

# CHRISTIE'S

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## ANDY WILLIAMS AN AMERICAN LEGEND



### CHRISTIE'S CELEBRATES THE ECLECTIC EYE OF THE TALENTED AND BELOVED KING OF CROONERS

**Post-War & Contemporary Art, Impressionist & Modern Art, American Art, Latin American Art, Prints & Multiples, African & Oceanic Art and 20th Century Decorative Art & Design**

*"Throughout my life, I have always been collecting. Every picture I ever sold I still regret. But I never gave up buying... I could not imagine a life without paintings. I look at my paintings every day. At night I will go into the living room and look at the Dubuffet because I love it so much. Then to the drawing room, to look at the Picasso, the de Kooning, the Diebenkorn. I could not imagine a room without art."* **Andy Williams**

**New York** – Christie's is pleased to present the outstanding collection of Post-War and Contemporary art, thoughtfully accumulated over a sixty-year period by Andy Williams, one of America's most beloved performers. A group of works from his collection will be offered in the Evening and Day Sales, May 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, and is expected to achieve in excess of \$30 million. The works come from Williams' two houses in California and Missouri, as well as his own Moon River Theater, and also include Impressionist and Modern Art, American Art, Latin American Art, Prints and Multiples, African and Oceanic Art and 20th Century Decorative Art and Design to be sold in New York, London and Paris in 2013.

Andy Williams was born on December 3, 1927 and grew up during the height of the Depression in Wall Lake, Iowa, a place where money and opportunity was in extremely short supply. His dramatic rise to fame was a uniquely American success story: from modest circumstances, he became one of the most famous and beloved entertainers in the world, known as "The Legend."

In his youth, Williams performed in a church choir with his three brothers, before making his official singing debut at age 8 as part of the Williams Brothers quartet. Championed by their father, who had an unshakeable belief in his sons' potential, they moved from Iowa to Des Moines to Chicago, always in search of a wider audience. The Williams brothers' fame grew with each performance. Their first big break came when Bing Crosby hired them as backup singers on his 1944 hit, *Swinging on a Star*. By 1947, they were headlining shows in Las Vegas—within a year, they were the highest paid nightclub act in the world.

Williams began his solo career in 1952 with early hits such as "Canadian Sunset," and "The Hawaiian Wedding Song." In 1957, his song "Butterfly" was the No. 1 single in the United States and Britain. After almost a decade of successful records, the singer moved to Los Angeles in 1961 to sign with Columbia Records, who offered Williams what was at the time the biggest recording contract in history. By 1973, Williams had recorded more than 17 gold records, including "Love Story" and "Days of Wine and Roses."

His 1962 rendition of Henry Mancini's "Moon River" from the film, *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, solidified his status as one of the era's most popular singers; he was even asked to perform when it was nominated for Best Original Song at the 1962 Academy Awards. That same year, Williams debuted his own variety series on NBC, *The Andy Williams Show*. The show won three Emmy Awards and lasted until 1971, continuing into the 1990s as an annual Christmas special featuring Williams' entire family. His show was also a favorite on British television, thanks to the singer's success in the UK.

Williams frequently performed throughout Europe in the 1960s and 70s. In fact, his 1970s record sales were greater in the UK than in the United States. His popularity in Britain endured into the last years of his life, with numerous hits in the late 1990s and a tour there in 2007. His performance of "Moon River" in 2009 marked his last appearance on British television.

In 1992, the singer opened the Andy Williams Moon River Theater in Branson, Missouri, where he performed to sold-out crowds for years. On September 25, 2012, Williams died after a year-long battle with cancer.

*"Andy Williams was a uniquely American success story which played out against the backdrop of the Great Depression, World War II and the tumultuous 1960s. A musical prodigy performing since the age of 8, Andy would become one of the most beloved entertainers of the 20th century, an unparalleled example of the American dream. Everything Andy did looked effortless, but behind it all was a tireless work ethic and relentless ambition to be the best. He was as passionate about his art collecting as he was about music. He began haunting the world's top galleries and museums in the 1950s and never stopped. Williams' highly personal choices in Post War and Contemporary artworks reflect the dynamic energy of New York and Los Angeles in the 50s and 60s, where he befriended artists such as Kenneth Noland and Ed Ruscha and dealers such as Nicholas Wilder, Billy Pearson, Richard Gray, and Andre Emmerich. He surrounded himself with art and objects in his La Quinta and Branson homes, creating gracious, museum-like displays.*

He also believed in sharing his art, and installed works at his Moon River Theater in Branson. He had the exceptional ability to recognize quality in every category that he turned his attention to—a rare gift among collectors. Although best known for his 20th century art collection, his Catholic tastes extended to African art, Folk art, duck decoys and Indian blankets” **declared Robert Manley, International Director, Specialist Head of the Post-War and Contemporary Art Department.**

Andy Williams’ great success as a performer was due to his tireless work ethic, and he pursued collecting with the same passionate determination. Initially interested in the great masters of Modern Art, such as **Picasso, Braque, and Juan Gris**, Andy soon developed a taste for the New York School painters of the 1950s. His collection grew to encompass brilliant examples by **Willem de Kooning, Hans Hofmann, Richard Diebenkorn and Franz Kline**. A strategic collector with an eye for quality, Andy created a veritable stockpile of masterpieces, many of which he would exhibit at his own Moon River Theater. He saw every exhibition he could, read voraciously and developed an unwavering instinct for the best works. He was also fortunate to have amassed his collection at a time when one could still buy major examples, and he had the resources and courage to acquire them. This portion of Williams’ collection dedicated to Post-War and Contemporary art also includes significant works by **Kenneth Noland, Ed Ruscha, Sean Scully, Arshile Gorky, Helen Frankenthaler, Clyfford Still, Jean Dubuffet, Morris Louis, Robert Motherwell, Claes Oldenburg, Nathan Olivera, Sam Francis, Joseph Albers, Francois-Xavier Lalanne and Jean-Michel Basquiat**, to name a few.



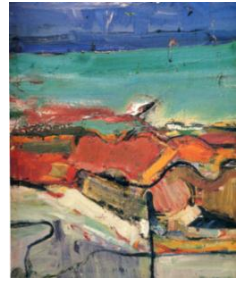
Williams was an especially passionate collector of **Willem de Kooning’s** art, amassing numerous paintings and bronze sculptures by the artist. One of the highlights of the collection is *Untitled XVII*, a masterpiece of de Kooning’s final years of painting. Executed in 1984, *Untitled XVII* possesses the dynamism and immediacy of the artist’s best works. De Kooning had the remarkable ability to continually develop, refine and advance his work over 60 years, while maintaining his unique signature style. The lyrical 1984 work demonstrates the artist’s supreme confidence at the height of his fame, after six decades of painting.

*Women Singing I* exhibits **de Kooning’s** return to the female nude in 1966. De Kooning re-interprets classical subject matter according to the new image of American women—as pop singers, go-go dancers and Playboy models—forged by 1960s culture. For the first time, mass-media came to dominate all aspects of American life, and de Kooning found himself almost unconsciously engaging with the perennial theme in his art: the alluring yet monstrous female nude.



"Words have temperatures to me," notes **Ed Ruscha**. "When they reach a certain point and become hot words, then they appeal to me. Sometimes I have a dream that if a word gets too hot and too appealing, it will boil apart, and I won't be able to read or think of it. Usually I catch them before they get too hot." *Mint (Red)* is a wonderfully evocative picture from the famous series of "liquid word" paintings that Ruscha made between 1967 and 1969. In this small but seminal series, Ruscha's words seem to have been written in a syrupy liquid, as if they were the products of an idle finger doodling on a tabletop or the bar of a roadside diner.

*Berkeley* is a luminous example of **Richard Diebenkorn's** translation of Abstract Expressionist methods through vivid, saturated color. Painted in 1955—the year dubbed by Diebenkorn the most “explosive” of his career—the work’s bold brushwork and coloration typify the final pictures of the series. In *Berkeley*, Diebenkorn consolidates his entire abstract visual vocabulary: merging gestural strokes and calligraphic line with pulsating jewel tones. The structured, interlocking planes were inspired by aerial views of California that he saw on a 1951 airplane flight. The bird’s-eye perspective offered a new economy of form, which found expressive potential in the urban hues and coastal expanses of the Bay Area.



When the artist moved to Southern California in 1966, he began his celebrated *Ocean Park* paintings, named for the Santa Monica boulevard where he worked. *Ocean Park #92* illustrates Diebenkorn’s new system of abstraction, which sublimated Los Angeles’ landscape into a lyrical, compositional methodology. The work illustrates the artist’s renewed interest in flat color and collapsed perspective, reconciling Henri Matisse’s bright blues and greens with Piet Mondrian’s delineated grids. Painted in 1976, it was included that same year for Diebenkorn’s retrospective at the Albright-Knox Gallery. As one of the show’s most contemporary paintings, *Ocean Park #92* undoubtedly influenced the gallery’s director who chose the California painter’s 1977-8 paintings for the American Pavilion at the next Venice Biennale.

*"I was a delegate from California for Bobby Kennedy. I was coming back from the convention driving down Michigan Boulevard and I saw this wonderful painting in the window. Brilliant red and green and I just loved it and I didn't know anything about it. And I stopped at Richard Gray Gallery and I said, "How much is it?" And he told me how much it was and I asked him if [Hofmann] was a good painter and he said, "Yes, he's a great painter." I had no idea but I bought it!"* **Andy Williams**

**Hans Hofmann's** *Beatae Memoriae*, represents the culmination of the artist’s lifelong exploration of pictorial structure, spatial tensions, and color relationships. Celebrated for his exuberant, color-filled canvases, and renowned as an influential painting instructor— first in his native Germany, then in New York City and Provincetown— Hofmann played a pivotal role in the development of Abstract Expressionism. In *Beatae Memoriae*, Hofmann combines gestural strokes, dripped paint and high-relief impasto to create a mosaic of swirling color. *Beatae Memoriae*, held in Andy Williams’ private collection for the past three decades, emerges as a profoundly important work that brilliantly encapsulates Hofmann’s most celebrated period.



**Sam Francis** painted *Untitled* in 1958, at the end of his eight-year long stay in Paris and just after he toured Japan. Golden yellow, aubergine, black and red are layered in thin, bright washes of oil paint that drip and spray across the canvas. Inspired by Abstract Expressionism and Japanese ink painting, Francis illustrates both influences through his gestural, vigorous brushstrokes and thin, calligraphic washes of color. The work is a prime example of how Francis achieved a balance between openness and density, as his compositions find an equilibrium between

saturated color and white canvas.



**Kenneth Noland's** *Circle*, painted circa 1960 and *Untitled*, painted in 1958-59, are from Kenneth Noland's early breakthrough series of *Targets*. Since 1958, Noland's compositions have been regarded as quintessential examples of Color Field painting. In both *Circle* and *Untitled*, Noland distills pure color energy with eight and seven concentric bands, respectively. The artist's distinctive *Target* series is considered the artist's most successful formal endeavors, and one of the seminal icons of Post-War American painting.



**Jean-Michel Basquiat's** frenetically-drawn *Furious Man* exemplifies the artist's creative and expressive power. Executed in 1982, the work is haunted by the artist's dark skeletal figure who emerges from a golden blaze into a flat sea of gray. With his ghostly face, illuminated halo, and upraised arms, Basquiat's figure draws on the motifs of biblical imagery. With its raw energy and urban-primitive aesthetic, *Furious Man* acts as a wry commentary on the image of the noble-savage, illustrated by modernist masters like Pablo Picasso. Drawn in layers of wax crayon on paper, the work has an immediacy that matches its dramatic imagery.

## Impressionist & Modern Art

New York 8-9 May 2013

"My first interest was French impressionist painting but of course I didn't have any money. So, I bought prints, \$2 or \$5 a print. I was about 25 years old. I was early in my career... When I made a little bit of money, then I started to buy lithographs for \$75. That's how I could afford Picasso. But that is all I could afford. When I started to make money I started to buy pictures. But that was in the 60s." **Andy Williams**

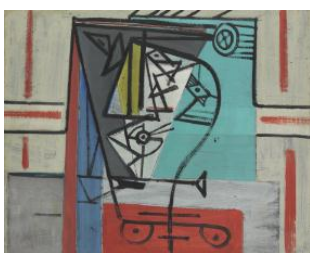


Works by **Paul Klee**, **Henry Moore**, **Alexander Archipenko**, **Egon Schiele** and **Pablo Picasso** from the Andy Williams collection will be included in New York's Impressionist and Modern Art sale this May. The highlight of this section is Picasso's *Figure Féminine Sur la Plage*. Painted in 1927, the work coincides with an exhibition of drawings that ended on July 11, 1927 at the Galerie Paul Rosenberg in Paris—right before Picasso took his wife and son to the Côte d'Azur for their annual summer holiday. The artist quickly set up accommodations for his family, before returning to Paris for a clandestine meeting with his seventeen-year-old mistress, Marie-Thérèse Walter. Back in

Cannes, Picasso rendered Marie-Thérèse on the beach in a series of Bather drawings. Illustrated in a sculpturally volumetric manner using ink or pencil, these drawings filled two notebooks dated July 17 and September 11, 1927. *Figure Féminine Sur la Plage* may well be Picasso's first painted version of the bather subject rendered in the surrealist figuration of the *Métamorphoses* drawings, which are characterized by oddly sensual bodily distortions, dislocations and visual double-entendres.



Six works from the Andy Williams' collection will be included in May's American Art sale, including two important paintings by **Milton Avery**, *The Musicians*, 1949 and *Pale Flower*, 1951. The success of Milton Avery's art lies in his ability to modernize a familiar domestic scene through his carefully orchestrated arrangement of color and pattern. He translates his subject matter into a unique lexicon of shapes and forms that fit together to create a cohesive composition. Painted in 1949, *The Musicians* was executed during the most critical period of Milton Avery's career. Indeed, his work from the mid-1940s incorporates the simplified, blocked forms for which he became known. In addition to their broad popular appeal, Avery's bold, abstracted shapes exerted an important influence on Post-War American painters, especially Mark Rothko and Adolph Gottlieb. His work also reflects the same painterly concerns that consumed the pioneers of French modernism: like Matisse, Dufy, and Picasso, Avery arranges planes of saturated color while retaining the two-dimensional surface of the canvas.



In 1923, the Cuban-born artist **Wifredo Lam** set sail for Spain, where he would remain for the next fourteen years. His new exposure to European art—everything from Realism and Abstraction to Cubism and Surrealism—ignited a moment of great creative experimentation. Executed in 1937, just before the Spanish Civil War and Lam's departure for Paris, *Untitled (Abstract)* demonstrates the artist's outstanding ability to synthesize and refine vanguard ideas and practices into his own artistic idiom. Interlocking planes, abstract geometric shapes, and stylized pictographic forms coexist in a composition that anticipates Lam's syncretic approach to modernism.



The upcoming African and Oceanic Art sale in Paris will present a selection of African sculptures from the Andy Williams collection. The selection will be led by an important and rare Igbo couple from Nigeria created for a shrine and called Ugonachomma. Representations of couples as well as life size sculptures are extremely rare in African art. The gesture of these two figures is particularly tender and naturalistic a quality rarely seen in African art. Another highlight of the collection is embodied by a fine Kota Reliquary from the former collections of Russell B. Aitken and Frank Crownshield. Crownshield was a great art collector and taste-maker of the 1930's and the creator of Vanity Fair magazine. Highlights of the Andy Williams African Art will be on view in NY in May.

**Impressionist & Modern Art**  
**Post-War & Contemporary Art**  
**American Art**  
**Latin American Art**

**New York 8-9 May 2013**  
**New York 15-16 May 2013**  
**New York 23 May 2013**  
**New York 30 May 2013**

**African & Oceanic Art**  
**20th Century Decorative Art and Design**  
**Post-War & Contemporary Art**  
**Open House**  
**First Open**  
**Prints & Multiples**

**Paris**                    **12 June 2013**  
**New York**            **13 June 2013**  
**London**                **25-26 June 2013**  
**New York**            **23 July 2013**  
**New York**            **10 September 2013**  
**New York**            **29 October 2013**

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#### **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*

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