

# CHRISTIE'S

PRESS RELEASE | LONDON  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 11 November 2013

## THE PARNASSUS COLLECTION AT CHRISTIE'S LONDON

Important European Private Collection  
formed over the last 3 decades

Featuring Post-War British Modernism, Victorian & British  
Impressionist Art, Old Master Paintings, Impressionist & Modern  
Art and Post-War & Contemporary Art



**London** – Christie's London is proud to offer works from *The Parnassus Collection* across a number of sales in 2013 and 2014. With an unerring eye for quality, this important collection has been brought together over the last three decades. The variety and breadth of the artworks, which include 17<sup>th</sup>-century Dutch Old Masters, Victorian and British Impressionist Art, European Impressionist and Modern Art, Post-War British Modernism and European Post-War and Contemporary Art, reflect the eclectic taste and passions of this private European aesthete.

The selection of paintings and sculpture from the collection being offered in the *Modern British & Irish Art Evening Sale* and *Day Sale* on 20 and 21 November 2013 represent the synthesis between tradition and modernity that is at the heart of the entire collection. This approach is central to the selection of the group of Post-War British Modernist paintings that make up a large proportion of the works. In the wake of the Second World War, a number of tendencies and strategies emerged in Western art, reacting to the new modern landscape in which the artists found themselves. In the United States, the influx of Surrealists in exile from Europe during the war years had led to a break with figuration that resulted in Abstract Expressionism. On the continent, similar movements came to the fore, not least under the banner of Art Informel. In Britain, by contrast, a range

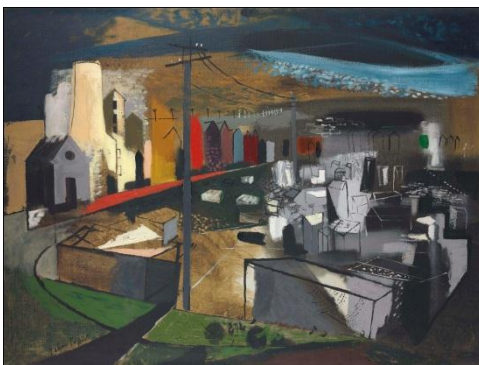
of movements emerged, many of them refusing to abandon the lyricism of figuration. These span the emphatic, narrative figurative scenes of Spencer to the rigid abstraction of Riley, with an infinite range of alternative means of expression in between. Works from this important collection, which has been brought together over the past thirty years, are being sold now to allow the collector, in his own words, “to take stock, reanimate the collection and steer it in a new direction.”

The works on offer are united by their bold images and strength of colour. Highlights include *Boats at Brindisi* by Patrick Caulfield R.A. (1936-2005), one of the most important artists of the British Pop Art generation (estimate: £300,000 – 500,000, *illustrated page one*). Eschewing the 'Pop' artist label, Caulfield instead preferred the term 'formal' artist, and he drew inspiration from the works of the Spanish Cubist, Juan Gris. *Boats at Brindisi* was painted in 1966, two years after Caulfield was included in *The New Generation*, a key group show at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, alongside artists including Hockney, Allen Jones, Bridget Riley and Brett Whiteley.



In *Head of Renée Fedden* by Frank Auerbach (B. 1931) (estimate: £350,000 – 550,000, *illustrated left*) the artist has depicted his sitter as a vivid flame of yellow against a blue-grey background that thrusts the colour into relief. This is a flicker of life and personality that coalesces into the form of a face, revealing itself as a portrait with that jolt of recognition that is so crucial to his pictures. Auerbach aims to capture his sitters in a sense that is beyond mere appearance. He uses the physicality of the paint and of his own vigorous, vivid brushwork to add to a sense of the physical, and also emotional, presence of his subject.

Sir Stanley Spencer's *Saint Peter Escaping from Prison* is one of the last paintings completed by Spencer before he died. It was sold by Spencer from his studio for £200 during an exhibition in Cookham in June 1958. Suffering from cancer, he wrote to the buyer, Miss Parry in November of that year: 'I found it as much as I can do to paint this. I am still stuck with the painting of Christ preaching from the barge. If I don't get on with it, the barge will get waterlogged.' Spencer died the following February with *Christ Preaching from the Barge* still unfinished (estimate: £200,000 – 300,000, *illustrated right*).



Additional highlights of the collection offered in the *Modern British & Irish Art Evening Sale* include a monumental early work by Ivon Hitchens (1893-1979), *Foliage by Water No. 8* (estimate: £80,000 – 120,000) and *White Predominating*, by William Scott, R.A. (1913-1989) (estimate: £150,000 – 200,000). **For the full *Evening Sale* catalogue please click [here](#).** The *Modern British & Irish Art Day Sale* will offer ten works from *The Parnassus Collection* including *Portland Stone Perspective* by John Piper, C.H. (1903-1992) (estimate: £60,000 – 80,000, *illustrated left*). **For the full *Day Sale* catalogue please click [here](#).**

The sale of *Old Master & British Paintings* sale 3 December 2013 will feature three works from *The Parnassus Collection* including important sporting works such as a pair of paintings of stallions by Johann Georg de

Hamilton (1672-1737), 1725 (estimate: £250,000-350,000). For the full *Old Master & British Paintings* sale catalogue please click [here](#).

Further works from the collection will be offered in the December sales of *Victorian & British Impressionist Art* and *Old Master & British Paintings* and in the February sales of *Impressionist & Modern Art* and *Post War & Contemporary Art*. Further details will be available in the near future.

---

**PRESS CONTACT: Dernagh O'Leary | +44 (0)207 389 2398 | [doleary@christies.com](mailto:doleary@christies.com)**

### 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.*

###

Visit Christie's Website at [www.christies.com](http://www.christies.com)

Complete catalogue available online at [www.christies.com](http://www.christies.com) or via the Christie's iPhone app

**FOLLOW CHRISTIE'S ON:**

