://collectmylot.com>

Please note that in particular Cadogan Tate does not accept any liability for damage or loss, due to its negligence or otherwise, exceeding the Hammer Price of a lot plus Buyer's premium, or, at its sole option, the cost of repairing or replacing the damaged or missing lot. It reserves a lien over all goods in its possession for payment of storage and all other charges due to it

From the point of collection from Christie's, subject to payment of its charges and to its Standard Terms & Conditions of Business, in the event of loss and/or damage Cadogan Tate accepts liability for the lot value (defined as the hammer price of each lot, plus buyer's premium). Its charge for accepting this liability, which is fully insured, is 0.6% of the hammer price or 100% of all other charges, whichever is smaller.

BOOKS

Please note that all lots from book department sales will be stored at Christie's King Street for collection and not transferred to Cadogan Tate.

TRANSFER, STORAGE & RELATED CHARGES

Transfer and storage will be free of charge for all lots collected before 5.00 pm on the 28th day following the auction.

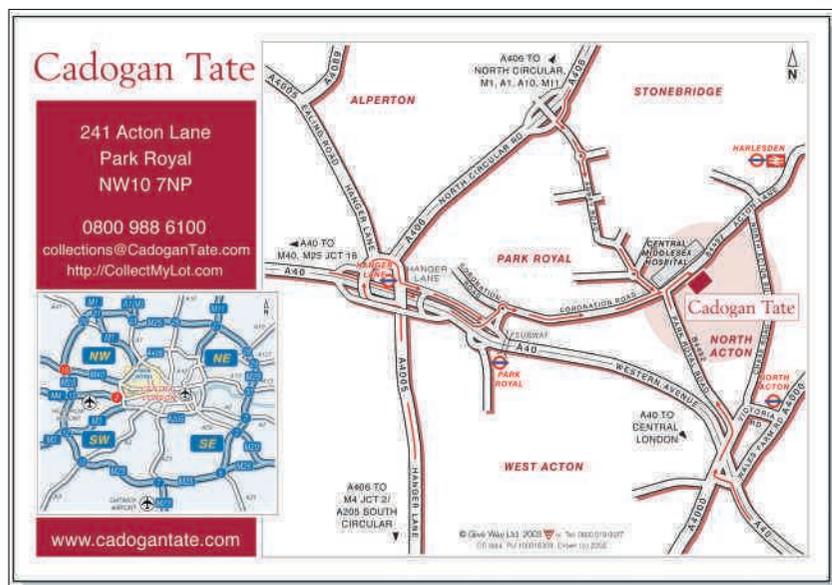
Thereafter the charges set out below will be payable.

CHARGES PER LOT	FURNITURE / LARGE OBJECTS	PICTURES / SMALL OBJECTS
1-28 days after the auction	Free of Charge	Free of Charge
29th day onwards:		
Transfer	£66.00	£33.00
Storage per day	£5.00	£2.50

These charges do not include

- the Extended Liability Charge of 0.6% of hammer price plus buyer's premium, capped at the total of all other charges
- VAT which will be applied at the current rate.

Christie's Fine Art Storage Services (CFASS) offers storage solutions for fine art, antiques and collectibles in London, New York and Singapore (Free Port). It is a separate subsidiary of Christie's and its clients enjoy complete confidentiality. Visit www.cfass.com, or contact london@cfass.com or Telephone: +44 (0)20 7622 0609 for charges and other details



CADOGAN TATE WAREHOUSE

241 Acton Lane, Park Royal,
London NW10 7NP

Telephone: +44 (0)800 988 6100

Email: collections@cadogantate.com

CONDITIONS OF SALE

These Conditions of Sale and the Important Notices and Explanation of Cataloguing Practice set out the terms governing the legal relationship of Christie's and the seller with the buyer. You should read them carefully before bidding.

1. CHRISTIE'S AS AGENT

Except as otherwise stated Christie's acts as agent for the seller. The contract for the sale of the property is therefore made between the seller and the buyer.

2. CATALOGUE DESCRIPTIONS AND CONDITION

Lots are sold as described and otherwise in the condition they are in at the time of the sale, on the following basis.

(a) Condition

The nature of the lots sold in our auctions is such that they will rarely be in perfect condition, and are likely, due to their nature and age, to show signs of wear and tear, damage, other imperfections, restoration or repair. Any reference to condition in a catalogue entry will not amount to a full description of condition. Condition reports are usually available on request, and will supplement the catalogue description. In describing lots, our staff assess the condition in a manner appropriate to the estimated value of the item and the nature of the auction in which it is included. Any statement as to the physical nature or condition of a lot, in a catalogue, condition report or otherwise, is given honestly and with appropriate care. However, Christie's staff are not professional restorers or trained conservators and accordingly any such statement will not be exhaustive. We therefore recommend that you always view property personally, and, particularly in the case of any items of significant value, that you instruct your own restorer or other professional adviser to report to you in advance of bidding.

(b) Cataloguing Practice

Our cataloguing practice is explained in the Important Notices and Explanation of Cataloguing Practice, which appear after the catalogue entries.

(c) Attribution, etc

Any statements made by Christie's about any lot, whether orally or in writing, concerning attribution to, for example, an artist, school, or country of origin, or history or provenance, or any date or period, are expressions of our opinion or belief. Our opinions and beliefs have been formed honestly and in accordance with the standard of care reasonably to be expected of an auction house of Christie's standing, due regard having been had to the estimated value of the item and the nature of the auction in which it is included. It must be clearly understood, however, that, due to the nature of the auction process, we are unable to carry out exhaustive research of the kind undertaken by professional historians and scholars, and also that, as research develops and scholarship and expertise evolve, opinions on these matters may change. We therefore recommend that, particularly in the case of any item of significant value, you seek advice on such matters from your own professional advisers.

(d) Estimates

Estimates of the selling price should not be relied on as a statement that this is the price at which the item will sell or its value for any other purpose.

(e) Fitness for Purpose

Lots sold are enormously varied in terms of age, category and condition, and may be purchased for a variety of purposes. Unless otherwise specifically agreed, no promise is made that a lot is fit for any particular purpose.

3. AT THE SALE

(a) Refusal of admission

Christie's has the right, at our complete discretion, to refuse admission to the premises or participation in any auction and to reject any bid.

(b) Registration before bidding

Prospective buyers who wish to bid in the saleroom can register online in advance of the sale, or can come to the saleroom on the day of the sale approximately 30 minutes before the start of the sale to register in person. Prospective buyers must complete and sign a registration form with his or her name and permanent address, and provide identification before bidding. We may require the production of bank details from which payment will be made or other financial references.

(c) Bidding as principal

When making a bid, a bidder is accepting personal liability to pay the purchase price, including the buyer's premium and all applicable taxes, plus all other applicable charges, unless it has been explicitly agreed in writing with Christie's before the commencement of the sale that the bidder is acting as agent on behalf of an identified third party acceptable to Christie's, and that Christie's will only look to the principal for payment.

(d) Absentee bids

We will use reasonable efforts to carry out written bids delivered to us prior to the sale for the convenience of clients who are not present at the auction in person, by an agent or by telephone. Bids must be placed in the currency of the place of the sale. Please refer to the catalogue for the Absentee Bids Form. If we receive written bids on a particular lot for identical amounts, and at the auction these are the highest bids on the lot, it will be sold to the person whose written bid was received and accepted first. Execution of written bids is a free service undertaken subject to other commitments at the time of the sale and provided that we have exercised reasonable care in the handling of written bids, the volume of goods is such that we cannot accept liability in any individual instance for failing to execute a written bid or for errors and omissions in connection with it arising from circumstances beyond our reasonable control.

(e) Telephone bids

If a prospective buyer makes arrangements with us prior to the commencement of the sale we will use reasonable efforts to contact them to enable them to participate in the bidding by telephone but we do not accept liability for failure to do so or for errors and omissions in connection with telephone bidding arising from circumstances beyond our reasonable control.

(f) Currency converter

At some auctions a currency converter may be operated. Errors may occur in the operation of the currency converter. Where these arise from circumstances beyond our reasonable control we do not accept liability to bidders who follow the currency converter rather than the actual bidding in the saleroom.

(g) Video or digital images

At some auctions there may be a video or digital screen. Errors may occur in its operation and in the quality of the image. We do not accept liability for such errors where they arise for reasons beyond our reasonable control.

(h) Reserves

Unless otherwise indicated, all lots are offered subject to a reserve, which is the confidential minimum price below which the lot will not be sold. The reserve will not exceed the low estimate printed in the catalogue. If any lots are not subject to a reserve, they will be identified with the symbol • next to the lot number. The auctioneer may open the bidding on any lot below the reserve by placing a bid on behalf of the seller. The auctioneer may continue to bid on behalf of the seller up to the amount of the reserve, either by placing consecutive bids or by placing bids in response to other bidders.

(i) Auctioneer's discretion

The auctioneer has the right to exercise reasonable discretion in refusing any bid, advancing the bidding in such a manner as he may decide, withdrawing or dividing any lot, combining any two or more lots and, in the case of error or dispute, and whether during or after the sale, determining the successful bidder, continuing the bidding, cancelling the sale or reoffering and reselling the item in dispute. If any dispute arises after the sale, then, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary the sale record maintained by the auctioneer will be conclusive.

(j) Successful bid and passing of risk

Subject to the auctioneer's reasonable discretion, the highest bidder accepted by the auctioneer will be the buyer and the striking of his hammer marks the acceptance of the highest bid and the conclusion of a contract for sale between the seller and the buyer. Risk and responsibility for the lot (including frames or glass where relevant) passes to the buyer at the expiration of seven calendar days from the date of the sale or on collection by the buyer if earlier.

4. AFTER THE SALE

(a) Buyer's premium

In addition to the hammer price, the buyer agrees to pay to us the buyer's premium together with any applicable value added tax. The buyer's premium is 25% of the final bid price of each lot up to and including £50,000, 20% of the excess of the hammer price above £50,000 and up to and including £1,000,000 and 12% of the excess of the hammer price above £1,000,000. Exceptions: Wine and Cigars: 17.5% of the final bid price of each lot, VAT is payable at the applicable rate.

(b) Artist's Resale Right ("Droit de Suite")

If the Artist's Resale Right Regulations 2006 apply to the lot the buyer also agrees to pay to us an amount equal to the resale royalty provided for in those Regulations. Lots affected are identified with the symbol λ next to the lot number.

(c) Payment and ownership

The buyer must pay the full amount due (comprising the hammer price, buyer's premium and any applicable taxes or resale royalty) immediately after the sale. This applies even if the buyer wishes to export the lot and an export licence is, or may be, required. The buyer will not acquire title to the lot until all amounts due to us from the buyer have been received by us in good cleared funds even in circumstances where we have released the lot to the buyer.

(d) Collection of purchases

We shall be entitled to retain items sold until all amounts due to us, or to Christie's International plc, or to any of its affiliates, subsidiaries or parent companies worldwide, have been received in full in good cleared funds or until the buyer has performed any other outstanding obligations as we, in our sole discretion, shall require, including, for the avoidance of doubt, completing any anti-money laundering or anti-terrorism financing checks we may require to our satisfaction. In the event a buyer fails to complete any anti-money laundering or anti-terrorism financing checks to our satisfaction, Christie's shall be entitled to cancel the sale and to take any other actions that are required or permitted under applicable law. Subject to this, the buyer shall collect purchased lots within two calendar days from the date of the sale unless otherwise agreed between us and the buyer.

(e) Packing, handling and shipping

Although we shall use reasonable efforts to take care when handling, packing and shipping a purchased lot and in selecting third parties for these purposes, we are not responsible for the acts or omissions of any such third parties. Similarly, where we suggest other handlers, packers or carriers if so requested, our suggestions are made on the basis of our general experience of such parties in the past and we are not responsible to any person to whom we have made a recommendation for the acts or omissions of the third party concerned.

(f) Export licence

Unless otherwise agreed by us in writing, the fact that the buyer wishes to apply for an export licence does not affect his or her obligation to make payment immediately after the sale nor our right to charge interest or storage charges on late payment. If the buyer requests us to apply for an export licence on his or her behalf, we shall be entitled to make a charge for this service. We shall not be obliged to rescind a sale nor to refund any interest or other expenses incurred by the buyer where payment is made by the buyer in circumstances where an export licence is required.

(g) Remedies for non payment

If the buyer fails to make payment in full in good cleared funds within 7 days after the sale, we shall have the right to exercise a number of legal rights and remedies. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (i) to charge interest at an annual rate equal to 5% above the base rate of Lloyds TSB Bank Plc;
- (ii) to hold the defaulting buyer liable for the total amount due and to commence legal proceedings for its recovery together with interest, legal fees and costs to the fullest extent permitted under applicable law;
- (iii) to cancel the sale;
- (iv) to resell the property publicly or privately on such terms as we shall think fit;
- (v) to pay the seller an amount up to the net proceeds payable in respect of the amount bid by the defaulting buyer;
- (vi) to set off against any amounts which we, or Christie's International plc, or any of its affiliates, subsidiaries or parent companies worldwide, may owe the buyer in any other transactions, the outstanding amount remaining unpaid by the buyer;
- (vii) where several amounts are owed by the buyer to us, or to Christie's International plc, or to any of its affiliates, subsidiaries or parent companies worldwide, in respect of different transactions, to apply any amount paid to discharge any amount owed in respect of any particular transaction, whether or not the buyer so directs;

(viii) to reject at any future auction any bids made by or on behalf of the buyer or to obtain a deposit from the buyer before accepting any bids;

(ix) to exercise all the rights and remedies of a person holding security over any property in our possession owned by the buyer, whether by way of pledge, security interest or in any other way, to the fullest extent permitted by the law of the place where such property is located. The buyer will be deemed to have granted such security to us and we may retain such property as collateral security for such buyer's obligations to us;

(x) to take such other action as we deem necessary or appropriate.

If we resell the property under paragraph (iv) above, the defaulting buyer shall be liable for payment of any deficiency between the total amount originally due to us and the price obtained upon resale as well as for all reasonable costs, expenses, damages, legal fees and commissions and premiums of whatever kind associated with both sales or otherwise arising from the default. If we pay any amount to the seller under paragraph (v) above, the buyer acknowledges that Christie's shall have all of the rights of the seller, however arising, to pursue the buyer for such amount.

(h) Failure to collect purchases

Where purchases are not collected within two calendar days from the date of the sale, whether or not payment has been made, we shall be permitted to remove the property to a third party warehouse at the buyer's expense, and only release the items after payment in full has been made of removal, storage, handling, and any other costs reasonably incurred, together with payment of all other amounts due to us.

(i) Selling Property at Christie's

In addition to expenses such as transport, all consignors pay a commission according to a fixed scale of charges based upon the value of the property sold by the consignor at Christie's in a calendar year. Commissions are charged on a sale by sale basis.

5. LIMITED WARRANTY

In addition to Christie's liability to buyers set out in clause 2 of these Conditions, but subject to the terms and conditions of this paragraph, Christie's warrants for a period of five years from the date of the sale that any property described in headings having all capital-letter type) in this catalogue (as such description may be amended by any saleroom notice or announcement) which is stated without qualification to be the work of a named author or authorship, is authentic and not a forgery. The term "author" or "authorship" refers to the creator of the property or to the period, culture, source or origin, as the case may be, with which the creation of such property is identified in the UPPER CASE description of the property in this catalogue. Only UPPER CASE TYPE headings of lots in this catalogue indicate what is being warranted by Christie's. Christie's warranty does not apply to supplemental material which appears below the UPPER CASE TYPE headings of each lot and Christie's is not responsible for any errors or omissions in such material. The terms used in the headings are further explained in Important Notices and Explanation of Cataloguing Practice. The warranty does not apply to any heading which is stated to represent a qualified opinion. The warranty is subject to the following:

(i) It does not apply where (a) the catalogue description or saleroom notice corresponded to the generally accepted opinion of scholars or experts at the date of the sale or fairly indicated that there was a conflict of opinions; or (b) correct identification of a lot can be demonstrated only by means of either a scientific process not generally accepted for use until after publication of the catalogue or a process which at the date of publication of the catalogue was unreasonably expensive or impractical or likely to have caused damage to the property.

(ii) The benefits of the warranty are not assignable and shall apply only to the original buyer of the lot as shown on the invoice originally issued by Christie's when the lot was sold at auction.

(iii) The original buyer must have remained the owner of the lot without disposing of any interest in it to any third party.

(iv) The buyer's sole and exclusive remedy against Christie's and the seller, in place of any other remedy which might be available, is the cancellation of the sale and the refund of the original purchase price paid for the lot. Neither Christie's nor the seller will be liable for any special, incidental or consequential damages including, without limitation, loss of profits nor for interest.

(v) The buyer must give written notice of claim to us within five years from the date of the auction. It is Christie's general policy, and Christie's shall have the right, to require the buyer to obtain the written opinions of two recognised experts in the field, mutually acceptable to Christie's and the buyer, before Christie's decides whether or not to cancel the sale under the warranty.

(vi) The buyer must return the lot to the Christie's saleroom at which it was purchased in the same condition as at the time of the sale.

6. COPYRIGHT

The copyright in all images, illustrations and written material produced by or for Christie's relating to a lot including the contents of this catalogue, is and shall remain at all times the property of Christie's and shall not be used by the buyer, nor by anyone else, without our prior written consent. Christie's and the seller make no representation or warranty that the buyer of a property will acquire any copyright or other reproduction rights in it.

7. SEVERABILITY

If any part of these Conditions of Sale is found by any court to be invalid, illegal or unenforceable, that part shall be discounted and the rest of the conditions shall continue to be valid to the fullest extent permitted by law.

8. LAW AND JURISDICTION

The rights and obligations of the parties with respect to these Conditions of Sale, the conduct of the auction and any matters connected with any of the foregoing shall be governed and interpreted by the laws of England. By bidding at auction, whether present in person or by agent, by written bid, telephone or other means, the buyer shall be deemed to have submitted, for the benefit of Christie's, to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of the United Kingdom.

CHRISTIE'S SPECIALIST DEPARTMENTS AND SERVICES

DEPARTMENTS

AMERICAN FURNITURE
NY: +1 212 636 2230

AMERICAN INDIAN ART
NY: +1 212 606 0536

AMERICAN PICTURES
NY: +1 212 636 2140

ANGLO-INDIAN ART
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2570

ANTIQUITIES
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3219

ARMS AND ARMOUR
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3119

**ASIAN 20TH CENTURY
AND CONTEMPORARY ART**
NY: +1 212 468 7133

AUSTRALIAN PICTURES
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2040

**BOOKS AND
MANUSCRIPTS**
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2674
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3203

BRITISH & IRISH ART
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2682
NY: +1 212 636 2084
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3257

BRITISH ART ON PAPER
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2278
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3293
NY: +1 212 636 2085

**BRITISH PICTURES
1500-1850**
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2945

CARPETS
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2370
SK: +44 (0)20 7389 2776

CHINESE WORKS OF ART
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2577
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3239

CLOCKS
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2357

CONTEMPORARY ART
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2920
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3313

**COSTUME, TEXTILES
AND FANS**
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3215

**EUROPEAN CERAMICS
AND GLASS**
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3026

FURNITURE
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2482
SK: +44 (0)20 7389 2791

IMPRESSIONIST PICTURES
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2638
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3218

**INDIAN
CONTEMPORARY ART**
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2700
NY: +1 212 636 2189

INTERIORS
SK: +44 (0)20 7389 2236
NY: +1 212 636 2032

ISLAMIC WORKS OF ART
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2700
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3239

**JAPANESE
WORKS OF ART**
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2591
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3239

JEWELLERY
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2383
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3265

LATIN AMERICAN ART
NY: +1 212 636 2150

MARITIME PICTURES
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3284
NY: +1 212 707 5949

MINIATURES
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2650

MODERN DESIGN
SK: +44 (0)20 7389 2142

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3365

**NINETEENTH CENTURY
FURNITURE AND
SCULPTURE**
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2699

**NINETEENTH CENTURY
EUROPEAN PICTURES**
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2443
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3309

OBJECTS OF VERTU
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2347
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3001

OLD MASTER DRAWINGS
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2251

OLD MASTER PICTURES
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2531
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3250

**ORIENTAL CERAMICS
AND WORKS OF ART**
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3235

PHOTOGRAPHS
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2292

**POPULAR CULTURE
AND ENTERTAINMENT**
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3275

POST-WAR ART
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2450
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3210

POSTERS
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3208

PRINTS
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2328
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3109

**PRIVATE COLLECTIONS
AND
COUNTRY HOUSE SALES**
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2343

RUSSIAN WORKS OF ART
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2057

**TRAVEL, SCIENCE AND
NATURAL HISTORY**
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3291

SCULPTURE
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2331
SK: +44 (0)20 7389 2794

SILVER
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2666
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3262

SWISS ART
ZUR: +41 (0) 44 268 1012

**TOPOGRAPHICAL
PICTURES**
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2040
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3291

**TRIBAL AND
PRE-COLUMBIAN ART**
PAR: +33 (0)140 768 386

**TWENTIETH CENTURY
BRITISH ART**
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2684
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3311

**TWENTIETH CENTURY
DECORATIVE ART
& DESIGN**
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2140
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3236

**TWENTIETH CENTURY
PICTURES**
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3218

VICTORIAN PICTURES
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2468
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3257

**WATERCOLOURS AND
DRAWINGS**
KS: +44 (0)20 7389 2257
SK: +44 (0)20 7752 3293

WINE
KS: +44 (0)20 7752 3366

AUCTION SERVICES

**CORPORATE
COLLECTIONS**
Tel: +44 (0)20 7389 2548
Email: norchard@christies.com

FINANCIAL SERVICES
Tel: +44 (0)20 7389 2624
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**HERITAGE AND
TAXATION**
Tel: +44 (0)20 7389 2101
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**PRIVATE COLLECTIONS
AND
COUNTRY HOUSE SALES**
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Fax: +44 (0)20 7389 2225
Email: awaters@christies.com

MUSEUM SERVICES, UK
Tel: +44 (0)20 7389 2570
Email: llindsay@christies.com

PRIVATE SALES
US: +1 212 636 2034
Fax: +1 212 636 2035
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VALUATIONS
Tel: +44 (0)20 7389 2280
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OTHER SERVICES

CHRISTIE'S EDUCATION
London
Tel: +44 (0)20 7665 4350
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Email: education@christies.com

New York
Tel: +1 212 355 1501
Fax: +1 212 355 7370
Email: christieseducation@christies.edu

Hong Kong
Tel: +852 2978 6747
Fax: +852 2525 3856
Email: hkcourse@christies.com

**CHRISTIE'S FINE ART
STORAGE SERVICES**
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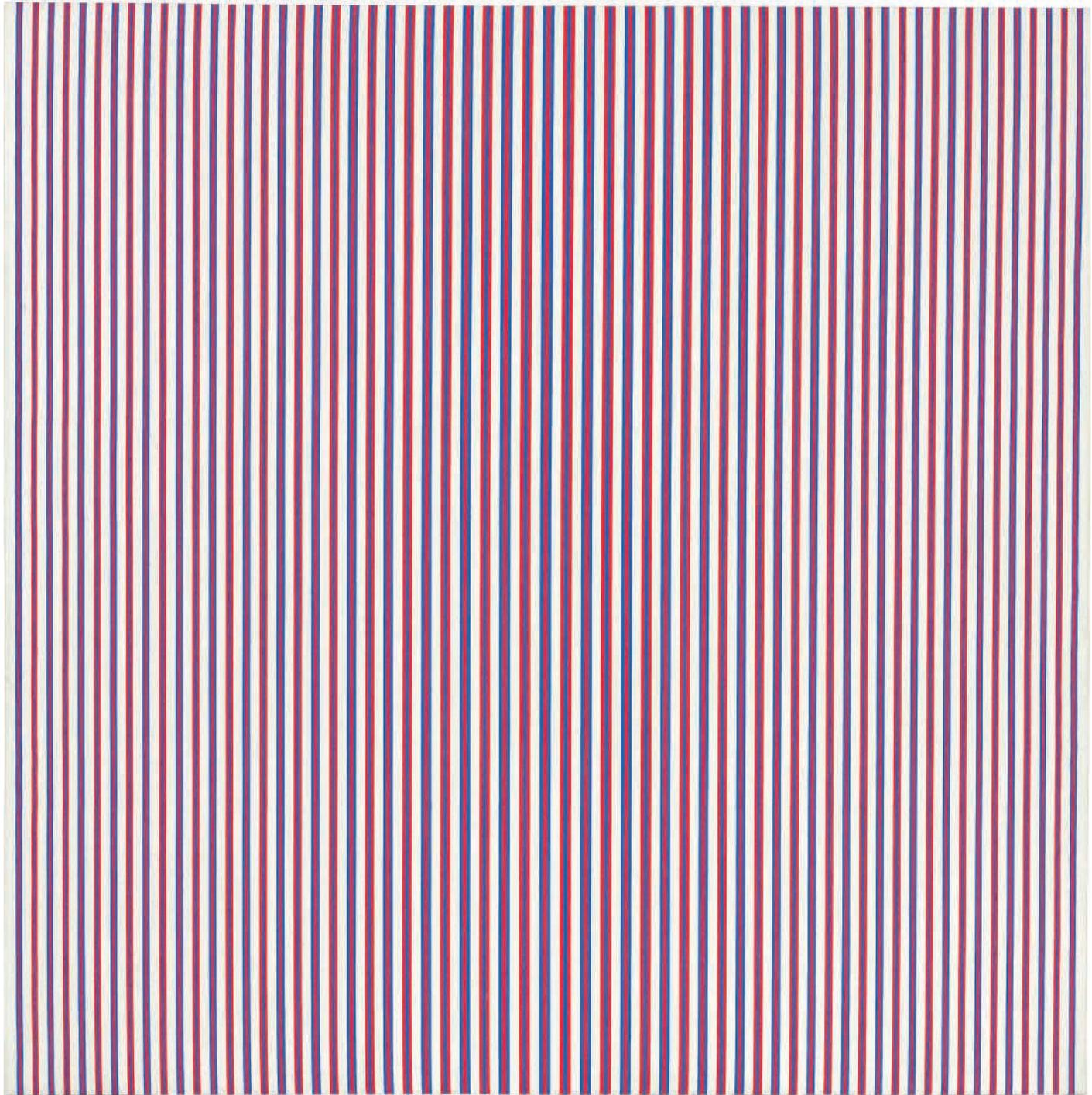
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Chant 2

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