

# CHRISTIE'S

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## CLASSIC WEEK

### OLD MASTERS EVENING SALE

15 DECEMBER – LIVE – 6.00pm



Jan Davidsz. De Heem.  
(Utrecht 1606-1684 Antwerp)  
*A banquet still life* inscribed and signed 'V. E otmoedigen/ J-D heem.'  
(Estimate £4,000,000-£6,000,000)

**London** – Christie's announces the **Old Masters Evening Sale** taking place live on 15 December as part of Classic Week. The sale, which comprises 48 lots encompassing six centuries of European Art, presents a rich array of paintings, as well as sculpture and works on paper, covering a multitude of subjects and mediums. The sale is particularly strong in works by Netherlandish artists of the Golden Age, led by a monumental *pronkstilleven* by **Jan Davidsz. de Heem** (lot 10), (*illustrated above*), one of the finest still lifes to come onto the market this generation, (estimate £4,000,000-£6,000,000). Among the largest and most ambitiously conceived in the artist's *oeuvre*, this painting marks a highpoint in his career, being the culmination of a series of four monumental canvases embarked on between 1640 and 1643, which together re-defined the genre and established de Heem as the pre-eminent still-

life painter of the Golden Age. This picture has remained hidden from public view in the same private collection since the nineteenth century. It has only recently been brought to the attention of scholars and is offered here for sale, uncleaned, for the first time in more than two centuries.



A further notable work from this period is a rare and immaculately-preserved cabinet picture of cattle by **Paulus Potter** (lot 15), (*illustrated left*), executed in 1647 when the artist was just 22, (estimate £2,000,000-3,000,000). This painting is a consummate example of Potter's best work in the genre, combining scrupulous observation of the anatomy of the cattle with richly detailed renditions of texture and vivid effects of soft, glowing sunlight. With an especially distinguished provenance, this is arguably the finest painting by the artist still in private hands, unseen in public and untraced since the last time it was sold at auction in 1928.

**Frans van Mieris, The Elder's** *The Drummer Boy* (lot 27), (*illustrated right*), is a work of striking originality that can be considered one of the most important child genre scenes painted in Holland during the second half of the seventeenth century, (estimate £800,000-1,200,000). Untraced since its de-acquisition from the Alte Pinakothek Munich in 1929, and feared to be lost, the picture can now be properly re-instated into van Mieris's *oeuvre* and its qualities appreciated at large for the first time in almost a century.



Turning to the Italian school, there is a beautifully-preserved panel of *The Nativity, with the Journey to Egypt beyond* by the Milanese artist **Bernardino Luini** (lot 22, *illustrated left*), who was strongly influenced by Leonardo, (estimate £3,000,000-5,000,000). This painting can be counted among the masterpieces of Luini's full maturity and has notable provenance: having been acquired by the Scottish agent, James Irvine for one major Scottish collector, Sir William Forbes, 7th Bt., it was subsequently sold to another, Sir Archibald Campbell, 2nd Bt. of Succoth. It has been in the same private collection since the early-nineteenth century and is one of finest and the best preserved of Luini's religious panels to remain in private hands.





The sale also includes two exceptional panoramic view paintings of Venice and Messina, (lots 39 and 40) by Gaspar Van Wittel, called **Vanvitelli**, the pioneering painter of Italian *vedute* -, (*illustrated left*), (lot 39), the *Molo, Venice, looking West towards the entrance of the Grand Canal*, (estimate £600,000-800,000). These works were originally commissioned by the influential French scholar, Michel-Ange de La Chausse.

**Jean-Baptiste Simeon Chardin's** bold painting of a dead rabbit (lot 35), (*illustrated right*), is one of the earliest still lifes by the artist, who is celebrated as one of the greatest painters of the genre during the eighteenth century, (estimate £600,000-800,000). In a century that saw a certain frivolity at the height of fashion, Chardin's calm, quiet, meditative works eschewed the seductive art of the age, and went on to influence subsequent generations of painters, including Manet.



London Classic Week comprises a marquee series of ten sales celebrating craftsmanship and the story of creativity across time, from Antiquity to the 21st century, to be offered across five online and five live auctions taking place from 24 November to 17 December. Classic Week features Old Master Paintings and Sculpture, British & European Art, Antiquities, and Valuable Books and Manuscripts. Works on paper are strongly represented this season, ranging from manuscript illuminations, Old Master and British Drawings and Watercolours, and Quentin Blake illustrations.

An exhibition and viewing for the Classic Week sales will take place at Christie's King Street from 3 December – 16 December.

The exhibition, viewing and live sale will be taking place under socially distanced regulations, strictly adhering to government guidelines.

To view the Old Masters Evening sale online please click [here](#)

To follow the sale live on 15 December via christies.com please click [here](#)

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#### About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had auction sales in 2019 that totalled £4.5 billion / \$5.8 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.

*\*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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*Images available on request*

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