

Press Release

CHRISTIE'S

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POP ART MASTERPIECES STAR AT CHRISTIE'S THIS FALL

**NOVEMBER 2011 AUCTION TO OFFER SEMINAL WORKS BY
ROY LICHTENSTEIN, ANDY WARHOL,
GERHARD RICHTER**



Roy Lichtenstein (1923-1997)
I Can See the Whole Room...and There's Nobody in It!
graphite and oil on canvas acrylic,
48 x 48 in.
Painted in 1961.
Estimate: \$35,000,000- \$45,000,000



Andy Warhol (1928-1987)
Silver Liz
silkscreen ink and spray enamel on canvas
40 x 40 in.
Painted in 1963.
Estimate : \$16,000,000-18,000,000



Gerhard Richter (b. 1932)
Frau Niepenberg
oil on canvas
55 1/8 x 39 3/8 in..
Painted in 1965.
Estimate : \$7,000,000-10,000,000

New York – Christie's is pleased to announce the auction of an exceptional selection of Pop Art masterpieces at its Post-War and Contemporary Sale on November 8, 2011. The constellation of major works to be offered will include stars such as Roy Lichtenstein's *I Can See the Whole Room...and There's Nobody in It!*, Andy Warhol's *Silver Liz* and *Four Campbell's Soup Cans* and Gerhard Richter's *Frau Niepenberg*. Works by all three of these artists have previously set world auction records at Christie's, a leader in Pop Art sales.

"Pop Art speaks to the global market as exciting and visually stunning stimulation. Christie's is putting together one of the great iconic groupings of work by Roy Lichtenstein, Andy Warhol, and Gerhard Richter from the nineteen-sixties," declared **Brett Gorvy, Chairman and International Head of Post-War and Contemporary Art.**



I Can See the Whole Room...and There's Nobody in It!, one of the earliest and most important of **Lichtenstein's** Pop Art pictures, is estimated at \$35,000,000 to \$45,000,000. Formerly in the collection of the legendary Emily and Burton Tremain, this picture has been exhibited and published widely, in part because it so perfectly encapsulates the wisdom and wit of Lichtenstein's greatest works, investigating the concepts and processes of painting through the use of popular imagery.

Painted in 1961, *I Can See the Whole Room...and There's Nobody in It!* depicts a man's face peering through a speakeasy-style peephole into the realm of the viewer. Dating from the same year as Lichtenstein's first true comic-strip painting, *Look Mickey*, the work conveys the excitement of a moment of great discovery, when the artist found he could explore the deep formal possibilities and paradoxes of modern abstraction through the surface play of the print media. Lichtenstein based this painting on a picture by William Overgard for the comic strip *Steve Roper*, an appropriation of which Overgard became aware when *I Can See the Whole Room...and There's Nobody in It!* was featured in one of the earliest and most important exhibitions of Pop Art, *Six Painters and the Object*, at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in 1963. On that occasion, Overgard wrote to *TIME* magazine, saying that it was, "Very flattering... I think?" In the years since, the work has come to be seen as an essential cornerstone in the history of Pop Art.

Andy Warhol's pictures of *Campbell's Soup Cans* are among the indisputable icons of the twentieth century. Dating from 1962, *Four Campbell's Soup Cans* is a unique, hand-painted picture that predates the use of the silkscreen process that would revolutionize Warhol's output later the same year (estimate \$7,000,000-10,000,000). Of the sixty or so pictures of soup cans that Warhol created during the early 1960s, many of which are now in museum collections, a large number were made using processes that allowed for the repetition of the image. However, *Four Campbell's Soup Cans* forms part of a separate group of works that were based on photographs taken by Warhol's friend Edward Wallowitch. Within that limited group, only two pictures aside from *Four Campbell's Soup Cans* showed multiple cans, making this work all the rarer.



To create *Four Campbell's Soup Cans*, Warhol projected Wallowitch's photograph and then carefully rendered it in paint. He banished any sense of shade or shadow, creating a fascinating tension between the clearly photographic origin of the work and the flat fields of color of both the background and the red labels. In a work that was still hand-painted, he wryly undermined the cult of the brushstroke that had fuelled so much of Modernism.



The *Silver Liz* paintings that **Andy Warhol** made in the summer of 1963 are among the defining icons of his oeuvre. Representing the culmination of several series of portraits of Elizabeth Taylor made in the early 1960s, these definitive “icons of an icon” rank among the most resonant, enduring and unforgettable pictorial statements of his art (estimate \$16,000,000 to \$18,000,000).

Of all the stars that Andy Warhol knew and painted, he seems to have held Elizabeth Taylor in especially high regard, seeing her throughout his life as the absolute epitome of glamour. When later in his life Warhol

met Taylor, growing to become friends with her in the late 1970s and '80s, he was famously heard to quip that if there was an afterlife, he would like to be reincarnated as a “big ring” on her finger. She was included in his pantheon of “death and disaster” of the early 1960s because of her recent brush with death, when suffering from pneumonia she had to undergo an emergency tracheotomy. As Warhol later explained, he “*also did movie stars - Marilyn Monroe, Elizabeth Taylor, Troy Donahue - during my ‘death’ period...(because)... Marilyn Monroe died then. I felt that Elizabeth Taylor was going to die too, after her operation.*” His return to her image in the *Silver Liz* of the summer of 1963 marked a distinct contrast to these earlier, more morbid and biographically orientated images. “*I started (the first portraits of Taylor) a long time ago*” Warhol told an interviewer in the autumn of 1963, “*when she was so sick and everybody thought she was going to die. Now I’m doing them all over, putting bright colors on her lips and eyes.*”

The choice of color for the background was obvious. Not only was silver symbolic of the “silver screen,” but in the summer of 1963 silver was also the color of the moment. “Silver was the future, it was spacy,” Warhol remembered. “The astronauts wore silver suits, Shepherd, Grissom and Glenn had already been up in them, and their equipment was silver too.” It was in 1963 that Warhol sported silver hair, and when his studio first became the “Silver Factory.”

Frau Niepenberg, painted in 1965, is one of the most dramatic and deliberately enigmatic works from the increasingly ambiguous series of photo-paintings that **Gerhard Richter** made throughout the mid-1960s (estimate \$7,000,000 to \$10,000,000). Painted in the last months of 1965, it is one of a series of fictitious, even misleading images drawn from photographic sources that Richter constructed with meticulous and mock-mechanical precision.



One of Richter's ambitions in simulating photography in his work was to claim for painting the same sense of authority, authenticity and objectivity that is implicit in a photograph. *"I'm not trying to imitate a photograph,"* Richter famously said of his 1960s photo-paintings, *"I'm trying to make one,"* recognizing that, although a photograph gives a far from true picture of reality, it does have fascinating pictorial qualities of its own – qualities that he believed could benefit the very different nature of painting. *"I was able to see... (the photograph) ...as a picture which conveyed a different aspect to me, without all those conventional criteria which I formerly attached to art. There was no style, no composition, no judgment. It liberated me from personal experience. There was nothing but a pure picture."*

"I blur things to make everything equally important and equally unimportant," he continued. *"I blur things so that they do not look artistic or craftsmanlike but technological, smooth and perfect. I blur things to make all the parts a closer fit. Perhaps I also blur out of the excess of unimportant information."* The faux-mechanical nature of Richter's blurring was, he has said, something that may have derived from the inspiration of American Pop artists such as Roy Lichtenstein, Claes Oldenburg and Andy Warhol.

Notes to Editors :

Works by the above three artists that have set world auction records at Christie's include **Lichtenstein's** 1964 painting *Ohhh ... Alright ...*, which sold for the world auction record of \$42,642,500 during Christie's Post-War and Contemporary Art Evening sale in November 2010; **Warhol's** 1963 work *Green car crash - Green burning car I*, which sold for \$71,720,000 in 2007 and his 1963-64 *Self-portrait* (in 4 parts), which sold for \$38,442,500 in 2011, setting the world auction record for any portrait by Warhol; and **Richter's** 1966 work *Zwei Liebespaare*, which sold in London in 2008 for \$14,342,829, the highest price for a Pop work by the artist.

Viewing - Christie's London - 8 King Street:

October 9	12 noon-5pm
October 10	9am-8pm
October 11	9am-5pm
October 12	9am-5pm
October 13	9am-6pm
October 14	9am-3:30pm

Viewing - Christies New York - 20 Rockefeller Plaza:

4 November	10am - 5pm
5 November	10am - 5pm
6 November	1pm - 5pm
7 November	10am - 5pm
8 November	10am - 12pm

Sale - Christies New York - 20 Rockefeller Plaza:

8 November	6:30pm
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About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business had global auction and private sales in the first half of 2011 that totaled £2.0 billion/\$3.2 billion. In 2010 it achieved global auction and private sales of £3.3 billion/\$5.0 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. Founded in 1766 by James Christie, Christie's conducted the greatest auctions of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, and today remains a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 450 sales annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewelry, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from \$200 to over \$100 million. Christie's has 53 offices in 32 countries and 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai and Hong Kong. More recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in emerging and new markets such as Russia, China, India and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Mumbai and Dubai.

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