

CHRISTIE'S

PRESS RELEASE | NEW YORK
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | 22 MARCH 2013

RARE PORTRAIT OF MATISSE'S WIFE TO HIGHLIGHT CHRISTIE'S IMPRESSIONIST & MODERN ART EVENING SALE IN NEW YORK

1905 MASTERPIECE CAPTURES A PIVOTAL MOMENT OF SHARED INNOVATION
BETWEEN DRAIN AND MATISSE – THE TWO LEADING ARTISTS OF THE FAUVE PERIOD



André Derain (1880-1954) *Madame Matisse au kimono*, oil on canvas, Painted in 1905

New York - Christie's is pleased to announce a magnificent portrait by André Derain titled *Madame Matisse au kimono* will highlight the *Evening Sale* of Impressionist & Modern Art on May 8 in New York. This high fauve masterpiece is the most important portrait by the artist ever to appear at auction and represents a pivotal moment of artistic collaboration between André Derain and Henri Matisse. Derain painted Madame Matisse in August 1905, during the famous summer he spent with Matisse in Collioure, prior to the now celebrated Salon d'Automne exhibition, when fauvism exploded with startling effect on the Parisian art world. Estimated at

\$15-20 million, the painting comes from a private European collection where it has resided over 40 years and will be presented as a star lot of Christie's spring auction series devoted to major works of fine art.

Brooke Lampley, Head of Department, Impressionist & Modern Art comments, *"Derain is known for his vivid landscapes, but very few fully-realized portraits by Derain are known to exist. This lush and richly detailed homage to Madame Matisse stands as a symbol of the unique camaraderie and intellectual collaboration between Matisse and Derain, the two giants of the Fauve movement. To have a large-scale portrait of this exceptional caliber and with such a celebrated muse as its subject makes this an unparalleled collecting opportunity for fine art connoisseurs worldwide."*

This painting derives from the summer of 1905 when Derain and Matisse embarked on a frenzy of painting in Collioure that would change the course of modern art. The artists employed brilliant, exaggerated chroma that superseded any tones seen in nature, thereby challenging, even outraging, viewers and commentators alike. The products of this spectacular summer would lead to the fabled salle VII of the 1905 Salon d'Automne where the critic Louis Vauxcelles coined the term "les fauves"— "the wild beasts"— a sobriquet for this group of painters that would withstand the test of time. It is in light of this momentous historical moment that this radiant canvas of Amélie Matisse becomes a seductively talismanic emblem, marking the sense of community and shared objectives that united these two artists.

Derain depicts Amélie in the elegant, patterned Japanese kimono which she often wore and in which she was painted by her husband, as well as several of his other fauve colleagues. Derain presents her wrapped in the softly draping folds of the kimono, with its swirling blue arabesques contrasting with the sensuous white, holding a red fan and sitting pensively with one elbow resting on a table for support. The abstracted background of greens and reds serves to heighten the imposing presence of the sitter, and calls to mind the same colors that Matisse used in the background of his famous portrait of Mme Matisse, *La Raie Verte*, painted in September 1905, and now in the Copenhagen Staatens Museum for Kunst.

Eleven years senior to Derain, Matisse was instrumental in the progression of the younger's career. When Derain's father cut him off from the funds that allowed him to paint, hoping his son would choose a more lucrative career, Derain invited Matisse and his wife to visit his parents. In the spring of 1905, disguised as a bourgeois couple of impeccable respectability, the pair successfully persuaded Derain's parents against their better judgment to accept André's choice of painting as a profession. With 1,000 francs in hand, Derain then accepted the invitation to join Matisse in Collioure a few months later.

The painting will be exhibited in the following cities:

London | April 4-6 | Christie's, 8 King Street, St. James, London

Moscow | April 24-26 | Spiridonov House, 125009, Russia, Moscow, Malii Gnezdnikovskii pereulok 9/8 crp 1

New York | May 4-8 | Christie's, 20 Rockefeller Plaza, New York

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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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