

# CHRISTIE'S

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## PROPERTY FROM THE COLLECTION OF SENATOR FRANK R. LAUTENBERG (1924-2013), A THOROUGHLY MODERN AMERICAN



EDWARD RUSCHA (B. 1937)  
Untitled  
oil on canvas  
59 1/2 x 146 in.  
Executed in 1985  
Estimate: \$1,500,000-2,500,000

**New York** - Christie's is honored to offer artworks from the collection of Senator Frank R. Lautenberg in a series of sales in New York this fall and next spring. Well-known as a five-term senator from New Jersey and successful co-founder and CEO of Automatic Data Processing Inc., Lautenberg was also an ardent philanthropist and art collector. His life epitomized the American Dream: Growing up in poverty, he served in World War II and earned his college degree through the GI Bill, then parlayed an innovative idea – payroll processing services – into a successful multinational business. He served on the board of the Port Authority of New York/New Jersey and supported several political campaigns before being urged to run for the office of U.S. Senator in 1982. A popular legislator, he was reelected four more times by large margins and was the Senate's last serving World War II veteran when he died in June of this year.

Lautenberg was equally successful, if less well-known, as an art collector, accumulating works that echoed his highly personal vision of America: patriotic, progressive and multifaceted. He assembled a collection of some of the best Post-War and Contemporary artists and photographers, predominantly American, with a discerning eye, including **Jasper Johns**, **Robert Rauschenberg**, **Edward Ruscha**, **Cindy Sherman**, and **Andy Warhol**. His collection also includes works by French Modernist **Fernand Léger**, and mid-century photographer **Robert Frank**, and New Jersey native **Alfred Stieglitz**. His extraordinary collection of paintings, multimedia works, photographs, and lithographs will be offered in various sales in fall 2013 and spring 2014: Prints and Multiples (Oct. 29), Impressionist and Modern Art (Nov. 6), Post-War and Contemporary Art (Nov. 12 – 13), and Photographs (April 20, 2014).

*“Sen. Lautenberg was a passionate collector of artists whose works capture the complexity of what it means to be American in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. We are honored to offer his collection and to share his appreciation for these signature works of great American artists and photographers.”* declared **Laura Paulson, Deputy Chairman, International Director – Post-War and Contemporary Art.**

- **Post-War and Contemporary Art**

One highlight of the collection is **Edward Ruscha's** (b. 1937) cinematically scaled canvas *Untitled*, 1985, which is paradoxically both a patriotic and haunting image of that ultra-American emblem, the "Stars and Stripes," in all her glory. The American flag became a Pop Art fixture in the 1950s when artists such as Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg and Claes Oldenburg began infusing familiar objects such as the flag with irony and anti-art gestures and complicated their representation with encrusted canvases, combines, and painted sculptures. By changing format, color, and medium, they challenged traditional representations of blandly familiar things. The common thread unifying all Ruscha's work is his exploration of the common image or object and his ability to elevate those simple images to fine art status. Ruscha, like many Pop artists, used serial repetition and often conveyed an ambiguous attitude toward his subject matter. In Ruscha's hands, however, this flag is no longer a ready-made symbol, but rather an object alive with both figurative and symbolic meaning. In this portrait, "Old Glory" blows majestically on a strong breeze. Ruscha handles the paint expertly, seamlessly depicting the voluptuous folds in the fabric with deeply shadowed ripples and layering. This painting is one of five renditions of the American flag that Ruscha painted between 1985 and 1987. One remains in the artist's collection, and the other three are in prestigious private and museum collections, including the collection of Emily Fischer Landau and the Bank of America collection. (Estimate: \$1,500,000-2,500,000).



**Jasper Johns's** (b. 1937) *Flags 1* screenprint in colors, from 1973, is the definitive masterpiece of Jasper Johns' prolific career as a printmaker. Large in scale, and rendered in rich, multilayered color, the work has been praised as the most painterly and vivid of all his silkscreen paintings. Signature to Johns' work is the use of a variety of media—from encaustic to silkscreen, bronze to charcoal—to actively provoke the viewer into an endless re-evaluation of everyday imagery. Working from a photograph of his own painting, *Two Flags*, executed the same year, Johns creates *Flags 1* with the same staggering beauty and visual complexity, embedding it with new meaning and wonder. "To me the flag turned out to be something I had never observed before. I knew it was a flag, and had used the word 'flag'; yet I had never consciously seen it. I became

*interested in contemplating objects I had never before taken a really good look at,"* declared Johns in 1978. Executed in 1973, *Flags 1* holds special poignancy, as evokes at once the generational hope of the post-war period as well as the turbulent years after, which tested the patriotism of the entire country as the Vietnam War drew on. (Estimate: \$250,000-350,000).

**Robert Rauschenberg** (1925-2008) *Untitled*, 1965, celebrates the passage of civil rights legislation, which took place in 1964-65 first championed by John F. Kennedy, carried through by Lyndon Johnson. Rauschenberg used a collection of mostly American icons of the time, as an allegory of the political events, the fight for liberty and equal rights. The most powerful images, the blue portrait of President John F. Kennedy is juxtaposed against another black-and-white picture of the president pointing a finger. Robert Rauschenberg's political and social views radically changed in response to the assassination of President Kennedy in 1963. JFK became an American popular icon, and the artist repeated the image of the president frequently in his silkscreen paintings of first half of the sixties. As Pop art emerged, Rauschenberg used



some of the visual language of contemporaries such as Andy Warhol. Most importantly, among the words contained on the street signs Rauschenberg used is the word STOP, which is verbal code to communicate with the viewer in the same way that his images utilize a visual code. The work of Rauschenberg is a quintessential point of reference in American art. Unlike the artists of post-WWII movements in Europe, Rauschenberg stresses that his inspiration and line of thinking have no social or political undertones. However, it is very difficult not to attribute political significance to a piece of art that uses portraits of prominent political figures or commemorative monuments such as the profile of the Native American, which is in full color and not in duotones and shows a dichotomy to the progress taking place in the lands that once belonged to them, (Estimate: \$300,000-500,000).

**Edward Ruscha's** *Gasoline Stations*, 1962, is a portfolio of 10 gelatin silver prints, number 16 of 25, (Estimate: \$60,000-80,000). Ruscha originally conceived the portfolio as a way to report the "news" from his numerous road trips across the United States on Route 66 between Oklahoma City and Los Angeles, where he was located at the time.

The collection also includes a complete set of ten *Campbell's Soup I* screen prints in colors, from 1968, by **Andy Warhol**. Based in Camden, NJ, the Campbell Soup Company was more than a pop art symbol to Senator Lautenberg, it represented jobs and significant philanthropic investment in the Camden area (Estimate: \$200,000-300,000).



*Untitled #196*, executed in 1989, is a seminal image in which **Cindy Sherman** (b. 1954) captures in a single iconic self-image the principal themes that define the artist's oeuvre. Through the incorporation and imitation of costumes, poses, interiors and settings that characterize classical portraiture, this series digs deeply into the canon of European art. *Untitled #196* evokes familiar American portraits of the Founding Fathers, such as George Washington or Thomas Jefferson. It is a tribute to his signature combination of patriotism and willingness to challenge the status quo that Sen. Lautenberg hung this compelling portrait in living room of his New Jersey residence. (Estimate: \$180,000-220,000)

- **Impressionist and Modern Art**



Painted in 1951, **Fernand Léger's** *Untitled (Still Life with Dove)* is one of a series that the artist created in the early 1950s featuring birds in flight. This modernist and schematic treatment of an essentially natural scene embodies Léger's mature oeuvre and captures his colorful, joyful vision at this late stage in his career, (Estimate: \$600,000-800,000). The dove symbol of love and peace had a deep significance for the Senator who championed the cause of peace in the Middle East and worked to strengthen relations between the U.S. and Israel during his entire 30-year Senate career.

- **Photographs**

The collection includes a selection of photographs signed by **Edward S. Curtis**, **Robert Frank**, and **Alfred Stieglitz**, among others, which will be offered in April 2014 at auction. Sen. Lautenberg's life story is reflected in the photographic works he collected, ranging from a 1907 Alfred Stieglitz image of immigrants in steerage class on an ocean liner, to a 1986 color photograph of the Meadowlands marsh in New Jersey, where in 2003, the state opened a new railroad station bearing

his name, in homage to his tireless advocacy for public transportation. An image from Swiss photographer Robert Frank's seminal "Les Américains" series, *City Fathers, Hoboken* (taken in 1955 and published in 1958), captures a timeless image of political pomp in nearby Hoboken, NJ, where top-hatted city officials were celebrating the city's centennial in 1955 (Estimate: \$40,000-60,000).

### **SENATOR FRANK R. LAUTENBERG (1924-2013)**

His is a truly American story: raised by immigrant parents and imbued with an unceasing drive for success, a man reaches the pinnacles of business before entering the world of public service. Frank Lautenberg was a five-term senator and the last veteran of World War II and the 'Greatest Generation' to serve in the U.S. Senate. Senator Lautenberg unapologetically pursued a vision of an America that could propel each and every one of its citizens to the same successes he had enjoyed; a nation that was supportive, just, and fair. In his tireless fight for the American people, he leaves a rich and invaluable legacy for future generations. Lautenberg scored big victories in Congress, including a ban on smoking on airplanes, preventing domestic abusers from possessing guns, cracking down on drunken driving, and the "Toxic Right to Know" law about the release of pollutants into communities. His signature achievement bore his name, the Lautenberg amendment, which enabled hundreds of thousands to immigrate to America from countries where they had been historically persecuted, as his parents' families had been in Russian and Poland. Before entering politics, he was the chairman and chief executive officer of Automatic Data Processing, Inc. "*He dared greatly,*" remembered Lautenberg's colleague **Hillary Clinton**, "*and he led boldly.*"

"Frank Lautenberg has been one of the most productive senators in the history of this country," Senate Majority Leader **Harry Reid**, D-Nevada, said. "*He improved the lives of countless Americans with his commitment to our nation's health and safety, from improving our public transportation to protecting citizens from gun violence to ensuring that members of our military and their families get the care they deserve,*" declared President **Barack Obama**.

In addition to his Jewish philanthropy, Lautenberg served on the boards of institutions such as Columbia Business School, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, and the Montclair Art Museum. In recognition of his prolific legislative and philanthropic career, he received honorary degrees from Hebrew Union College, Hebrew University Jerusalem, and the New Jersey Institute of Technology. Lautenberg was the recipient of the James Madison Award from the American Library Association, the Albert D. Chemin Award from the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, and was a member of the Information Processing Hall of Fame. A proud father and grandfather, he believed in living a life that could create a better world for his descendants. Lautenberg forever retained a signature joie de vivre; even at age 85, he could be found at a Lady Gaga concert with his wife, Bonnie Englehardt Lautenberg.

### **SALES**

**Prints and Multiples | New York | 29–30 October 2013**

**Impressionist and Modern Art Day Sale | New York | 6 November 2013**

**Post-War and Contemporary Art Evening and Day Sales | New York | 12–13 November 2013**

**Photographs | New York | 3 April 2014**



## About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in the first half of 2013 that totaled £2.4 billion/\$3.68 billion. In 2012, Christie's had global auction and private sales that totaled £3.92 billion/\$6.27 billion making it the highest annual total in Christie's history. 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 £465.2 million (\$711.8 million) in the first half of 2013, an increase of 13% on the previous year, and for the third successive year represents the highest total for the period in both company and art market history.

Christie's has a global presence with 53 offices in 32 countries and 12 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Mumbai. 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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*Images available on request*

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