

For Immediate Release

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***CHRISTIE'S EVENING SALE OF POST-WAR AND CONTEMPORARY ART TOTALS
\$69.8 MILLION***

Mark Rothko's No. 9 (White and Black on Wine) Realizes A Record Price of \$16.4 Million

New York, NY – Two masterworks by Mark Rothko, each a superb and highly resonant example of his celebrated late 1950s work, accounted for the top prices tonight at Christie's spring evening sale of Post-War and Contemporary art. The sale realized \$69,788,625 and was 72% sold by lot and 89% sold by value. In a saleroom energized by furious bidding for the best quality works, six world auction records were established tonight for artists such as Rothko, Close, Manzoni and Murakami. Seventeen works sold for over \$1 million and 37 of the 43 lots sold fetched prices within or above pre-sale estimate (86%). Successful buyers this evening were 79% North American, 19% European and 2% from the rest of the world.*

"The message from tonight's sale is that the art market is strong," said Christopher Burge, Honorary Chairman of Christie's Americas and the evening's auctioneer. "There was furious bidding for works of great quality and the top story of the night was clearly Rothko. It was also gratifying to see the truly beautiful Yves Klein painting, a work of great importance, receive its due."

The top lot of the sale, Mark Rothko's No. 9 (White and Black on Wine), 1958, a rare and monumental landscape-format painting by the artist, sold for a stunning price of \$16,359,500, far eclipsing the previous world auction record for the artist. This coveted work, with its bold heavy colors, imposing scale and powerful balance of contrasting tones, is also the only work by Rothko universally accepted as belonging to the first series of mural paintings produced for the artist's now-legendary unfulfilled commission for the Four Seasons restaurant in New York.

** Excluding Arshile Gorky's Year After Year, which was offered as a separate sale.*

The second highest price of the evening was paid for Rothko's Brown and Blacks in Reds, 1957, the highlight of the Seagram Collection, a collection meticulously assembled to accentuate the firm's landmark headquarters at 375 Park Avenue in New York. Several bidders pursued this painterly work which finally sold for \$6,727,500 and continued Christie's highly successful sales of Seagram property which has thus far realized \$8.7 million.

Additional highlights included Yves Klein's beautiful and mesmerizing RE 2, 1958, the second painting from the artist's highly celebrated series of sponge reliefs, which realized \$5,271,500 and Gerhard Richter's monumental abstract painting Abstraktes Bild, 1987, which fetched \$3,367,500.

The sale offered a wide selection of works by Andy Warhol from a variety of private collections and several fetched impressive prices. Marlon, 1966, an unforgettable image of a leather-clad Marlon Brando resting on his Triumph motorbike in a publicity still from the 1953 movie The Wild One, fetched \$5,047,500. Campbell's Soup Can (Pepper Pot), 1962, a classic example of the artist's iconic soup can paintings from the renowned Tremaine Family Collection sold for \$2,415,500.

Several private collections fared well tonight. Christie's sold six of nine works from a private European collection for a total of \$6,201,300. This distinguished collection was led by Sam Francis' Big Orange, 1954-55, a seminal work from the artist's most important period and one of the few 1950s Francis paintings still in private hands, which realized \$2,695,500. The Collection of Marieluise Hessel was 100% sold for a total of \$2,945,800.

Christie's continued its record-breaking sales of works by the acclaimed artist Takashi Murakami and tonight sold the artist's first three-dimensional figure, Miss Ko², 1997, for \$567,500. Executed in the artist's signature Japanimation style, Miss Ko² is the stereotypical male fantasy with flowing blonde hair, huge innocent eyes, a tiny waist and seemingly mile-long legs.

Thus far, Christie's sales of Impressionist & Modern, Post-War and Contemporary art have realized a total \$142,362,615.

<i>Sale</i>	<i>Sold</i>
<i>Impressionist & Modern Art (evening)</i>	<i>\$59,737,900</i>
<i>Impressionist & Modern Art (day & WOP)</i>	<i>\$12,836,090</i>
<i>Post-War & Contemporary Art (evening)</i>	<i>\$69,788,625</i>
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>\$142,362,615</i>

Christie's sales of Post-War and Contemporary Art continue tomorrow at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m

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Images available on request

Visit Christie's Web site at www.christies.com