

CHRISTIE'S

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SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL'S ONLY WARTIME PAINTING TO BE OFFERED IN THE MODERN BRITISH ART EVENING SALE, 1 MARCH 2021

- *Tower of the Koutoubia Mosque* by Sir Winston Churchill was the only painting created by Churchill during the Second World War
- The painting was gifted by Churchill to Franklin D. Roosevelt after Churchill introduced him to the views and sunset of Marrakech
- Sir Winston Churchill's *Tower of the Koutoubia Mosque* has a pre-sale estimate of £1,500,000-2,500,000



Sir Winston Churchill, *Tower of the Koutoubia Mosque*, oil on canvas, 45.7 x 61 cm, Painted in January 1943, Estimate: £1,500,000-2,500,000

London – Christie's Modern British Art Evening Sale on 1 March 2021 will be led by Sir Winston Churchill's *Tower of the Koutoubia Mosque* (1943, estimate: £1,500,000-2,500,000), which is being offered from The Jolie Family Collection. The painting is the only work that Churchill created during the Second World War, executing the painting in Marrakech following the Casablanca Conference in January 1943. Churchill invited Franklin D. Roosevelt to join him in Marrakech the day after the conference concluded, motivated by his desire to share the views of the city and the light at sunset, which he so revered, with Roosevelt. The view impressed Roosevelt so much that Churchill decided to capture the scene for him as a memento

of their excursion. This act was seen not only as an indication of their friendship but of the special relationship between the UK and the USA.

Nick Orchard, Head of Department, Modern British Art, Christie's: "Christie's is delighted to offer such a historically significant painting as the leading highlight of the Modern British Art Evening Sale. *Tower of the Koutoubia Mosque* was created following the Casablanca Conference where it was agreed by the Allied forces that only complete surrender by the Axis powers would be acceptable. It is the only work that Churchill painted during the war, perhaps encouraged by the recent progress made by the Allies in what he considered to be one of the most beautiful countries he had encountered. *Tower of the Koutoubia Mosque* is therefore arguably the best painting by Winston Churchill due to the significance of the subject matter to him, and the fact that it highlights the importance of the friendship between the two leaders. The gifting of the work to Roosevelt underlines the fact that Churchill held the American President in such high regard and points to their joint efforts in guiding the Allied powers to the outcome of the Second World War."

Sir Winston Churchill began painting scenes of Morocco after being encouraged to visit the country by his painting tutor, Sir John Lavery. Upon his first visit in 1935, he felt that the light and scenery were unrivalled, creating some 45 paintings of the country. *Tower of the Koutoubia Mosque* stands out as the only painting created between 1939 and 1945, and the work is expected to realise one of the top prices for Sir Winston Churchill's paintings at auction.

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