

For Immediate Release

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**CHRISTIE'S LATIN AMERICAN SALE
PRESENTS MASTERPIECES BY MATTA,
CARRINGTON, PORTINARI & BOTERO
ON MAY 22-23**

Public Exhibition: May 19 to May 22, 2012

Auctions: May 22 at 6:30 p.m. (lots 1-83) and May 23 at 10 a.m. (lots 85-302)

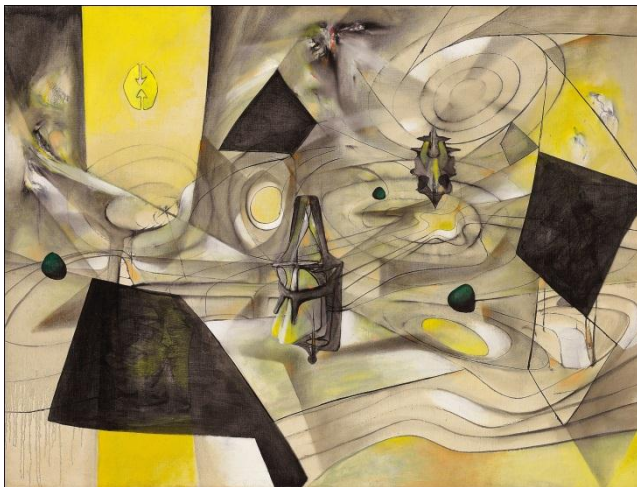
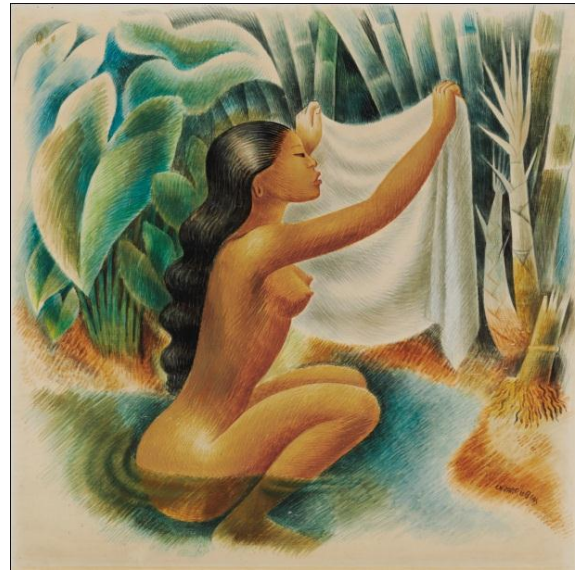


Fernando Botero
The Arnolfini (after Van Eyck)
oil on canvas
Painted in 1997.
Estimate: \$500,000-700,000

New York – On May 22 and 23, Christie's Latin American sale will offer an exceptional selection of works by modern and contemporary masters hailing from Mexico, Venezuela, Brazil, Argentina, Puerto Rico, Colombia, and many other regions throughout the Americas. Rich in works from private collections, the two-day auction presents over 300 works by leading Latin American artists such as Fernando Botero, Miguel Covarrubias, Matta, Joaquín Torres-García, Candido Portinari, and Leonora Carrington, among others. The sale is expected to realize upwards of \$20 million.

The Arnolfini (after Van Eyck) (lot 25) is one of Fernando Botero's many visual citations of the renowned Flemish Renaissance painting, a work of art that has fascinated and inspired the artist since the 1960s (*pictured left*, estimate: \$500,000-700,000). Offered to the market for the first time, this version is perhaps the most complex and charming. Here, Botero has recreated several details from Van Eyck's version, including the open window with the apple on the sill, the elaborately draped canopy bed, and the use of the floorboards and ceiling beams to emphasize the perspective, all the while maintaining his unmistakably unique style.

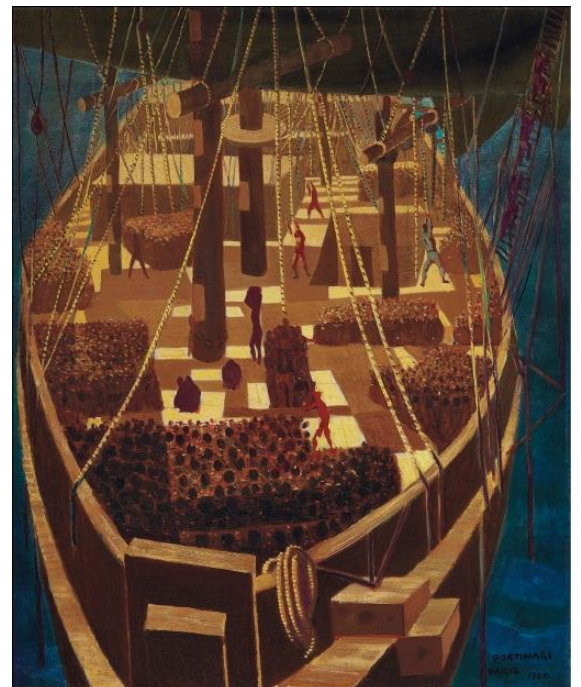
From the esteemed Robert Brady Museum Foundation and formerly in the collection of the cosmetics magnate Helena Rubinstein, *Bather Holding Up Her Kemban* (lot 4) by Miguel Covarrubias (pictured right, estimate: \$300,000-500,000) reflects the artist's deep love and fascination for the Indonesian island of Bali. He first travelled to Bali in 1930 as a newlywed with his bride and fellow artist Rosa Rolando. A Guggenheim Fellowship provided him with funds for a subsequent trip in 1933, which led to his publication of the well-received book *Island of Bali* in 1937 as well as a series of drawings and paintings of which this work is a wonderful and rare example. In works like *Bather Holding Up Her Kemban*, Covarrubias encapsulates his passion and romanticized vision of Bali's inhabitants and landscape as a truly earthly paradise of the South Seas.



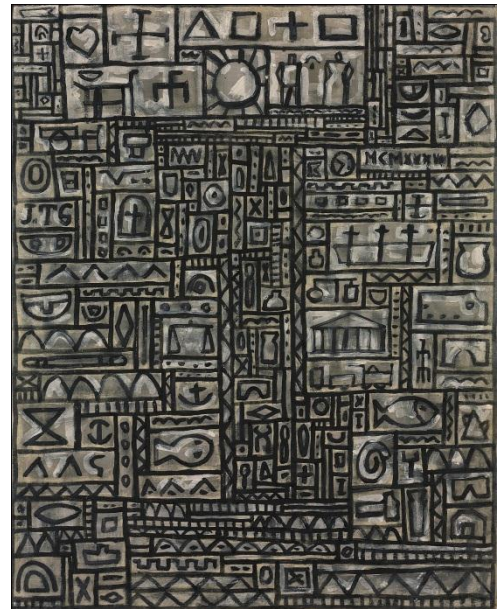
La révolte des contraires (lot 10) by Matta was painted in 1944, when the artist had arrived in New York, after emigrating from Chile and living briefly in Paris (pictured left, estimate: \$1,800,000-2,500,000). Upon his arrival in the United States, Matta quickly gained critical acclaim from the press, with the exhibition of his works at the Julien Levy Gallery and the Pierre Matisse Gallery. *La révolte des contraires* was painted at a time of great personal and professional growth for the artist. Matta sought to depict a cataclysmic space in a perpetual state of flux, with the utilization of thin washes of pigment, undulating lines, and flame-like breakouts of prismatic color.

Candido Portinari's contemporary oil paintings kindle the intense human emotion of his murals on a more intimate scale, and the epic *Navio negreiro*, 1950 (lot 64) (the cover lot of the catalogue and pictured right, estimate: \$700,000-900,000) originally from the renowned collection of Brazilian Ambassador Jayme de Barros, depicts a foundational episode in the history of Brazil. An homage to Brazil's African roots and, at the same time, an indictment of the conditions of the slave trade, *Navio negreiro* is a powerful national acknowledgment of Brazil's past and, no less, a testament to the diversity of its present.

Upon his return to Montevideo, Uruguay in 1934, one of Joaquín Torres-García's first undertakings was the construction of *Cosmic Monument*, a free-standing stone wall intended as a public manifestation of his aesthetic ideals. Throughout the late 1930s, the artist rendered several paintings that were inspired by the



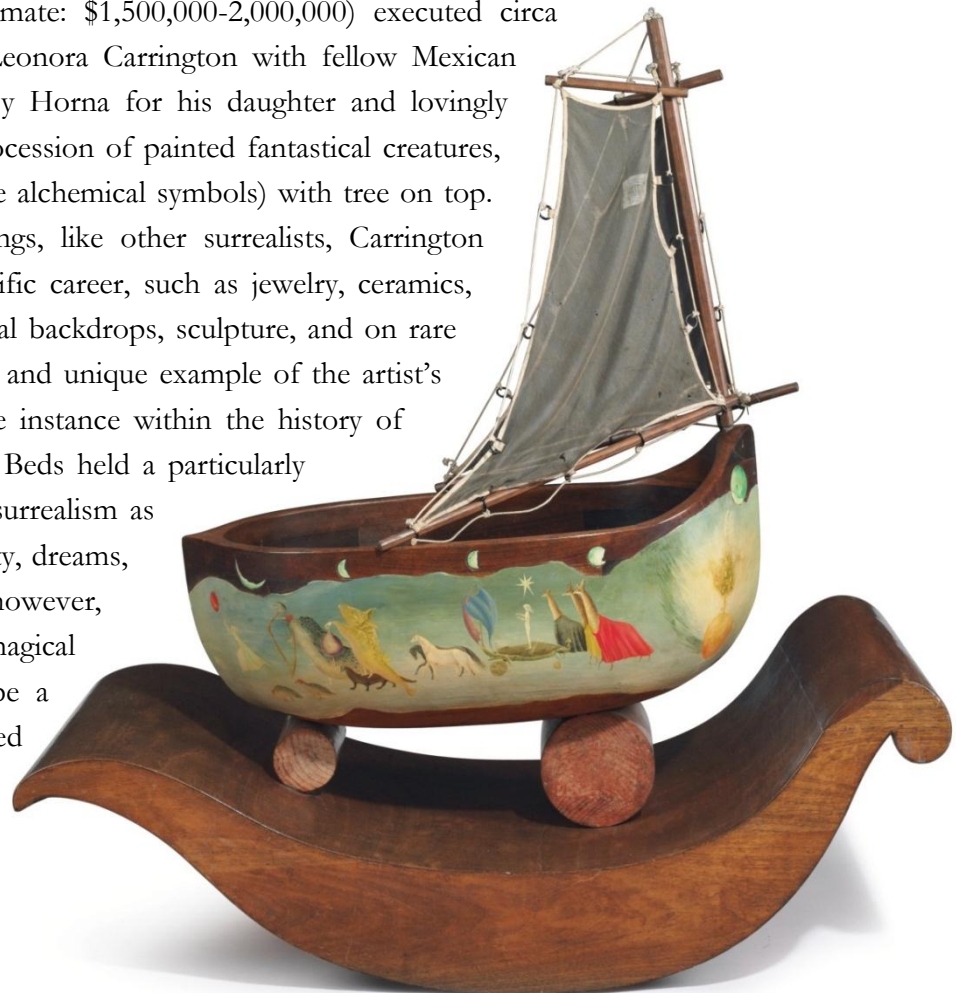
monument, one of which is *Grafismo universal sobre fondo gris*, 1937 (lot 16) (pictured right- estimate: \$1,000,000-1,500,000). The paintings from this final Montevidean period represent the culmination of Torres-García's career, in which he deftly integrated formal modernist motifs and the symbolic hieroglyphs of the ancient Americas. *Grafismo universal sobre fondo gris* projects a vibrant composite image of transcendence and unity, animated at its core by the rich symbology and history of the Americas.



Claudio Bravo's *Psalterium* (lot 26) belongs to a series of paintings of draped fabrics the artist executed between 1997 and 2002 (pictured left, estimate: \$800,000-1,200,000). Christened with religious titles, such as *Benedictus*, *Offertorio*, and *Annunciation*, the series renders the sacred tantalizingly sensual through masterful illusionism and the luminous vitality of richly saturated, jewel-toned colors. Bravo's affinity with antiquity is also evident, as the streamlined folds of painted fabric recall the timeless elegance of classical drapery.

Christie's is particularly honored to have been entrusted with the sale of the surrealist masterpiece *La cuna (The Cradle)* (lot 40) (pictured below- estimate: \$1,500,000-2,000,000) executed circa

1949 by the British-born Mexican artist Leonora Carrington with fellow Mexican artist José Horna. Originally fabricated by Horna for his daughter and lovingly embellished by Carrington with a lively procession of painted fantastical creatures, including an egg (one of the artist's favorite alchemical symbols) with tree on top. Although primarily known for her paintings, like other surrealists, Carrington ventured into other media during her prolific career, such as jewelry, ceramics, tapestries, masks, costume designs, theatrical backdrops, sculpture, and on rare occasions, furniture. *La cuna* is a stunning and unique example of the artist's foray into this latter arena and a truly rare instance within the history of surrealism of an object made for a child. Beds held a particularly elevated status within the iconography of surrealism as the locus for their explorations into sexuality, dreams, and the unconscious. Carrington's cradle, however, reflects her long fascination with the magical potential of childhood, and what could be a more suitable metaphor than a bed shaped like a boat that could sail a child into the wondrous land of dreams.



ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS



Anonymous
(Follower of Miguel González, Mexican School, Late 17th Century)
The Education of the Virgin (lot 36)
oil and enameled mother-of-pearl on panel (*Enconchado*)
Estimate: \$70,000-100,000



Jorge De La Vega
Rompecabezas (one panel) (lot 72)
acrylic on canvas
Painted in 1969-70
Estimate: \$300,000-400,000



Carlos Cruz-Diez
Psychromie 164 (lot 55)
acrylic inserts mounted on painted wood
Executed in Paris in April 1965
Estimate: \$250,000-350,000



Francisco Toledo
Chapulín (lot 44)
oil and sand on canvas
Estimate: \$250,000-350,000

Auction: Latin American Art

Viewing: Christie's Rockefeller Galleries

May 22-23

May 19-22

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in 2011 that totaled £3.6 billion/\$5.7 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. Founded in 1766 by James Christie, Christie's has since conducted the greatest and most celebrated auctions through the centuries providing a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 450 auctions annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from \$200 to over \$100 million. Christie's also has a long and successful history conducting private sales for its clients in all categories, with emphasis on Post-War and Contemporary, Impressionist and Modern, Old Masters and Jewellery. Private sales totaled £502 million / \$808.6m in 2011, an increase of 44% on the previous year.

Christie's has a global presence with 53 offices in 32 countries and 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, and Hong Kong. More recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in growth markets such as Russia, China, India and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Mumbai and Dubai.

**Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and do not reflect costs, financing fees or application of buyer's or seller's credits.*

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Images available on request