

# CHRISTIE'S

PRESS RELEASE | NEW YORK | 15 OCTOBER 2013  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***UNTITLED (No. 11)***  
**A RADIATING SUNSET-ORANGE  
ABSTRACT MASTERPIECE  
BY MARK ROTHKO**

*'I would like to say to those that think of my pictures as serene...that I have imprisoned the most utter violence in every inch of their surface.'* Mark Rothko



Mark Rothko (1903-1970)  
Untitled (No. 11)  
oil on canvas  
79 ½ x 69 ¾ in. (201.9 x 177.2 cm.)  
Painted in 1957.  
Estimate: \$25,000,000-35,000,000

**Post-War and Contemporary Art, Evening Sale  
12 November 2013**

**New York** - Leading the Post-War and Contemporary Art Evening sale in New York on November 12<sup>th</sup> is one of the most stunning works by Mark Rothko to be offered at auction since *Orange, Red, Yellow*, from the Pincus Collection, which sold for a record \$86.8 million against an estimate of \$35-45 million at Christie's New York in May 2012. With its hovering orange-yellow and white clouds of color set within a deep orange rectangular field, *Untitled (No. 11)* emanates with light from the very core of the painting. In the same collection for two

decades, the work was acquired by the present owner at Christie's in 1992, when it was the cover lot of the sale. *Untitled (No. 11)* has been featured prominently in major museum retrospectives including seminal exhibitions at the Contemporary Arts Museum in Houston, the Neue National-Galerie in Dusseldorf and The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York. Estimated at \$25-35 million, *Untitled (No. 11)* will be on view in London in October before being sold at auction in New York on November 12.

"After the auction record set in May 2012 for *Orange, Red, Yellow*, from the Pincus Collection, we are delighted to present *Untitled (No. 11)* as one of the highlights of Christie's November evening sale. The demand for masterworks by Rothko is probably the most international amongst all the artists we sell, with strong bidding consistently from the Americas, Europe, Asia, Russia and the Middle-East. *Untitled (No. 11)* is remarkable for its incredible beauty, intensity of color and inner light - the very hallmarks of Rothko's prime period. The monumental scale allows viewers to be completely enveloped by the colors and its sensations," remarked **Brett Gorvy, Chairman and International Head of Post-War & Contemporary Art.**

*Untitled (No. 11)* is a magisterial painting created by Mark Rothko in the early part of 1957, at the height of his mature period. A warm, rich, orange sunset of a painting, seemingly radiating with the awesome power of three shimmering rectangular forms - each pulsating with turbulent, fiery energy - it is the largest of a sequence of similarly colored paintings that Rothko painted in this landmark year. This short sequence of luminescent works, which includes such paintings as the similarly structured No. 10, now in the Menil Collection, Houston, was to prove, with notable but increasingly rare exceptions, among the last of Rothko's more brightly-colored series of works.

In 1957, having reached the height of his powers and maturity as an artist, Rothko finally began to enjoy the fruits of his success. This year was to prove the first time that the artist had been '*able to live by my work... in my 53 years of life,*' he proudly announced. Between February and March of 1957, Rothko had spent time in New Orleans as an artist in residence at Newcomb Art School, part of Tulane University. There he enjoyed what he described as '*a number of benign days of early summer, sun, warmth and lush growth...(away from)... all problems and irritations*' that he anticipated would no doubt '*reappear in full force*' when he returned to New York. Over the previous three years Rothko's reputation, along with understanding and appreciation of his work, had grown to the point that the often misanthropic artist was growing defensive of the now increasingly laudatory reviews being given to his work. It is precisely this unique combination of serenity and a ferocious, almost volcanically violent energy trapped and vibrating in the confined space of the work's surface that is conveyed by a work such as *Untitled, (No 11)*. Like the mesmerizing image of a sunset (or perhaps the more-publicized series of man-made nuclear explosions that peppered the torturous political and psychological landscape of the 1950s), *Untitled (No. 11)* appears to hover between sublime beauty and a hitherto unknown and immeasurable violence. It establishes an extraordinary balance between the warm luminescence of the glowing colored forms and an awesome primordial sense of unimaginable elemental power.

The 'genius' of this painting, as Robert Motherwell pointed out, was that, out of pure color, Rothko had created a profound and moving 'language of feeling'. *Untitled (No 11)* is not a '*picture of an experience*' Rothko insisted, it is an '*experience*'. And, if people '*want sacred experiences,*' he said, '*they will find them here. If they want profane experiences, they'll find them too. I take no sides.*' He wanted his paintings to radiate with such power that they established an undeniable sense of '*presence*', so strong that, '*when you turned your back to the painting, you would feel that presence the way you feel the sun on your back*'.

## Note to editors:



### CHRISTIE'S HOLDS THE WORLD RECORD PRICE FOR THE ARTIST AT AUCTION

#### PROPERTY FROM THE PINCUS COLLECTION

Mark Rothko

*Orange, Red, Yellow*, oil on canvas, painted in 1961

Sold for: \$86,882,500

WORLD AUCTION RECORD FOR ANY POST- WAR AND CONTEMPORARY WORK OF ART

WORLD AUCTION RECORD FOR THE ARTIST

Post-War and Contemporary Art Evening Sale New York – Tuesday, May 8, 2012

#### Exhibition:

London King Street  
New York

12-18 October 2013

1-12 November 2013

#### Sale:

12 November 2013

Christie's New York, 20 Rockefeller Plaza, 10020 New York

---

PRESS CONTACT: Capucine Milliot | +1 347 403 1564 | [cmilliot@christies.com](mailto:cmilliot@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.

###

*Images available on request*

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:

