

*For Immediate Release*

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**RARE CÉZANNE SELF-PORTRAIT LEADS CHRISTIE'S SPRING SALES  
OF IMPRESSIONIST & MODERN ART**

*Penultimate Self-Portrait is the Last in Private Hands*

*Impressionist & Modern Art*

*May 7 & 8, 2003*

*New York – A rare and stunning self-portrait by Paul Cézanne (estimate: \$15,000,000–20,000,000), will be the top lot of Christie's evening sale of Impressionist & Modern Art on May 7, at Rockefeller Center. Never before offered at auction, Portrait de Paul Cézanne, circa 1895, is Cézanne's penultimate depiction of himself, completed only a decade before the artist's death, and the only late self-portrait still in private hands. It has not been publicly exhibited since 1937.*

*Among the major Post-Impressionists at work at the end of the century, Paul Cézanne, Paul Gauguin, and Vincent van Gogh left significant bodies of self-portraiture. The self-portraits of Cézanne tell the longest story, showing the man at intervals in a period spanning almost four decades; the first was done when the artist was in his mid-20s, and the last when he was around 60 years old. In the final 15 years of his life, during the time when he created many of his most important paintings and those that would have the greatest impact on the modern painters of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, he produced only four self-portraits.*

*Portrait de Paul Cézanne is an engaging portrayal that shows the artist on the threshold of his twilight, seasoned and sage-like, questioning and skeptical. There is an admirable nobility in his gray eminence, and even a glint of mischief in the eye under the cocked brow that harkens back to the artist's bohemian youth.*

*Petite danseuse de quatorze ans, executed in wax circa 1879–1881 and cast by 1922 (estimate: \$8,000,000–12,000,000) is universally regarded both as Edgar Degas' supreme sculptural achievement and as one of the most innovative and important sculptures of the modern age. A candid depiction of a young dancer, it is the largest and most ambitious sculpture of all Degas' oeuvre, and the only one exhibited during his lifetime. With its unflinching realism and bold combination of materials – the sculpture features a muslin tutu and satin hair ribbon -- the sculpture represented a daring break with academic tradition when it was first shown publicly in 1881.*

*Between 1948 and 1950, Alberto Giacometti executed a series of multi-figure compositions that comprise some of the undisputed masterpieces of his career. Their constituent elements are culled from the trademark iconography of his post-war oeuvre: the standing woman, the striding man, the disembodied bust. *La clairière*, conceived in 1950 and cast the same year (estimate: \$8,000,000–12,000,000), comprising nine tall, gaunt female figures on a rectangular base, is one of the most celebrated and recognizable of this important group of sculptures and provides a superb example of Giacometti's critical reckoning during this period with the experience of vision and representation. Another important work by Giacometti, *Homme qui marche III*, also conceived in 1950 and cast that same year (estimate: \$3,000,000–4,000,000), expresses one of the central themes of the artist's work during this period. Having made numerous sculptures of striding figures – both solitary and in groups – the present composition represents a culmination of the series, with the short, hesitant step of earlier examples such as *Homme qui marche I*, 1947, replaced here with a wide, dynamic stride.*

*“Composition in White, Blue, and Yellow” :C, 1936 (estimate: \$6,000,000–9,000,000), is an exceptional example of Piet Mondrian's work from the mid-1930s. While his earlier works are celebrated for their spare and reductive purity, Mondrian's compositions from 1932 onward are characterized by a new freedom and vitality, with more complex rhythms steadily supplanting the meditative calm of the earlier canon. This revolution in his work was inaugurated by the introduction of a single new compositional strategy: the double line. The use of color is also noteworthy, with the picture's yellow and blue planes providing a strong asymmetrical bias that checks the evenness of the linear rhythm.*

*The theme of the horse and rider was a persistent and fruitful source of inspiration for Edgar Degas. Over the course of his career, he executed more paintings, drawings, and sculptures of the subject than of any other, besides the ballet. Executed in the mid-1880s *Avant le départ*, (estimate: \$3,000,000–4,000,000), is a masterful example of Degas' racehorse scenes. The landscape is rendered in short, directional strokes of green, yellow, and mauve pastel, while the sky is broadly laid on in passages of light gray chalk atop the warm ocher paper. The coats of the horses vary in*

tonality from red to chestnut to black, and the jockeys' silks provide touches of brilliant color that further animate this vibrant scene.

Claude Monet's *Poste de douaniers à Dieppe, 1882* (estimate: \$2,000,000–3,000,000), from the collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, depicts the gorge of Petit Ailly, located along the Normandy coast just west of Dieppe at Varengueville. The small cabin in the painting, which also appears in other works painted by Monet in this area, was built as a customs house during the Napoleonic blockade of Europe; from this cliff-top perch, officials could spot incoming cargo ships that needed to be intercepted and taxed.

Two canvases by Paul Gauguin are among the important highlights of the May 7 sale of *Impressionist & Modern Art*. *Nature Morte à l'estampe japonaise, 1888* (estimate: \$2,500,000–3,000,000) is both an overt homage to Cézanne and an early indication of Gauguin's interest in Japanese prints. It is one of only three or four still-lives that Gauguin made during a ten-week stay in Paris following his return from Martinique, which endows it with a special importance in Gauguin's oeuvre. *Les oies, 1889* (estimate: \$1,000,000–1,500,000), executed in Brittany in 1889, is one of the most haunting and abstract paintings of Gauguin's entire career. It depicts three geese splashing in a rippling lake, guarded by a Breton woman in traditional costume whose reflection is visible at the upper edge of the canvas. It was in Brittany – especially during his third sojourn in 1889–1890 – that Gauguin finally broke free of earlier tradition and emerged as an intensely original modern master. With its unconventional viewpoint and brilliant swirls of anti-naturalistic color, *Les oies* vividly illustrates this development.

Joan Miró's *Peinture, 1952* (estimate: \$400,000–600,000), which comes from the renowned Seagram Collection, directly correlates to the artist's interest in mural painting, which began several years earlier with important mural commissions in the United States. The extreme width of this painting, and others from the period, gives the effect of a landscape backdrop punctuated by a sequence of vertically aligned forms, creating a pictorial narrative.

Other highlights of the evening sale of *Impressionist & Modern art* are Alfred Sisley's *Paysage à Sevres, 1878* (estimate: \$900,000–1,200,000), Claude Monet's *Vagues à la Manneporte, 1870* (estimate: \$600,000–800,000), and Fernand Léger's *Les papillons, 1937* (estimate: \$600,000–800,000).

*Impressionist & Modern Art Day Sale, May 8*

Christie's *Impressionist and Modern Art day sale* will be highlighted by Camille Pissarro's painting *Jeune paysanne à sa toilette, 1881* (estimate: \$350,000–450,000) and Eugene Boudin's *Fecamp. Le bassin, 1850* (estimate: \$140,000–180,000). The Fauve period is represented by a 1907 winter scene by Maurice de Vlaminck: *Le coteaux de Chatou en hiver, 1907* (estimate: \$350,000–450,000), while the Surrealist

movement is highlighted by André Masson's 1924 painting *L'homme* (estimate: \$120,000–160,000), which is being sold by the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, and Joan Miró's *Paroles du poete* (estimate: \$300,000–400,000). Raoul Dufy's *Bateaux au Port* (estimate: \$350,000–450,000) leads the selection of School of Paris paintings.

Sculpture has been growing field of interest to collectors, and this season's sale includes Aristide Maillol's *Baigneuse debout se tenant les bras aux epaules* (estimate: \$280,000–350,000) and Edgar Degas' *Danseuse regardant la plante de son piede droit* (estimate: \$180,000–220,000). The Impressionist and Modern Works on Paper section of the sale offers a broad selection, including Vincent van Gogh's *Sein Nursing Baby* (estimate: \$220,000–280,000), Fernand Léger's *Composition aux deux perroquets* (estimate: \$380,000–450,000) and Pablo Picasso's *Femme nue et amours* (estimate: \$250,000–350,000).

*Auction:*            *Impressionist & Modern Art evening sale*            *May 7 at 7 p.m.*  
                         *Impressionist & Modern Art day sale*                            *May 8 at 10 a.m.*

*Viewing:*            *Christie's Galleries, 20 Rockefeller Plaza*                            *May 2 – 6*

*Christies.com:*            *The sales of Impressionist & Modern art will be featured on [www.christies.com](http://www.christies.com) in a special subsite that will include a gallery talk with Nicholas Maclean, co-head of Christie's Impressionist & Modern Art department. All lots in the sales can be viewed online, along with full catalogue descriptions on Lotfinder®. The Impressionist & Modern Art subsite will be featured on christies.com two weeks prior to the sale date.*

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*Images available on request*  
*Visit Christie's Web site at [www.christies.com](http://www.christies.com)*