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8 June 2012

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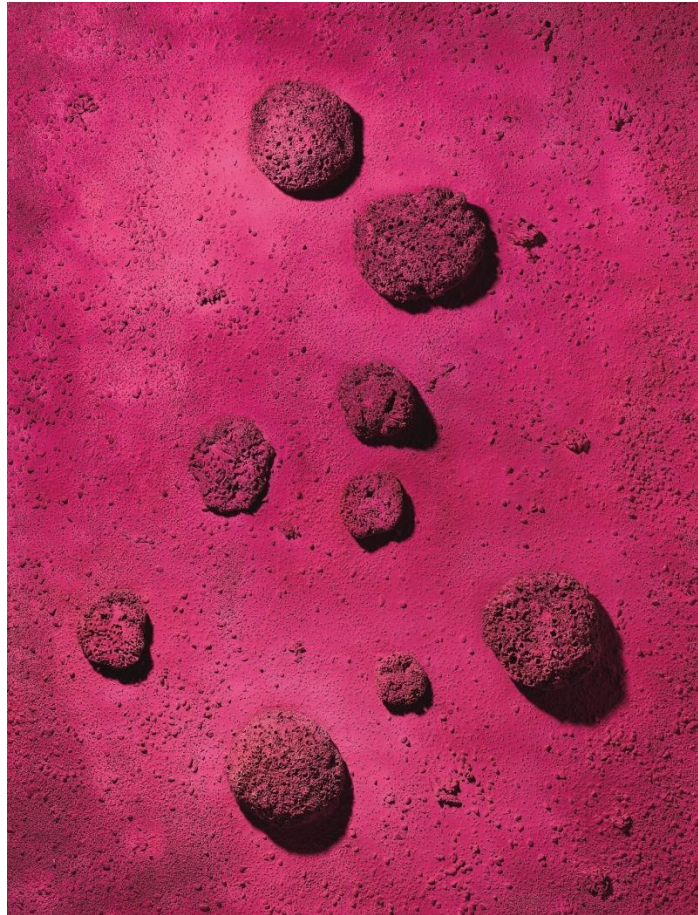
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OUT OF THIS WORLD: TWO YVES KLEIN MASTERPIECES



INCLUDING A REDISCOVERED WORK, PREVIOUSLY
IN THE COLLECTION OF LUCIO FONTANA

POST-WAR & CONTEMPORARY ART EVENING AUCTION / Christie's London, King Street / 27 June 2012, 7pm

London – On the 50th anniversary of Yves Klein's death, two masterpieces by the artist will be offered in Christie's Post-War & Contemporary Art Evening Auction, London on 27 June. This follows the outstanding result achieved at Christie's New York last May when the legendary *FC 1 (Fire-Color 1)*, sold for \$36,482,500 (£22,619,150), setting a new world record for the artist at auction.

Representing the figurehead of the London auction season is *Le Rose du bleu (RE 22)* (1960; estimate upon request; *illustrated above*); by far the largest pink sponge relief ever created and included in all the artist's major exhibitions over the past 50 years. Previously part of the renowned Madeleine Everaert and Menil collections, the work finds a perfect counterpoint in *Relief éponge bleu (RE 51)* (1959; estimate: £6,000,000-9,000,000; *illustrated page 2*), the ultramarine blue sponge relief previously owned by Lucio Fontana. Together, these otherworldly sponge reliefs capture the zeitgeist at the turn of the 1960s; a moment dominated by the Cold War space race. In 1961, the year after Klein created *Le Rose du bleu (RE 22)*, Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin would go down in history as the first man to travel into space. A matter of weeks later, United States president, John F. Kennedy avowed to land a man on the moon within the decade.

Francis Outred, Head of Post-War and Contemporary Art, Christie's Europe: 'Fifty years after Yves Klein's death, it is a privilege to be uniting two great masterpieces by the artist in one auction. Together they go towards elaborating his mystical trilogy of colour: ultramarine blue, gold and rose pink. Created at a moment of intense scientific and space exploration, Klein's works can be seen as prophetic of man's awesome advances into space; Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gargarin making his pioneering orbit of planet Earth in 1961. 'Le Rose du bleu' is a magnificent sponge relief, the largest to ever be carried out in rose madder. It previously formed part of the Madeleine Everaert and Menil Collections, and was exhibited at 'Yves Klein: Monochrome und Feuer', at the Museum Haus Lange, Krefeld in 1961 - the artist's only retrospective during his lifetime. 'Relief éponge bleu' is one of the very first of Klein's sponge-reliefs and was previously owned by celebrated 'Spatial' artist and patron, Lucio Fontana. Captured in archive footage of Klein's major exhibition at Galerie Iris Clert in 1959, it subsequently remained unseen for many years. Its presence in the forthcoming Post-War and Contemporary Art auction at Christie's represents a major rediscovery'.



◀ **Le Rose du Bleu** in 'Yves Klein: Monochrome und Feuer', Museum Haus Lange, Krefeld, 1961
Photographs: Yves Klein Archives
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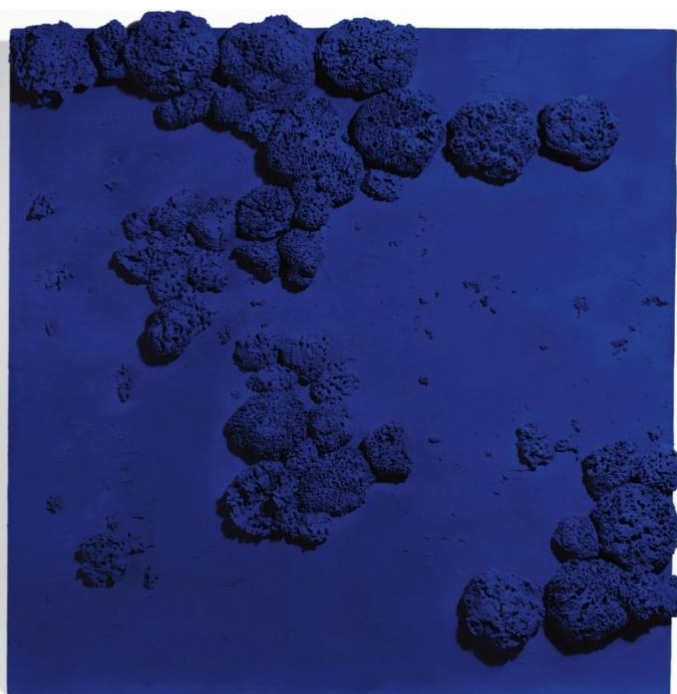
Relief Éponge Bleu in 'Bas-Reliefs dans une forêt d'éponges', Galerie Iris Clert, Paris, 1959
Photograph: Yves Klein Archives
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"In the 1950s I didn't believe in anything irrational. Nevertheless I shared two irrational moments with Yves Klein: the marriage of gold and blue to form pink, and his leap into the void. For the pink, [Klein] united fringes of blue and gold, which when illuminated with light suddenly appeared fuchsia, pink" (Claude Parent).

Rendered in intense velveteen, rose cadmium madder, **LE ROSE DU BLEU** (illustrated page 1) is an intensely tactile work, made up of nine, large, glowing, and intensely sculptural sponge orbs standing proud from the canvas, densely overlaid with pebbles, all bound together with searing, resplendent pink pigment. The effect is like a lunar landscape, or the shimmering layers of a coral reef: stones, sponge and sand-like pigment simulating depth like the bright light illuminating a tropical sea. The title of the work reveals its important place in the formulation of Klein's mystic philosophy; the rose madder derived from its interaction with blue and gold. *Le Rose du bleu* (RE22) formed an integral part of the artist's landmark retrospective *Yves Klein: Monochrome und Feuer* at the Museum Haus Lange, Krefeld in 1961 (illustrated above), which also introduced the important element of fire to the artist's oeuvre.

RELIEF ÉPONGE BLEU (illustrated right) is one of a rare group of outstanding early reliefs that dominated Klein's defining exhibition: *Bas-reliefs dans une forêt d'éponges* (Bas-Reliefs in a forest of sponges), held at the Galerie Iris Clert in Paris in June 1959 (illustrated above right). Comprising of a forty-inch square blue rectangle heavily laden with sponges and small stones in a way that both disrupts the geometry of its borders and the flat plane of its surface, the work is a radiant, intriguing and distinctly three-dimensional entity.



In the 1950s, Lucio Fontana and Yves Klein were the two Post-War European artists most responsible for establishing the conceptual direction in art. As one of the first, great examples of Klein's pioneering series of sponge-reliefs, it is both fitting and significant that it was Fontana who first acquired *Relief éponge bleu* from Klein at this inaugural exhibition.



Anthropométrie (ANT49) (1960; estimate: £1,000,000-1,500,000; *illustrated left*) is another important work by Yves Klein to be offered at auction during the Christie's London Post-War & Contemporary Art auction on 27 June.

It is a rare example from Klein's series of *Anthropométries*, married with a blue dappled, *Cosmogénie* background, and proudly signed on the front of the work by the artist: 'ANT 49 1960'. The work is being sold from the Siggie and Sissy Loch Charitable Foundation. Siegfried Loch (affectionately known as Siggie) has harnessed the same drive and energy that propelled him to become one of the most influential figures in the music industry into an extraordinary grouping of Post-War and Contemporary art, united around the colour blue. Together Siggie and his wife Sissy have built up a collection that demonstrates not only their unrivalled connoisseurship, but also an encyclopedic timeline of twentieth century, Western contemporary art.

AUCTION

Wednesday 27 June 2012 7.00 pm
8 King Street, St. James's
London SW1Y 6QT

FULL AUCTION VIEWING

Saturday 23 June	12noon-5pm
Sunday 24 June	12noon-5pm
Monday 25 June	9am-6.30pm
Tuesday 26 June	9am-6.30pm
Wednesday 27 June	9am-4pm

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Images available on request

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**Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and do not reflect costs, financing fees or application of buyer's or seller's credits.*