

CHRISTIE'S

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CHRISTIE'S *MODERN BRITISH & IRISH* *ART EVENING SALE* REALISES

£21.3 MILLION / \$36.2 MILLION / €26.5 MILLION

Dame Barbara Hepworth's *Figure for Landscape* achieves a
New World Record price for the Artist at Auction
realising £4.1 million / \$7 million / €5.1 million

4 New World Record Prices set for
John Craxton, Elisabeth Frink, Barbara Hepworth and F.E. McWilliam.



London, June 2014 – *The Modern British & Irish Art Evening Sale* realised £21,313,500 / \$36,211,637 / € 26,513,994 selling 78% by lot and 89% by value. The top price was paid for *Figure for Landscape*, by Dame Barbara Hepworth which realised £4,170,500 / \$7,085,680 / €5,188,102 (estimate: £1 – 2 million), setting a new world record price for the artist at auction.

André Zlattinger, Senior Director, Head of Modern British Art, Christie's London and Rachel Hilderley, Christie's International Specialist and Director, Modern British Art: “*The market for British Art has never been more buoyant. The results of the ‘Modern British & Irish Art Evening Sale’ were the highest ever achieved for a various owner sale in the category and reflect the continued demand for 20th century British & Irish Art from collectors across four continents. The sale saw 4 new artist records set for Dame Barbara Hepworth, John Craxton, Dame Elisabeth Frink and F.E. McWilliam. We are particularly pleased with the result of the outstanding Barbara Hepworth sculpture ‘Figure for Landscape’ which realised over £4 million, setting a new world record price for the artist at auction. We witnessed stellar results for Ben Nicholson, Stanley Spencer, William Turnbull and Samuel John Peploe, as well as for the collections of the Estate of John Craxton and the property formerly from the Collection of Major Ion Harrison, which %100 sold. We look forward to ‘The Modern British & Irish Art Day Sale’ on 26 June 2014.*”

Top Lot

- The top price was paid for *Figure for Landscape* by Dame Barbara Hepworth, which realised £4,170,500 / \$7,085,680 / €5,188,102 (estimate: £1 – 2 million), setting a new world record price for the artist at auction. Cast six from an edition of seven, *Figure for Landscape* is the first example of Hepworth attempting the process of wrapping the armature in plaster, which had dictated that the hollow cast bronze be made in two parts, ultimately demonstrating the artist's ability to push the boundaries of materials. This work was offered by the Kunsthall Stavanger in Norway, which acquired the work in 1968 and will use the funds to safeguard the future of the institution. Four other editions of the work, including the artist's proof, are currently held in the following public collections: the San Diego Society of Arts (5/7), the Hirshhorn Museum and the Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC (2/7), Exeter University (4/7) and Tate (0/7); three others are in private collections.

Further highlights of the Auction:

- *The Scarecrow, Cookham* by Sir Stanley Spencer sold for £2,938,500 / \$4,992,512 / €3,655,494 (estimate: £1,500,000 – 2,500,000). Painted in 1934, this painting provides a clear indication of the artist's personal style based on direct observation of the familiar British landscape. This work is an accurate portrayal of the garden at Rowborough, a large house in Cookham. Painted en plein-air, a hanging scarecrow dominates the canvas, dividing the composition into rough quarters. Fascinated by this figure, the artist recalled in notes made in 1938: "It was like watching a person slowly changing into a part of nature. And I liked the feeling of it always being there... in the evening he faded away like a gleaming Cheshire cat". Discerning collectors will recognise the significant interchange between Man of Straw and Son of Man. Resembling a crucified figure, this Christian implication was made explicit when the artist was commissioned later in 1934 to paint a crucifixion. It is this *Crucifixion* which was sold at Christie's in May 2011 for £2,001,250, breaking the then world record for the artist at auction, most recently surpassed by *Christ Preaching at Cookham Regatta: Conversation Between Punts*, which fetched £6,018,500 in November 2013.
- Previously in the collection of his great friend and patron, Helen Sutherland, *1945 (still life with mugs)* by Ben Nicholson sold for £2,098,500 / \$3,565,352 / € 2,610,534 (estimate: £500,000 – 800,000). Using the still life as a springboard for an exploration of compositional harmony, this pivotal picture dates from the end of the Second World War, from a moment when the artist was returning to the still life genre, creating crisp and elegant palimpsests in which the abstract idiom he had explored and honed over the previous decades was evident at the same time as cups and bottles.
- *Industrial Panorama* by Laurence Stephen Lowry R.A realised £1,594,500 / \$2,709,056 / €1,983,558 (estimate: £1,500,000 – 2,500,000). On viewing the highly structured, composite landscape of *Industrial Panorama*, one is unexpectedly transported back some 300 years to the Baroque and the wonderfully lyrical landscape paintings by artists such as Claude Lorrain and Nicolas Poussin. This painting contains all the elements of Lowry's beloved industrial oeuvre, with factory buildings, canals and chimneys all pictured here; along with miniature figures and a dog, which board the shoreline in the central foreground. The scene is captured from Lowry's typically elevated viewpoint giving his figures a diminutive feel, most notable in the present lot, where the vast urban scene seems to sprawl, without cease, into the distance.