



# CHRISTIE'S

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## WASSILY KANDINSKY'S *RIGIDE ET COURBÉ* TO HIGHLIGHT CHRISTIE'S IMPRESSIONIST AND MODERN ART EVENING SALE IN NEW YORK

- MOST IMPORTANT PARIS PERIOD PAINTING BY KANDINSKY TO APPEAR ON THE MARKET
- FIRST TIME IN OVER 50 YEARS THE WORK WILL BE PUBLICLY DISPLAYED AND OFFERED
- ESTIMATE: \$18-25 MILLION



PROPERTY FROM AN IMPORTANT PRIVATE AMERICAN COLLECTION

Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944)

*Rigide et courbé*

signed with monogram and dated '35' (lower left)

oil and sand on canvas

44 7/8 x 63 7/8 in. (114 x 162.4 cm.)

Estimate: \$18,000,000-25,000,000

**New York** – Christie's announces **Wassily Kandinsky's *Rigide et courbé*** as a highlight of its November 16<sup>th</sup> Impressionist and Modern Art Evening Sale in New York. *Rigide et courbé* (*Rigid and Curved*) is one of the most celebrated and dynamic compositions, of grand scale. The canvas is densely packed with lively geometric vignettes and a thoughtfully textured surface composed of sand mixed with paint, a technique Kandinsky used only in his Paris paintings of 1934-1935. The present work, first owned by Solomon R. Guggenheim who acquired it from Kandinsky in 1936, has been extensively published and highly exhibited from 1937-1949. Estimated at

\$18-25 million, the painting is undoubtedly the most important Paris period painting by Kandinsky to ever appear on the market. It is being offered from an important private American collection and has not been on the market since 1964. The upcoming sale preview marks the first time in over 50 years that the work will be publicly displayed.

**Conor Jordan, Deputy Chairman of Impressionist and Modern Art**, remarked: "With its dynamic sweep of upward energy, Kandinsky's *Rigide et courbé*, a late masterpiece from the mid-1930s, unseen in public for over fifty years, evokes an epic paean, a rhapsodic song of thanksgiving suggesting the bright hope the artist saw in his new home in Paris following his flight from Nazi Germany. Abstract forms, runic symbols and mythic references, summoning Kandinsky's life and career, intertwine with veiled allusions to contemporary events, across the broad dimensions of this technically audacious canvas which is richly worked in oil and sand. It ranks among the greatest Kandinskys still in private hands."

Kandinsky completed the present work in December of 1935, marking the second anniversary of his arrival in Paris after the closure at the Berlin Bauhaus. After spending the summer of 1933 in Paris and on holiday by the Mediterranean, Kandinsky and his wife Nina decided to re-locate from Berlin to the French capital. Marcel Duchamp located a three-room, sixth floor flat in a new building at 135, boulevard de la Seine (today the boulevard Général Koenig), overlooking the river, in the Paris suburb of Neuilly-sur-Seine for them. The Kandinskys took up residence in their new home during the final days of December 1933.

Bound shapes on one side and the opposition of thrusting supple organic forms that press outward against the other suggest a veiled narrative of escape, release, and the freedom to begin anew, just as Kandinsky had recently experienced in the drastic, but hopeful change of circumstances in his own life. *Rigide et courbé* reflects the profound impact Kandinsky's new French surroundings had on his painting. The light in Paris changed his palette and the scale of his works grew.

In advance of the November 16 sale in New York, Christie's will tour this exceptional painting around the world, including:

**Christie's Hong Kong:** September 30 – October 1

**Christie's London:** October 6 – October 9

**San Francisco:** October 13 – October 16

**\*Note to editors:** Christie's currently holds the world auction record for a work of art by Kandinsky, with *Studie für Improvisation 8* having sold in November 2012 for \$23 million.

PRESS CONTACTS:

Sung Hee Kim | +1 212 636 2680 | [shkim@christies.com](mailto:shkim@christies.com)

**About Christie's**

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction, private and digital sales in the first half of 2016 that totalled £2.1 billion / \$3 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. Christie's offers around 350 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.

2016 marks Christie's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary. 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. Click [HERE](#) to view a short film about Christie's and the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Christie's has a global presence in 46 countries, with 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.*

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*Images available on request*

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