

Press Release

CHRISTIE'S

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Contact: Matthew Paton 44.20.7389.2664 mpaton@christies.com
Rik Pike 1.212.636.2680 rpike@christies.com

THE FAMED COLLECTION OF J. IRWIN AND XENIA S. MILLER TO BE OFFERED AT CHRISTIE'S

Seventeen Works To Be Sold In London This June Form The Most Significant Offering Of Impressionist And Modern Art Ever To Be Sold By Christie's In Europe

Collection Includes The Most Important Work From Monet's Waterlilies' Series Ever Sold On The European Market



London / New York – Christie's is delighted to announce the consignment from the Collection of J. Irwin and Xenia S. Miller to its 2008 season of sales at Christie's in London and New York. Leading the collection are seventeen works which will be offered at the *Impressionist and Modern Art Evening Sale* in London on June 24, and represent the most important and valuable collection of Impressionist and Modern art ever offered by Christie's in Europe.

Christie's
20 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10020
phone 212.636.2680 fax 212.636.4951
www.christies.com

J. Irwin Miller, an industrialist from Columbus, Indiana, and his wife Xenia Simons Miller, were major philanthropists and patrons of the arts who were instrumental in turning Columbus in America into a showcase for modern architecture. Their passion for civic renewal was matched with a belief that art is an essential element of a meaningful life, and the seventeen Impressionist and Modern works together are expected to realize in excess of £40 million / \$80 million.

Their collection is led by Claude Monet's *Le bassin aux nymphéas*, an expansive and important late water-lily painting, one of an extremely rare series of large-scale four paintings signed and dated by the artist in 1919 (estimate on request). Unlike most of the late work which remained unfinished in the studio at the artist's death, these four works were released by the artist during his lifetime. One of the series is in the Collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, another was cut down and the third is in a private collection, having been sold at Christie's New York in November 1992 for the then very significant price of \$12,100,000.



Other major Impressionist and Modern works include an important Fauve portrait by Henri Matisse (estimate: £3,000,000-4,000,000); Pierre Bonnard's luminous *Vue du Cannet* of 1927 (estimate: £3,000,000-4,000,000); a Marc Chagall still life (estimate: £1,500,000-2,500,000); *Comptoir et guitare*, a major Pablo Picasso still life of 1924 (estimate: £3,000,000-4,000,000); an exquisite 1911 cubist oil on canvas, also by Picasso (estimate: £2,000,000-3,000,000); superb watercolors by Wassily Kandinsky and Camille Pissarro's vibrant street scene *Cours du Havre, Gare Saint Lazare* of 1893 (estimate: £2,000,000-3,000,000).

Elsewhere, six other works will be offered in Post-War and Contemporary Art sales in London, and at New York sales of American Paintings and Folk Art auctions in 2008. These six lots include significant pictures by Mark Rothko and a superb Edwards Hicks example from his much sought-after series *The Peaceable Kingdom* (estimate: \$4,000,000-6,000,000). In its entirety, the Collection is valued in excess of £45 million / \$90 million.

Christopher Burge, Honorary Chairman, Christie's Americas, says: "In life, Mr. and Mrs. Miller were humble, direct, unpretentious and somewhat shy. Yet their influence – on the art world, on the business



community, on the citizens of Columbus – was expansive, far-reaching, complex and bold. Predominant in their lives was a profound commitment to their community, a family tradition and an almost spiritual philosophy about the importance of enriching the lives of their fellow citizens. We are deeply honored to be offering their Collection for sale.”

Jussi Pylkkänen, President of Christie's Europe, says: *“It is a great honor for Christie's to be asked to handle the Collection of J. Irwin and Xenia S. Miller. The collection represents one of the most significant groups of Impressionist and Modern masterpieces ever offered for sale in Europe and these fine works will serve as the foundation of what promises to be a spectacular exhibition and sale here in London in June. The outstanding work is unquestionably Monet's superb Le bassin aux nymphéas of 1919. A Nymphéas of this quality is of the utmost rarity and represents the most important work from Monet's Waterlilies' series ever sold on the European market. In recent years, Christie's auctions in Europe have realised some landmark prices as new clients from Asia, the Middle East and Russia compete with the traditional collectors from Europe and the Americas and we are looking very forward to building on recent successes in London and offering this extraordinary collection in June.”*

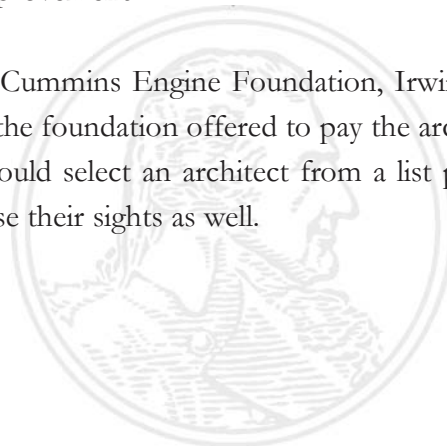
J. Irwin and Xenia S. Miller



As philanthropists, they helped to transform their ordinary small Midwestern town of Columbus, Indiana, into a unique city where art and architecture have elevated the quality of life for all its citizens. In their private lives, they also built a mid-century modern home for their family that is recognized today as a National Historic Landmark and filled it with furnishings, paintings, drawings and sculptures by late 19th and 20th century masters.

Although Irwin Miller is known internationally as a businessman, social activist and philanthropist, the story of the Millers and Columbus, Indiana is legendary in architectural circles. In 1976, The New York Times architecture critic, Paul Goldberger, wrote, “Columbus, Ind., and J. Irwin Miller are almost holy words in architectural circles. There is no other place in which a single philanthropist has placed so much faith in architecture as a means to civic improvement.”

Through his company's philanthropic arm, the Cummins Engine Foundation, Irwin Miller created the Architecture Program in 1952, under which the foundation offered to pay the architects' fees for a public building if the local governing body would select an architect from a list provided by the Foundation. These efforts inspired others to raise their sights as well.



Today, there are more than 60 structures of note in Columbus designed by architects such as Eliel and Eero Saarinen, I. M. Pei, Kevin Roche, and Richard Meier. Half of them received a subsidy from the Cummins Foundation. The significance of the modern architecture in Columbus led the community as a whole and four specific buildings within it (including the Millers' home) to be designated National Historic Landmarks in 2000.

Xenia Miller also believed that the arts were among the most civilizing influences of life. With an unerring eye for color and design, she identified and bought the works of some of the greatest artists of the 20th century well before they were famous. She, with her husband, commissioned major works by Henry Moore, Jean Tinguely, and Dale Chihuly for public projects in their hometown and donated them to the city. She chaired the Indiana Arts Commission and was the first person to chair the board of the Indiana Endowment for the Arts. It was her vision and persistence that created the Indianapolis Museum of Art—Columbus Gallery, one of the first branch galleries of a major museum in the country.

Educated at Yale and Balliol College, Oxford in the late 1920s and early 1930s, Irwin Miller was an active participant in the intellectual debates at both universities on modernism and the role of art in society. He returned to his hometown of Columbus, Indiana in 1934, to enter the world of business as the General Manager of Cummins Engine Company. Over the next sixty years, Irwin Miller fashioned Cummins into the leading independent diesel manufacturer in the world, a Fortune 500 company with 25,000 employees in 131 countries and \$6 billion of sales, based on the simple belief that the only appropriate goal in any activity is the very best possible.

Xenia Miller was also born in southern Indiana. Like many women who came of age in the Great Depression, she could not afford to go to college. She met her future husband across a union bargaining table at Cummins when she represented the office workers and he negotiated for management. Her discerning eye for great art, grounded in her love of beauty and color, was largely self taught in the great museums and galleries of the world.

The Millers' shared faith in art as an essential element of a good life went beyond civic improvement. The Millers persuaded their friend Eero Saarinen (who was rarely interested in residential architecture) to design a house for their family in Columbus, finished in 1957. It was for this wonderful structure and for



the glorious gardens, that the Millers, over an eighteen year period in the 1960s and 70s, carefully selected paintings, drawings and sculptures by late 19th and 20th century masters.

International Auction Calendar



Impressionist and Modern Art Evening Sale

London, June 24

Led by Claude Monet's *Le bassin aux nymphéas*, an expansive and important late water-lily painting, one of a series of four paintings signed and dated by the artist in 1919 (estimate on request), other major Impressionist and Modern works to be offered on the evening include paintings by Pierre Bonnard, Pablo Picasso, Camille Pissarro, Henri Matisse, Marc Chagall and Wassily Kandinsky.

Post-War and Contemporary Art

London, June 30, July 1

Three paintings will be auctioned, led by Mark Rothko's *Black, White and Blue* (estimate: £1,500,000-2,000,000).

American Furniture and Folk Art

New York, September 24

A superb example from one of the most sought-after American Folk Art picture series, *Peaceable Kingdom* by Edward Hicks (estimate: \$4,000,000-6,000,000), will be included in this sale.



Important American Paintings, Drawings and Sculpture

New York, December 4

Two works by Morris Hirshfield and Anna Mary Robertson Moses will be offered.

About Christie's

Christie's is the world's leading art business with global auction sales in 2007 that totaled £3.1 billion/\$6.3 billion. This marks the highest total in company and in art auction history. 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 conducted the greatest auctions of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, and today remains a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 600 sales 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 \$80 million. Christie's has 85 offices in 43 countries and 14 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Los Angeles, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Tel Aviv, Dubai and Hong Kong. Most recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in emerging and new 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