

CHRISTIE'S

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Une Bibliothèque des Avant-gardes: Paul Destribats (1926-2017) 5th and final part

Paris – 3 and 4 November 2022
Viewing from 26 October to 2 November



Wassily KANDINSKY and Franz MARC
Der Blaue Reiter, Munich, R. Piper & Co., 1912, 295 x 224 mm,
Estimation: €30,000 – €50,000
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Paris – On 3 and 4 November, the Christie's Books and Manuscripts department in partnership with bookseller Jean-Baptiste de Proyart and expert Claude Oterelo will conclude the auction of Paul Destribats' (1926–2017) *Bibliothèque des Avant-gardes*. This journey began at Christie's in 2019 with an inaugural sale followed by three more auctions in the years that followed.

With 6,000 books, pamphlets and manifestos from the 20th century, the first four sales of the library totalled nearly €14 million, becoming the largest book collection ever sold at Christie's Paris. This concluding sale brings together nearly 450 lots that epitomise and chronicle the European avant-garde of the 20th and 21st centuries.

With this final chapter, the library remains the hall of fame it already proved to be for the most renowned artists of the 20th century. Lot 5 features a copy of the revolutionary *Blaue Reiter* (1912), the founding work of the avant-garde, here in its extremely rare deluxe edition. In a remarkable state of preservation, the Destribats library copy includes two original signed woodcuts by **Wassily Kandinsky and Franz Marc**, and is supplemented by two handwritten letters signed by the artists (estimated at €30,000 – €50,000. ill. below).

Another emblematic work and cornerstone of the collection is **André Breton's *Manifeste du Surréalisme***. Paul Destribats considered Breton, the figurehead of the Surrealist movement, to be a prerequisite for anyone wishing to understand the evolution of modernity, and the poetic and artistic affiliations of the 20th century. This final sale therefore includes the only complete set of corrected proofs of the *Manifeste* currently known to exist, consisting in particular of some extraordinary original collages by André Breton spread over three pages (estimated at €70,000 – €100,000).

Following the sale dedicated to Iliad and PAB, this fifth auction highlights artist-publishers of the second half of the 20th century. **François Di Dio** (1921–2005), who was influenced by surrealism, created more than 150 books for his Soleil Noir. Paul Destribats, who was a fervent subscriber to this publishing house, had collected most of the books published by Di Dio, often in deluxe editions, including engravings,

drawings, sculptures and other sometimes surprising elements, massively breaking down the notion of the book as an object.



The library includes in particular *La Double vue*, followed by *L'Inventeur du temps gratuit*, a work by Robert Lebel illustrated by Alberto Giacometti and Marcel Duchamp. The Destribats volume is complemented by additional copies of engravings by Giacometti and Duchamp, one of which comes with a handwritten message from the former to the latter (estimated at €20,000 – €30,000, ill. left).

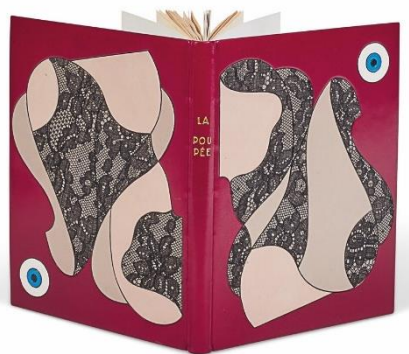
With *Aube à l'Antipode* by Alain Jouffroy (1966), René Magritte plays with the conventions of book illustration, creating a fully-fledged book-object in three dimensions – or rather, four dimensions including sound, as the box he designed to hold the book also contains a small bell.



Also among the major figures of Surrealism is Benjamin Péret's book *Au 125 du boulevard Saint-Germain* (1923), illustrated with magnificent drypoints and two original Ernst drawings. The publication boasts a beautiful binding by Georges Leroux (est. €30,000 – €40,000, ill. left).

Hans Bellmer, with his various “dolls”, was clearly one of the key figures of surrealism in the interwar period. Highlights of the collection include *La Poupée* of 1936, a volume that belonged to Paul Éluard with an original photograph and drawing by the artist, as well as a long

handwritten letter to the writer – who played a key role in the recognition of Bellmer's work in France (est. €30,000 – €40,000). Another copy of *La Poupée* will also be available for sale, one of the first five deluxe copies on Japon paper, with an original photograph by Hans Bellmer and superb binding by Georges Leroux (estimate: €30 000 – €40 000, ill. right).



The sale will feature one of the world's finest Dada books: the first edition of *Cinéma calendrier du coeur abstrait, maisons* (1920), with text by Tristan Tzara and illustrated with original woodcuts by Jean Arp, in a binding by Jacques Anthoine-Legrain, estimated at €8,000 – €12,000. Also by the Dadaist is *L'Indicateur des chemins de coeur*, presented alongside three magnificent Cubist engravings and an original preparatory drawing by Louis Marcoussis. This copy on Holland paper is all the more precious as it is said to have been sent by Tristan Tzara to Hilda Robey, the founder of the Guggenheim Museum in New York (€10,000 – €15,000).



The sale concludes with a set of around twenty magnificent books by Yvon Lambert, nearly all of which are copies no. 1 of a limited edition, such as a striking work by Anselm Kiefer, *Die Ungeborenen* (2002) featuring photographs by the artist, embellished with original collages in ash and lead (€6,000 – €8,000), and a concertina book by Loris Gréaud, *The Statement* (2013, €800 – €1200 ill. left), as well as other works, illustrated by Louise Bourgeois, Christian Bolstanski and Jean-Michel Othoniel.

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