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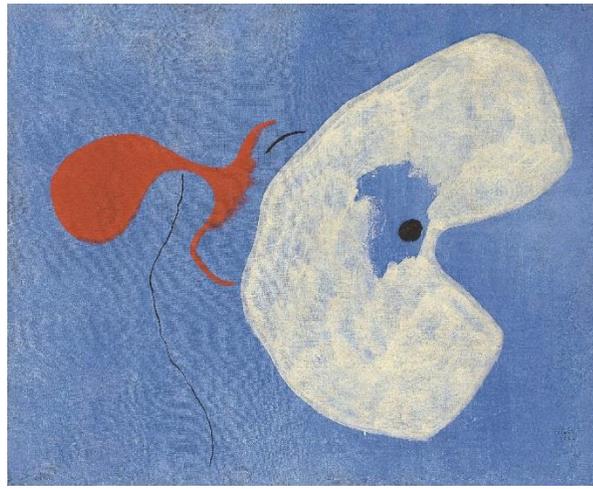
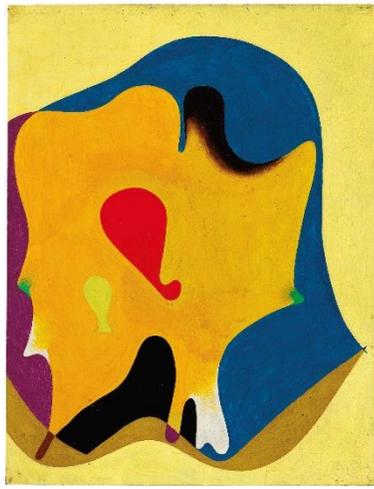
MASTERWORKS FROM THE COLLECTION OF ANTONI TÀPIES



Antoni Tàpies: Photographed at home

London – This February Christie's will present Masterworks from the Collection of Antoni Tàpies, one of the most famous Post-War artists of his generation who was celebrated for his exploration of the spirituality of the material world. Featuring artists including Joan Miró, Pablo Picasso, Paul Klee and Wassily Kandinsky, works from this collection will star in the *Impressionist and Modern Art Evening Sale*, *The Art of the Surreal Evening Sale* (both 27 February) and the *Impressionist and Modern Works on Paper Sale* (28 February). Masterworks from the Collection of Antoni Tàpies will be on view at Christie's King Street from 20 to 28 February 2018.

Presenting artworks by some of the most important figures of the twentieth century avant-garde, the personal collection of Antoni Tàpies offers a unique insight into the powerful bond that existed between the artist and the paintings and sculptures he encountered over the course of his lifetime. These highly intimate objects were closely connected to Tàpies's own artistic practice, often acting as a catalyst for his creative impulses, whilst also reflecting the seminal relationships, friendships and concepts that inspired him throughout his artistic career. Built on his desire to understand life's unfathomable mysteries, Tàpies's collection spans vastly different time periods and cultures, including examples of Khmer statuary alongside abstract modernist paintings, dreamlike compositions from the Surrealists, striking African idols and artefacts from antiquity.



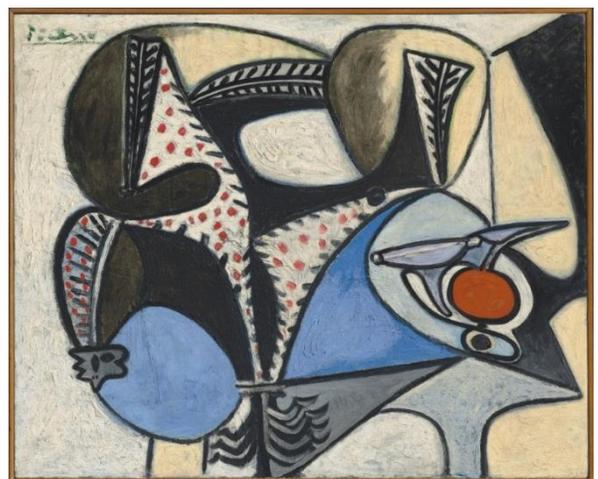
Left: Joan Miro, *Tête d'homme*, oil on panel, 1932, estimate: £800,000-1,200,000

Right: Joan Miro, *Painting*, oil on canvas, 1926, estimate: £600,000-900,000

Born in Barcelona in 1923, Antoni Tàpies grew up as the violence of the Civil War was being inscribed on the ancient walls of his city. From destruction, he forged one of the greatest bodies of abstract work of the twentieth century. Tàpies first came to prominence in the late 1940s, working in a Surrealist idiom that shared much with the ideas of artists such as Paul Klee and his fellow Catalanian Joan Miró. A scholarship to Paris in 1950-51 led to a meeting with Pablo Picasso. Informed by his interest in Zen philosophy as much as by the privation of Post-War Spain, Tàpies deliberately chose commonplace materials to infuse with new significance, invoking a transformative alchemy that prefigured the Italian movement of Arte Povera. Following his first American exhibitions in 1953, he represented Spain at the Venice Biennale in 1958; a celebrated solo show at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum followed in 1962, and another toured Europe in 1973-74. In 1984, he created the Tàpies Foundation, which holds his archives and over 2000 of his works, and continues to this day to promote the interdisciplinary study of modern and contemporary art. Major retrospectives were held at the Jeu de Paume in Paris in 1994, at the Guggenheim in 1995, and at Madrid's Reina Sofía Museum in 2000.

Olivier Camu, Deputy Chairman, Impressionist and Modern Art at Christie's added: '*Tàpies chose these works carefully, building within his collection a group of exceptional artworks from the Twentieth Century. Of course, his interests extended far wider than this period, but each of the works presented here reveal something interesting about Tàpies as an artist and a collector. They speak to his Catalan heritage, to his roots in the Surrealist movement, to his place as a leading figure within the Post-War art world. It is fascinating to be reminded through this small selection how sharp, sophisticated, informed and sensitive his eye was.*'

Gathering together artworks, apparently epochs and cultures apart, Tàpies collected passionately, but in a unique and idiosyncratic manner. The eclectic collection was formed in the Tàpies family home, built by the renowned Catalan architect José Antonio Coderch in the early 1960s to the artist's designs. Within this elegant, atmospheric setting, these artworks came to life, creating a unique, immersive, kaleidoscopic environment, in which the artist lived and worked. Each space was carefully curated by Tàpies and his beloved wife Teresa, the selection of objects within each room chosen for their ability to imbue the space with a mysterious, enigmatic energy, and for the effect they created when seen in combination with one another. These are the objects which captured his imagination, comforted him, inspired him and obsessed him on a daily basis.



Pablo Picasso, *Le coq saigné* ('The bled cock'), oil on plywood, 1947-48, estimate £2,200,000-2,800,000

Leading the group is a work of compelling force: Pablo Picasso's *Le coq saigné* ('The bled cock' 1947-8, estimate: £2,200,000 – 2,800,000). *Le coq saigné* has been celebrated as one of the most visually complex and arresting works of the large series of still-lives that the artist painted during and immediately following the Second World War. A sinuously interlocking composition of colour, planar form, line and pattern, the subject itself becomes almost entirely abstract. Further highlights of the collection include Joan Miró's *Painting* (1926, estimate £600,000 – 900,000), which belongs to Miró's famed series of 'oneiric' or 'dream' paintings, an enigmatic group of spectral compositions which the artist began in Paris in 1925 and Miró's *Tête d'homme* (1932, estimate £800,000 – 1,200,000) one of a small group of twelve intimately sized, experimental oil paintings which emerged at a pivotal moment in Joan Miró's career,



Antoni and Teresa Tàpies pictured at home with Picasso's *Le coq saigné*
circa 1985

following several years marked by what the artist termed a 'crisis of personal consciousness'. The elegance of Paul Klee's oil-transfer drawing, *Weibsteufel, die Welt beherrschend* (1921, estimate £200,000 – 300,000), along with Wassily Kandinsky's gouache and watercolour *Allein* (1932, estimate £120,000 – 200,000), reflect Tàpies's highly discerning and sensitive eye as a collector. Together the works paint a compelling picture of not only Tàpies's relationships with the artists who were his friends and peers, but also a pioneering moment in the history of 20th-century art.

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*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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