

# CHRISTIE'S

THE ART PEOPLE

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## CHRISTIE'S TO OFFER 'VEGETARIAN VAMPIRES', A SURREALIST MASTERPIECE BY REMEDIOS VARO



Remedios Varo (Spanish/Mexican 1908-1963)

*Vampiros vegetarianos*

oil on canvas

Painted in 1962.

Estimate: \$1,500,000 – 2,000,000

**New York** – On May 27, Christie's Evening Sale of Latin American Art will offer an outstanding Surrealist work by Remedios Varo, *Vampiros vegetarianos* (*Vegetarian vampires*). Never before offered at auction, *Vampiros vegetarianos* was executed at the height of the artist's career in 1962, and featured prominently in her final exhibition at the groundbreaking Galería Juan Martín in Mexico City. A trailblazer and outlier within the context of modern art, the Spanish born, Mexican artist is best known for her dream-like paintings brimming with myriad sources, ranging from the supernatural to spirituality and science.

**Virgilio Garza, Head of Latin American Art**, commented: "*Vampiros vegetarianos* is a wonderful work and serves as an incredible anchor to our sale which features an important selection of works by several leading women surrealist artists, including Leonora Carrington, Alice Rahon and Bridget Tichenor."

The scene depicted reveals a windowless medieval chamber illuminated by starlight from an oculus replete with a delicate silvery railing. Three emaciated characters sit around a bistro-style table eagerly sipping liquid from long thin straws. Their robes, made in the Surrealist decalomania technique so favored by Varo, take on a fiery glow with their tattered threads springing up like newly water plants.

Another visually arresting aspect of these vampires is their headgear, a play on Mercury's winged helmet – but here those of bats have replaced the birds' wings. Birds, bats, wings, flying creatures of all sorts are a staple in Varo's work, often hinting at flights of fancy and mystical ascendancy. These whimsical creatures are pictorial relatives of the many hybrid creatures featured in the paintings of the Surrealist Leonora Carrington, Varo's closest friend in Mexico.

The focus of the work and locus of the title's pun is the meal on the table, a scattering of red fruits so meticulously rendered and brilliantly hued that they glow like embers. Of particular note, the tomatoes on the table are the main ingredients in a popular cocktail mixed in Mexico known as sangrita. Drinks made with tequila and *sangrita* are known as *Vampiros*. A favorite cocktail of Carrington, one can imagine her and Varo as they merrily planned one of their many naughty hijinks.

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**Note to Editors:**

**EXHIBITION:**

Christie's New York

May 23-27, 2015

**AUCTION:**

Christie's New York

May 27, 2015 | Lots 1-82 | 7:00pm

May 28, 2015 | Lots 82-264 | 2:00pm

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**About Christie's**

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in 2014 that totalled £5.1 billion / \$8.4 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 totalled £916.1 million (\$1.5 billion).

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, New Delhi, 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.*

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Images available on request

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