

CHRISTIE'S

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CLAUDE MONET'S *LE PARLEMENT, SOLEIL COUCHANT* TO HIGHLIGHT CHRISTIE'S MAY 11TH *LOOKING FORWARD TO THE PAST* AUCTION



Claude Monet, *Le Parlement, soleil couchant*, Oil on canvas, executed in 1902. Estimate: US\$35-45million

New York – Christie's is pleased to announce an additional major highlight of its upcoming May auction series in New York: Claude Monet's *Le Parlement, soleil couchant*, a magisterial depiction of London's Gothic Houses of Parliament, as viewed from across the River Thames. Estimated at US\$35-45 million, *Le Parlement, soleil couchant* will be among the top lots of Christie's *Looking Forward to the Past* evening auction on May 11, a curated selection of top-quality works that explores the most innovative artists and movements of the 20th Century. ([see related press release](#))

Jussi Pytkkanen, Christie's Global President, remarked: "*This wonderfully expressive Monet is simply one of the greatest depictions of the Houses of Parliament by the greatest artist of the 19th Century. Moreover, this picture heralds a new age in painting as artists were inspired by Monet to liberate colour and create wonderful abstractions by interpreting real subjects. One could argue that these pictures heralded the end of academic painting as artists were inspired to follow the path of abstraction from 1902 onwards. Monet was the father of modernism.*"

Claude Monet's *Le Parlement, soleil couchant* remains today one of the most entrancing series to have been composed by the artist during the final phase of his career. Monet's views of the Thames established a new departure in his work, preparing the ground for his last, mythic feat: the *Nymphéas (Water Lilies)* series. Depicting a beautiful sunset over the Houses of Parliament, *Le Parlement, soleil couchant* belongs to a group of nineteen views that Monet started working on in 1900 and 1901. *Le Parlement, soleil couchant* and all the other views of Parliament were painted during the late hours of the afternoon and in early evenings. The present work appears to be a fantastical vision: backlit by a luminous pink sky breaching through the crevices of the clouds, while the silhouette of Parliament rises like a blue mirage, wavering above the water.

Of the series, only five— *Soleil couchant* included—are still in private collections. The remaining fourteen are part of the collections of some of the world's most important museums, such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C., the Musée d'Orsay in Paris and the Pushkin Museum in Moscow.

The painting is one of three major works by Monet to feature in Christie's upcoming *Evening Sales* in May; the auction house previously announced the collection of late Goldman Sachs Chairman John Whitehead, a 90-piece collection of classic Impressionist works led by Monet's *Paysage de matin (Giverny)*, 1888 ([see related release](#)) and *Les meules à Giverny, 1885*, an important precursor to the artist's iconic *Haystacks* series of 1890-91 (estimate: US\$12-18 million).

Notes to the Editors:

- In 2014, Christie's achieved global sales of US\$1.2 billion for Impressionist and Modern Art, an increase of 19% over the previous year.
- Christie's holds the world auction for any work by Claude Monet, which was set in London on 24 June 2008 when the artist's 1919 canvas, *Le bassin aux nymphéas* sold for £40,921,248 (US\$80,379,592) in its Impressionist and Modern Art Evening Sale.

Tour dates for this work and other highlights of *Looking Forward to the Past*

Hong Kong: 2 – 6 April 2015

London: 11-15 April 2015

New York: 2-11 May 2015

Auction:

New York: 11 May 2015

Christie's 20 Rockefeller Plaza

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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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