

CHRISTIE'S

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FROM THE SALON TO THE AUCTION ROOM

CELEBRATED MANET PORTRAIT FROM THE 1882 SALON TO BE OFFERED FOR
THE FIRST TIME AT AUCTION, AFTER MORE THAN 100 YEARS IN A PRIVATE COLLECTION



Edouard Manet (1832-1883), *Le Printemps*
oil on canvas, 29 ¹/₈ x 20 ¹/₄ in. (74 x 51.5 cm.), painted in 1881
Estimate: \$25-35 million

*“Manet's defenders are delirious,
his detractors stupefied.”*

Maurice du Seigneur, "L'Artiste,"
1 June 1882 (about *Le Printemps*)

New York – Christie's is pleased to announce the sale of acclaimed *Le Printemps* by Edouard Manet as a highlight of the Fall auction season. It will be included in the Evening Sale of Impressionist and Modern Art on Wednesday, 5 November with a \$25-35 million estimate. This masterwork comes completely fresh to the market, having remained in the same collection for over a century and been on loan for the last two decades at the National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C. The proceeds from the sale of *Le Printemps* will benefit a private American foundation supporting environmental, public health and other charitable causes.

Brooke Lampley, Head of Impressionist and Modern Art comments, *“On the heels of the fantastic traveling exhibition Impressionism, Fashion and Modernity, of which works by Manet were a keystone, we are delighted to have been entrusted with the sale of Le Printemps. This painting is by the first artist of the modern era, encapsulating all major themes of the early modern period, from nature and femininity to society and fashion. One of his best known and most widely reproduced works, Le Printemps exemplifies the revolutionary style that Manet embraced.”*

From the mid-1860s, Manet had established his reputation as the leading master of portraiture among the practitioners of “New Painting,” radically transforming its scope to embrace a dialogue between the traditional canon of art history and contemporary Belle Époque Paris. Actress Jeanne Demarsy is cast as an allegory of spring, a theme artists embraced since antiquity, yet executed in the artist’s ground-breaking painterly style and in a vanguard setting.

With an eye to Goya and early Renaissance portraits of young noblewomen, Manet posed Jeanne in profile. He evoked the arrival of spring in his treatment of Jeanne’s specially designed flowered dress, her lacy parasol, her bonnet regaled with blossoms, and the profuse verdant foliage of rhododendrons he painted behind her. Of the four seasons, Manet completed only *Le Printemps* and *L’Automne*, Musée des Beaux-Arts of Nancy.

Adrien Meyer, International Director, comments, *“In this breathtaking painting Manet depicts a coquettish but self-assured Jeanne Demarsy as Spring. His distinguished use of black anchors the painting and emphasizes Jeanne’s fragility. Manet projects in this masterpiece an idea of the modern woman, feminine and free, attracting yet deflecting the gaze of the viewer. Le Printemps is one of the last museum-quality works by Manet to come to auction. When again will the market offer a picture that truly made Impressionist history?”*



Le Printemps was exhibited at the Paris Salon of 1882, along with *Un bar aux Folies-Bergère* – the supreme masterpiece of Manet's oeuvre. Previously, the official Salon system in France had thwarted Manet's hopes and plans for public success, recognition, and acceptance throughout his career. The submission of these two paintings, however, only a year before the artist's premature death, would prove triumphant and potentially redefine Manet's legacy. The works were enthusiastically received and led to a wide-spread call for reproduced images of both.

"It is one of the best, the most original and most harmonious paintings Manet has yet produced."

Louis de Fourcade, "Le Gaulois," 4 May 1882 (about *Le Printemps*).

Manet's friend, the journalist Antonin Proust, who had suggested the theme of the four seasons to him, was the painting's first owner in 1883. By 1902, the painting had entered the holdings of the important Impressionist collector J. B. Faure, the famed operatic baritone, who was an avid collector and great patron of Manet. The dealer Durand-Ruel acquired the painting from Faure in 1907 and shipped it to his New York gallery, from which it was purchased in 1909, having remained ever since in private hands.

"As a soldier carries his rifle, so she shoulders her grey parasol."

Louis de Fourcade, "Le Gaulois," 4 May 1882 (about *Le Printemps*).

Provenance of *Le Printemps*:

Antonin Proust, Paris (acquired from the artist, 2 January 1883).

Jean-Baptiste Faure, Paris (acquired from the above by 1902).

Galerie Durand-Ruel et Cie., Paris (acquired from the above, 13 March 1907).

Private collection, New York (acquired from the above, 1909).

By descent from the above.

Le Printemps will be offered at auction in New York following an international tour, starting in Asia where it will be exhibited for the first time.

Hong Kong | 5-6 October

London | 15-18 October

Paris | 23-26 October

New York | 1-5 November

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Note to Editors:

Additional highlights of Christie's New York Fall Evening Sale will be released later this season.

In the first half of 2014, the Impressionist & Modern Art department, which includes Modern British Art, realized sales of \$939.3 million, up 49% on 2013 half year figures.

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in 2013 that totaled £4.5 billion/ \$7.1 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 around 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 & Contemporary, Impressionist & Modern, Old Masters and Jewellery. Private sales totaled £760.5 million (\$1.19 billion) in 2013, an increase of 20% on the previous year.

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.