

For Immediate Release

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**EXQUISITE LANDSCAPE BY MATTA LEADS CHRISTIE'S SPRING SALES
OF LATIN AMERICAN ART**

*Surrealist Landscape from the Renowned Seagram Collection
Never Before Offered at Auction*

Latin American Art

May 28 & 29, 2003

New York – Christie's spring sales of Latin American art on May 28 and 29 at Rockefeller Center will be headlined by Endless Nudes, an exquisite 1942 canvas by Roberto Sebastián Matta from the renowned Seagram Collection. A vibrant and dream-like landscape, Endless Nudes is estimated at \$1,000,000–1,500,000 and is making its first appearance at auction.

Proclaimed the most profound painter of his generation by none other than Marcel Duchamp, Matta joined the Surrealists in Paris in 1937 at the invitation of André Breton and was soon regarded as one of their most talented and zealous champions. Arriving in New York in 1940, he became a central figure among a new generation of artists who used the principle of automatism – spontaneous painting undertaken to freely express the workings of the subconscious – as a guiding force. Rich with luminous color and imagery, Endless Nudes exemplifies the characteristics and ideals of the Surrealist movement in its evocation of a fantastic, illusory landscape.

Another important canvas by Matta, The Morphology of Desire, 1938 (estimate: \$700,000–900,000), is one of the seminal paintings of the morphology series, which marked a significant turning point

in the artist's career. The present canvas masterfully depicts Matta's notion of man's inner world through the Earth's volatile landscape with turbulent, incendiary color.

Eugenio Landesio's La Hacienda de Colón, 1857-58 (estimate: \$800,000-1,000,000), from a private Mexican collection, was included in The Metropolitan Museum of Art's landmark 1990 traveling exhibition Mexico: Splendors of Thirty Centuries. Landesio, one of Mexico's premier landscape artists in the mid-19th century, was able to simultaneously combine scientific knowledge with artistic sensibility to create works of art that served as an important visual record for the hacienda owners who commissioned his paintings. The present work, a sweeping vista of the Hacienda de Colón, a sugarcane mill located in Puebla, details the various components of hacienda life through architectural attention to detail and the depiction of the residents' daily lives. Other important 19th-century works in the sale are three wonderful drawings by Saturnino Herrán.

Fernando Botero's sculpture is represented in the sale by Reclining Nude, 1976 (estimate: \$300,000-350,000), a bronze with dark brown patina. Acquired directly from the artist by the present owner, Reclining Nude is an endearing example of Botero's characteristically voluptuous depictions of the female nude.

Also making its first appearance at auction is Joaquín Torres-García's Composición, 1931 (estimate: \$250,000-350,000), a painting that illustrates Torres-García's quest to unite tradition with the modernist influence of his time. A white glyph on a dark gray background divided into a grid whose symmetrical compartments contain a variety of images, Composición is a superb example of the architectural character of his work from the early 1930s.

Nativity (triptych), 1989 (estimate: \$120,000-160,000), which is being sold by the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, to benefit their Collection Fund, is a fantastical triptych by Surrealist Leonora Carrington. Carrington, who populates her canvases with animals and mythical characters that serve as intermediaries between the unconscious and natural worlds, has created here a replica of the traditional Christian nativity scene.

Frida Kahlo made her first visit to New York in 1931, when her husband, the Mexican muralist Diego Rivera, was preparing for a retrospective and the fledgling Museum of Modern Art. From her hotel window at the Barbizon-Plaza, Kahlo made the charming watercolor A View of Central Park, 1932 (estimate: \$80,000-120,000), a wintry view of the south end of the park and of various roads looping through grass and trees. Revealing the artist's relaxed touch and insouciant humor, apartment buildings are lightly indicated on the drawing's periphery while a better-defined building with two arched windows must certainly be The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Claudio Bravo's Poteria de Marrakesh, 1995 (estimate: \$200,000-250,000), a depiction of pieces of pottery, exemplifies the artist's technical mastery and thematic consistency through his poetic references to everyday life. Antonio Berni's Juanito Laguna, 1977 (estimate: \$100,000-150,000), an acrylic and collage on wood, is part of the artist's aesthetic exploration of the rapid industrial growth of Buenos Aires and its effects on the city's marginalized population.

Contemporary Art

Christie's evening sale of Latin American Art on May 28 will once again offer paintings, sculpture and installation work by Latin America's most revered Contemporary artists, including Sandra Cinto, Francis Alj's, Mira Schendel, and Luis Cruz Azaceta.

<i>Auction:</i>	<i>Latin American Art (evening session)</i>	<i>May 28 at 7 p.m.</i>
	<i>Latin American Art (morning session)</i>	<i>May 29 at 10 a.m.</i>
<i>Viewing:</i>	<i>Christie's Galleries, Rockefeller Center</i>	<i>May 24 – 28</i>

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Images available on request

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

Christies.com: The sales of Latin American art will be featured on www.christies.com in a special subsite that will include picture gallery and specialist's view of the sales. All lots in the sales can be viewed online, along with full catalogue descriptions on Lotfinder®. The Latin American Art subsite will be featured on christies.com two weeks prior to the sale date.