

Press Release

CHRISTIE'S

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PROPERTY FROM
THE COLLECTION OF EVELYN D. HAAS

MAJOR COLLECTION REVEALS THE DISCERNING EYE OF PROMINENT BAY AREA
ARTS PATRON, OUTDOORSWOMAN AND PHILANTHROPIST, EVELYN D. HAAS

DIEBENKORN'S STUNNING *BERKELEY #59* AND A PIVOTAL EARLY PAINTING BY
BARNETT NEWMAN STAR AMONG WORKS BY PICASSO AND THIEBAUD



RICHARD DIEBENKORN (1922-1993)
Berkeley #59, 1956
Estimate: \$4,000,000 – 6,000,000

*Select highlights on view in San Francisco April 17-18 at the Hedge Gallery, and in
New York April 21-25 at Christie's Rockefeller Center Lobby Gallery*

New York – Christie's is honored to announce the upcoming sale of an outstanding private American collection of Modern and Contemporary Art: *Property from the Collection of Evelyn D. Haas*. As a patron of the arts and philanthropist, Mrs. Haas immersed herself in a wide range of volunteer work and

was a devoted leader of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, while also becoming a well-regarded art connoisseur in her own right. Notable for the extraordinary quality, rarity and important art historical status of the works, her collection includes Modern and Contemporary paintings and sculpture, as well as important works on paper and prints. Among the artists represented in her collection are Post-War artists Richard Diebenkorn, Barnett Newman, Vija Celmins, Richard Prince and Wayne Thiebaud, plus Modern artists Pablo Picasso, Raoul Dufy and Maurice Utrillo. Christie's will offer paintings, works on paper, and prints from her collection across a number of sales in April, May and July, and several photographs in October, (*see appendix for details*). The total combined value of the works, which will be offered across seven sale categories, is estimated to exceed \$9 million.

Mrs. Haas's passion for art was encouraged by her mother-in-law, Elise Stern Haas, a renowned collector and an early member of the SFMOMA Board of Trustees from 1953-1990. Elise made extraordinary donations to the museum over the years, including the bequest upon her death in 1990 of thirty-seven paintings, sculptures and works on paper, among them a painting she bought from her dear friend Sarah Stein, Henri Matisse's *Femme au chapeau*, currently on view in the critically acclaimed exhibition, *The Steins Collect*, at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

Laura Paulson, Christie's Deputy Chairman and International Director for Post-War and Contemporary Art, said: "*We are thrilled that Christie's has been entrusted with the sale of the Collection of Evelyn D. Haas. Her life's passion was supporting the arts and bringing art to the people, not only in San Francisco, but also to the world at large. Her personal collection reveals a discerning eye and deep appreciation of the major artists of the late 19th and 20th centuries, and an appreciation of the artists in the Bay Area.*"

Highlights from the Collection are traveling on a world tour, with stops in **Geneva from April 16 – 19** and **San Francisco from April 17 – 18**, before arriving in **New York for a special exhibition from April 21 – 25**, before the spring sales season (*see appendix for complete tour schedule and sale calendar*).

EVELYN D. HAAS: PHILANTHROPIST, ART COLLECTOR, OUTDOORSWOMAN

Evelyn D. Haas devoted her life to her family, philanthropy, public service and to making the arts accessible to the people of San Francisco and the world at large. Through their family foundation and personal endeavors, she and her husband Walter A. Haas, Jr., were involved in countless charitable activities, including the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA), the restoration of San Francisco's Crissy Field, the San Francisco Chronicle Season of Sharing Fund and the San Francisco Symphony.



Evelyn and Walter A. Haas, Jr.

Mrs. Haas continued and expanded on the philanthropic legacy of the Haas family, which has been inextricably linked to San Francisco for seven generations, ever since Levi Strauss established his company there in 1853. Her charitable work spanned many fields, but she is best known for her lifelong dedication to the arts. From her earliest years in San Francisco, Mrs. Haas actively volunteered at SFMOMA and joined its Board of Trustees in 1972, where she served in many leadership roles over the years, including Executive Vice

President, President and Chairman Emeritus. She developed an exceptional eye for contemporary art and was deeply committed to promoting California artists, purchasing much of her collection from galleries in San Francisco, including the John Berggruen Gallery.

Born in New Jersey in 1917, she was raised in New York City and graduated from Wheaton College (Mass.), where she developed her love of art and majored in art history. She moved to San Francisco in 1940 after marrying Walter A. Haas, Jr., who was Chairman and CEO of Levi Strauss & Co. from 1958-1971, and raised three children. An accomplished fly-fishing enthusiast and outdoorswoman, Mrs. Haas also co-authored a book on fly-fishing, *Wade a Little Deeper, Dear* (1979).

IMPRESSIONIST & MODERN ART SALES, MAY 1-2, NEW YORK



One of Mrs. Haas' most cherished artworks was a wedding gift from her mother-in-law, Elise Stern Haas, a watercolor and ink drawing by **Pablo Picasso** (1881-1973). *Sur la terrasse* (pictured at left; estimate: \$500,000-700,000) was painted in July 1933 in Cannes, where Picasso took his customary seaside summer holiday with his wife Olga and son Paulo. Though his muse and mistress Marie-Thérèse Walter remained in Paris that year, she made her presence felt in the series of watercolor, ink and gouache drawings he created that summer. Here she takes the form of a sculpted bust mounted on a plinth and displayed on the terrace of a Mediterranean villa. Marie-Thérèse was then

still a well-kept secret, known to only a few close friends. By placing his mistress's image in a public forum, Picasso may have expressed an inner desire to reveal her to the world; he never did so, and for the remainder of her life, Marie-Thérèse and their daughter Maya were kept out of sight, while she remained unfailingly dedicated in her love for him.

An additional seven works on paper from the Haas Collection will be offered in a dedicated section in the May 2 Impressionist and Modern Art *Day Sale* in New York. All were gifts or bequests from her mother-in-law, Elise Stern Haas, including a watercolor by Raoul Dufy, two by Lyonel Feininger, two gouaches by Georges Rouault and a gouache by Maurice Utrillo (estimates range from \$10,000-60,000). A sketch of a horse by Marino Marini (estimate: \$30,000-\$40,000) was given to Elise Stern Haas by the artist himself when she visited his studio.

POST-WAR & CONTEMPORARY ART SALES, MAY 8-9, NEW YORK

"I fell in love with the painting right away. If this house ever catches fire, this is the painting I'd grab," Mrs. Haas told an interviewer in 1995, referring to **Richard Diebenkorn's** majestic *Berkeley #59*, (pictured on page one and at right; estimate: \$4,000,000 – 6,000,000). She explained, *"It was a great moment when we bought it, because it was something so different from anything I'd ever had, and I just love it."* This large canvas, nearly 5 feet by 5 feet, combines Diebenkorn's sumptuous use of vibrant color together with his rich gestural technique to produce an extraordinary and innovative portrait of his beloved California

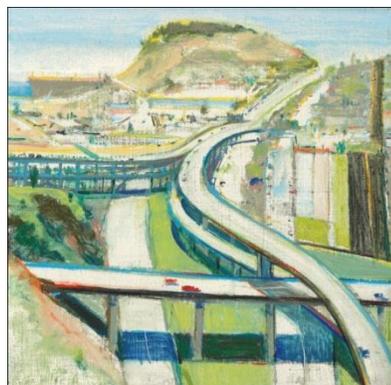


landscape. The crowning achievement of his early Abstract Expressionist works, with its Baroque-like complexity and painterly richness, *Berkeley #59* is one of the most self-assured examples from the artist's Berkeley series, and it was a highlight of Diebenkorn's first one-person show in New York at the Poindexter Gallery in 1956. Acknowledging the painting's significance, Mrs. Haas made a fractional gift of it to SFMOMA, and it is being offered as *Property from the Collection of Evelyn D. Haas and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, a part of which is sold for the benefit of future acquisitions.*



The collection also includes an important painting by **Barnett Newman** (1905-1970), *Untitled*, 1945, (pictured at left; estimate: \$3,000,000-4,000,000). Having destroyed all works on canvas made before 1945, Newman displays in this canvas the essential originating moment out of which his subsequent oeuvre evolves. *Untitled*, 1945, is the first work in his catalogue raisonné, and it contains the evidence of two structuring visual elements of the artist's full maturity: the presence of a strong vertical band (Newman's term) bisecting the canvas and the play of contrasts between the painterly, active treatment of the band and the expansive field. Newman's signature "zip" also makes its first appearance in oil on canvas. The extraordinary, if subtle, play of active versus static in *Untitled* is echoed in his later work, where it both divides and unites the composition. Neither side of the band can stand alone; rather, both ask to be understood as a unitary *gestalt*.

A rare work on paper by **Vija Celmins** (b. 1939), *Untitled #8*, 1995-1996 (pictured at right; estimate: \$700,000-900,000), explores the cosmic world of starscapes. Starting in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Celmins began a career-long investigation of distant galaxies. Rendered in her elegantly meticulous style, *Untitled #8* is a detailed translation of a photograph through a slow and exacting process in which Celmins rubbed charcoal evenly onto the surface in layers, smoothing down the layers with varying degrees of pressure to achieve a rich modulation of black tones, "working herself into the space," as she once described it. *Untitled #8* creates light and depth by virtue of a few strokes of an eraser, suggesting a viewing experience of infinite variety, much like the sky Celmins captures in the drawn image.



Another California artist Mrs. Haas admired was fellow San Franciscan **Wayne Thiebaud** (b. 1920). His *Study for Freeway*, 1979, (pictured at left; estimate: \$400,000-600,000) was one of several paintings inspired by the landscape around the artist's second home and studio in San Francisco's Potrero Hill district. "I was fascinated...by the way that different streets came in and out and then just vanished," he told writer Adam Gopnik. "So I sat out on a street corner and began to paint them." The giddy sensation of unending rolling hills is compressed into a dizzying vertigo by telescoping the sensation of

scaling and then plunging down the escarpments. His use of perspective draws the viewer into the scene, asking us to consider the nature of our surroundings while encouraging us to recognize the haunting sense of beauty in even the most ubiquitous of objects.

The complete e-catalogues for these sales will be available online at www.christies.com.

Auctions:

<i>Prints and Multiples Day Sale</i>	Tuesday-Wednesday, April 24-25, at 10am, 2 pm
<i>Impressionist and Modern Art Evening Sale</i>	Tuesday, May 1, at 7pm
<i>Impressionist and Modern Art Day Sale</i>	Wednesday, May 2, at 10am, 2 pm
<i>Post-War & Contemporary Art Evening Sale</i>	Tuesday, May 8, at 7pm
<i>Post-War & Contemporary Art Day Sale</i>	Wednesday, May 9, at 10am, 2pm
<i>Interiors</i>	Tuesday, July 17, at 10am
<i>Photographs</i>	Thursday, October 4, at 10am

Viewings:

<i>Geneva, select highlights</i>	April 16 – 19
<i>San Francisco, select highlights</i>	April 17 – 18
<i>Dedicated highlights exhibition in Rockefeller Center Lobby Gallery</i>	April 21-25
<i>Christie's Rockefeller Galleries, New York City</i>	Selected works on view four days prior to each sale

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in 2011 that totaled £3.6 billion/\$5.7 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 has since conducted the greatest and most celebrated auctions through the centuries providing a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 450 auctions annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from \$200 to over \$100 million. Christie's also has a long and successful history conducting private sales for its clients in all categories, with emphasis on Post-War and Contemporary, Impressionist and Modern, Old Masters and Jewellery. Private sales totaled £502 million / \$808.6m in 2011, an increase of 44% on the previous year.

Christie's has a global presence with 53 offices in 32 countries and 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, and Hong Kong. More recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in growth markets such as Russia, China, India and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Mumbai and Dubai.

**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.*

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