

CHRISTIE'S

PRESS RELEASE | NEW YORK | 14 OCTOBER 2013
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MODERN MASTERS HIGHLIGHT CHRISTIE'S DECEMBER SALE OF AMERICAN ART

EDWARD HOPPER'S *EAST WIND OVER WEEHAWKEN* TO LEAD THE SALE,
WITH PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT THE PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMY OF THE FINE ARTS
EARLY SALE HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE WORKS BY BLUEMNER, DEMUTH, & AVERY



Edward Hopper, *East Wind Over Weehawken*

oil on canvas, Painted in 1934., 34 x 50 ¼ in. (86.4 x 127.6 cm)

Estimate: \$22,000,000-28,000,000

New York – Masterworks of American Modernism are the cornerstones for the stellar line-up of paintings and sculpture to be offered at Christie's sale of *American Art* on December 5 in New York. Early confirmed highlights of the sale include Edward Hopper's masterpiece *East Wind Over Weehawken*, Charles Demuth's *In the Key of Blue*, Oscar Bluemner's *Surprise (May Moon)*, and Milton Avery's *Mandolin with Pears*. **Elizabeth Sterling, Head of American Art at Christie's in New York**, said, "Christie's is honored to have been entrusted by the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts with the sale of *East Wind Over Weehawken* by Edward Hopper. On the heels of our May sale, which achieved the highest total that the category has seen since May 2008, it is clear that the market for American Modernism is thriving.

Examples from the genre have soared at auction in recent seasons, driven by a renewed demand for these masterpiece-quality works.”

EDWARD HOPPER | *East Wind Over Weehawken*

Estimate: \$22,000,000-28,000,000

As the star lot of the sale, Christie’s will offer *East Wind Over Weehawken* by Edward Hopper (1882-1967), a 1934 streetscape of a New Jersey suburb (*illustrated page 1*). The work was created shortly after Hopper’s fall 1933 retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, at a pivotal moment in the artist’s career. With his studio based in New York City, Hopper would occasionally travel across the Hudson River to New Jersey in search of subject matter. He carried out eight preparatory sketches of the sleepy suburb of New York, along with extensive notes about color in the area, which all contributed to the finished streetscape. The perspective is as if one is looking through a car window, having come to an intersection in the residential neighborhood. The work, which sought to capture the realities of Depression-era America, is permeated by a sense of melancholy and loneliness, underscored by the gray sky and brooding colors of the buildings. This, combined with the sense of suspended narrative, is what differentiated Hopper from his Ashcan School contemporaries.



Photograph of the site of *East Wind Over Weehawken* taken in 2008
© 2013, Kevin Grandfield, From: *Hunting Nighthawks: On the Road With Edward Hopper*

This painting hails from the prestigious collection of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA) and has not been on the market since having been acquired by PAFA in 1952. Since its creation, the painting has been exhibited at such renowned institutions as the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, São Paulo’s Museum of Modern Art, the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid and the Grand Palais in Paris. As announced by PAFA, proceeds from the sale of *East Wind Over Weehawken* will be used to support the creation of a new endowment for the purchase of artworks to expand the renowned collection of the museum and school.

CHARLES DEMUTH | *In the Key of Blue*

Estimate: \$1,800,000-2,400,000

Painted *circa* 1919-1920, *In the Key of Blue* (*illustrated right*) was part of a new series of paintings that Charles Demuth had executed in tempera, all of which were much larger in scale than his previous watercolors. *In the Key of Blue* is a *tour-de-force* that demonstrates Charles Demuth at the height of his abilities. Here Demuth depicts buildings in a landscape set against planes of subtly modulated color in a composition that is simultaneously refined and dynamic. Most likely influenced by John Addington Symonds’ 1893 essay on aesthetics, it is a dynamic Precisionist composition and meditation on light, form and color. Demuth juxtaposes the strong outlines of the planar forms with the softness of the tempera medium to create depth and suggest the effects of light on the scene. The influence of Cezanne is evident in the areas of exposed



board, which Demuth has deliberately left bare and incorporated into the composition to add further texture and complexity. Executed circa 1920, *In the Key of Blue* is an important and rare tempera that is a direct precursor of masterworks such as *My Egypt* (1927, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York).

OSCAR BLUEMNER | *Surprise (May Moon)*

Estimate: \$400,000-600,000



Surprise (May Moon) was executed by Oscar Bluemner in 1927 (illustrated left), a key moment in the artist's career, as he was experiencing an important shift in his style. Following the passing of his wife the previous year, Bluemner moved his family from Elizabeth, New Jersey, to South Braintree, Massachusetts. His artworks reflected this emotionally turbulent time and he focused on motifs of suns and moons, seeing them as symbols of God or a universal creator. *Surprise (May Moon)* is one of a series of eighteen extraordinary works known as Oscar Bluemner's Sun and Moon series that offer a life affirming depiction of nature and its spiritual force. Here Bluemner masterfully utilizes color to shape and stimulate mood and to convey a range of powerful emotions in a single image. These

important watercolors were the successors to Georgia O'Keeffe's *Evening Star* series and a precursor to Arthur Dove's exploration of similar iconography in the 1930s.

MILTON AVERY | *Mandolin with Pears*

Estimate: \$600,000-800,000

An important figure in the American Modernist movement, Avery was largely self-taught and experimented with color planes and patterns, bridging the gap between Matisse's vivaciously outlined canvases and the American color field artists of the 1950s. *Mandolin with Pears* (illustrated right) was executed in 1945, after Avery had aligned himself with gallerist Paul Rosenberg. Rosenberg had encouraged Avery to replace his painterly techniques with denser areas of flat colors and delineated forms, resulting in visually striking abstract works, such as the present example. *Mandolin with Pears* exemplifies Avery's unique ability to simplify a scene to its broadest possible forms while retaining tension and balance through color and shape.



PRESS CONTACT: Jaime Bernice | +1 212 636 2680 | jbernice@christies.com

[The complete eCatalogue and further details of the sale will be available at Christies.com.](#)

[For PAFA's announcement of the sale of *East Wind Over Weehawken*, please click here.](#)

NOTE TO EDITORS

EDWARD HOPPER'S *EAST WIND OVER WEEHAWKEN* WILL BE ON VIEW AT CHRISTIE'S LONDON FROM OCTOBER 13-19.

FURTHER DETAILS OF THE SALE, INCLUDING OTHER HIGHLIGHTS, WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN THE COMING WEEKS.

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, reached a total of £2.4 billion/\$3.68 billion in global auction and private sales in the first six months of 2013. In 2012, global auction and private sales totaled £3.92 billion/\$6.27 billion, marking the highest annual revenue ever reached by Christie's. 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, jewelry, photography, 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 an emphasis on Post-War and Contemporary, Impressionist and Modern, Old Masters and Jewelry. Global private sales totaled £465 million/\$711 million in the first half year of 2013, an increase of 13% from the same period last year, breaking the sales record of half year private sales for Christie's and the art market for three consecutive years.

Christie's has a global presence of 53 offices in 32 countries and 11 salerooms around the world including London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, Hong Kong, and Shanghai. Christie's has recently led in growth markets such as Russia, China, India and The United Arab Emirates, with successful sales, exhibitions and initiatives held 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.*

###

Images available on request

FOLLOW CHRISTIE'S ON:

