

CHRISTIE'S

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WARHOL'S LAST MASTERWORK

Mercedes-Benz W 196 R Grand Prix Car (Streamlined Version, 1954), 1986

FROM THE DAIMLER ART COLLECTION



Andy Warhol (1928-1987)
Mercedes-Benz W 196 R Grand Prix Car (Streamlined version, 1954)
synthetic polymer and silkscreen inks on canvas
160 ½ x 180 ⅞ in. (407,6 x 457,5 cm)
Executed in 1986
Estimate: \$12,000,000-16,000,000

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

New York - Christie's is delighted to present a masterwork from the Daimler Art Collection: Andy Warhol's *Mercedes-Benz W 196 R Grand Prix Car (Streamlined Version, 1954)*, executed in 1986. This monumental work of nearly fourteen feet tall was produced for the Daimler Art Collection on the occasion of the automobile's centenary in 1986. Realized the same year as the celebrated spectral "*Fright Wig*" *Self-Portrait*, also painted over the black void of the canvas, this vast and vibrant work ranks among the most striking in Warhol's late oeuvre. Indeed, the last decade of his life was considered by some to be some of the most innovative of his career. The Cars series was his last work before his sudden death in 1987. This Tour de force is estimated to achieve \$12-16 million.

The Mercedes-Benz W196 is an icon in the Motorcars History; it was the Mercedes-Benz Formula One entry in the 1954 and 1955 Formula One seasons, winning 9 of 12 races entered in the hands of Juan Manuel Fangio and Stirling Moss. Pictured by Andy Warhol, it becomes a symbol of post-war prosperity, industrial challenge, and America's fascination with the packaged image of the sleek. Repeated twelve times, the loaded symbol of the car is at once exacerbated and deflated. Conversely there is a remarkably sensual and seductive quality in the way the cars are presented without shadows, as if they were floating, and in the iridescent colors. This repetition process lies at the heart of many of Warhol's seminal works, such as the Brillo Boxes, Campbell's Soup Cans or the Marilyn portraits. Warhol indulges in the American fascination with objects, status, beauty, and fame, reveling in the lack of consciousness precipitated by obsessive material desire.

"It is an honor to be entrusted with the sale of this masterwork for such a reputable institution as The Daimler Art Collection", declared Eva Schweizer, head of the Christie's office in Stuttgart. "Mercedes-Benz W 196 R Grand Prix Car (Streamlined version, 1954), executed in 1986, was one of Warhol last work before his sudden death."

While cars emerged sporadically in the works of Italian Futurists, it wasn't until the 1960s that the automobile became a motif in its own right, and artists like Warhol and Tom Wesselmann were on the forefront of that movement. The works in the Daimler series were all based on Daimler photographs. The Daimler Warhols were shown at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York City in 1988 and then in 2010 at the Albertina Museum in Vienna in the exhibition "Andy Warhol. Cars". The commission given to Andy Warhol was a landmark for the Daimler Company's future intensive cooperation with contemporary artists as well as its collection's early international orientation. Artists Robert Longo, Sylvie Fleury, and Vincent Szarek were commissioned to create further works.

The Daimler Art Collection, established over 30 years ago by Daimler-Benz, manufacturer of premium cars including the Mercedes-Benz, comprises almost 2,000 modern and contemporary works by more than 700 international artists, ranging from Andy Warhol to Nam June Paik to Walter de Maria and Mark di Suvero. The collection has long established international exhibition and education program. Proceeds from the sale of Warhol's *Mercedes-Benz W 196 R Grand Prix Car (Streamlined version, 1954)*, will be used to develop Daimler Art Collection's commitment to art and securing its' long term future.

Viewing **1-12 November 2013**
Sale **12 November 2013**
Christie's New York, 20 Rockefeller Plaza, 10020 New York

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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.

About The Daimler Art Collection

The Daimler Art Collection was started in 1977 and currently includes about 1800 works by German and international artists. The collection focuses on abstract and geometrical pictorial concepts, from which it derives its distinctive character.

Andy Warhol's works from the "Cars" series, produced as the result of a commission from Daimler-Benz in 1986/87, but incomplete because of Warhol's death, make up a facet of the collection in their own right. 80 pictures were planned, intended to record the history of Mercedes using 20 selected Mercedes models, but the artist only managed to produce 35 pictures and 12 drawings.

http://www.collection.daimler.com/index_e.htm

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