

# CHRISTIE'S

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## A SURREALIST MASTERPIECE MAJOR BRAZILIAN AND MEXICAN MODERNIST WORKS

A Selection of Works to Benefit the Americas Society Visual Arts Program



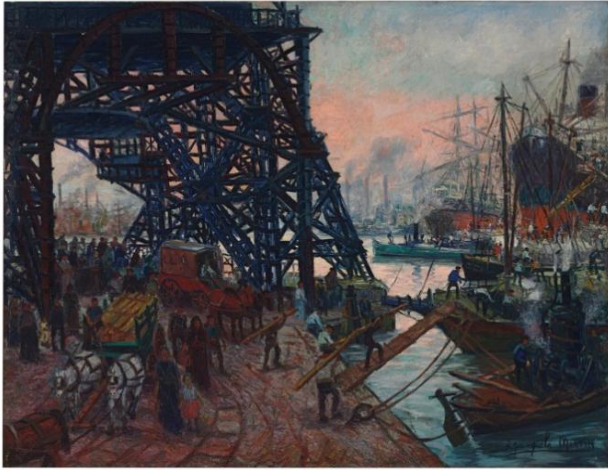
**Matta** (Chilean)

*El prisionero de la luz*, 1941 (lot 56)

Estimate: \$2,500,000 – 3,500,000

**New York** – On May 29 and 30, Christie's **Latin American Sale** will offer an outstanding selection of over 300 lots from some of the region's most prominent modern and contemporary masters. The two-day auction includes esteemed private collections and an exceptional offering of paintings and sculpture from important Latin American artists such as Fernando Botero, Leonora Carrington, Matta, Wilfredo Lam, Alfredo Ramos Martínez, and Alfredo Volpi, among others.

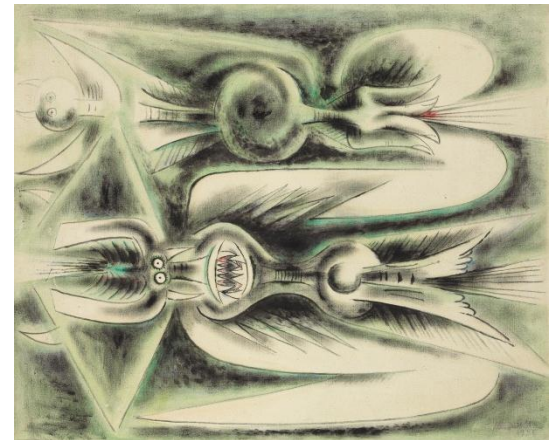
Never-before-seen on the international auction market, *El prisionero de la luz* (*Prisoner of Light*) (lot 56) by **Matta** (pictured above; estimate: \$2,500,000 – 3,500,000) will make its debut May 29 at Christie's New York. Painted in 1941, *Prisoner of Light* was created at a time during the artist's career when he began to incorporate the violence of nature into his work as a metaphor for the hidden forces that surround us. Here, Matta uses veils of thin wash to create a mysterious environment, simultaneously evoking an actual landscape and an inner psychological terrain.



**Benito Quinquela Martín** (Argentinian)  
*The Bridge at Boca (Puente en La Boca)*, 1924 (lot 53)  
 oil on canvas  
 Estimate: \$300,000 – 400,000

**Benito Quinquela Martín**, declared Argentina's most famous artist by *Time* magazine in 1953 is well represented with *The Bridge at Boca (Puente en La Boca)* (lot 53) (pictured at left; estimate \$300,000 – 400,000). Largely self-taught as an artist, Quinquela adapted an idiosyncratic Impressionism over his career, eschewing avant-garde experimentation for emotionally charged renderings of the waterfront – brought to life in the bustle of ships and the hardworking dockhands attending them. Once in the possession of HRH Prince of Wales, Edward VIII, this offering depicts a lyrical and atmospheric quality registering the auspicious horizons of the modern Argentine nation and commemorates a storied diplomatic exchange. *The Bridge at Boca* is a tribute to the working classes of La Boca, the port district of Buenos Aires and Quinquela's native home.

**Wilfredo Lam's** *L'eau solide* (pictured at right; estimate: \$400,000 – 600,000) (lot 55) arises from a period when the artist embarked on a body of work stimulated by his re-counter with what he termed *la cosa negra*, filtered through post-Cubist and Surrealist forms. Spectral and richly suggestive, the two figures present in *L'eau solide* mirror each other across horizontal axis, their bodies adjoined through elemental geometries that conjure a mystical image of spirits levitating in space. The figures render the iconography of the Afro-Cuban religion Santería, which Lam studied as a child with his godmother, through the universal language of abstraction, merging the artist's singular visual and intercultural histories.



**Wilfredo Lam** (Cuban)  
*L'eau solide*, 1945 (lot 55)  
 oil on canvas  
 Estimate: \$400,000 – 600,000



**Leonora Carrington** (British/Mexican)  
*Neighborly Advice*, 1947 (lot 58)  
 tempera on masonite  
 Estimate: \$200,000 – 300,000

One of the most significant works by Surrealist artist **Leonora Carrington** to come to auction in recent years, *Neighborly Advice* (lot 58) (pictured at left; estimate: \$200,000 – 300,000) was last seen publicly when it was exhibited in 1948 at the Pierre Matisse Gallery in New York. Here, a game of hide and seek is being played as two women conceal a small child in a chest, while an older girl carefully makes her way along a magic carpet. The composition of *Neighborly Advice* depicts a variety of scenes, going from left to right – the figures all in ghostly white, leaving the viewer unclear if they are from a world of dreams, imagination or faery. One of the most enigmatic and

unique artists within the vanguard Surrealist movement of the twentieth century, **Remedios Varo** offers *Visita al pasado* (lot 59) (estimate: \$200,000 – 300,000). Rendered with Varo's trademark precision and meticulous draftsmanship, *Visita al pasado* exhibits the artist's recurrent theme of travel whether physical, spiritual or physiological. For Varo, the idea of travel was developed into a personal symbol. She evolved the image of the



journey as a central metaphor in her work, depicting characters emerging from the constraints of tradition and isolation to seek power and magic.

The son of Italian immigrants, **Alfredo Volpi** trained as bookbinder and painter-decorator before embarking on a career as an artist. A superb colorist, Volpi achieved a clear, luminous quality of space and tone through his use of the traditional egg tempera technique. In *Bandeirinhas horizontais com maestro* (No. 1330) (lot 71) (pictured at right; estimate: \$600,000 – 800,000), Volpi's colorful feast flags project modernist values of color and form within a dynamic, pentagonal pattern. The painting's strong horizontal orientation is a steadying check to the rhythmic movement of color unfolding across the canvas.



**Alfredo Volpi** (Brazilian)  
*Bandeirinhas horizontais com maestro* (No. 1330), c. mid-1970s (lot 71)  
tempera on canvas  
Estimate: \$600,000 – 800,000



**Alfredo Ramos Martínez** (Mexican)  
*Mujeres con frutas*, c. 1930 (lot 38)  
oil on canvas  
Estimate: \$1,000,000 – 1,500,000

*Mujeres con frutas* (lot 38) (pictured left; estimate: \$1,000,000 – 1,500,000) captures the signature aesthetic **Alfredo Ramos Martínez** embraced during his period of self-exile from his homeland. Here, two slight, bronze-skinned women, presumably Tehuanas from southern Oaxaca's famed Isthmus of Tehuantepec, are framed by thick foliage and set against a shallow backdrop. Martínez uses deep outlines, soft modeling, sculptural and simplified form to produce an overall effect of a low-relief carving. This is a style that fuses his previous forty years of experience, marrying pre-Columbian sculptural form, craft and modernism to exhibit the vivid color and decorative motifs of *arte popular*.

## IMPORTANT PRIVATE COLLECTIONS



**Diego Rivera** (Mexican)  
*Returning from the Market*, 1934 (lot 1)  
watercolor and crayon on rice paper  
Estimate: \$60,000 – 80,000

Christie's and the Americas Society are pleased to present The Americas Society Visual Arts Department Endowment Benefit Art Auction on May 29 and 30, 2013. The auction will include a selection of 34 works donated to the Americas Society that will be offered in conjunction with the Christie's Latin American Evening and Day sales. The sale features artists who have exhibited at the Americas Society throughout its stellar history and several making their first appearance at auction. All proceeds from the sale will benefit the creation of an endowment for the Society's Visual Arts program. A key lot from this selection is **Diego Rivera's** *Returning from the Market* (lot 1), donated by noted philanthropist, collector, and Americas Society founder, David Rockefeller (pictured at left; estimate: \$60,000-80,000). [Please click here for the complete release.](#)

This spring, Christie's will present an outstanding collection, thoughtfully accumulated over a sixty-year period by **Andy Williams**, one of America's most beloved performers. A group of works from his collection will be offered in the Evening and Day Sales of Impressionist and Modern Art, Post-War and Contemporary Art, **Latin American Art**, American Art, Prints and Multiples, African and Oceanic

Art and 20th Century Decorative Art and Design to be sold in New York, London and Paris in 2013. The works come from Williams' two homes in California and Missouri, as well as his own Moon River Theater. [Please click here for the complete release.](#)

Another highlight comes from Colombian master **Fernando Botero** in *Dancers* (lot 31), a monumental bronze sculpture that exudes beauty and strength, executed in 2000 (pictured at right; estimate: \$700,000 – 1,000,000). Christie's will offer *Dancers* on behalf of **The Scheringa Museum of Realist Art**. This epic pair of dancers brings to life the cultural significance of dance throughout Latin America, and in particular, of Botero's native town of Medellin – a city known for its love of dance and specifically, the tango. Botero captures the dancers perfectly in sync with each other as they gaze into each other's eyes. The couples materiality and size belies the affective tenderness and intimacy of this shared moment forever frozen in time.



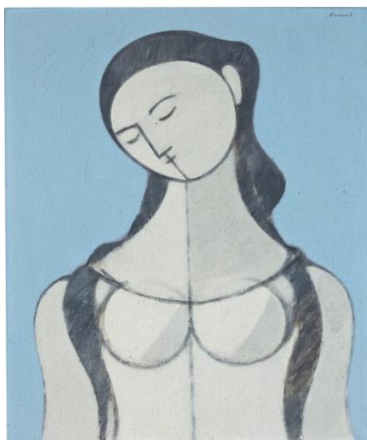
**Fernando Botero** (Colombian)  
*Dancers*, 2000 (lot 31)  
bronze with dark brown patina  
Estimate: \$700,000 – 1,000,000



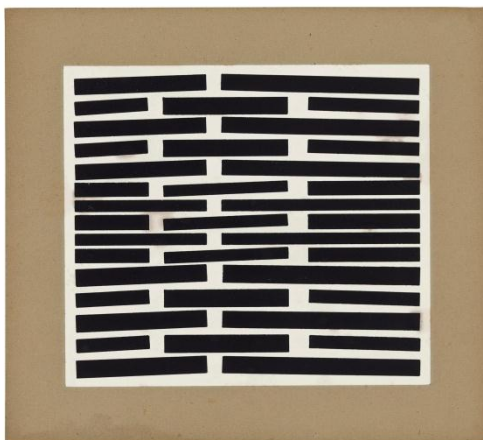
**Rufino Tamayo** (Mexican)  
*Sonriente en rosa*, 1988 (lot 46)  
oil and sand on canvas  
Estimate: \$400,000 – 600,000

Additional top private collections to be offered for the sale include **Property from a Distinguished Collection** highlighted by **Rufino Tamayo's** *Sonriente en rosa* (*Smiling Woman in Pink*) (lot 46) (pictured at left; estimate: \$400,000 – 600,000). The female form was often the subject matter for Tamayo's paintings which allowed him to express his modern aesthetic and mankind's place in the world. *Sonriente en rosa*, entirely defined by the color red in various tones and hues, depicts the female form in contemporary dress and style in medium tones of greyish pink, thus describing her as centered and balanced. **From the Collection of Dr. Luiz Bethoven Do Amaral** features *Mulata com flores* (lot 66) by **Emiliano Di Cavalcanti** (pictured below right; estimate: \$200,000 – 300,000). One of the most celebrated Brazilian modern artists, Di Cavalcanti seeks to use visual language to depict Brazilian people and traditions, concentrating on music and carnivals. Painted in 1969, *Mulata com flores* is a shining example of the artist demonstrating his employment of modernist forms to depict a reality particular to Brazil.

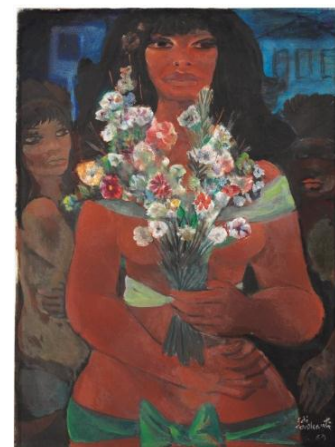
## BRAZILIAN HIGHLIGHTS



**Milton Dacosta** (Brazilian)  
*Figura*, 1954 (lot 70)  
oil on canvas  
Estimate: \$30,000 – 40,000



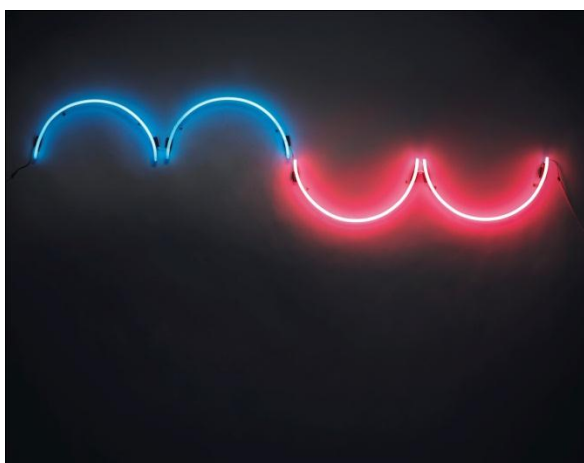
**Hélio Oiticica** (Brazilian)  
*Metaesquema 193*, 1958 (lot 73)  
gouache on cardboard  
Estimate: \$200,000 – 300,000



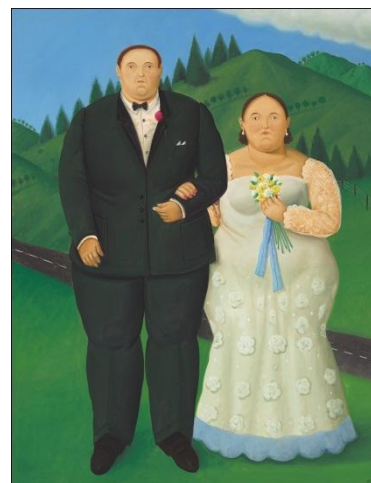
**Emiliano Di Cavalcanti** (Brazilian)  
*Mulata com flores*, 1969 (lot 66)  
oil on canvas  
Estimate: \$200,000 – 300,000

Christie's is also pleased to offer forty important works by some of today's most prominent Brazilian modern and contemporary artists. Leading the selection is **Hélio Oiticica's** *Metaesquema 193* (lot 73) (pictured above center; estimate: \$200,000 – 300,000). Executed in 1958, the *Metaesquema* series is considered an important precursor to Oiticica's later works of the 1960s. Consisting of 350 gouaches, the series is an exploration of the structural properties of color through a sequence of variations within a limited repertoire of forms. Here, the dynamic composition of black rectangular shapes on a white background suggests the figures are in motion, but also exhibit a desire to transcend this structure and deploy into space. Situated at the intersection of pop, body, minimalist, and conceptual art practices, **Antonio Dias's** provocative work *The Poet and the Pornographer* (lot 79) (pictured below left; estimate: \$200,000 – 300,000) suggests the oft clichéd dichotomy between mind and body through the coolly reduced, artificial means of neon tubing. Paired semicircles of serenely blue and lushly hot-pink light are suspended in space, their anthropomorphic shapes identical and yet at the same time incomplete, halved and broken – their union forever unrealized.

### ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE



**Antonio Dias** (Brazilian)  
*The Poet and the Pornographer*, 1972-73 (lot 79)  
blue and pink neon  
Estimate: \$200,000 – 300,000



**Fernando Botero** (Colombian)  
*Country Wedding*, 2009 (lot 18)  
oil on canvas  
Estimate: \$700,000 – 900,000

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#### 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, 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 £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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