

CHRISTIE'S

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TAMARA DE LEMPICKA'S ICONIC *Portrait de Marjorie Ferry* WILL BE A LEADING HIGHLIGHT OF CHRISTIE'S *IMPRESSIONIST AND MODERN ART EVENING SALE*

5 FEBRUARY 2020



Tamara de Lempicka, *Portrait de Marjorie Ferry* (1932, estimate: £8,000,000-12,000,000)

London – Tamara de Lempicka's *Portrait de Marjorie Ferry* (1932, estimate: £8,000,000-12,000,000) will be a leading highlight of Christie's Impressionist and Modern Art Evening Sale on 5 February 2020, co-leading the auction. The painting was commissioned by the husband

of the British-born cabaret star Marjorie Ferry at the height of Lempicka's fame in Paris where she was the most sought-after and celebrated female modernist painter. She was also recognised as an influential socialite who was determinedly independent. By 1930 Lempicka had become the *première* portraitist in demand among both wealthy Europeans and Americans, specifically with those who had an eye for classicised modernism.

Keith Gill, Head of Evening Sale, Impressionist and Modern Art Christie's: "Tamara de Lempicka's striking portraits came to symbolise the exuberance and freedom of the post-war society during the 1920s and early 30s. *Portrait de Marjorie Ferry* is one of the artist's most iconic paintings, last seen at auction 10 years ago when it rightly set the record at the time for her work, sold from the collection of legendary fashion designer Wolfgang Joop. Marjorie Ferry married a financier who commissioned Lempicka in 1932 to create this exquisitely painted composition that not only captures the vibrancy of its sitter but reflects the Art Deco style that had defined the previous decade. Lempicka's work has seen renewed interest in recent years with great prices being achieved and we are honoured to present *Portrait de Marjorie Ferry* as one of the leading highlights of the Impressionist and Modern Art Evening Sale."

Lempicka had been painting since the late 1920s in her signature, high classical style. Marjorie Ferry is presented in an imagined space with Lempicka's framing of the sitter's face derived from cinematic devices. Combining stylistic traits drawn from French Cubism, post-war Purism and Neo-Classicism, her own study of early Italian masters, and realist trends in Germany, Lempicka forged her own bold figurative style. She drew timely and fashionable inspiration from J.A.D. Ingres, whose mid-19th century classicism had also served as the springboard for Picasso's return to the figure following the First World War. Lempicka quickly developed a pictorial manner that was acutely attuned to describing the liberated assertiveness and unrestrained pursuit of pleasure that characterised the 1920s, testing, stretching, but remaining within the new, more liberal boundaries of good taste.

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