

CHRISTIE'S

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PRIVATE COLLECTIONS AND MUSEUM QUALITY PIECES ARE LEADING THE 3rd STAND ALONE PRE- COLUMBIAN ART AUCTION ON 7 APRIL IN PARIS

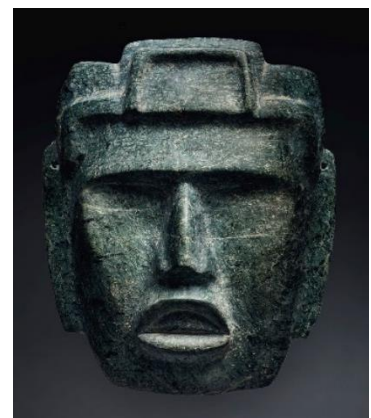


Paris – This season, Christie's France will hold its 3rd stand-alone Pre-Columbian Art auction with an offering of over 70% from distinguished private collections. This auction, composed of 62 lots, will be highlighted by works from The Collection of James and Marilyn Alsdorf, the Fiore Arts collection as well as from a notable European collection. Works date from 1000 B.C. to 1521 A.D., and will be representing the cultures of Mezcala, Maya, Aztec, Teotihuacan and a general cross section of the ancient Central and South America. The overall pre-sale estimate of the auction is around €2 million.

Following the immense success of the Professor Prigogine collection in 2018 and The Felix and Heidi Stoll collection last year, Christie's Pre-Columbian art department will continue to offer works from exquisite private collections in its third auction.

From a distinguished European collection three works will be offered in this auction, including an impressive early Teotihuacan stone figure from the city-state, dating 300 B.C. - 300 A.D. and estimated at €250,000-450,000 (illustrated left). The small corpus

of such large, early Teotihuacan figures embodies the earlier traditions of Olmec and Guerrero sculpture. This work, as well as the impressive Chontal mask of a priest or lord, identified by its diadem (illustrated right) from the Late Preclassic period (300-100 B.C / estimate: €225,000-425,000) were featured in the important exhibition *Mexique Terre des Dieux - Tresors de l'Art Precolombien* hosted in Geneva in 1998-1999. The representation of a face mask, is a defining characteristic of the Chontal style, which ranges from naturalistic to abstract masks. The renowned scholar, Carlo Gay, hypothesized that the Chontal masks evolved into the famed carving tradition of the later Teotihuacan masks.



"We looked for objects to delight our eyes and souls" – Marilyn Alsdorf

James and Marilyn Alsdorf spent their 38-year long marriage building a wide-ranging collection marked by both quality and diversity. With works spanning antiquity to the Renaissance, 19th Century to modern Masters, the Alsdorf's home was akin to an encyclopedic museum of art.

There are 22 Pre-Columbian works coming from this prestigious collection of which Christie's sold major works last November in New York, including an important painting by René Magritte *Le seize septembre* sold for just under \$20 million. The Alsdorfs' love for Indian, Southeast Asian, Himalayan, African and Pre-Columbian art formed their early collection, started in the 1960s. In addition to these 15 Pre-Columbian works, another group of works will be offered in the African and Oceanic art auction on 8 April in Paris. Amongst the Alsdorf collection, Christie's will be offering a rare Aztec stone altar from 1450-1520 A.D. estimated at €30,000-50,000 (illustrated below) and a Veracruz Stone Yoke fragment from El Tajín estimated at €7,000-10,000 (illustrated right).



Among the many remaining works of Aztec sculpture, receptacles hold a special place due to their shape and portable function. Altars are often impressive blocks whose upper part is fitted with a flat and shallow cavity. These structures were closely linked to the rites in the sense of receptacles and spaces for the exhibition or consumption of the sacrificed victims. The Alsdorf-altar is decorated with bas-reliefs on its four sides, representing the days of the Aztec ritual calendar. One side is carved with the "Four-movement", a very important glyph symbolizing the "Fifth World" – which is the Aztec world – successor of the four preceding worlds (estimated: €30,000-50,000).



Eight works are from the significant Fiore Arts Collection. These Mayan objects have all been on loan at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston close to a decade. A fine and beautiful pair of Mayan lidded vessels, from the Early Classic period (250-450 A.D. estimate: €100,000-150,000) represents a pair of long-beaked cormorants. The Mayans believed that these aquatic birds were able to travel through the three celestial realms -from the heavens to the underworld.

A Mayan standing figure of a nobleman, from the Late Classic period, 550-950 A.D., possibly a member of the priestly caste, belonged once to the renowned Jay C. Leff Collection of Pennsylvania. Mr. Leff was an omnivorous collector from the 1950s to the 70s of African, Oceanic, Pre-Columbian Arts as well as Antiquities. The Mayan figure in the upcoming auction was part of a traveling exhibition throughout the US, starting in the early 1960s. Today, many works from the Jay C. Leff collection are to be found in American museums (estimate: €100,000-150,000).



The Fiore Arts collection was founded by a North American private collector circa 20 years ago. Works from the collection have been exhibited in different North American museums, including the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. The proceeds from the auction will allow further philanthropic efforts the Fiore Arts Collection undertook since several years.

Auction : Tuesday 7 April at 6 pm

Viewing: From Thursday 2 April to Tuesday 7 April from 10 am to 6 pm. Open, on Sunday 5 April from 2pm to 6pm

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About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had auction sales in the first half of 2019 that totalled £2.2 billion / \$2.8 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and international expertise. 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.

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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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