

CHRISTIE'S

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RULE BRITANNIA

Modern British Art at Christie's in December 2012



London - Christie's announces full details of the *Modern British Art* Evening Sale which will take place on the Tuesday, 12 December 2012. Comprising 65 lots, the sale will feature works by Britain's most influential modern artists including Ben Nicholson, L.S. Lowry, Henry Moore, Dame Barbara Hepworth, Sean Scully and David Hockney, alongside a strong group of sculpture and works by the Scottish Colourists; London School; and Pop artists. The sale will also present eight works from legendary London restaurants Langan's Brasserie and Odin's, *for a dedicated press release please click [here](#)*. On Wednesday, 13 December 2012 the *Modern British and Irish Art Day Sale* will offer over 185 lots led by the most familiar names from this dynamic collecting category: Jack B. Yeats, David Bomberg, John Piper and Dame Elisabeth Frink. The sales feature works with estimates ranging from £3,000 to £1.8 million – providing wonderful opportunities for both new and established collectors. The auctions are expected to realise a combined total in excess of £12 million.

Leading the sales are works by **Ben Nicholson, O.M. (1894-1982)** and **Laurence Stephen Lowry, R.A. (1887-1976)**. Nicholson's *October 1949 (Composition Rangitane)*, an important, monumental curved panel is one of the first two curved works that he created, making it an important breakthrough in his oeuvre (estimate: £1 million – 1.5 million, *illustrated above left*). Alongside Piet Mondrian (1872 – 1944), Nicholson was a leading force in Abstract art in Europe. This work, with its leaning shapes and incredibly textured, varied sense of colour treatment on the surface, is a move away from the rigorous formality usually seen in Nicholson's paintings. Two paintings by the ever-popular Lowry provide a very human glimpse into daily British life – predominantly in the north of England – between the 1920s and 60s: *At the Mill Gate* (estimate: £1.2 – 1.8 million, *illustrated above right*) and *The White Shop* (estimate: £700,000 - £1 million).

André Zlattinger Director, Head of Modern British Art, Christies London and Rachel Hilderley, Christie's International Specialist and Director, Modern British Art: *"Christie's is proud to present these significant works by L.S. Lowry to the market this season, continuing the tradition of being auction house of choice for offering the very best Lowrys. This celebrated British artist will soon be the subject of a major retrospective at the Tate in Summer 2013, the first public exhibition since his death in 1976. This demonstrates the diversity of this dynamic category, particularly highlighted by the important array of works by leading British Pop artists."*

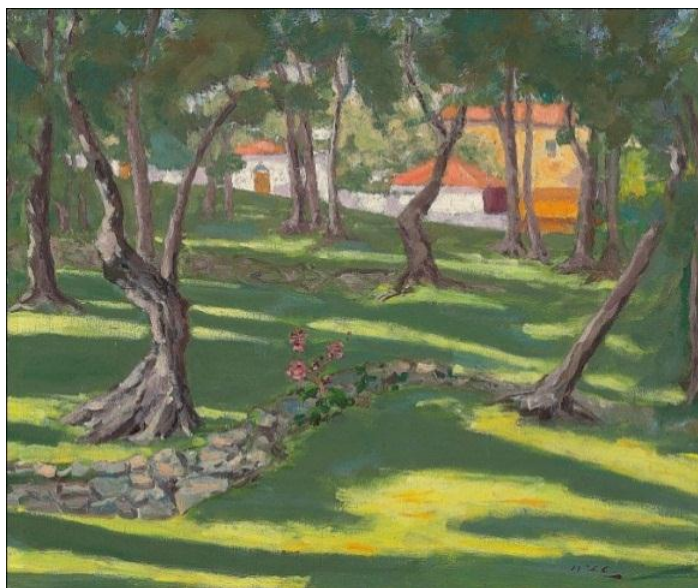
BRITISH PRE-WAR

A selection of works by the **Bloomsbury** artists, **Vanessa Bell (1879-1961)**, **Duncan Grant (1885-1978)** and **Roger Fry (1866-1934)**, constitute the most significant group of their works ever to be offered at auction. Highlights include Grant's *Nude with a Flute* (estimate: £100,000 – 150,000, *illustrated right*); this work is one of four paintings



which Grant envisaged would invest the human figure with exotic fantasy, partly through setting, partly through brilliant, emblematic colour. *Nude with a Flute* was bought by Vivien Leigh in 1964 and the three other panels remained in the artist's collection until his death in 1978. Part of the blue nude, with its owner's dog, is also glimpsed in the background of an important work by Bell: *Flowers in the Studio* of 1915 (estimate: £70,000 – 100,000).

Richard Shone, curator of the 1999 Tate exhibition 'The Art of Bloomsbury': *"This is by far the finest group of works by Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant ever to come to auction. They include outstanding paintings and designs from their Post-Impressionist period, some of them not seen in Britain for over twenty years".*



A hitherto unknown and recently rediscovered painting by **Sir Winston Churchill O.M., R.A. (1874-1965)** is a further highlight of the *Evening Sale*; *The Ancient Olive Grove at La Dragonnière, Cap Martin* was painted at Lord Rothermere's villa at Cap Martin in the South of France (estimate: £150,000 – 250,000, *illustrated left*). Rothermere was a wealthy newspaper proprietor who among other papers owned The Daily Mail. The two gentlemen were old friends, socially as well as politically, the latter connection being imperative for both, each seeking political influence as well as the opportunity, in Churchill's case, to express his views publicly in a supportive environment. In February 1937 Churchill spent a restful fortnight at the villa and, delighted by the garden and its

grove of olive trees, produced a series of paintings - of which the present picture is the fifth known example. Churchill's last visit to La Dragonnière was in 1945. After the huge personal shock of losing the general election he had been urged by his wife and family to take a long painting holiday in the sunshine of Lake Como. Feeling more happy in himself and, despite the many years of wartime interruption, achieving success once again with his brushes and paints, Churchill extended his holiday to revisit old haunts on the French Riviera. This painting has never before been seen in public.

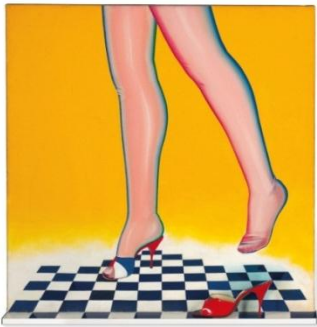
BRITISH POST-WAR

An early work by **David Hockney O.M., C.H., R.A. (b.1937)**, *Oh, for a gentle lover*, is a reminder that the artist first rose to prominence as a fearless subversive (estimate: £150,000 – 250,000, *illustrated right*). 1960 was an important year for Hockney; the major Picasso exhibition at the Tate had a profound on the artist for whom Picasso has come to be one of the greatest models of what an artist can be, what painting can achieve, and how an artistic career might be conducted in the modern world. It was in his series of 'love paintings' initiated in spring 1960, at the end of the first year of his three-year postgraduate course at the Royal College of Art, that he found his voice as an artist. This work was purchased by Sir Colin Anderson, Provost of the Royal College of Art when Hockney was a student there, almost certainly at the time that his brother Donald Anderson, Chairman of the



P&O Line, was involved in commissioning artists to decorate the S.S. Canberra. Hockney created a series of jocular figurative paintings for a games room called the Pop Inn, *illustrated left*. These walls proved such an enticement to graffiti-writing teenagers on the ship that they were eventually boarded over to avoid further desecration. Luckily this painted hymn to romantic love between men that Hockney had painted a year earlier, and which helped earn him the commission, has survived unscathed more than half a century later.

BRITISH POP



Allen Jones R.A. (b.1937), a central figure within the British Pop Art movement, moved to New York in 1964, where he took his work into the more extreme direction for which he became both famous and notorious. *Artistic Foot(wear)*, completed in 1966, is the last of Jones' iconic shelf paintings, and in its chequerboard floor pattern receding into the distance also anticipates the larger 'step' paintings that followed in 1967 (estimate: £280,000 – 350,000, *illustrated left*). Its title pays homage to the brand of shoe, Jonbachs Artistic Footwear, described in paint on the canvas surface and present as a found object on the shelf attached to the bottom of the canvas, the conceit being that

the woman is about to bring her left foot out of the imaginary space of the painting into the actual space of the 'real' world in which we are standing.

Space travel - particularly the 'space race' of the early 1960s between the Americans and the Russians, was a popular theme among British Pop artists including Richard Hamilton and Derek Boshier. The Russian cosmonaut, Yuri Gagarin (1934-68) made history on 12 April 1961 when he became the first man to reach outer space. In recognition of this achievement he was made the subject of various works by **Joe Tilson (b.1928)** in the late 1960s, such as *Gagarin Space Triangle* (estimate: £80,000 – 120,000, *illustrated above*). Tilson's first Pop works of the early 1960s were determinedly

handmade, often constructed out of wood and painted with conventional artist's brushes highlighting the personal touch. By the middle of the decade, Tilson had come to embrace the more machine-made look and impersonal surfaces associated with American Pop Art, in particular making use of photo silkscreening, which Andy Warhol and Robert Rauschenberg began using in 1962, when appropriating images from the mass media.

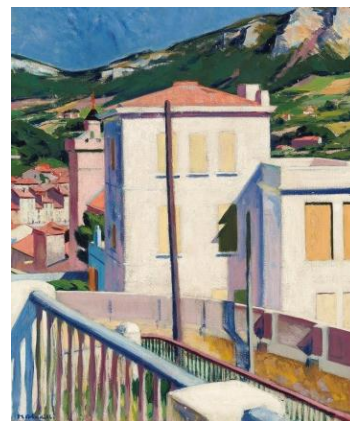


THE FOUR SCOTTISH COLOURISTS



The two sales feature a strong selection of works by **Samuel John Peploe R.S.A. (1871-1935)**, **John Duncan Fergusson (1874-1961)**, **Francis Campbell Boileau Cadell R.S.A. (1883-1937)** and **George Leslie Hunter (1877-1931)**. Highlights offered in the *Evening Sale* include a rich still life by Peploe; *Still Life of Pink Roses and Oranges* (estimate: £200,000 – 300,000, *illustrated left*). This work clearly suggests the influence of the French Post-Impressionists upon the artist; Peploe's richness of colour and confidence in handling paint was greatly inspired by Cézanne.

Works by Cadell include *The White Villa, Cassis* which was completed during a trip to the South of France where he painted alongside Peploe (estimate: £300,000 – 500,000, *illustrated right*). Throughout their careers, the Colourists drew inspiration from the two grands maîtres of modern French art - Matisse and Cézanne, and they sought to combine their principles in their own work. It is no coincidence therefore that *The White Villa, Cassis* undoubtedly steers towards the lyricism of Matisse in its tonal values, for Cassis had attracted Matisse in 1905. Indeed, it was specifically the Fauves' art of the warm south which had attracted the Colourists to paint these Mediterranean towns and their environs. *Still Life of Tulips* illustrates that Cadell's still lives from the 1920s are perhaps his most sophisticated and accomplished, capturing an elegant intelligence in the placing of objects and a striking juxtaposition of swathes of bright colour (estimate: £250,000 – 350,000).



SCULPTURE



The *Evening Sale* includes a fine selection of sculpture, led by a bronze *Family Group* by **Henry Moore O.M., C.H. (1898-1986)** (estimate: £350,000 – 450,000, *illustrated left*), a small-scale model for his Harlow sculpture. The family theme had been chosen as the 'new' towns of Stevenage and Harlow were developed after the war to promote a better quality of life and family values outside London. Further important pieces include **Dame Barbara Hepworth's (1903-1975)** *Horizontal Form* (estimate: £150,000 – 250,000) and *Man with Goggles* by **Dame Elisabeth Frink R.A. (1930-1993)** (estimate: £80,000 – 120,000).

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Images available on request

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Christie's and L.S. Lowry

- Christie's holds the joint highest world auction record price for L.S. Lowry, with *The Football Match*, 1949, which sold for £5,641,250 in May 2011 and *Piccadilly Circus, London*, 1960, which sold for £5,641,250 in November 2011; these are the joint highest prices ever paid in the 20th Century British Art category.
- In 2011 and 2012, to date, Christie's has had 91% market share for works by L.S. Lowry sold at auction.