

CHRISTIE'S

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MASTERWORK TO LEAD CHRISTIE'S EVENING SALE OF CONTEMPORARY ART ON 15 MAY 2013

Jackson Pollock's *Number 19*

THE MOST IMPORTANT WORK BY POLLOCK PRESENTED AT AUCTION IN THE LAST TWO DECADES

"The general quality that emerged from such pictures, especially (Number) Nineteen, seemed more than enough to justify the claim that Pollock is one of the major painters of our time." — Clement Greenberg



Jackson Pollock (1912-1956)
Number 19, 1948
Oil and enamel on paper laid down on canvas
30 7/8 x 22 7/8 in. (78.4 x 58.1 cm.)
Painted in 1948
Estimate: \$ 25,000,000-35,000,000

New York - On 15 May 2013, Christie's will present a 20th Century masterwork by Jackson Pollock as the preeminent highlight of the spring Contemporary Art Evening Auction. Jackson Pollock's *Number 19, 1948*, was created during the artist's most important period, 1947-1950. Using silver, black, and white, accented by vibrant notes of red and green, he creates a shimmering surface that celebrates his iconic drip style.

"If Pollock's drip paintings are among the best-known paintings of the 20th century, the sale of Number 19 this spring in New York is an exceptional and unique opportunity for collectors and institutions to acquire this iconic masterpiece. Innumerable layers of delicate dripped paint reveal the captivating circular movement of Pollock's hand. Number 19 is one of those paintings you get lost in," **declared Brett Gorvy, Chairman and International Head of Post-War & Contemporary Art.**

Number 19, 1948 is one of the great drip paintings that Jackson Pollock made in a legendary three-year burst of creativity between 1947 and 1950 that completely revolutionized American painting and reshaped the history of twentieth century art. Displaying a fascinatingly intricate, dense, dynamic and animated abstract surface - one that reveals the artist's complete mastery of his radical new medium of pouring and dripping enamel paint onto an unprimed ground - the painting is one of the most engaging and successfully resolved of all these much-celebrated works.

The year 1948 marked the moment that Pollock gained complete mastery over the drip technique and the beginning of its expansion into paintings that were less compositions on a theme than fields of painterly activity and self-expression. As if to reinforce this sense of his work as an action and a direct translating of his unconscious experience onto canvas rather than any descriptive attempt at composing a picture around a subject, Pollock abandoned at this time the use of all descriptive titles, preferring, from this year onwards, to simply number his pictures.

Having developed his technique in the first great drip paintings of 1947, Pollock was also, by 1948, able to control to a great extent the way in which his thinned enamel paint fell and formed on the surfaces below it. Partially the product of a dancing performance, working on the painting from all sides, Pollock, as many onlookers to his working method at this time observed, seemed to create these works by drawing and gesturing in the space above them. As the gossamer-like lines of different colour and the fascinating depth and space they create in a work such as *Number 19, 1948* show, Pollock, in his finest creations, displayed an extraordinary command over both his medium and the complexity of the image generated. The unique freeform manner of painting that Pollock pioneered in a painting such as this represented not only the creation of some of the most mesmeric and enduringly fascinating pictorial structures in all of twentieth century art, but it also, in its near miraculous union of space, force, energy, gravity, material and physical gesture, opened up an entirely new dimension of painting.

Viewing

London - King Street

10- 16 April 2013

Sale Preview

New York – 20 Rockefeller Plaza

11 – 15 May 2013

Auction

Post-War and Contemporary Art, Evening Sale

15 May 2013

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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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