

For Immediate Release

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**OLD MASTERS AND 19TH CENTURY ART
AT CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK JUNE 4**

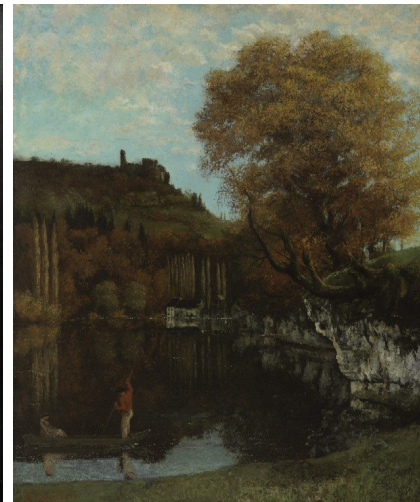
**RARE, NEWLY REDISCOVERED WORK BY REGNAULT
AMONG THE 19TH CENTURY HIGHLIGHTS**



Workshop of Joachim Patinir
Saint Jerome in the Wilderness
circa 1480-1524
Estimate: \$30,000 - \$50,000



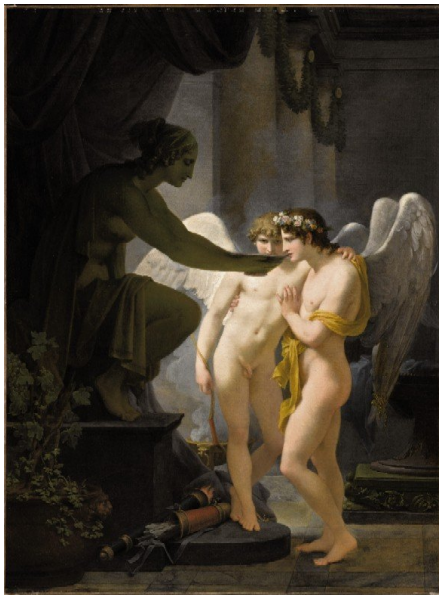
Sir Joshua Reynolds, P.R.A.
Portrait of Bridget Morris
circa 1757
Estimate: \$50,000 - 70,000



Gustave Courbet
Le Miroir de Scey-en-Varais
1864-1868
Estimate: \$250,000-350,000

New York – Exceptional examples of early Northern Renaissance painting, 18th century British portraiture, and 19th century genre painting are among the highlights of Christie's June 4 sale of *Old Masters and 19th Century Art* in New York. This sale spans the full continuum of European art from the 14th to the 19th century, with a diverse array of artists, including Aelbert Cuyp, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Gustave Courbet, and Jean Baptiste Regnault, among others. The 155-lot sale is expected to realize in excess of \$6 million.

Among the highlights of the sale is an exciting rediscovery by the French neoclassical artist **Jean Baptiste Regnault** (1754-1829). *Cupid and Hymen Drink from the Cup of Friendship* (pictured below - estimate: \$200,000-300,000) comes from a private European collection; it was one of a small group of Regnault's late works that were dispersed at an estate sale of his work in 1830. Never before published, this full-scale painting depicts a mischievous-looking Cupid, God of Love, embracing Hymen, God of Marriage, who prepares to drink from a cup offered by a sculptural figure representing Friendship. Although it celebrates the union of Love and Marriage through the intermediary of Friendship (who sits upon an altar covered in ivy, symbolizing fidelity), the painting is notable for its barely concealed homoeroticism and a hothouse sensuality that would have been startling to Regnault's contemporaries.



Scholars of Regnault's work theorize that the artist may never have intended to sell the painting. In his later years, as a financially successful artist and founder of his own school, Regnault no longer relied on commissions and instead indulged in painting subjects of his own choosing. The painting is a major work from the artist's so-called *genre gracieux*: a remarkably independent series of late works imbued with the eroticism of the 18th century but executed with a sexual frankness, sensuality and exaggerated -- almost Mannerist -- elegance of line. Of the eleven paintings documented in Regnault's estate sale, most are now included in museum collections in Europe and the U.S. An exquisite *modello* for *Cupid and Hymen Drink from the Cup of Friendship*, executed on paper and mounted on canvas, is now in the collection of the

Musée du Louvre in Paris.

Old Masters

One of the earliest highlights of the sale is a depiction of *Saint Jerome in the Wilderness* (pictured page one left - estimate: \$30,000-50,000) from the **Workshop of Joachim Patinir** (circa 1480-1524). The composition of the painting is similar to a version by Patinir that is in the collection of the Museo del Prado in Madrid. Other elements, including the figure of Saint Gerome and the red cloak at the foreground link the painting to versions held by the Louvre and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. The painting is one of several works in the sale that is offered without reserve.

Additional examples of early Netherlandish genre painting and portraiture include works by **Aelbert Cuyp** (1620-1691) and the **Circle of Quentin Massys** (1466-1530). Cuyp's *A Herdsman and cows in a field with the Deutsche Huis and Mariakerke, Utrecht, beyond* (estimate: \$120,000-180,000) is a gently-lit

bucolic scene. *A gentleman in his study, half-length, wearing a fur-trimmed coat* (estimate: \$100,000-150,000) is a finely-detailed portrait of an unknown scholar attributed to Massys's fellow artists, who are believed to have painted the work in the years immediately following his death in 1530. The life-like details and secular nature of the portrait bear the trademark influence of Massys, who was the celebrated founder of the Antwerp school of painting.

The storied tradition of British portraiture is represented in the sale by **Sir Joshua Reynolds, P.R.A.** (1723-1792), one of the greatest portrait painters of the 18th century. His *Portrait of Bridget Morris, later Mrs. Lockwood* (pictured page one center - estimate: \$50,000-70,000) is a delicate half-length view of his young subject, clad in a white silk dress and blue robe with ermine trim.

19th Century Highlights



A poignant portrayal of a doe-eyed peasant girl draws the viewer into *La Leçon Difficile* (pictured left - estimate: \$700,000-1,000,000) by the 19th century French painter **William Bouguereau** (1825-1905). In this sentimental evocation of youth, Bouguereau conveys the ideals of beauty, purity and hope that were central to his artistic philosophy.

A highlight from the collection of the late Caral Gimbel Leboworth, a prominent New York philanthropist and art patron, is **Gustave Courbet's** idyllic landscape *Le Miroir de Scey-en-Varais* (pictured page one right - estimate: \$250,000 - \$350,000). The large-scale painting is the lead image from a small group of paintings depicting a mirror-like pool in the river Loue, located just beyond Courbet's native Ornans. At just over four feet in height, the painting is the largest of the works by Courbet focusing on this stretch of river, and the only one to encompass all of its features, including the ruins of a medieval tower on the hill above. Courbet added a rare touch of pastoral romance to the work in the quaint portrayal of a local couple poling a boat on the river. Believed to have been painted in the mid 1860's, the painting has remained in the Leboworth collection for nearly four decades.

The sale's cover lot is the superlative *Reapers at Noon* (estimate: 120,000 - \$180,000) by the 19th century British artist **John Linnell** (1792-1882). The charming scene depicts a trio of farmhands stealing a midday nap beneath the pile of wheat they are meant to be stacking. A terrier stands guard nearby, appearing ready to bark a warning of the farmer's approach. The painting is the first of four versions Linnell completed; the second was purchased by Sir Henry Tate, and is now in the collection of the Tate Britain in London.

Maritime Paintings

Rounding out the selection of offerings in the sale is a section of historic maritime paintings highlighted by *The Billowing Ocean: The Clipper Titania* (estimate: \$80,000-120,000) by the British artist **Montague Dawson** (1895-1973). *Shipping off Gibraltar* (estimate: \$30,000-50,000) is a Romantic depiction of the Rock of Gibraltar and its Moorish Castle by **Vilhelm Melbye** (1824-1882), one of Denmark's most sought-after marine artists.

Auction: Old Masters and 19th Century Art

June 4, 2009 at 10am

Viewings: Christie's Rockefeller Galleries

May 30-June 3, 2009

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*Estimates do not include buyer's premium

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