



# CHRISTIE'S

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## 250 YEARS LATER: SWISS ART TAKES CENTER STAGE

### ON THE DAY CHRISTIE'S TURNS 250

5 DECEMBER 2016



**Zurich** – Christie's Zurich has the privilege to be one of the company's two salerooms to stage an auction on the actual day that Christie's turns 250. On 5 December 1766 James Christie, the founder of today's world leading art business, held his first auction in London, offering an array of objects – from 4 irons to 4 Indian glass panels. Within a couple of months James Christie revolutionised the auction business by staging the first ever stand-alone painting auction on 20 March 1767. This tradition will continue on 5 December 2016, when Christie's will present 80 works of Swiss Art – a category which has held stand-alone auctions for 25 years in Zurich.



After setting a new world auction record for Le Corbusier (1887-1965) when selling the sculpture *La Femme*, for over CHF 3 million in Zurich two years ago, Hans-Peter Keller and his Swiss Art team are delighted to present Le Corbusier's *Ozon, Opus I*, realized in 1947. *Ozon*, was the small village in the French Pyrenees, Le Corbusier and his wife moved to, when the Germans marched into Paris in 1940. Here, he continued to develop the form and lines of the female body and integrated the findings into his work – not only in his sculptures but also into his drawings, paintings and his architecture projects. *Opus I* is a clear reference to the organ Le Corbusier was most fascinated by, the human ear, which developed its own dynamism throughout the artist's *oeuvre* (estimate: CHF 400,000-600,000).

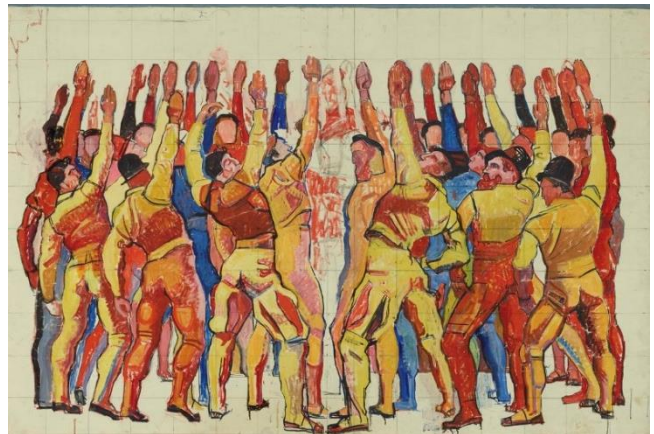


The auction will present five works by Ferdinand Hodler (1853-1918), retracing the career of one of the greatest Swiss artists. An early work entitled *Waldinneres bei Frontenex*, dating from 1874 when Hodler was just 4 years into his painting training, depicts a forest, into which the viewer is drawn by finding themselves on a path into the deep and dark woods surrounding Frontenex (estimate: CHF300,000-500,000).

The highlight of this small section is *Thunersee mit Niesen* (illustrated first page), the work was painted around 1912/1913 and will be offered for sale for the first time in over a century. The painting has been lent to several museum exhibitions throughout Switzerland, Japan, Austria, the Netherlands, France and Italy. Hodler started to paint *Thunersee mit Niesen* in early 1912, 6 months later his works were exhibited at the Galerie Moos in Zurich, followed by a show in Solothurn in April 1913 where *Thunersee mit Niesen* was sold for CHF 4,750 to an ancestor of the present consignor. In 1904 Ferdinand Hodler explained his artistic vision: “...what I value most in paintings is

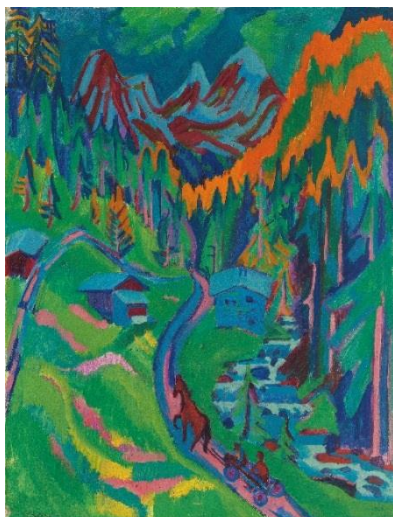
*its form. Everything else is simply there to serve the form and the most important of these servants is colour. I love clarity in paintings, which is why I love parallelism...*” Just one look at *Thunersee mit Niesen* indicates how early into his career Hodler found the meaning in art and applied it throughout his career (estimate: CHF2,500,000-3,500,000).

The third work by the artist is a preparatory sketch for a major work that Hodler painted for the town hall of Hannover, Germany, titled *Einmütigkeit (Unanimity – estimate: CHF500,000-700,000)* in 1913. The painting depicts a historic moment which took place in 1533, when the citizens of Hannover vowed to become citizens of the Holy Gospel. The preparatory sketch of 117x170 cm will be part of the artist's catalogue raisonné, Volume 3, in preparation by SIK (Schweizerisches Institut für Kunstwissenschaften).



No Swiss Art auction would be complete without at least one work by the most known Swiss artist family, the Giacomettis. *Lago chegela*, is one of the last paintings by Giovanni Giacometti (1868-1933) painted in the early months of the year 1933. It depicts the view from the frozen lake Maloja, looking towards St. Moritz. On the horizon the mountains of the Engadine – Piz Corvatsch to the right and Piz Martedell to the left- surround the lake, emphasizing the reflection of the ice-blue sky on the Swiss waters contained by the shoreline, contributing to the structure of the painting and indicating elements of parallelism (estimate: CHF800,000-1,200,000). Giovanni Giacometti died of a stroke a few months later, on 25<sup>th</sup> of June 1933.

The sale will also present an interesting opportunity to compare the juxtaposition of the works *Landschaft mit Kastanienbäumen* by Albert Müller (1897-1926, illustrated below right / estimate: CHF280,00-350,000) painted in 1925/26 and *Sertigweg im Sommer* painted in 1924 by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (1880-1938, illustrated below left / estimate: CHF1,200,000-1,800,000). Kirchner moved from Berlin to Davos, Switzerland in 1917 and became a mentor and teacher to a group of young Swiss artists, which included Albert Müller. Expressionism became their common language, an artistic development which had not been established in Switzerland before and the two paintings depict a clear inspiration.



## NOTES TO EDITORS

Public pre-sale exhibitions:

Geneva: Thursday 10 November to Sunday 13 November 2016 at the Four Seasons Hotel des Bergues

Zurich: 2-4 December 2016 at the Grosser Vortragssaal, Kunsthaus Zürich

Auction: 5 December 2016 at 7.00pm at the Grosser Vortragssaal, Kunsthaus Zürich

### 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. 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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