

# CHRISTIE'S

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## DE KOONING MASTERWORK WILL LEAD 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY EVENING SALE

17 NOVEMBER 2022 | NEW YORK

*UNTITLED III* IS SET TO BE AMONG DE KOONING'S TOP THREE WORKS TO  
SELL AT AUCTION



**WILLEM DE KOONING (1904-1997)**

*Untitled III*

signed 'de Kooning' (on the reverse) oil on canvas  
70 x 80 in. (177.8 x 203.2cm.)

Painted in 1977-1980  
Estimate on Request

**New York** – Christie's is pleased to announce Willem de Kooning's *Untitled III* as a leading highlight of this season's 20th Century Evening Sale, taking place live Thursday, 17 November 2022 during Marquee Week in Christie's New York saleroom at Rockefeller Center. The work is estimated to achieve in the region of \$35,000,000, establishing it among the top three artworks by the artist to sell at auction.

*Untitled III* dates from a triumphal period of the artist's career. Responding to the open spaces and unique light of his home in Springs, Long Island, de Kooning's canvases became tangible evidence of the vitality that he found in his new surroundings. Culminating in 1977, with these large-scale canvases, the artist successfully brought together figure and landscape. The predominance of blue in the present

work is especially striking given de Kooning's bucolic surroundings. The artist clears a path through deep pools of blue for light to explode through ethereal washes of pale white and blue. In the central band, fiery red elements pierce the upper calm, and mottled passages of blue, green, yellow, and pink temper their energy allowing a distinct sense of visual equilibrium. By keeping the background colors more tame and dispersed between drifts of marbled white, de Kooning keeps the composition from becoming jumbled and instead evokes the virtuosic gestural quality for which he is known.

*"With a painting such as Untitled III, de Kooning takes his place in a noble tradition of artist's responding to the landscape that includes the like of Claude Monet and Vincent van Gogh" says **Ana Maria Celis, Head of Department, Post-War and Contemporary Art**, "He didn't want to paint nature directly, he wanted to convey the extraordinary sense of light that bounces off the water in this very special place."*

By fixating on this representation of a feeling, the artist dives deeper and deeper into his meticulous process of repeatedly laying down layers of paint before removing excess layers to materialize the intangible experience in color and form. By coalescing color, form, abstraction and figuration into one pulsating canvas, de Kooning demonstrates why he has come to be celebrated as one of the most inventive painters of the twentieth-century.

## TOUR DATES

Hong Kong | 5 – 7 October  
London | 14 – 17 October

DOWNLOAD PRESS IMAGE [HERE](#)

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### About Christie's

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Christie's [auctions](#) span more than [80 art and luxury categories](#), at price points ranging from \$200 to over \$100 million. In recent years, Christie's has achieved the world record price for an artwork at auction ([Leonardo da Vinci's Salvator Mundi](#), 2017), for a 20th century artwork ([Andy Warhol's Shot Sage Blue Marilyn](#), 2022) and for a work by a living artist ([Jeff Koons' Rabbit](#), 2019). Christie's is also recognised as a reference for prestigious single owner collections, having auctioned 8 of the 10 most important collections in history.

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*\*Please note when quoting estimates above that other fees will apply in addition to the hammer price - see Section D of the Conditions of Sale at the back of the sale catalogue.*

*\*Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and are reported net of applicable fees.*

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