

CHRISTIE'S

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BOOKS AND DECORATIVE ARTS

NEW WORLD AUCTION RECORD FOR A WORK BY ANTONIO CANOVA



Antonio Canova, Joachim Murat, 1813, setting a new world auction record for the artist at €4,843,250

Paris – The Decorative Arts and Book auction week totalled €13,158,563 / £11,711,121 / \$15,555,209 and was led by *The Exceptional Sale* curated by renowned French Designer Hervé Van der Straeten. Furniture, sculpture, porcelain, Asian works of art and ceramic masterpieces from different centuries were well received by international collectors, resulting in a sale total of €7,748,500, surpassing the auction's pre-sale estimate of €4 million.

Top lot of the week was lot 714 in *The Exception Sale*, an highly important sculpture of Joachim Murat by Antonio Canova (1757-1822), setting a new world auction record for Canova, when selling for €4,320,000, quadrupling its pre-sale estimate of €1 million. Part of a pair of sculptures of Joachim Murat and his wife Caroline, sister of the Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte, the two busts were known to have been completed in 1813, but no further records have ever been found. Murat's bust was previously hidden in the private collection of direct descendants of the family and only recently discovered by Christie's specialists.

Further property from the princely Murat collection was offered in *The Collector: Le Goût Français* sale. A total of 26 lots, first time offered at auction, achieved strong prices for gold

boxes, silverware, and objects as well as for another sculpture, this time representing Murat's wife Caroline Bonaparte, sister of Napoleon, which sold for €68,500 as well as a gold box with the emblems of Napoleon I which sold 247,500 against a pre-sale estimate of 30,000-50,000. The entire collection of the Princes Murat realized a total of €4,843,250.

Simon de Monicault, Head of Decorative Arts Department commented: "We saw a great appetite from collectors worldwide for unique and rare pieces presented throughout these different sales. Private collections, such as from the Princes Murat attracted strong bidding and resulting in prices which surpassed their pre-sale estimates. We are very pleased to have set a new world auction record for Canova, with the rediscovered unique marble bust of Joachim Murat. Other important lots of the sales included a beautiful Roman marble resting Nymph dating from circa 2nd- 3rd century AD from the private collection of Commander Weiller, selling for €175,000 as well as pair of enameled plaques by the Aeneid Master, selling for €751,500. The success of the *Le Goût Français* auction reflects the enthusiasm for unusual and rare pieces, such as a unique French Revolution chair dating from 1790 – the cover lot - estimated at €3,000-5,000 and selling for €55,000."

The newly appointed Parisian Books and Manuscripts team, led by Adrien Legendre, presented their first auction of *Rare Books and Manuscript*, covering 500 years of literature.

Adrien Legendre, Head of Books and Manuscript Department commented after the auction: "We owe this very encouraging result largely to the hard work of the new Parisian team as well as the help of our international colleagues. It has been a pleasure to witness international bidding by phone, online and in the room throughout the sale. From the collection of Baroness Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza we were very pleased to offer – amongst other lots - the extraordinary copy of Albertus Seba's *Rerum Naturalium Thesauri* that sold for €511,500, establishing the world record price for a copy. Very strong results have been achieved for French literature with important provenance, such as Breton's *Les Vases Communicants* inscribed by Breton to Sigmund Freud in 1932, selling for €150,000, as well as a 12-pages autograph letter signed by Proust, sold to a phone bidder from the US for €40,000. We're also very glad to see the autograph manuscript of the 12 Notations preempted by the Bibliothèque Nationale."

During the two days of auctions 3 lots have been preempted by different French institutions:

**The Collector: Le Goût Français
29 November 2017, Paris**

- Par le musée de Fontainebleau

Lot 3

SCEAU EN BRONZE

DEBUT XIXÈME SIECLE

Price realised EUR 6,000

Estimate EUR 1,200 - EUR 1,800

Lot 25 A

Nicolas-François Dun (1764-1832)

Portrait du prince Achille Murat (1801-1847); et Portrait du prince Lucien Murat (1803-1878)

Price realised EUR 20,000

Estimate EUR 8,000 - EUR 12,000

Livres Rares et Manuscrits

28 November 2017, Paris

- Par la Bibliothèque Nationale Française

Lot 519

BOULEZ, Pierre. 12 Notations. Manuscrit musical autographe signé.[1945].

Price realised EUR 68,750

Estimate EUR 25,000 - EUR 35,000

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About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction, private and digital sales in first half of 2017 that totalled £2.35 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.

Alongside regular sales online, Christie's has a global presence in 46 countries, with 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, Hong Kong, and Shanghai.

**Please note when quoting estimates above that other fees will apply in addition to the hammer price - see Section D of the Conditions of Sale at the back of the sale catalogue.*

**Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and are reported net of applicable fees.*

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