

CHRISTIE'S

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PICASSO'S PORTRAIT OF MARIE-THÉRÈSE TO HIGHLIGHT CHRISTIE'S 20TH CENTURY EVENING SALE



On View at Christie's London: 17-18 September

NEW YORK – On October 6, Christie's will offer Pablo Picasso's *Tête de femme sur fond jaune*, 18 July 1934 (\$8-12 million), as a highlight of its 20th Century Evening Sale. Picasso kept the present example in his personal collection for the duration of his life – a testament to the importance that it held for him – and it remained in his family's possession following his death, until 2013. The sale on October 6 marks *Tête de femme sur fond jaune*'s first appearance at auction. More information on the 20th Century Evening Sale may be viewed [here](#).

Giovanna Bertazzoni, Vice-Chairman, 20th and 21st Century Art, Christie's, remarked: "It is a privilege to be able to offer this colourful, intimate portrait of Marie-Thérèse Walter, painted in the golden years of their love, alongside the enigmatic and magisterial depiction of Dora Maar in the 1941 *Femme dans un fauteuil*. Seen side by side, these portraits offer a fascinating window into the coexisting aspects of Picasso's personality and show the astonishing versatility and extraordinary depth of his portraiture."

In 1927, Picasso met Marie-Thérèse Walter, opening with: “You have an interesting face. I would like to do a portrait of you. I feel we are going to do great things together.” These now infamous lines were Picasso’s introduction to the young, golden haired woman he met one January evening outside the Galeries Lafayette in Paris. With her youthful innocence, luminous vitality and statuesque form, Marie-Thérèse Walter would become one of Picasso’s greatest muses; her presence, image, and the overwhelming desire she aroused in him inspiring an ecstatic outpouring of works that more than fulfilled the artist’s prediction.

Tête de femme sur fond jaune is a vibrant example of Picasso’s portraits of his young muse, painted in 1934 at the height of Walter’s influence on Picasso’s art. Radiating bright summer light, and saturated with the vibrant palette that has come to define Picasso’s depictions of Walter, this portrait was painted in Boisgeloup, the artist’s picturesque château in rural Gisors, northwest of Paris. Here, Picasso has described the unmistakable features of Walter—her classical profile, wide-eyed gaze, and voluptuous body—with his own language of linear signs. So well did he know her form by this point, he has reproduced it like a cartographer, mapping the rise and fall of her visage and bust, the shape of her eyes, and the pout of her lips, with a few, assured outlines.

PRESS CONTACT: Rebecca Riegelhaupt | RRiegelhaupt@christies.com | 212-636-2680

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