

For Immediate Release

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CHRISTIE'S TO OFFER "A RARE TROVE OF MODERNS" FROM AN IMPORTANT AMERICAN COLLECTION

Post-War and Contemporary Art November 10

New York, NY – Christie's evening sale of *Post-War and Contemporary Art* on November 10 at Rockefeller Center will offer "a rare trove of Moderns" from an Important American Collection. Assembled over 40 years, this collection reflects the personal journey of discovery and unique partnership of a husband and wife team, and conveys a passion, intelligence and boldness of conviction that is ground-breaking. Christie's will offer seven important works, including the best of Alexander Calder and Cy Twombly, in the sale of Post-War and Contemporary Art and five pivotal works from major 20th century artists such as Miró, Giacometti, Picasso and Léger, as part of the evening sale of *Impressionist and Modern Art* on November 3.

The couple sought the guidance of legendary Chicago dealer Bud Holland in the beginning of their pursuit, and together they concentrated on early 20th century European masters. In 1973, the couple acquired *Baby Flat Top* (estimate: \$1,500,000-2,000,000), Alexander Calder's early masterpiece that was executed in 1946 for his breakthrough exhibition at Galerie Louis Carré in Paris. This standing mobile is a seminal example of the artist's engineering talent and unerring sense of balance, form and movement. This intricate and complex sculpture incorporates five separate mobiles of varying elements into one unified composition. The collectors chose to complement *Baby Flat Top* with an impressively large hanging mobile entitled *Number 1 to 5*, 1954 (estimate: \$1,000,000-1,500,000), whose strong colors juxtaposed with varied shapes, create a miniaturized cosmos.

The selection of major works by Cy Twombly represents distinct high periods in the artist's career and truly distinguishes this collection. *Untitled (Rome)*, 1971 (estimate: \$5,000,000-7,000,000) is a rare white-ground painting from his highly celebrated 'Blackboard' series, a series inspired by the idea of a classroom blackboard and notable for its strict graphic regularity and severe formal restraint. Meanwhile the present work shows Twombly's graphic development into a continuous flow of movement and energy as seen by this work's wave-like progression of lasso-loops scrawled across the canvas in a sequential rhythm. Prior to Twombly's 'Blackboard' series is *Untitled (Rome)*, 1962 (estimate: \$3,500,000-4,500,000), an exuberant example from his Rome period in which the artist uses scrawls, smears and drips of paint in sporadic and explosive movements to create a sensual and visceral landscape. Executed in 1981-1982 is Cy Twombly's, *Untitled* (estimate: \$600,000-800,000), a work on paper where color becomes increasingly dominant and whose vigorous scrawls of crayon reveal an almost Impressionistic quality that characterized much of his work from this period.

A radical shift in the collection was made by the purchase of Jasper John's *Untitled*, 1981-1982 (estimate: \$4,000,000-5,000,000), from the Leo Castelli Gallery in 1982. This colossal picture marks the culmination of the artist's cross hatching theme and shows the development of this nearly decade-long motif. The pattern of dense cross-hatching covers the entire canvas and is punctuated only by shifts in color and a skull-and-crossbones, which hangs in the corner of the canvas. This newly introduced figurative element—the skull-and-crossbones—demonstrates a new direction that Johns was taking in his work and signifies what would become his signature works in the subsequent period.

Also highlighting the collection is Jean Dubuffet's *Il Parle*, 1961 (estimate: \$800,000-1,200,000), whose color and vigor captures the creative frenzy associated with Dubuffet's art during this period.

Auction: Post-War and Contemporary Art November 10 at 7 p.m.
An Important American Collection

Viewing: Christie's Galleries, 20 Rockefeller Plaza November 6-10

Christies.com: *The sales of Post-War and Contemporary Art will be featured on www.christies.com. All lots in the sales can be viewed online, along with full catalogue descriptions on Lotfinder®. The Post-War and Contemporary Art subsite will be featured on christies.com two weeks prior to the sale date.*

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Images available upon request

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