

# CHRISTIE'S

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## DRAWINGS WEEK AT CHRISTIE'S: OLD MASTER AND MODERN DRAWINGS SALES 10 and 11 April in Paris



Kees van Dongen (1877-1968)  
*Portrait of Romanian singer Modjesko*, executed in 1907  
Estimate: €150.000-250.000



Elisabeth Vigée Le Brun (1755-1842)  
*Portrait of a young lady*  
Estimate: €40.000-60.000

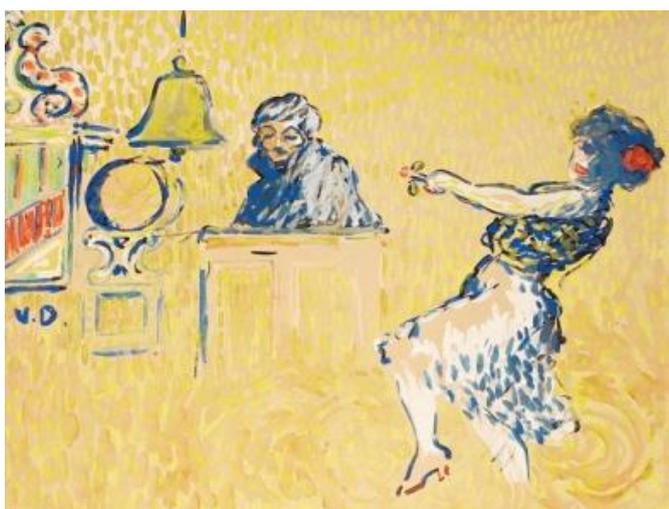
**Paris** – Christie's Paris is pleased to announce *Drawings Week*, for the first time presenting *Old Master Drawings* followed by *Modern Works on Paper*, on 10 and 11 April respectively. These auctions will coincide with the international fair the *Salon du Dessin*.

**François de Ricqlès, President of Christie's France:** "Christie's is pleased to present the market with a variety of Drawings, including Classical examples from the 16<sup>th</sup> century through to the 19<sup>th</sup> century and also Modern works at a time when collectors of works on paper from all over the world gather in Paris for the *Salon du Dessin*. This is the first time since Christie's opened in Paris, in December 2001, that we will be presenting two drawing and works on paper sales as "Drawings Week": one dedicated to Old Masters and one focusing on Impressionist and Modern art."

## MODERN WORKS ON PAPER

**Tudor Davies, Head of the Impressionist and Modern Art Department, Christie's Paris:** *"We are delighted to announce the launch of this new sale concept for Christie's Paris. Twenty years after the creation of dedicated sales in the Works on Paper category in Christie's New York and London, this sale will offer the same unique service in the category to our collectors, including the benefit of our unrivaled expertise through our experienced international team. As the ultimate expression of an artist's style, drawing truly lies at the heart of the artistic process. As demonstrated by the magnificent *Femme Assise* by Pablo Picasso featured on our catalogue cover, the sale focuses on the presentation of works on paper of the highest quality and sourced from private collections".*

The sale of *Modern Works on Paper* is led by *Femme Assise*, a remarkable and complex drawing of a seated Dora Maar (1907-1997) by **Pablo Picasso (1881-1973)**, which is offered at auction for the first time (estimate: €800,000-€1,200,000, *illustrated right*). An historic representation executed in the darkest hours of the Second World War, on March 5<sup>th</sup>, 1942, this is a rare portrayal of Dora Maar seated, executed in varying shades of grey and black ink. The woman in an armchair, a theme primarily associated with Picasso during the Spanish Civil War and the Occupation, is masterfully explored by the artist in this exceptionally large work (73.5 cm x 56.5 cm). Despite Picasso's deliberate distortions of Maar's face, her features are discernible. The anxiety of her figure is conveyed through the spiked talons of her manicured hands, her disintegrating feet and the otherworldly construction of the torture-throne upon which she is sitting.



Further Modern highlights include two works by the Dutch artist **Kees van Dongen (1877-1969)**. The first, executed in 1904, is entitled *La Parade du Cirque* (estimate: €200,000-300,000, *illustrated left*). This date coincides with the year that the artist's work was exhibited at the *Salon des Indépendants* alongside that of Maurice de Vlaminck and Henri Matisse. Together, they are regarded as the forefathers of the Fauve movement.

The second work, *Portrait of Romanian singer Modjesko*, was produced three years later in 1907 when the artist was discovering Montmartre, the inspirational *Bateau-Lavoir* bohemian way of life and meeting figures such as Modjesko (estimate: €150,000-250,000, *illustrated page 1*).

The work of Italian artist **Amedeo Modigliani (1884-1920)** is featured, with two drawings including a portrait of *Blaise Cendrars* from 1918. Like Van Dongen and other artists of the time, Modigliani was part of the Montparnasse Group, and he was particularly fond of depicting fellow artists and writers. His subjects included painters such as Diego Rivera and Juan Gris, and poets such as Jean Cocteau and Blaise Cendrars. This particular portrait, kept in the Cendrars family for many generations, is expected to realise between €200,000 and €300,000.



An outstanding group of watercolors by **Auguste Rodin (1840-1917)** includes *Femme-pyjama* (estimate: €30,000-50,000, illustrated left). Produced in the 1900s while Rodin was in his sixties, the works featured are among the artist's later works. They are offered for the first time at auction, having been acquired directly from the artist by the devoted collector Eugène Rehns, from whom they have passed by descent. Rodin was moved by the committed support of Rehns, a contemporary of the artist and a devoted collector of his sculptures and watercolors, who is known to have sent Rodin letters of admiration; Rodin invited Rehn on a personal tour of his studio in Meudon.

Rodin started concentrating on female models and developing his typical chromatic palette only after his meeting with Camille Claudel, around 1890. An immediate public success, over 130 of these works celebrating the melodic grace of women were shown in the great Rodin retrospective during the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1900. Rodin's drawings and watercolors were subsequently featured in all future exhibitions of his work as an important part of his oeuvre; they are highly sought after by institutions and collectors around the world.

*Après le bain, femme nue s'essuyant* is an important charcoal on paper by **Edgar Degas (1834-1917)** executed between 1895 and 1900, which illustrates the artist's skillful use of this technique (estimate: €200,000-300,000). In his drawing technique Degas was influenced by Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, whose insistence on the importance of the use of line to suggest volume and shadow can clearly be read in Dega's *Après le bain, femme nue s'essuyant*.



## **OLD MASTERS DRAWINGS**

**Ketty Gottado, Head of the Old Masters Drawings Department:** *"We are proud to announce the upcoming sale which features works of great quality including a previously unseen drawing by Poussin. The Old Masters and 19<sup>th</sup> Century Drawings Sale, held at Christie's Paris on March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012, not only marked the category's twentieth anniversary in Paris, but also doubled the pre-sale estimate, realising the highest total for a sale in the department at Christie's Paris. This strong result placed Christie's as the market leader for Old Masters and 19<sup>th</sup> Century Drawings in Paris, with several artist records broken, including the record for Claude Gelée. French drawings performed remarkably well, while an oriental-themed drawing album, Count Edward Raczyński's, sold five times above its estimate. This year, French drawings from the 19<sup>th</sup> century will continue to be well represented.*

One of the top lots in the Old Master Drawings sale is a previously unseen work by **Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665)**, representing *A lying man on a bed, two men standing in the back, one holding his hand* (estimate: €80,000-120,000, *illustrated right*).



The renowned art historian Philippe de Chennevières, who once owned the drawing, identified this work as the study for the painting *La Mort de Germanicus*, 1627, which is now part of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts' collection. Poussin produced at least two other drawings on the theme *La mort de Germanicus*. One of these, representing the full composition of the painting, is currently held at the Musée Condé of Chantilly; the other, coming from the former Lebel collection, is a study of the left hand side of the scene. The present drawing illustrates the scene from the opposite side and is reminiscent of the style of Poussin's later work, produced between 1643 to 1645, a time which coincides with the artist's return from Paris. The flickering lines that are characteristic of the artists's late career are evident in this work. The back of the drawing reveals a further sketch by the artist, of a bent leg, which is one of the artist's only known anatomical studies.



**Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun (1755-1842)** is another leading artist of the sale with *Portrait of a Young Lady* (estimate: €40.000-60.000, *illustrated left*). Her passionate for drawing is well-known, and it is said that her father – who was a painter - noticed his daughter's amazing gift when she was just twelve. An inscription on the back of the drawing seems to indicate that it is a self-portrait of the artist at the young age of sixteen. This is a charming and characteristic 18<sup>th</sup> century work, evocatively depicting the sitter's delicate features, the soft curls cascading over her shoulders and held back with a ribbon.

**Gabriel de Saint Aubin (1724-1780)** is widely regarded as the most dedicated chronicler of the Enlightenment period in Paris. A relentlessly curious artist, he spent his time roaming the crowded streets of Paris – from the hallways of theatres and the Salon du Louvre - sketching every little detail and expertly capturing on paper the vivid reality of street life. The artist is also renowned for the sketches he produced around auction rooms, which now serve as a rare primary source of information revealing the atmosphere at the time. His lively drawings offer narratives of works passing from one collection to the next, ultimately immortalizing the history of 18<sup>th</sup> century auction sales.



Gabriel de Saint-Aubin rarely left Paris; unlike his contemporaries he never visited Italy. His curiosity was fulfilled on Parisian ground. As a result, the rich works offered present the artist's inimitable visual chronicles. This is exemplified by *Marché de la Mégisserie* which depicts itinerant merchants fighting on the dock, near the Pont-Neuf, observed by three soldiers on the right. The vivacity of the merchants' fight is testament to the artist's fascination with the everyday, while also being admitted in to the Parisian social hubs of the time, such as the Coliseum of the Champs-Élysées.

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**Notes to Editors:**

**Old Masters Drawings Sale:** Wednesday, 10 April at 15:30

**Modern Works on Paper Sale:** Thursday, 11 April at 15:00

**Exhibition:** Saturday, 6 April and Monday, 8 April to Wednesday 10 April from 10:00 to 15:00

**Christie's :** 9, avenue Matignon, 75008 Paris

**About Christie's**

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in 2012 that totaled £3.92 billion/\$6.27 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, jewelry, 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 Jewelry. Private sales totaled £631.3 million/\$1 billion in 2012, an increase of 26% on the same period last 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 in growth markets such as Russia, China, India and the Middle East, with successful sales, exhibitions and initiatives in Moscow, Baku, Beijing, Mumbai, Delhi, Jeddah, Abu Dhabi, Doha 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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