



CHRISTIE'S

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A Surreal Legacy Selected works of art from The Edward James Foundation

Surrealist works offered for sale by artists including Dalí and Tchelitchew presented alongside a diverse mix of English, French and Continental pieces reflecting the vision of Surrealist patron, Edward James and the rich history of West Dean House



Salvador Dalí and Edward James, *A sofa in the form of Mae West's lips*, (1938, estimate: £250,000-400,000) and Salvador Dalí and Edward James, *Lobster Telephone, (white aphrodisiac)*, (1938, estimate: £150,000-250,000)

London – Christie's will present selected works of art from The Edward James Foundation on 15 December 2016 as part of Christie's Classic Week. Iconic pieces that trace the development of Surrealism and reflect the tastes of the visionary patron of art and collector, Edward James, will be offered alongside a cross-category selection of objects from West Dean House, collected by generations of successive owners.

The sale will comprise approximately 200 lots and the proceeds will be used to support the Foundation's long-term plan to enhance Edward James' educational legacy including a permanent exhibition space and a transformation of how the Foundation's archives are managed and used. James sold a number of works in the 1970s and early 1980s to benefit the Foundation and this sale continues a long-standing relationship between Christie's and The Edward James Foundation. With estimates ranging from £600-400,000, the sale provides opportunities for collectors at every level and will be on view from 10-15 December 2016.

Surrealism is the thread that ran through the whole of Edward James' life and he was a patron and close confidant to some of the most significant artists in the



Edward James, circa late 1920s



Salvador Dalí and Edward James, one from a pair of Champagne standard lamps (1938, estimate: £100,000-150,000)

Another artist whose career James nurtured was the Russian Neo-Romanticist Pavel Tchelitchew, who created a sketch at West Dean House in 1934 that would instigate a long and conscientious artistic relationship. James acquired an extensive collection of Tchelitchew's work, a large group of which is included in the sale. The highlight of the group is *The Concert* (1933, estimate: £250,000-350,000, *illustrated right*).



Pavel Tchelitchew, *The Concert* (1933, estimate: £250,000-350,000)



Interior of West Dean House showing a selection of Gothic seat furniture

In the 18th and first half of the 19th centuries, West Dean had been the home of the Peachey family, whose portraits hang on the walls of the state rooms. Sir James Peachey, later 1st Lord Selsey, commissioned James Wyatt to remodel the house in 1804, who also probably supplied Gothic seat furniture, a selection of which is included in the sale (*illustrated left*). When Edward James' father, William James, purchased West Dean in 1891, he also acquired many Peachey heirlooms, to which he added his own acquisitions to create the archetypal Edwardian country house. Highlights amongst the acquisitions of William James to be offered for sale include a pair of Louis XVI ormolu-mounted blue-ground porcelain 'lacrimal' vases, reputedly from Versailles (circa 1782, estimate £80,000-120,000), An Empire patinated-bronze and green porphyry tazza (circa 1800-08, estimate: £60,000-100,000) brought back from Russia circa 1808 by Alexander, 10th Duke of Hamilton and subsequently purchased at the celebrated sale of Christopher Beckett

Denison's collection at Christie's in 1885, and *Portrait of a boy playing golf by the shore, with vessels at sea* by Bartholomeus van der Helst (*illustrated above, left*).

Orlando Rock, UK Chairman, Christie's: "Edward James was touched by genius - and the inspirational Surrealist fantasies that he created at Monkton and elsewhere are testimony to his visionary patronage. This eclectic auction embraces the contrasting and pioneering tastes of several generations of this Anglo-American family and will raise funds to safeguard the future of the educational Foundation at West Dean, through which Edward James sought to secure future generations of artistic creativity."

Andrew Waters, Director of Sales, Decorative Arts, London and Head of Private Collections: *“Edward James is best remembered for his brilliance in inspiring and empowering those around him, but his deserved reputation as a major patron of the Surrealists tells only part of the story. He demonstrated a unique ability to create a sense of magic in whatever he did and one of his most evident talents was his instinct to create environments full of surprise and wonder, witty and provocative. Christie’s very much look forward to offering a selection of works from West Dean in December.”*

The Hon Peter Benson, Chairman of the Trustees of The Edward James Foundation: *“The forthcoming sale marks the culmination and completion of much work in terms of reviewing the myriad of items acquired over many years, for the most part held unused and undisplayed at West Dean House. It will allow us to ensure that we can retain there the heart of the collection built up by Edward James and his family, passively to feature properly that legacy with all its Surrealist significance, and actively to enhance markedly the education of our students in conservation and the creative arts at West Dean College, the primary charitable objective of the Edward James Foundation.”*

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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 250th 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 250th 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. 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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About The Edward James Foundation

The Edward James Foundation is the educational charitable trust behind West Dean College, West Dean Gardens, West Dean Estate and West Dean Tapestry Studio. The Foundation was established by Surrealist patron, Edward James in 1964 with an educational mission to further the knowledge and understanding of crafts and the creative and visual arts. It is a charitable company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales. Company no. 6689362 and Charity Registration No. 1126084.

