

CHRISTIE'S

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CHRISTIE'S REALISES HIGHEST TOTAL FOR ANY ART AUCTION HELD IN LONDON AS EVENING SALES OF *IMPRESSIONIST, MODERN + SURREALIST ART* TOTAL

£176.9 million / \$288 million / €212.7 million



London - The *Impressionist and Modern Art Evening Sale* and the auction of *The Art of the Surreal* took place on the evening of 4 February at Christie's London, realising a combined total of £176,986,000 / \$288,133,208 / €212,737,172 and selling 86% by lot and 95% by value. The auctions had a combined pre-sale estimate of £113.3 million to £162.9 million. The top price was paid for *Nature morte à la nappe à carreaux*, 1915, by Juan Gris (1887-1927) which sold for £34,802,500 / \$56,658,470 / €41,832,605, setting a new world record price for the artist at auction (estimate: £12-18 million, *pictured above*). In total, 35 works of art sold for over £1 million / 43 for over \$1 million, and four artist records were set, led by Juan Gris and also including records for a work by Carlo Carrà (lot 110), Le Corbusier (lot 14) and Dorothea Tanning (lot 124).

Jay Vincze, International Director and Head of The Impressionist and Modern Art Department, Christie's London: "We are thrilled with tonight's results, which represent the highest total for a sale held in London in any category. We were particularly pleased with the result of the private Swiss collection which more than doubled its pre-sale estimate with every work sold, and three new world records established. The energy of the sale and the depth of bidding was exceptional, particularly on the top lots, underpinned by both the quality of the works on offer and the global nature of both new and established buyers and bidders."

Olivier Camu, Deputy Chairman, Impressionist and Modern Art, Christie's: *"It was a pleasure to work with the intellectual and generous family who entrusted us with the sale of the Swiss Collection, enabling us to offer the works with appealing estimates and in the best context. The market rose to the appearance of these privately owned modernist works which have never been seen on the market and were either bought or gifted directly from the artists. The result of the collection offered so far is a testament to the discipline and sharp eye of this couple who were passionate about art and architecture. It was led by a new world record price for any Cubist picture and also set a new benchmark record for Carra, the co-inventor of 'Pittura Metafisica', and a record price for Le Corbusier. The Surrealist sale was packed with quality, unseen works including the Carra, the Tanning – which had not been seen for 30 years and sparked competition amongst 15 bidders - and the Magritte, which is one of only three works by the artist to reach the \$10 million mark and which sold to a contemporary art collector who has, like many others, joined the Surrealist field of collecting."*

The top price at the auction was paid for *Nature morte à la nappe à carreaux*, 1915, by **Juan Gris** (1887-1927) which was offered at auction for the first time and sold for £34,802,500/ \$56,658,470/ €41,832,605, setting a new world record price for the artist at auction (estimate: £12-18 million, *pictured page one*). Offered from *Modern Masters: Works from an Important Private Swiss Collection*, this large-scale landmark painting by Gris dates from 1915, a watershed year in which he shifted further from his earlier Analytical Cubism to the more lyrical Synthetic Cubism. The importance of this picture, which is over a metre tall, is reflected in the fact that it has featured in a number of significant collections since its execution, including that of one of the greatest patrons of Cubism, Dr. G.F. Reber of Lausanne. Gris' move away from Analytical Cubism is demonstrated in the exuberant energy of this painting which features an explosion of objects, seemingly radiating from a point in the lower centre of the composition. There is a sense of dynamism to this composition which contrasts with the more static still life works that he often created prior to 1915. It was painted in March, only a few months after Gris had returned to Paris, following some months in the South of France after the outbreak of the First World War. Gris has not entirely succeeded in blocking out the War in this painting, depicting a copy of *Le Journal* and deliberately showing the ominous subtitle: '*Communiqués officiels*'. This magnificent still life was previously bequeathed to the anonymous Swiss collectors by the eminent Professor Doctor Wilhelm Löffler.

Further leading highlights of the sale:

- *Femme au costume turc dans un fauteuil*, 20 November 1955, by **Pablo Picasso** realised £16,882,500/ \$27,484,710/ €20,292,765 (estimate: £15-20 million). It is one of a small group of portraits by the artist showing Jacqueline Roque in the costume of an 'odalisque', a woman of the harem. Having met Jacqueline three years earlier, this painting dates from relatively early in their relationship and is a colourful, sexually charged celebration of Jacqueline, whom Picasso would marry six years later and who would become one of the most important muses of the artist's life.
- *Composition No. II with Blue and Yellow*, 1930, by **Piet Mondrian** (1872-1944) fetched £12,402,500/ \$20,191,270/ €14,907,805 (estimate: £8-12 million). The second highest price realised for a work from the *Modern Masters: Works from an Important Private Swiss Collection*, this is an historic example of the radical Neo-Plastic aesthetic that Mondrian had developed during the previous decade and which reached a pinnacle at this time.
- Property from the Former Louis Carré Collection, *Les cylindres colorés*, 1918, by **Fernand Léger** (1881-1955), sold for £12,066,500/ \$19,644,262/ €14,503,933 (estimate: £5-7 million). Dating from one of the most important watershed moments in Léger's career, this work was painted in 1918, at the end of the First World War. The conflict, which had seen Léger exposed to great danger at the Front, had provided

the artist with new ideas and subject matter. The end of the war brought a period of immense release for Léger, as a string of works that he created during that time reflected, many of which are now in museums throughout the world.

- *Trois hommes qui marchent I*, by **Alberto Giacometti** (1901-1966), conceived in 1948-1949 and cast by 1951, realised £9,042,500/ \$14,721,190/ €10,869,085 (estimate: £6.2-8 million). One of Giacometti's famous multi-figure compositions, dating to the height of his oeuvre, it was offered from The Property of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, Sold to Benefit the Acquisitions Fund.
- Leading the Surrealist works, *Les chasseurs au bord de la nuit (The hunters at the edge of night)*, painted in 1928, by **René Magritte** (1898-1967) sold for £6,578,500/ \$10,709,798/ €7,907,357 (estimate: £6,000,000 - 9,000,000). This is the most important early Magritte to come to auction in a generation. It has recently been part of the Museum of Modern Art's 2013 exhibition *Magritte, The Mystery of The Ordinary, 1926-1938*.
- Exemplifying pure impressionism at its peak, the gloriously light-saturated painting *Eglise de Varengeville, soleil couchant* by **Claude Monet** fetched £5,682,500/ \$9,251,110/ €6,830,365 (estimate: £4-7 million). It was painted at a turning point in Monet's life and career. Belonging to a group of four views from similar stand-points, this work presented buyers with a rare opportunity, with the other three works from the group are in: the Columbus Museum of Fine Art, Ohio; the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham; the JB Speed Art Museum, Louisville.
- *Deux femmes*, 1929, by **Fernand Léger** (1881-1955), realised £5,122,500/ \$8,339,430/ €6,157,242. This work combines the striking modernity of the artist's vision at this point in the late 1920s with the newly-developed naturalism and humanity that would make his work all the more accessible during the years, and indeed decades, to come.
- *La femme entrant dans l'eau*, 1931, by **Chaïm Soutine** (1893-1943), realised £5,122,500/ \$8,339,430/ €6,157,245 (estimate: £2.5 – 3.5 million). This is one of the most iconic and recognisable of Soutine's paintings, having featured in a range of exhibitions and monographs dedicated to the artist.
- The top lot of the three works offered from *The Estate of Ayala Zacks-Abramov*, **Henry Moore's Mother and Child with Apple**, conceived in 1956, sold for £5,010,500/ \$8,157,094/ €6,022,621 (estimate: £2.5-3.5 million). This sculpture belongs to a series of works exploring the playful relationship between mother and child which the artist executed in the early 1950s.

Notes to Editors:

Pre-sale estimates for Impressionist, Modern & Surrealist works offered in the February auctions:

<i>Impressionist & Modern Evening Auction</i>	4 February	£93,650,000	-	£134,100,000
<i>The Art of the Surreal Evening Auction</i>	4 February	£19,630,000	-	£28,820,000
<i>Impressionist & Modern Works on Paper</i>	5 February	£3,839,500	-	£5,625,500
<i>Impressionist & Modern Day Sale</i>	5 February	£7,694,000	-	£11,103,000
<i>Impressionist & Modern, South Kensington</i>	7 February	£1,491,000	-	£2,204,300
	TOTAL	£126,304,500	-	£181,852,800

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