

For Immediate Release
3 February 2003

Contact: Clare Roberts 44 207 389 2117
Alexandra Kindermann 44 207 389 2962

croberts@christies.com
akindermann@christies.com

IMPRESSIONIST AND MODERN MASTERS LEAD KEY WEEK OF SALES AT CHRISTIE'S IN FEBRUARY



Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841-1919), *Canotiers à Argenteuil*, oil on canvas, 1873 (estimate: £2,500,000-3,500,000)

Impressionist And Modern Art Evening Sale **3 February 2003**

London - During the first week of February 2003, Christie's London salerooms will be packed with a dazzling array of outstanding artworks from the 19th and 20th centuries as Christie's stages the Spring auctions of *Impressionist and Modern Art*, *German & Austrian Art*, *The Art of the Surreal* and *Post-War and Contemporary Art*,

The sale is led by a superb oil by Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841-1919), *Canotiers à Argenteuil* (estimate: £2,500,000-3,500,000), painted in 1873. The painting depicts oarsmen on the river at Argenteuil and reflects the popularity of rowing as a weekend activity of the middle classes, who flocked from the metropolis in favour of fresh air and relaxing exercise. It is a superb example of the work **Renoir produced in his prime impressionist years when he had fully developed his 'high style'**. At first glance the painting appears to have been executed with great ease and yet, on closer inspection, the variety of brushstrokes used and the careful use of contrasting colour combinations, particularly throughout the water, reveal its technical complexity. *Canotiers à Argenteuil* is the sister work to *The Skiff*, housed in the collection of the National Gallery, London, a painting that was produced much later when Renoir returned to this magnificent subject. The present work was formerly part of the Sterling and Francine Clark collection, one of the greatest collections of works by Renoir amassed last century, and later housed in the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute. It was de-accessioned in 1974 and has been exhibited just once since this time, in 1974.

The evening sale will also offer a number of superb works by Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) led by *Femme dans un fauteuil* (estimate: £4,000,000-6,000,000) which belongs to a group of celebrated canvases, dating from 1932, of **his young lover, Marie-Thérèse Walters. Painted at Boisgeloup, the château Picasso purchased as a hideaway for the couple, this painting is a sister work of *Nu au collier* which sold at Christie's London in June 2002 for £15.9 million, the most expensive Impressionist painting auctioned worldwide in 2002.** *Femme assise dans un fauteuil* (estimate: £2,500,000-3,500,000), painted on 3 November 1941, depicts Picasso's celebrated muse, Dora Maar, and is characteristic of the war infused paintings he produced during **the Spanish Civil War until the end of the Occupation. In Dora, a complex, emotional and eccentric woman, Picasso found an apt muse for the torment and turmoil he wished to render in his work during this period.**

Überbrücktes, an important work on paper by Paul Klee (1879-1940) (estimate: £2,500,000-3,500,000), executed in 1931, and formerly in the renowned Bürgi Collection of works by the artist, will be offered in the evening sale. It is one of the most important of his 'mosaic' works, which explore the use of glimmering, shimmering blocks of colour. The painting was executed in the same year that Klee left the Bauhaus to take up an appointment at the Düsseldorf Academy, and the title of the work, translated as *Spanned* or *Bridged Over*, possibly hints at the changes in his life during in this period.

Amedeo Modigliani's (1884-1920) portrait of *Lunia Czechowska* (estimate: £2,000,000-3,000,000) is a further notable work in the sale. Painted circa 1917-18, it depicts one of Modigliani's favourite, and most elegant, models. It is a superb example of the finest work that he produced

in the last five years of his short life, with the extremely elongated and simplified forms of the sitter's head, neck and shoulders.

Maurice de Vlaminck's (1876-1958) serene *Voile à Chatou*, an oil on canvas painted in 1905 (estimate: £1,400,000-1,800,000) will also be included in the sale. This work is an example of the artist's greatest Fauve landscapes, all of which were painted on the banks of the Seine in the village of Chatou, with its sweeping view of the river dotted with sailing boats.

Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890) is represented in the sale by a brown ink and reed pen work on paper, *Cimetière des Saintes Maries* (estimate: £1,000,000-1,500,000), executed at Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer in June 1888. This is one of a small group of works from van Gogh's stay in the village, and the only one featuring the cemetery, with a bustle of gravestones glimpsed over the wall at the far end of the village.

Scène de Plage an oil on panel by Eugène Boudin (1824-98), painted on the northern French coast in 1865 (estimate: £1,000,000-1,500,000), with a characteristically luminous sky, and a pastel on paper by Edgar Degas (1834-1917) entitled *Dansense* (estimate: £800,000-1,200,000.) will also feature.

Christie's is the only major auction house to hold dedicated sales of ***Impressionist and Modern Works on Paper***, the highlight of which in February 2003 will be Vincent van Gogh's *Six Pines near the Enclosure Wall*, 1889 (estimate: £300,000-400,000), drawn during his time at the asylum of St. Remy, *Nu couché* by Pablo Picasso (estimate: £120,000-160,000) drawn in 1969, and a very characteristic portrait of *Baudelaire* by Henri Matisse, 1944 (estimate: £80,000-120,000). The ***Impressionist and Modern Art Day Sale*** is led by Henri Delavallée's *La route près du manoir* (estimate: £160,000-220,000).

###

Images available on request

These auctions will be featured on www.christies.com. A complete illustrated online catalogue will be published with hard copies available to purchase via the site. If a collector is interested in finding any specific works of art for their collection Christie's online search engine Lotfinder® Assistant can immediately source specific forthcoming items of interest.

Exhibitions

Selected works from the 19th and 20th century evening sales will go on view at Christie's in New York between 22-25 January, and selected highlights from the 19th and 20th century day sales will go on view at Christie's Paris between 21-23 January 2003.

19TH & 20TH CENTURY ART AUCTIONS AT CHRISTIE'S LONDON IN FEBRUARY 2003

German and Austrian Art (evening sale), 3 February at 5pm

Impressionist and Modern Art (evening sale), 3 February at 7pm

The Art of the Surreal (evening sale), 3 February immediately following Impressionist and Modern Art

Impressionist and Modern Art (day sale), 4 February at 2pm

Post-War and Contemporary (evening sale), 5 February at 7pm

Impressionist and Modern Works on Paper, 6 February at 11am

Post-War and Contemporary (day sale), 6 February at 2pm