

CHRISTIE'S

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BOOKS AND DECORATIVE ARTS

Christie's Paris presents:

-Books

-Œuvres provenant des Collections du Comte M.A

-The Exceptional Sale

-The Collector: Le Goût Français

Paris - Following the record-breaking results realised in Paris for Christie's 20th Century Week of sales, Christie's will organise a second series of sales this season dedicated to Books and Decorative Arts which opens on view to the public on 24 November with sales on 28 and 29 November. Overall, more than 620 works of art and decorative items will be offered over two days of sales, with an overall estimate of €10 to 15 million.

BOOKS

The first auction will be dedicated to Rare Books, overseen by Adrien Legendre who joined Christie's last summer. This carefully selected auction will present a large range of rare and ancient books, manuscripts and first editions including an exceptional archive of **Blaise Pascal's** personal papers, *Les Recueils Guerrier*, (estimate: €250,000 - €350,000), copied by Father Pierre Guerrier and commissioned by Pascal's niece and goddaughter, Marguerite Périer. This important testimony is almost certainly the last copy in private hands and gathers together important and for some, unpublished, archives of Blaise Pascal. Father Guerrier ensured the preservation of these Pascalian documents of capital importance and they have remained in the same family until today, surviving the destruction of most Pascalian archives.

Another highlight is a remarkable group of rare books from the personal collection of **Baroness Thyssen Bornemisza**. Christie's will offer six outstanding rare books from the Baroness' collection including a superb *Book of Hours*, a Christian devotional book (estimate: €30,000 - €50,000), illuminated by an apprentice the master of Jean Rolin II, one of the most talented French illuminators of the Renaissance. This prestigious collection also includes the first edition of *La*

Tauromaquia by Francisco Goya (estimate: €150,000-250,000) and a copy of the splendid *Thesaurus* of the Dutch zoologist Albertus Seba: *Locupletissimi rerum naturalium thesauri* in a stunning inlaid contemporary binding (estimate: €350,000-550,000).



Also featured in the sale is the first edition of *Justine ou les Malheurs de la Vertu*, by the **Marquis de Sade**, published in 1791 (estimate: €10,000 - €15,000). The complete quire G is surprisingly missing, but has been carefully copied by André Breton. *Justine* is Sade's first work published during his lifetime. This is the second version of *Les Infortunes de la Vertu*, which he finished in 1787 when he was held in prison at the Bastille. Sade's literary debut was an immediate success. The Surrealists' fascination for the "Divine Marquis" was constant and he has always been considered as a reference by the movement.

ŒUVRES PROVENANT DES COLLECTIONS DU COMTE M.A.



This week of sales will also include the **Collection of the Comte M.A.** This sale, comprising 89 lots for a total estimate of approximately €2 to 3 million, will offer a large range of decorative art works with an important section dedicated to Old Master Paintings. The highlight of this ensemble is an exceptional oil on canvas by **Jean-Baptiste Hilaire** *Two caravans at the entrance to the valley leading to Palmyra* (estimate: €200,000-300,000). Beyond his interest in the

site's architecture, Hilaire wanted to depict the customs and habits of two caravans crossing each other in the landscape, one from Baghdad, the other from Damas. Hilaire detailed the clothes and accessories showing one interest in Orientalist subject matter.

A Baroque ormolu and porphyry obelisk realised after Bernini circa 1667-1669 is also part of the collection. Executed according to the model of the *Four Rivers' Fountain* of Piazza Navona by Bernini, this 66-cm. high obelisk presents the coat of arms of Giulio Rospiglioso (1600-1669), bishop and then cardinal who became pope under the name of Clément IX. The crest also presents his predecessor's coat of arms, Pope Alexander VII (Fabio Chigi). We can conclude that Giulio Rospigliosi benefited from his predecessor's favors to rise in the ecclesiastical hierarchy through the presence of the coat of arms of his protector on the crest (estimate: €60,000-80,000).



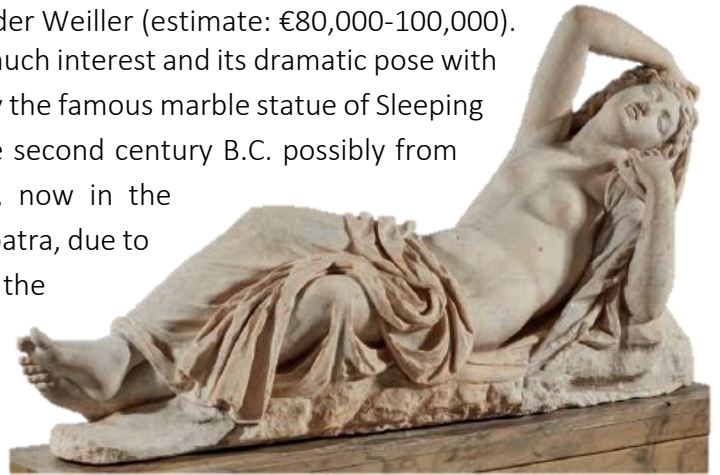
Further highlights include a pair of vases by Jacob Gabriel Molinarolo, also known as Müller, Miller or Molinari (around 1721 - 1780). Born into a family of Austrian sculptors and apprentice of Matthus Donner, he is considered as one of the most talented characters of the Donner school. The two vases illustrated left and estimated at €50,000-80,000, were part of the well-known collection of Georges Geffroy (1905-1971), a great Parisian designer and emblematic figure of the mid-century Café Society. The vases were placed in his apartment rue de Rivoli, and were visible in the living room furnished with a magnificent Louis XVI set, including a combination table by Adam Weisweiler and a Georges Jacob chair.

THE EXCEPTIONAL SALE

On the same day, Christie's will present **The Exceptional sale** curated by renowned French Designer **Hervé Van der Straeten**. Furniture, sculpture, porcelain, Asian works of art and ceramics will be offered to international collectors for a total estimate of €4 to 6 million.

The Resting Nymph of Commander Weiller

One of the highlights of the sale is a beautiful Roman marble resting Nymph dating from circa 2nd-3rd century AD from the private collection of Commander Weiller (estimate: €80,000-100,000). The identification of the subject has been a source of much interest and its dramatic pose with the raised arm and tilted head was certainly inspired by the famous marble statue of Sleeping Ariadne, a Roman copy of a Hellenistic original of the second century B.C. possibly from Pergamon. The most famous example of this type, now in the Vatican Museums, had been initially identified as Cleopatra, due to the snake bracelet she is wearing. Only at the end of the 18th century, Ennio Quirino Visconti identified her as Ariadne, abandoned by her lover Theseus on the island of Naxos whilst asleep, cf. LIMC, 'Ariadne', vol. III, *Addenda*, no. 118.



Other copies of this type can be found in the Louvre, the Museo del Prado, one in the collection of marbles at Wilton House and the Archaeological Museum of Florence. The pathos of the pose and the wealth of elaborate drapery are in line with the finest production of Hellenistic sculpture and reflect the style of the time.

The Trapani Coral and Gold Cabinet

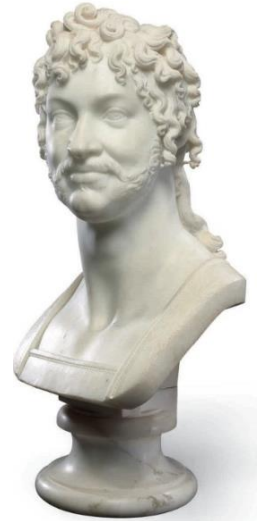
Another centrepiece of Christie's Exceptional Sale is a splendid baroque gilt, enameled and engraved-brass and coral-mounted ebonised cabinet from the late 17th century. Estimated at €80,000-120,000, this rare piece of furniture illustrates the genius of Trapani, the Mediterranean town located in Sicily near Palermo where the works was made. The *savoir-faire* of the artisans made Trapani the most reputable centre for the trade in coral and correspondingly one of the principal ports in the Mediterranean. The cabinet was essentially a storage unit, having evolved throughout the history of furniture to become a display piece and cabinet of curiosity that every erudite person had to own. Trapani coral was used to elevate the cabinet to the status of a masterpiece. This piece is surmounted by an astonishing coral branch sculpted as a tree executed with extreme precision from which subtly emerges satyrs, an eagle head, and a stag head.



Hervé Van der Straeten: “Precious objects made in Trapani in the 18th century are well-known. However, cabinets made in this city are very rare, an interesting combination of enameled brass and precious red coral in a Baroque design. The finely sculpted branch which forms the crest of the cabinet reveals figures of a satyr, an eagle and an owl”.

The Canova of the Princes Murat Collections

Another notable addition to the sale is an exceptional marble bust of Joachim Murat by Antonio Canova. The work was carved in 1813, when Canova travelled down to Naples from Rome to visit Joachim Murat and his wife Caroline, sister of the Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte two years before Murat’s execution. The result of this meeting was a portrait of each in marble, the great sculptor’s favourite medium. The sculptor began this important work, creating models of the busts in plaster and then returning to the Eternal City to execute the marbles. These two busts were known to have been completed and prepared for shipping the same year, in 1813, but no further record of them has ever been found, and there has never been any confirmation that they were delivered to Joachim Murat from Canova’s workshop before Joachim’s execution in 1815. The bust presented here was hidden in the private collection of the direct descendants of the Murat family and was only recently discovered.



LE GOÛT FRANÇAIS

On Wednesday 29 November, Christie’s will present **The Collector: Le Goût Français**, an auction which will offer an eclectic selection of works of art with prestigious provenances. A magnificent selection of pieces from the Murat princely collection will open the sale with great works of art related to one of Napoléon’s closest and brightest marshals.



In this same collection, Napoléon’s admirers will be able to acquire a rare French gold snuff-box with the crest of Napoléon Ist. Estimated at 30,000-50,000 euros, this box was realised by Léger-Fortune Alexandre Ricart around 1809-1815.

Collectors will also be able to discover an authentic Revolutionary chair once included in the famous collection of Chauvac-Claretie, dedicated to the French Revolution. This chair, estimated between €3,000 and 5,000 has previously been presented in several important exhibitions about this period of French History; at the Musée Carnavalet in 1939 and the Musée des Archives Nationales in 1968.



Another interesting piece is a Renaissance-Revival walnut table estimated €6,000-8,000 from the collection of famous architect Gustave Eiffel (1832-1923).

Time of auctions:

Books: 28 November at 2 pm

Œuvres provenant des Collections du Comte M.A: 28 November at 5 pm

The Exceptional Sale: 28 November at 7pm

The Collector: Le Goût français : 29 November at 11:30 am and 1:30 pm

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About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction, private and digital sales in first half of 2017 that totalled £2.35 billion / \$3 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. Christie's offers around 350 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 & Contemporary, Impressionist & Modern, Old Masters and Jewellery.

Alongside regular sales online, Christie's has a global presence in 46 countries, with 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, Hong Kong, and Shanghai.

**Please note when quoting estimates above that other fees will apply in addition to the hammer price - see Section D of the Conditions of Sale at the back of the sale catalogue.*

**Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and are reported net of applicable fees.*

Images available on request

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