

The background of the entire page is a reproduction of Salvador Dalí's 1969 painting 'Gala'. It depicts a vast, yellow, desert-like landscape under a pale blue sky. On the left, a large, dark, craggy rock formation rises. In the distance, a small, white, classical-style building with a bell tower sits on a hill. In the foreground, a giraffe stands, its long neck and back engulfed in bright orange and red flames. Further back, two small figures are visible: one standing and one sitting. The overall style is characteristic of Dalí's surrealist work.

# Bonhams

MAGAZINE | SPRING 2020 ISSUE 62

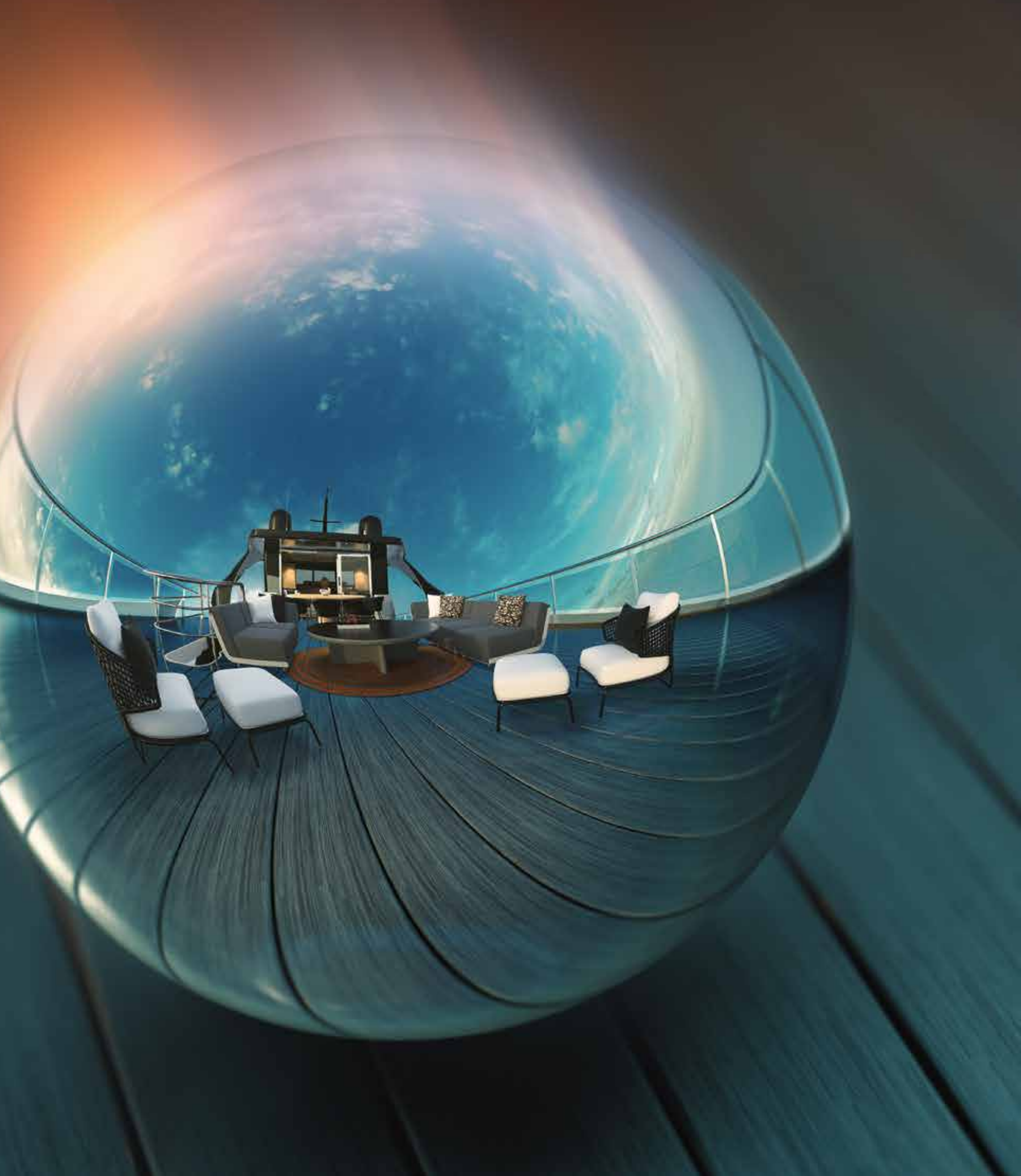
Salvador Dalí  
His fiery love for Gala

Christo  
He has it wrapped

Alexandra Shulman  
on handbags

Pierre Soulages  
Red hot

and  
William Dalrymple  
Ekow Eshun  
Christian Louboutin



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Photographed by Milton H. Greene © 2020 Joshua Greene / archiveimages.com

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*Couple aux têtes pleines de nuages*, 1937  
(detail)  
Sale: Impressionist & Modern Art  
London  
Thursday 26 March



Impressionist  
& Modern Art  
London  
Thursday 26 March  
5pm

Léonard Tsuguharu Foujita (1886-1968)  
*Femme allongée, Youki* (detail)  
oil on canvas  
50.5 x 61cm (19¾ x 24in)  
Painted in Paris, December 1923  
Estimate: £500,000 - 700,000  
(\$650,000 - 900,000)

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# Editor's letter



When was your eureka moment? The moment when, as a result of seeing something or meeting someone, the course of your life changed. For Christian Louboutin, it was when he saw a door handle made from a tusk. As he said, when I interviewed him about His Favourite Room (page 72), this was when he first saw that design did not have to

be purely functional. It could be beautiful as well. His approach to life changed as he realised that there were so many objects in the world waiting to be discovered that he hadn't known existed.

For Salvador Dalí, one of the defining moments of his life was when he met Gala, who was then married to the Surrealist poet, Paul Éluard. Soon after, he started to sign his works with both their names. As he said, "It is mostly with your blood, Gala, that I paint my pictures." Perhaps one of his most emotional paintings is *Couple aux têtes pleines de nuages* (1937) which, if you turn to page 26, you can see consists of two canvases shaped as portraits of Dalí and Gala, and, within the frames, their interior life depicted using Surrealist tropes. One of the masterpieces of Surrealism,

*Couple aux têtes pleines de nuages* (1937) comes to the Impressionist & Modern Art Sale in March.

Pierre Soulages, the creator of another sublime painting offered at Bonhams this season, had his lightbulb episode as a child when, as Martin Gayford writes on page 32, "he fell for the lustrous blackness of ink". The work, in London's Post-War & Contemporary Sale, belongs to a very rare group from the 1950s. It has a vivid underlay of crimson and was perhaps prompted by an artistic dialogue Soulages had with his friend, Mark Rothko.

On the other hand, there are those who don't need a eureka moment to discover their destiny. The American actress Diahann Carroll falls into this category. In March, Bonhams Los Angeles is offering the estate of this remarkable woman. Despite her background – her father worked on the New York subway – Carroll knew it was written in the stars that she would be a leading lady. With the confidence instilled in her by her parents since birth, she conquered Broadway.

*Lucinda Bredin*

## Contributors



### Alexandra Shulman

Editor-in-Chief of British *Vogue* for 25 years until 2017, Alexandra Shulman is a journalist, author and fashion consultant. She has published novels, and non-fiction (*Inside 'Vogue'*); her latest book, *Clothes... and Other Things that Matter*, is published in April. She has a extensive collection of handbags – and writes on page 44 about the ultimate accessory.



### Ekow Eshun

Ekow Eshun is a writer and curator. He is Chairman of the Fourth Plinth Commissioning Group and the former Director of the ICA, London. He is the author of *Africa State of Mind*, a major new survey of contemporary photography from Africa. On page 48, he investigates the astonishing work that came out of a photographic studio in a Natal suburb.



### Christian Louboutin

Christian Louboutin – world-renowned designer of towering stiletto shoes, each pair with a signature bright red sole – was born in Paris. He set up his own company in 1991 – selling only a couple of hundred pairs in the first 12 months, but 700,000 a year by 2012. On page 72, he describes how a room, in the Palais de la Porte Dorée, changed his life.



### Tanya Dukes

Tanya Dukes is an award-winning journalist, stylist and editor. She writes mainly on fashion – especially fine jewellery. She was the first Style Editor of *Elite Traveler* magazine and contributes to *The Hollywood Reporter*, among other titles. Based in New York, Tanya met Suzanne Kay to chat about her mother, the pioneering actress Diahann Carroll (page 18).



### William Dalrymple

William Dalrymple has written award-winning histories about India and the Islamic world, winning both the Duff Cooper Memorial Prize and Thomas Cook Travel Book Award. His most recent book is *The Anarchy: The Relentless Rise of the East India Company*, making him the ideal companion for a tour of Company paintings (page 36).



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# News

*In and out of  
Bonhams' salerooms*



## ★ If you're going to...

Bonhams, the only major international auction house to have a saleroom in Los Angeles, has strengthened its operations further on the West Coast by relocating its San Francisco office to an impressive new location in the city's Financial District. Leslie Wright, Bonhams' Deputy Chairman, US, said, "It is with great excitement that the new Bonhams office in San Francisco has officially opened its doors to the public. The gallery and full-service office will continue to function in the same capacity as it has before, but now in a new prestigious building."

When William Butterfield opened his auction house in San Francisco in 1865, he cannot have dared hope it would still be thriving – as its direct descendant, Bonhams – more than 150 years later. He had seen an opportunity to bring European antiques to the United States in the ships full of treasure-seekers that had been coming to seek their fortunes in the Californian gold-fields since the late 1840s.

His combination of entrepreneurial spirit and historical acuity continues to underpin Bonhams' work in San Francisco. The 11 resident specialists – departments include Asian Art,

Books & Manuscripts, Entertainment Memorabilia, Fine Art, Jewelry, History of Science & Technology, Furniture, Decorative Arts & Silver – have moved to the centre of the Financial District, just steps from the iconic Transamerica Pyramid which was the original site where Butterfield began his auctions.

Now at 601 California Street, Bonhams still offers fine art advisory and appraisal services, of course, but now has galleries for selling exhibitions and can offer tours of auction highlights. The building – the 22-storey skyscraper formerly known as the International Building – was designed by Anshen & Allen and completed in 1962. The architecture, which owes a distinct debt to the International style of Mies Van der Rohe and Le Corbusier, won an Honor Award from the American Institute of Architects in 1963.

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*Sella Molenaar drew the guests*



*Noor Soussi and El Bedeir*



*Hettie Judah, Lucia Tro Santafe,  
Tristram Featherstonehaugh & Vicky Steer*

## ★ Open all hours

In collaboration with *GalleriesNow*, December's Bonhams After Hours celebrated the Prints & Multiples sale. Following a panel discussion with Lucia Tro Santafe, Bonhams Director of Prints, Vicky Steer, Head of Editions at the

Whitechapel, and Hettie Judah, the *i's* senior art critic, Frida Wannerberger produced a live-art collage inspired by the sale's Cocteau ceramics. Illustrator Sella Molenaar drew portraits of the guests, as they ate decorated biscuits inspired by Sol LeWitt.



## ALPINE EAGLE

With its pure and sophisticated lines, Alpine Eagle offers a contemporary reinterpretation of one of our iconic creations. Its 41 mm case houses an automatic, chronometer-certified movement, the Chopard 01.01-C. Forged in Lucent Steel A223, an exclusive ultra-resistant metal resulting from four years of research and development, this exceptional timepiece, proudly developed and handcrafted by our artisans, showcases the full range of watchmaking skills cultivated within our Manufacture.

*Chopard*

THE ARTISAN OF EMOTIONS – SINCE 1860



Post-War &  
Contemporary Art  
London  
Thursday 12 March  
4pm

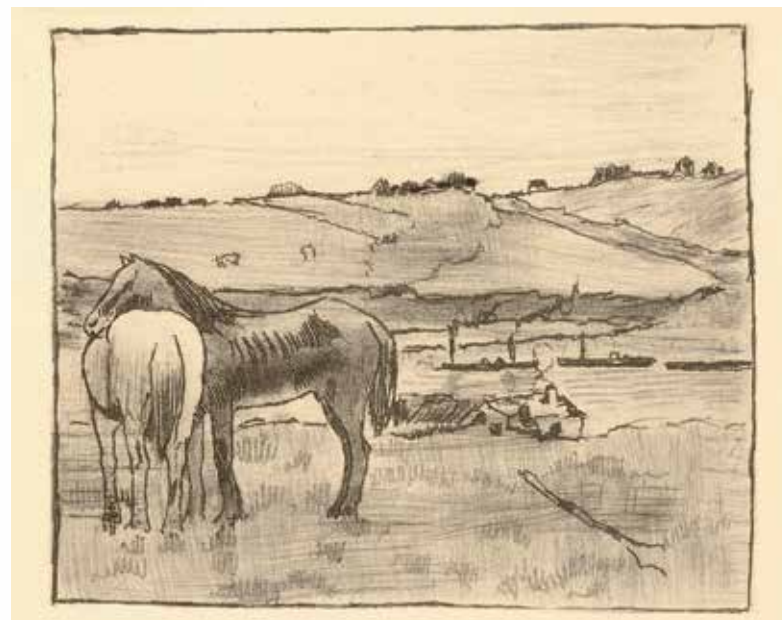
Lucio Fontana (1899-1968)  
*Crocifisso*, 1948-50  
painted and glazed ceramic  
37 x 21.6 x 12.8cm (14¾ x 8½ x 5 1/8 in)  
Estimate: £80,000 - 120,000  
(\$100,000 - 160,000)

Enquiries: Giacomo Balsamo  
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### ★ Gilbert on George

In 1892, Prince Albert Victor, Duke of Clarence – the eldest grandson of Queen Victoria, and hence second in line to the British throne – caught flu and died. His grief-stricken parents, the future King Edward VII and Queen Consort Alexandra, commissioned Sir Alfred Gilbert to design bronze statues of saints to adorn his tomb in St George's Chapel, Windsor. The figures – of which St George, England's patron saint, was the best known – were installed in 1895. Controversially, Gilbert, the premier English sculptor of the day (he also created Eros at Piccadilly Circus), capitalised on the appeal of St George by accepting commissions to make copies for private clients. A very small number of these, in a variety of media and, at 50cm, the same size as the original, have survived. An unrecorded version in bronze, however, has recently come to light. It will be offered in the Decorative Arts 1200-1900 sale in London in May. Found by Bonhams specialists during a country-house valuation, it appears to be unique – at 90cm high, it is considerably larger than the known casts – and has been hailed as a major discovery.

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### ★ Etched in history

From energetic racing scenes, to the serenity of his famous *Horses in the Meadow*, 1891-1892, horses and racing were subjects that gave Degas real freedom to experiment. In 1891, Galerie Durand-Ruel commissioned the copyist A.M. Lauzet to produce a print of *Horses in the Meadow*. Degas was dissatisfied with Lauzet's version, so he created his own, flipping the image and substituting soft-ground etching to create bold lines. He made three adjustments to the plate before the book edition of 50 was printed. The first state is lost, mentioned only in notes, the second state is unique, and is in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art,

the third and final state was pulled in two recorded proofs – one is in the National Gallery, Washington, and the other is in the Detroit Institute of Arts. Now a newly discovered third proof of this third state will feature in Bonhams Prints & Multiples sale in New York in May with an estimate of \$20,000-\$30,000. This lost proof – dramatically different from the other two known versions, with bolder contrasts and uneven outlines – is a significant addition to his graphic oeuvre.

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### A driven man

It takes a truly special car – and a dedicated collector – to warrant a last-minute daytrip on Concorde to place the winning bid. That was the length to which the late Dean S Edmonds Jr, eminent physics professor at Boston University, went in 1985 to acquire – at the world-record price of \$400,000 – an exceptional 1932 Bugatti Type 55 Roadster, originally sold new to the future Baron Rothschild.

According to his children, Edmonds “even as a young man, was busy playing with and racing cars.” When he became aware of this Type 55, he “had to have it. His friend showed him a postcard for the auction and within the day he juggled his plans, hopped out of teaching and headed to London.” The Bugatti is now offered in the Bonhams Amelia Island sale as part of the dozen-strong Edmonds

Collection, which ranges from an extremely rare 1962 Aston Martin DB4 GT-Engined to a 1981 DeLorean DMC-12. The eclectic collection reflects a man who was “passionate about engineering, aviation and motor cars but also opera and Classical history”.

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BEN ENWONWU  
FROM 1949 "AFRICA DANCES"

Modern and Contemporary  
African Art  
London  
Wednesday 18 March  
5pm

Benedict Chukwukadibia Enwonwu M.B.E  
(Nigerian, 1917-1994)  
*Agbogho Mmuo*  
oil on canvas  
Estimate: £200,000 - 300,000  
(\$260,000 - 390,000)

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### ★ Gift from the heart

The Universities China Committee in London (UCCL) has played a vital role for scholars in China and the UK since its foundation in 1925, facilitating research visits between the countries and promoting Chinese studies and language teaching in Britain. For the past 70 years, the UCCL has owned a collection of 11 paintings, presented by visiting Chinese artists in 1950, which is now to be offered in the Fine Chinese Paintings sale in Hong Kong in the spring season. The collection has a fascinating and heartening history. Escaping the hardships of the Chinese Civil War, the student artists found a warm welcome in a London still struggling with rationing and the after-effects of the Blitz;

the paintings were given in gratitude. For years, they hung on loan at the Buddhist Society in London, and from 1968 were on display in the Department of Chinese Studies at the University of Leeds. Many of the young artists were pupils of the President of the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing, Xu Beihong, a celebrated painter in his own right, whose *Magpies on Autumn Branches* [pictured right] is among the highlights of the sale. The proceeds will support the work of UCCL.

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### ★ Swan around

This wonderfully opulent gala-sleigh – reputedly commissioned by Ludwig II of Bavaria – forms part of the sale of the Jacob Collection in London on 22 April. King Ludwig did nothing by halves, as visitors to his fairytale castle Neuschwanstein

will know. Sometimes called the 'Swan King' – they say he influenced Tchaikovsky's ballet *Swan Lake* – he was also known, less flatteringly, as 'Mad King Ludwig' by those in his government who were plotting to dethrone him. Days after his exasperated ministers forced him to abdicate, Ludwig drowned in Lake Starnberg, in mysterious circumstances.

The Jacob Collection also contains objects that span more than 3,000 years – from Egyptian and Roman antiquities to 20th-century design. There is also impressive collections of cameras, scientific instruments, Victorian erotica, Japanese works of art and books, furniture, paintings, and toys, including a full-size children's carousel made in 1951, all to be sold without reserve.

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### ★ Unite for Africa

Ever since he launched Virgin Records in 1972, Sir Richard Branson has been part of the national conversation. As a businessman, investor and philanthropist, he is one of the most-recognisable faces in Britain – and indeed around the world. Branson has a particular passion for Africa, where he has not only established businesses but also supported budding entrepreneurs. During his many trips to Africa over the past decades, Branson has acquired an extensive and unusually comprehensive collection of African art. He is now selling a small selection of works from that collection at the Modern and Contemporary African Art sale in London in March to raise funds for Virgin Unite and African Arts Trust. Ranging from an ephemeral mixed-media installation by the highly regarded Nigerian artist



Nnenna Okore to a triptych by the Beninese artist Julien Sinzogan and a landscape by the multidisciplinary Ethiopian artist Elias Sime, the pieces speak not only of Branson's love of Africa, but also his restless curiosity and excellent eye.

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The Greek Sale  
London  
Tuesday 7 April  
2pm

Nikos Hadjikyriakos-Ghika (1906-1994)  
*Plant on a Terrace*  
signed and dated 'Ghika/65' (lower right)  
oil on canvas  
100 x 73cm (39 x 29in)  
Estimate: £50,000 - 70,000  
(\$65,000 - 90,000)

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Ghika  
65



Daisy Goodwin



Jasper Conran



Leslie Caron &amp; Nicky Haslam



Catherine and Philip Mould



Rachel Johnson and Nicholas Coleridge



### Social highlight

In London, it was not the night to try to host a dinner party: everybody arrived at Bonhams to support their friend, the celebrated interior designer Nicky Haslam. The guests? Film star Leslie Caron, Jasper Conran, cultural commentator Peter York, Rachel Johnson and writer and television producer Daisy Goodwin, among many others. The occasion? The sale of Haslam's impressive collection of art and artefacts from his Hampshire retreat, the Hunting Lodge. The party – with champagne provided by Mark's Club – took place amid an astonishing array of Haslam's possessions, not least a Lucian Freud etching of his ear, Cecil Beaton's *Portrait of Coco Chanel*, costume designs by Stephen Tennant and French terracotta busts. There was even one of Haslam's famous leather jackets.

What happened next...



### A renaissance

A newly discovered portrait of Queen Elizabeth I (c.1562) achieved £337,563 in Bonhams Old Master Paintings sale in London in December.



### Motoring on

In February, Count Guy Bouriat-Quintart's 1932 Bugatti Type 55 Roadster achieved €4,600,000 at Bonhams Grand Palais sale.

### Haring about

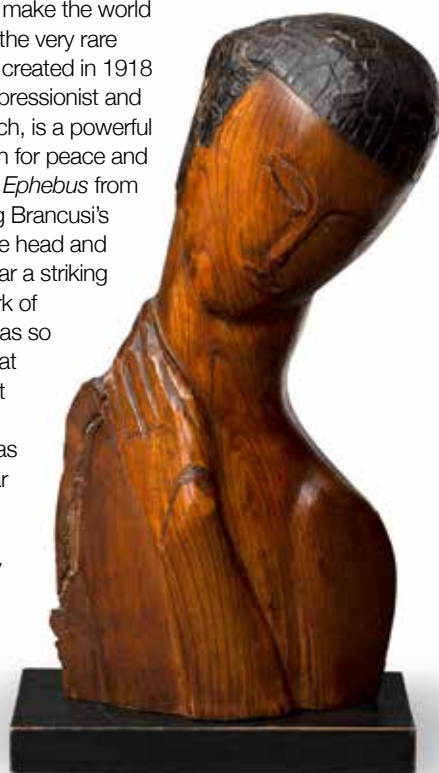
At November's Post-War & Contemporary Art sale in New York, Keith Haring's untitled mural from the Church of the Ascension Grace House achieved a world record \$3,860,075.



### ★ Peace work

After the First World War, the Russian-born French sculptor Osip Zadkine had an overwhelming desire to make the world whole again. *Ephebus*, the very rare wood sculpture that he created in 1918 and which leads the Impressionist and Modern Art Sale in March, is a powerful manifestation of his wish for peace and beauty. Zadkine carved *Ephebus* from a block of elm, following Brancusi's method; the angle of the head and empty, almond eyes bear a striking resemblance to the work of Modigliani. The piece was so important to Zadkine that he selected it for his first solo exhibition in 1920. Early examples – such as *Ephebus* – rarely appear on the market. This sculpture is one of the finest wood carvings by the artist to have ever appeared at auction.

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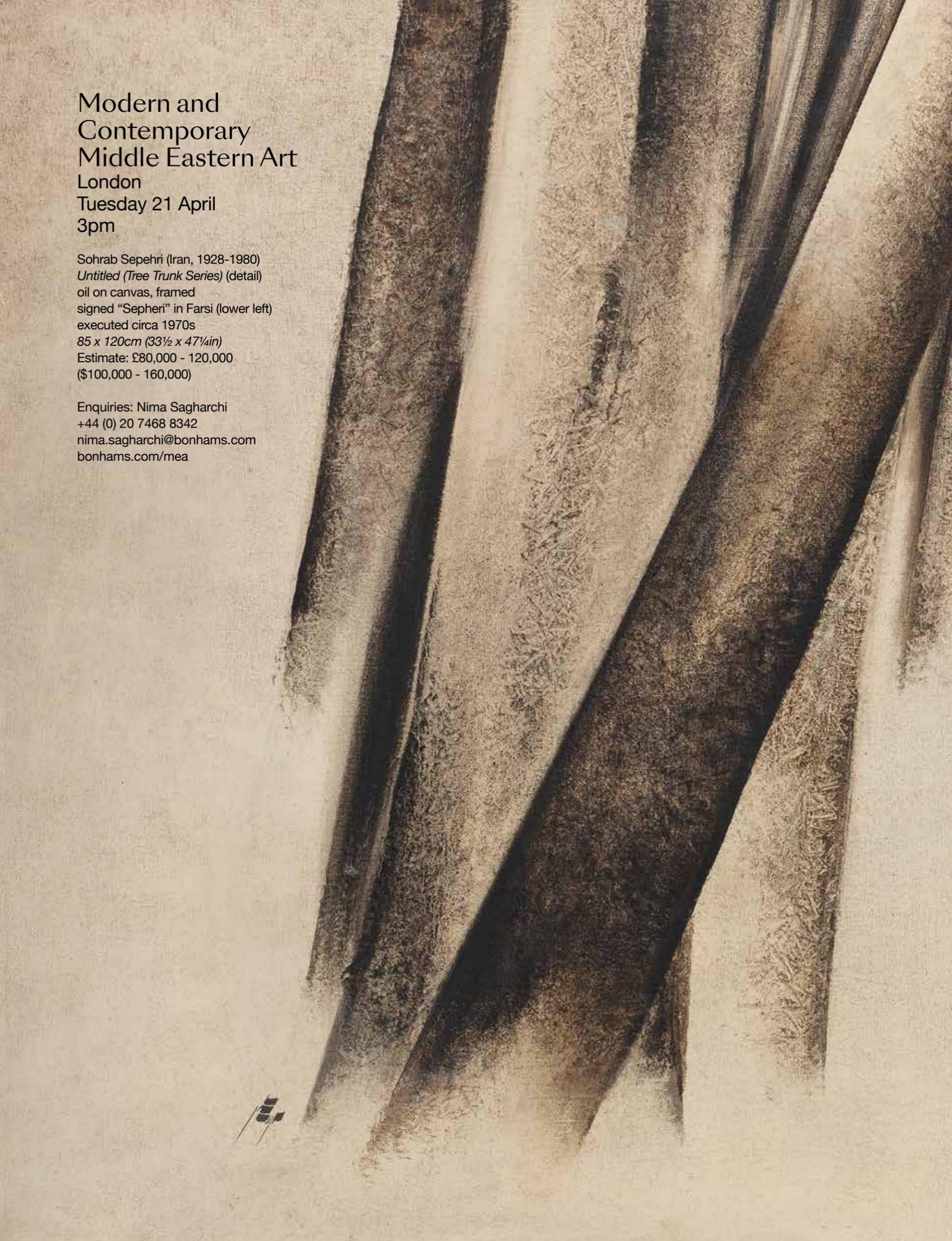


### ★ The great American novels

Philip Roth's wry exploration of the American Dream, often drawing on his own life, earned him readers and prizes galore, so the appearance of an unpublished Roth manuscript in the Fine Books and Manuscripts sale in New York in March is a major event. Over 53 pages, the author sketches a sequel to his 1972 novella *The Breast*, exploring the disappearance of that work's central character, Professor David Kepesh. In the event, Roth abandoned the idea and instead wrote a prequel to *The Breast*, published in 1977 under the title, *The Professor of Desire*. This is the first Roth manuscript ever offered at auction.

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Modern and  
Contemporary  
Middle Eastern Art  
London  
Tuesday 21 April  
3pm

Sohrab Sepehri (Iran, 1928-1980)  
*Untitled (Tree Trunk Series)* (detail)  
oil on canvas, framed  
signed "Sepheri" in Farsi (lower left)  
executed circa 1970s  
85 x 120cm (33½ x 47¼in)  
Estimate: £80,000 - 120,000  
(\$100,000 - 160,000)

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# On a journey

Molly Ott Ambler tells *Lucinda Bredin* how Aretha Franklin ushered her into the world of auctions

Photograph by Eric Vogel

## Right

Molly Ott Ambler, Bonhams' Head of Impressionist & Modern Art for the Americas

## Below

*Neige* by Henri Le Sidaner that achieved \$375,000 in New York's Impressionist & Modern Art sale in November 2019

There are many routes into the world of auctions – but few involve the Queen of Soul. Molly Ott Ambler, Bonhams' new Head of Impressionist & Modern Art for the Americas, laughs. "I graduated from Wellesley College and a week later was working in shipping at Sotheby's. I got a phone call and it's Aretha Franklin, about shipping a table. So I learned her code name that she used at various hotels through the years – I was just twenty-one and three-quarter years old." Molly was certainly kept busy. "Another time they said, oh, you speak French? Great. Ship this armour for a horse to a man in the south of France. We need it here in one week. On another level, I was the one who catalogued the single-owner collections, so I worked on the Gianni Versace sale after his death in Miami."

But it's not only brushes with celebrity that she remembers. It was her work on the Bill Blass collection – with its Old Master drawings and a Picasso oil painting from 1932 – that, in her words, "really sent me down a rabbit hole of research".

This aspect of her work remains a thrill. "Though I spend most of my time speaking to collectors and building relationships with clients, making works more interesting by understanding their provenance is a great joy and passion for me. Katharine Hepburn, for example, had a collection by modern British artists – people such as Alfred Wallis that I hadn't even heard about at the time. Why had they caught her interest? It was fascinating to make the connections."

So, when a painting by the German Expressionist Franz Marc came to Bonhams, "we researched it for nine months – you know, I think Bonhams should be known for these extra layers of expertise and care and attention. It's a great strength of Bonhams in my field: we sell



great art by the best artists, but by finding works on paper – drawings, or gouaches like the Franz Marc, rather than fully elaborated canvases – we can offer them at a lower price point."

Molly argues that this approach makes Bonhams accessible. It draws people in, gently educating collectors and nurturing the next generation. "Many of these buyers when they come to me say 'I feel intimidated by the art market'. I know it can be opaque, but we're saying: you might be spending \$5,000 or \$100,000, but come to us and we'll make sure you have a good experience."

What has changed since her own early days in the business? "Many of the collectors I've worked with over the years have, I suppose you might say, evolved. They



may have started in the world of Monet and Renoir, but they're creeping forward in time – many Impressionist buyers are now interested in works around the 1930s and '40s. Perhaps they buy a new home and think, you know, we can't have the Nabis here in the bright light of Florida – let's do oils of the '50s and '60s." It is one of the things that Molly most enjoys about her new role: going on that journey with her clients to introduce them to new artists and help them to pick up new threads.

"When the Whitney reopened a couple of years ago, they were suddenly featuring the women artists who helped define Abstract Expressionism. I thought: this is long overdue, I've been recommending – and selling – Helen Frankenthalers for years to my clients. And Joan Mitchell. And Grace Hartigan. These artists have deserved the attention they're now getting for a long time, so it's really fun for me to see museums shake-up their exhibitions."

## "As I got older, I found it was just in my pores to love looking at art"

Molly's passion for galleries was fired as a child in St Louis, Missouri, a city of superb art museums. "The St Louis Art Museum, which is free and open to all, is a wonderful collection and it also has such interesting little pockets of specialisation. My mother was a docent, and then she was on the acquisition committee for a time – so I spent a *lot* of my childhood there, after school, at least weekly. I would sketch works in the galleries – the Monet *Water Lilies*, a great Gauguin portrait... they were touchstone works for me as a kid."

Though Molly majored in English Literature, art history was always a part of her life. "My parents collected prints, dragging me to small galleries throughout New England, looking at 18th-century American furniture and botanical prints. I got sick

of it and would stay in the car, refusing to go in. But then we would take a yearly driving vacation, and visit museums right across the States. As I got older, I found it was just in my pores to love looking at art."

Molly sees her personal engagement with art as a perfect mirror to another of Bonhams' key strengths: the uncanny ability to identify areas of value in the marketplace – and draw them out by telling the story of key objects. "The market has really changed and responded to the kind of reshuffle we've seen at the Whitney. I mean, not every collector can afford Jackson Pollock, but many can enter that moment in our history from this new angle."

Molly points to MoMA's recent rehang, too. "It's fantastic", she says. "I've gone six times to see it. They've got Lee Bontecou, an artist I've always loved – to see her finally getting this kind of global attention, on the biggest stage available, is thrilling." She is very excited also about two paintings by Françoise Gilot offered by Bonhams. "She's another of my favourite artists," she says, "but she was known as just a muse of Picasso, when she's a great painter in her own right, a superb draughtswoman. She wrote books about her life, as well, both during her stormy years with Picasso and as just an artist and a woman in the workplace. To introduce new people to her and her paintings is immensely exciting."

*Lucinda Bredin is Editor of Bonhams Magazine.*

*The next Impressionist & Modern sale is on Thursday 26 March in New Bond Street, London.*



**Left**  
Edgar Degas (1834-1917)  
*Scene de ballet, Arlequin et Colombine*, c.1891-95  
stamped 'Degas' (lower left)  
pastel on paper laid down on card  
13½ x 15¼in (34.3 x 38.7cm)  
Estimate: \$300,000 - 500,000  
(£230,000 - 380,000)

**Above**  
Henri Matisse (1869-1954)  
*Nu couché*, 1944  
signed and dated 'Henri Matisse 5/44'  
(lower right)  
charcoal on paper  
15 x 22½in (38.1 x 57.2cm)  
Estimate: \$200,000 - 300,000  
(£150,000 - 230,000)



19th Century and  
British Impressionist Art  
London  
Wednesday 8 April  
2pm

Charles Burton Barber (British, 1845-1894)  
*Only a Shower* (detail)  
signed and dated 'C. Burton Barber 1884'  
oil on canvas  
60.9 x 76.2cm (24 x 30in)  
Estimate: £120,000 - 180,000  
(\$160,000 - 230,000)

Enquiries: Charles O'Brien  
+44 (0) 20 7468 8360  
charles.obrien@bonhams.com  
bonhams.com/19thcentury



**Left**  
Diahann Carroll's much-loved collection of antiques in her apartment in Los Angeles, overlooking West Hollywood Hills

**Below**  
Silver topped gold, ruby and diamond brooch, 19th century, Estimate: \$10,000 - 12,000

**Opposite**  
'Ageing, acting, marrying and other things I learned the hard way': the magnificent Diahann Carroll (1935-2019)



# Leading lady

Diahann Carroll was a trailblazer who *always* dressed the part. Diahann's daughter gives **Tanya Duker** the inside story on an actress who broke the mould

**T**here's a piece of advice that Diahann Carroll lived by and dispensed regularly: "If you're not invited to the party, throw your own." It's the kind of attitude – pragmatic, unsentimental, irrepressible – that sustained her through a seven-decade career in show business that started when she was a prim 1950s teenager in white gloves and led to a place among Hollywood's grandest dames. The lofty highs and trying lows Diahann experienced on the way made her exceptionally skilled at becoming the life of her self-made party, not merely seizing the opportunities that came her way but creating new ones. She navigated Hollywood's treacherous currents to emerge an icon, in the process creating a blueprint for the generations in her wake.

A doting family that instilled the sense that she was special gave Diahann preternatural confidence. Born in the Bronx in 1935 to striving working-class parents, she spent most of her childhood in uptown Manhattan, a self-described "Harlem princess" with handmade dresses and voice lessons at the Metropolitan Opera. When I sit down with Diahann's only child Suzanne Kay – whose father, Monte Kay, was the first of four husbands – she explains that her mother "was groomed to believe the truth about

herself, which is that she deserved the very best." This is the reason she looked at big-screen idols like Barbara Stanwyck and Bette Davis and saw a template for her future. Even at a time when black actors were mainly confined to roles as maids and nannies, "it never crossed her mind that she would be anything but a leading lady," said Suzanne.

**"It never crossed her mind that she would be anything but a leading lady"**

By the time she finished high school, she was a fledgling model and singer, with a few wins at local talent competitions under her belt – and parents who insisted she enrol in college. The detour into academia did not last. During her freshman year at New York University, in 1954, she won three episodes of the televised talent competition *Chance of a Lifetime* singing 'The Man I Love' and 'Someone to Watch Over Me'. Her victory came with \$3,000 in prize money and a booking to perform at the





**Above**  
Diahann Carroll's gold and diamond pendant from Tiffany & Co., showing her zodiac sign, Cancer  
Estimate: \$5,000 - 7,000



Latin Quarter, one of New York's most elegant nightclubs. NYU was put on hold, permanently.

Not all of Diahann's bookings were so highfalutin. She polished her skills at nightclubs in the villages of the Catskills, the mountain resorts outside New York City, usually accompanied by her mother. On one occasion when she travelled alone to a perform in a Pennsylvania mining town, the club's proprietor locked Diahann in her dressing room because his customers were fighting each other for her attentions. Luckily, days of being barricaded in dressing rooms for her own protection did not last.

The same year she landed a small role in *Carmen Jones*, the all-black adaptation of Bizet's opera *Carmen*. She was grateful for the chance to work with Harry Belafonte and Pearl Bailey, but had definite ideas about the material: in her autobiography *The Legs are the Last to Go*, she said it made the cast sound "intentionally downmarket". She didn't yet have the clout to do anything about that, but it was an experience that lingered in her memory.

Broadway beckoned. When composer Richard Rodgers saw her in the Truman Capote production *House of Flowers*, he saw she had the makings of a muse, and resolved to cast her in one of his shows. It took seven years, but he eventually created the musical *No Strings*, the story of romance between an American model and a writer in Paris, just for her. She returned the favour with a captivating performance that won a Tony Award. It was the first time a black woman had received the best actress prize; there would be more milestones to come.

Footage of the actress accepting her Tony shows her in a moment of pure, transcendent joy. At a time when the indignity of segregation persisted in the South and racism

– overt and otherwise – knew no geographical bounds, she was a vision of excellence, beauty and grace that no one could deny and black Americans could be proud of.

Still, she couldn't rest on her laurels. Even having accepted Broadway's highest accolade, performing in nightclubs remained her mainstay. There was an upside to the format, though. "She loved storytelling," said Suzanne. "She could use the stage to communicate a story in a way that she couldn't in a TV show or movie as an actor for hire. Creating her own musical production and taking it on the road, she had a lot of control of her creativity."

## "Sometimes you have to break rules to get what you need"

In 1968, Diahann found herself making television history in her best-known role. When she starred in *Julia* as a nurse with a young son, she became the first black woman to star in her own show. It was a hit during its run, but critics thought the character too faultlessly professional and mild-mannered to be representative of the reality of African-American life. No one would have claimed that of her film role in *Claudine* as a single mother of six children; she was nominated for an Oscar.

Dominique Deveraux, a conniving diva added to the third season of the blockbuster soap opera *Dynasty*, might never have existed had Diahann not aspired to be "the first black bitch on television". She dispatched her manager to approach series producer Aaron Spelling. When weeks went by without an answer, she took matters into her own hands by going to a *Dynasty* party



#### Left

All that glitters ...  
A Louis XV-style rock  
crystal chandelier

#### Above

Diahann Carroll's photo  
album from 1962 while  
she was appearing in  
*No Strings* on Broadway

#### Below

Diamond and Cultured  
Pearl Ring, Estimate:  
\$40,000 - 60,000

#### Right

Diahann Carroll's Steinway  
Baby Grand that took  
pride of place in her  
Los Angeles apartment



uninvited to get his attention. She landed the part that night. "Sometimes you have to break rules to get what you need," she explained. And to ensure the script avoided clichés, "I told them I wanted them to write a character for me as if they were writing for a rich white man," she said. "It was fine with me that race didn't figure into my character."

Where Dominique was brash, Diahann led with charm. But one thing they shared was sartorial flair. For Diahann, closets stocked with Norman Norell couture, Galanos gowns and sequined Scassi numbers served a dual purpose. They were tools to craft her effortlessly elegant image and also, said her daughter, "a sign that she achieved what she wanted to achieve. It was symbolic."

Her exuberant love of fashion was matched by a stoic, on-with-the-show outlook that applied to any challenge, including her breast cancer diagnosis in 1997. "My mother was not a complainer," said Suzanne. Instead she used her experience to help others, using her media clout to get women – especially women of colour and from low-income communities – to get mammograms.

Even when Diahann reached official retirement age, quietly bowing out was never an option. She returned to her roots, touring nightclubs and earned rave reviews in *The New York Times* for a cabaret act flaunting "her air of casually worn grandeur". In a recurring role as Park Avenue widow June Ellington on *White Collar*, she was the most elegant septuagenarian on television. And she was pursued by one of television's most successful showrunners, a young black woman who had single-handedly put others in starring roles. Shonda Rhimes, creator of *Grey's Anatomy*, personally called Diahann to offer her the part of Jane Burke, mother of cardiac surgeon Preston Burke. The actress jumped at the opportunity to join a hit show while in her eighth decade – with no audition required.

When asked what her mother would make of the outpouring of affection inspired by the news of her death in October 2019 – the international obituaries; the dimming of lights in Broadway theatres; tributes from Beyoncé and Oprah, Lenny Kravitz and Laurence Fishburne – Suzanne answered, "I think it's what she imagined would happen." Dispensing with false modesty, Diahann put it best herself when she assessed the scope of her influence: "Let's face it – I am historic."

*Tanya Dukes is a writer, editor and stylist.*

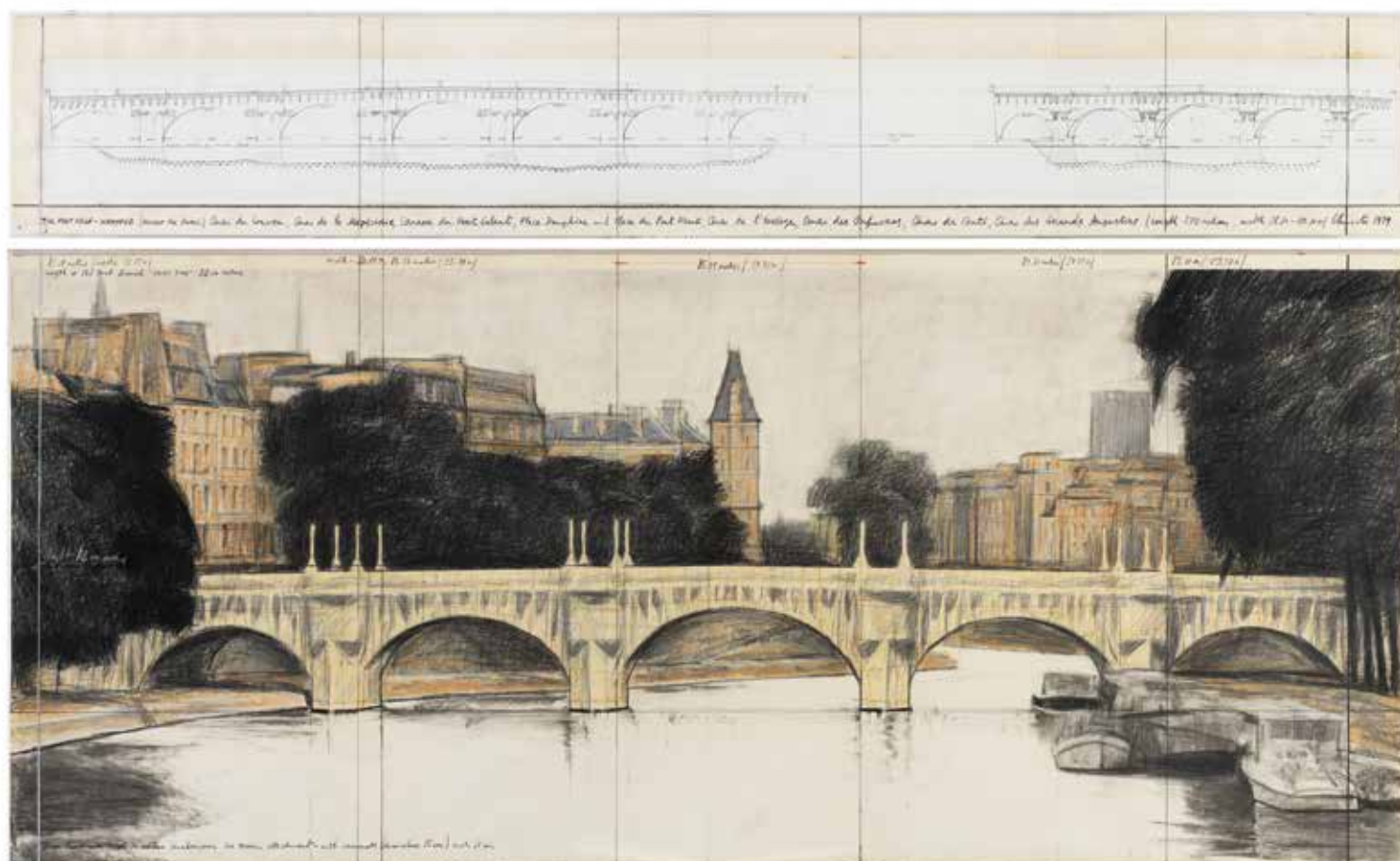
Sale: The Diahann Carroll Collection  
Los Angeles  
Tuesday 10 March at 2pm  
Enquiries: Emily Waterfall +1 323 436 5508  
emily.waterfall@bonhams.com  
bonhams.com/diahanncarroll





# Wrap star

Christo wrapped the Reichstag. He made Italians walk on water. Now it's the turn of the Arc de Triomphe, says *Mark Hudson*



**Left**  
Christo and Jeanne-Claude looking  
for a possible site for *The Mastaba*  
(Project for Abu Dhabi)  
February 1982

**Above**  
Christo (American, born 1935)  
*The Pont Neuf Wrapped* (Project  
For Paris), in two parts (1979)  
Overall: 147.5 x 245.4cm (58 x 96½in)  
Estimate: £120,000 - 180,000  
(\$160,000 - 230,000)

**Below**  
*The Pont-Neuf Wrapped*,  
Paris, 1975-1985

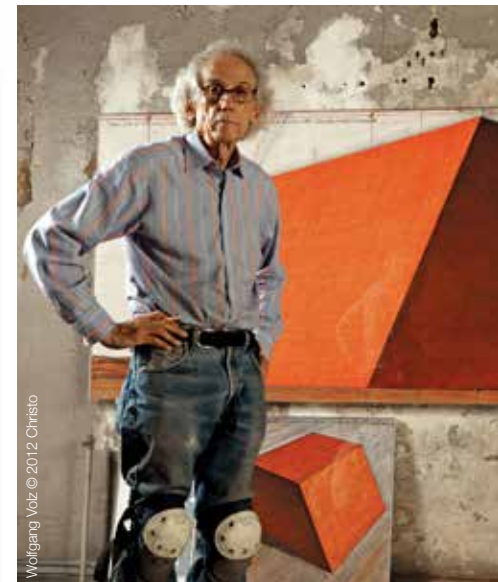
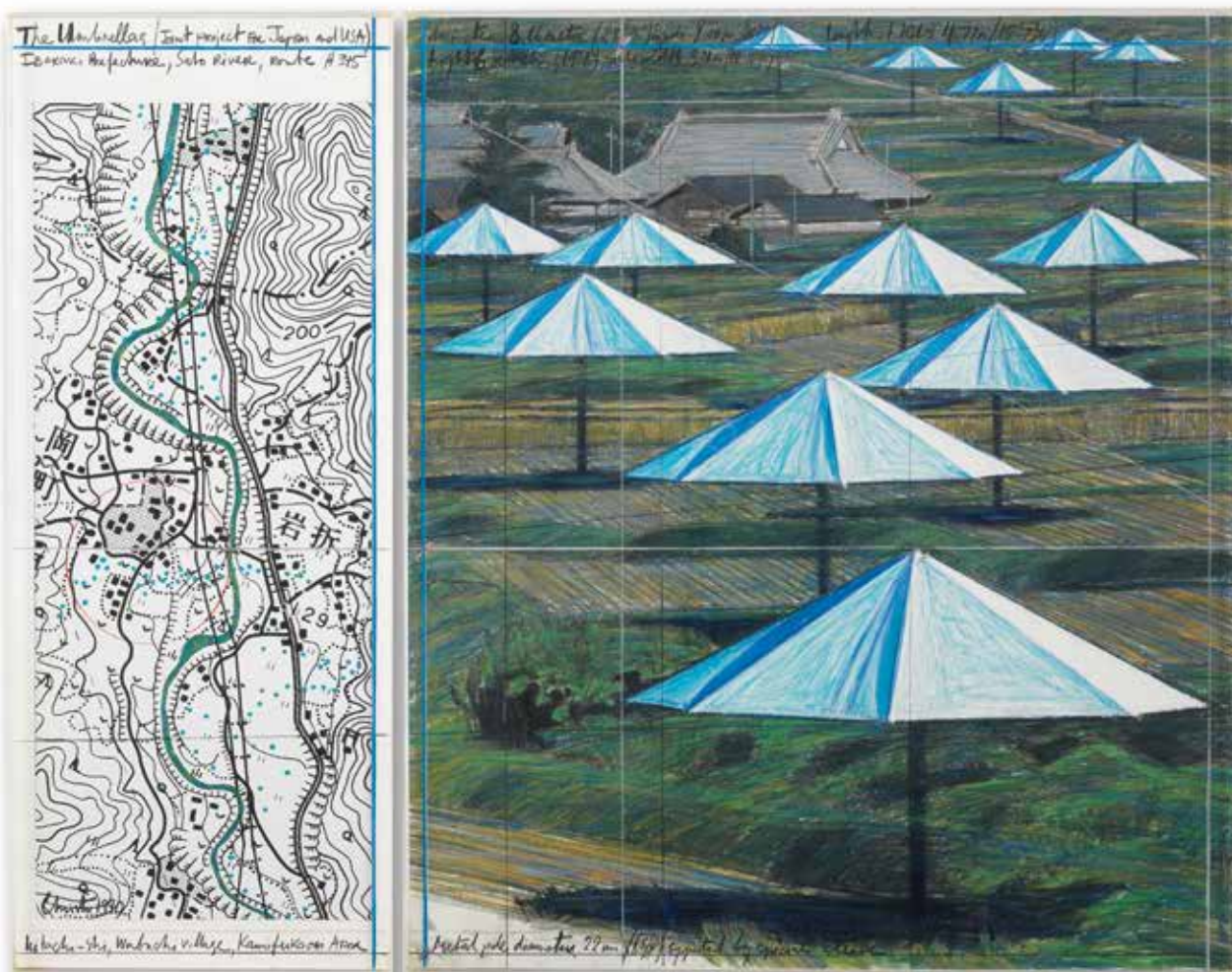
On 22 September 1985, 300 workers began covering the Pont Neuf in Paris in 40,000 square metres of woven polyamide fabric, turning the city's oldest and best-loved bridge "from an architectural object, an object of inspiration for artists," as the instigator of this project put it, "into an art object, period." Nine years in the planning, seen by three million members of the public – while all the time functioning as a thoroughfare over the Seine – *The Pont Neuf Wrapped* has become one of the most celebrated works by Christo and his wife and creative partner Jeanne-Claude, with whom his works from 1994 until her death in 2009 are jointly credited. But perhaps the most remarkable and surprising thing about this piece was its colour: a pale yellow, designed to echo the hue of the Paris pavements at sunset. Even on the greyest and most dismal days, the bridge seemed imbued with a transcendent glow entirely separate from its listless surroundings.

The Sixties was the era when artists became associated with a single, signature gesture: think Warhol's silk-screened portraits at one end of the spectrum and, at the other, Rothko's vaporous clouds of colour. Christo, who was born Christo Vladimirov Javacheff in Gabrovo, Bulgaria, in 1935, became globally notorious as "the guy who wraps things up". Starting with humble, everyday objects – bottles and tin cans –

bound in grubby pieces of canvas, he progressed rapidly to whole buildings (including some of the world's greatest monuments) and landscape features: trees, lakes, islands – and an entire stretch of Australian coastline.

Christo extended the possibilities of what the art object can be, not merely in the closeted art world, but in the full glare of the world's media, as heroic mega-project succeeded heroic mega-project. And in an art that appeared to be all about scale, volume,





#### Left

Christo (American, born 1935)  
*The Umbrellas (Joint Project for Japan and USA)*, in two parts (1990)  
 Overall: 78 x 98.5cm (30¾ x 38¾in)  
 Estimate: £50,000-70,000  
 (\$65,000 - 90,000)

#### Above

Christo in his studio with a preparatory drawing for *The Mastaba (Project for Abu Dhabi)*, 2012

structure and surface, light and colour played a surprisingly important role.

The unearthly radiance that seemed to bathe *The Pont Neuf Wrapped* was echoed more than 30 years later in *The London Mastaba*. Christo's only major work for the British capital, it was unveiled at the Serpentine in June 2018. This 20-metre-high trapezoid stack of barrels in reds, blues and violets, anchored on the surface of the lake, seemed to alter its sense of scale, weight and texture with the tiniest shifts in the light, appearing often eerily unreal, as though an image from the artist's sketchbook had been cut out and stuck onto the parkscape.

It will be fascinating to see how such qualities manifest themselves in Christo's next major project, the wrapping of another of Paris's great monuments, the Arc de Triomphe.

While Christo is Bulgarian by birth and American by nationality – he has lived in New York since 1964 – Paris is the city that formed him as an artist. It was here that he moved only a year after fleeing Bulgaria for Vienna in 1956. And, while he stayed only seven years, it was in Paris that he met Jeanne-Claude, when he was commissioned to paint her mother's portrait; where he found his feet as an artist as part of the Nouveau Réalisme movement alongside Yves Klein and Niki de Saint Phalle; where he had his first taste of notoriety when he and Jeanne-Claude blocked the Rue Visconti with oil barrels in 1962. And it was in Paris, of course, that he first started wrapping things.

So it feels appropriate, even poignant, that his career is now coming full circle as he returns to Paris at the age

of 85, for a project that looks set to be the crowning glory of his career – wrapping the monument around which this great city pivots – backed by a major retrospective, entitled simply *Paris!*, at the Pompidou Centre.

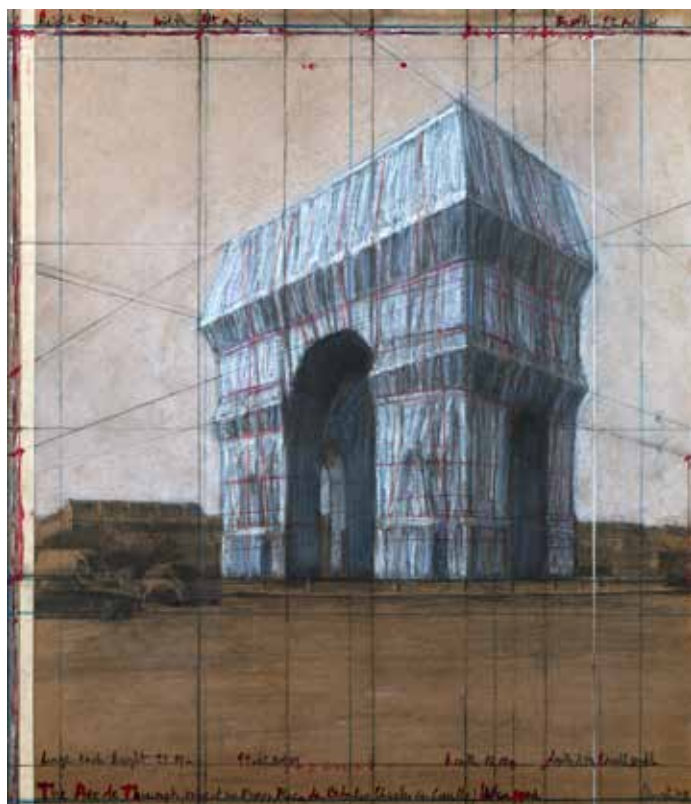
The exhibition chronicles Christo's Paris years – 1957 to 1964 – in detail, showing how he broke away from the strictures of his original discipline, painting, through a range of strategies that are all very redolent of the tumultuous early Sixties, the era of Nouveau Réalisme, Fluxus and the Zero group: public 'actions',

**“Christo had his first taste of notoriety when he blocked the Rue Visconti with oil barrels in 1962”**

vitrines, mocked-up shopfronts that feel very Pop in spirit, before he finally began appropriating objects by 'packaging them'.

Among all this material is a photomontage from 1962, in which Christo, then renting a small apartment close to the Arc de Triomphe, shows the great arch already 'bundled' in canvas. Nearly six decades later, the project will be realised this autumn using 25,000 square metres of silver-bluish polypropylene and 7,000 metres of red rope, colours which embody, of course, the French flag and its 'universal' values of liberty, equality and fraternity.

Long gestation times are nothing new for Christo. The nine years spent negotiating with Paris's then-mayor Jacques Chirac to wrap the Pont Neuf feel as



**Above**  
On the drawing board:  
Christo's next project,  
wrapping Arc de Triomphe

**Above right**  
*The Pont-Neuf Wrapped*,  
Paris, 1975-85

**Right**  
Christo and Jeanne-Claude,  
*The London Mastaba*, Serpentine  
Lake, Hyde Park, 2016-18

**Below**  
*Torse empaqueté*, 1958,  
held at the Museum Boijmans  
van Beuningen, Rotterdam



© 1982 Christo & Jeanne-Claude  
© Wolfgang Volz (Archives Christo)



Wolfgang Volz © 2018 Christo

nothing beside the 51 years between the conception of *The London Mastaba* – intended originally as a floating sculpture for Lake Michigan – and its final realisation. Some projects have taken even longer, and many more will probably never leave the planning stage, despite incurring substantial development costs. Feasibility studies for projects that “appropriate or borrow spaces which do not naturally belong to sculpture”, as Christo puts it, often run into the millions, whether they are for wrapping Berlin’s Reichstag in 1995 or *The Gates*, for which 7,503 gateways of brilliant orange fabric were distributed along 23 miles of paths in New York’s Central Park in 2005. Since Christo doesn’t accept sponsorship – feeling it would compromise his creative integrity – the \$21 million costs for the latter work were met entirely by the artists themselves, as they are with all Christo projects, from the sale of preparatory drawings and studies. And these are hardly scrawlings on the backs of cigarette packets.

A ‘drawing’ for *The Pont Neuf Wrapped* – offered at Bonhams Post-War and Contemporary sale in March – is an elaborate and surprisingly realistic mixed-media representation of the proposed wrapped bridge, incorporating pastel, wax crayon, charcoal, graphite and printed paper on paper, measuring eight feet in width.

Another large drawing in the auction offers a similarly intricate projection of one of the pair’s epic landscape works: *The Umbrellas (Joint Project for Japan and USA)*, in which thousands of umbrellas – blue in Japan, yellow in America – were dotted through inland valleys in the two countries, reflecting “the similarities and differences in the ways of life and the use of the land”.

While Christo’s works have often been interpreted as comments on political issues – from the Berlin Wall to the Arab-Israeli conflict – they have, in Jeanne-Claude’s words, “absolutely no purpose, except to be a work of art. We don’t give messages.” And, at a time when we’re increasingly pressed to interpret art in terms of quasi-literary themes, that feels refreshing: it leaves our minds free to dream and wonder in the optimistic and uplifting spirit the couple intended.

But none of these works have survived in physical form. Nine years in the making, *The Pont Neuf Wrapped* was on view for a mere 14 days, a typical lifespan for a Christo work. It was then rapidly disassembled and all its components recycled, as they are in all Christo works, to live on only in the preparatory drawings and collages, and – far more importantly – in the minds of those who saw it. Thus, in the wider folk and cultural memory, these works take on, as Christo puts it, “an almost legendary character”. The fact that he has no “artworks that exist” is a source of pride to Christo: “I think it takes much greater courage to create things to be gone than to create things to remain.”

Mark Hudson is an art critic and the author of *Titian: the Last Days*.

*‘Christo and Jeanne-Claude: Paris!’ is at Centre Pompidou from 18 March to 15 June.*

Sale: Post-War & Contemporary Art  
London  
Thursday 12 March at 4pm  
Enquiries: Ralph Taylor +44 (0) 20 7447 7403  
ralph.taylor@bonhams.com  
bonhams.com/contemporary



© Christo & Jeanne-Claude Photo: Wolfgang Volz (Archives Christo)

# Heads in the clouds

In self-imposed exile during the Spanish Civil War, Dalí painted an exquisite love letter to Spain – and his muse, Gala.

**Alastair Smart** investigates

**Left**

Salvador Dalí (1904-1989)

*Couple aux têtes pleines de nuages*, 1937

Left panel: 94.5 x 74.5cm

(37½ x 29½in)

Right panel: 87.7 x 65.8cm

(34½ x 25¾)

Estimate:

£7,000,000 - 10,000,000

(\$9,000,000 - 13,000,000)





In August 1929, Salvador Dalí invited a number of his Surrealist friends from Paris on a seaside holiday to Cadaqués. That was the pretty Costa Brava village, in his native Catalonia, where Dalí had spent almost every summer since his childhood. René Magritte came with his wife; so did the poet Paul Éluard with his, a Russian émigré called Elena Ivanovna Diakonova – though everyone knew her as Gala.

Dalí hadn't met Gala in Paris, but his first sight of her – in a swimsuit on the beach – left him immediately smitten. "A real-life Venus Callipyge had appeared before his eyes" is how Dalí biographer Ian Gibson described the moment, describing her pert buttocks, trim ankles and olive-shaped face.

She was no conventional beauty in, say, the Vivien Leigh mould, but the Spanish artist loved the confident spring in her step. He soon took to all manner of eccentric pursuits to win her attention: from painting his armpits blue and wearing a geranium over one ear to smearing himself in goat dung and fish glue.

Remarkably, Gala found this all very attractive, and the pair were lovers before summer was out. In 1934, following her divorce from Éluard, Gala and Dalí married – and went on to spend half a century together (until Gala's death in the early 1980s).

She was the great muse of his career, appearing in hundreds of works, in guises ranging from Madonna to whore. Among the most intriguing paintings she inspired is *Couple aux têtes pleines de nuages* ('Couple with their heads full of clouds'), which is offered in



#### Left

The giraffe motif – first seen in Dalí's 1930 film *L'Âge d'Or* – reappears in this 1937 painting, *The Burning Giraffe*

#### Above

*Couple aux têtes pleines de nuages* hanging on the wall at Giacinto Scelsi's apartment in Via di San Teodoro in Rome, now the location of the Isabella Scelsi Foundation

#### Opposite

Salvador Dalí and his wife Gala sail into New York aboard the *SS Champlain* in 1934

Bonhams Impressionist & Modern Art sale in London on 26 March.

The work is a his-and-hers diptych, which is painted on a pair of shaped panels: the one on the left takes the form of Dalí's face and upper body, while the one on the right takes that of his wife. The two heads lean towards one another in an intimate fashion.

Each panel has a gold frame and, within it, a desert landscape. Looking at them side by side is to see one continuous stretch of desert, broken only by the picture frames and the wall-space between them.

Both panels are signed 'Gala Salvador Dalí', as if to emphasise this work was an expression of the artist's love for his wife.

There is clearly much more going on, though.

The outline of Salvador and Gala is derived from the pose of a peasant couple in Jean-François Millet's painting *L'Angélus*, who bow their heads slightly towards each other in prayer. Dalí much admired this work, a copy of which had hung in his childhood home.

*Couple aux têtes pleines de nuages* was painted during what is considered the key period of his career: the decade or so, from the late 1920s onwards, when Dalí made his best Surrealist work. It features several of his signature motifs – a disfigured tree, a

skipping girl, a burning giraffe, and scattered rocks.

Surrealism's *raison d'être* was for artists to unleash their unconscious on canvas, so it never pays to analyse the results too closely. Given that the inspiration for a scene did not come from rational thought, even its creator was presumably unaware of what it 'meant'.

That said, one can often pick up on moods – and in *Couple aux têtes pleines de nuages* there is an atmosphere of emptiness and longing. The vast desert is all but depopulated.

**“Gala was Dalí's great muse, appearing in guises ranging from Madonna to whore”**

The date of execution is of great importance here: 1937, in the midst of the Spanish Civil War. Dalí would spend the three-year conflict in self-imposed exile, mostly in the US. He refused to run the risk of becoming one of the more than 200,000 Spaniards who perished.

His sister, Ana Maria, was jailed and tortured for 20 days of the war by the Republican secret service,





©Photo Scala, Florence, Art Institute of Chicago

on suspicion of espionage – before ultimately being found innocent. News also regularly reached Dalí of executions in Cadaqués and his hometown, Figueres, which lay 20 miles inland.

He called the former “the most beautiful place on earth”. On returning to Spain with Gala after the Civil War, Dalí was shocked by the “ghostly walls” he found there, “which stood out in the moonlight like the horrors in drawings by Goya”.

Might we see *Couple aux têtes pleines de nuages*, then, as an ode to his beloved Cadaqués?

Though it depicts a surreal landscape, there are more than enough ‘real’ elements in it to suggest so. They include the yellow sands; the Catalan-looking set of buildings in the left panel’s background; and the oddly shaped rock-forms, which recall those carved out at Cadaqués over millennia by violent storms. (Dalí lovingly referred to those rocks as “geological delirium”.)

It is telling, too, that he said his depictions of a girl with a skipping rope signified the happiness of youth. The dark clouds at the top of both panels create a contrasting sense of foreboding, while the giraffe on fire is interpreted by many as a symbol of war.

One might well see this painting in terms of Dalí’s nostalgia – and fears – for a place he associated with a more innocent time.

His conduct during the Spanish Civil War has been the subject of considerable scrutiny over the years, much of it negative. Many cultural figures denounced General Franco publicly – in the case of George Orwell and Ernest Hemingway, they fought against

him – but Dalí never voiced an opinion either way.

The conflict prompted an indignant Picasso to create arguably his greatest painting, *Guernica*, which was shown in the Spanish Pavilion at the Paris World’s Fair of 1937, alongside work by compatriots such as Joan Miró.

“Had Dalí wished or cared, there’s no question he would have been included too,” wrote Ian Gibson in his biography *The Shameful Life of Salvador Dalí*. “His abstention... contained more than a hint of where his true sympathies lay.”

**“Dark clouds create a sense of foreboding, while the giraffe on fire is interpreted as a symbol of war”**

This is a little harsh. Dalí was no fan of Franco. What seems most likely is that he was hedging his bets, depending on which side emerged victorious, so as not to jeopardise his return to Spain after the war was over.

*Couple aux têtes pleines de nuages* is a very rare example of a shaped panel or canvas by Dalí. Its only equivalent is a diptych of the same name and form, painted a year earlier, which now forms part of the Boijmans van Beuningen Museum collection in Rotterdam.

Though seen at a number of international exhibitions over the years, this is the very first

© Studio Tromp



© Foto Archivio Fondazione Isabella Scelsi



**Opposite**  
Dalí's *Inventions of the Monsters* of 1937 – note, again, the burning giraffe

**Left**  
Scelsi with his sister, Isabella

**Above**  
A rare shaped canvas created by Dalí: his *Couple aux têtes pleines de nuages* of 1936 – now held by the Boijmans van Beuningen Museum in Rotterdam

time that the 1937 painting will appear at auction. It is believed that Dalí may have given it to Paul Éluard, with whom he and Gala maintained decent relations.

Éluard had by now remarried and, one assumes, lacked the burning desire to keep an image of his ex-wife and the man with whom she had cuckolded him. It is thought he soon passed the work on to the Italian composer, Giacinto Scelsi – its first confirmed owner. Scelsi was a friend of both Éluard and Dalí's from his time spent studying in Paris in the 1920s.

*Couple aux têtes pleines de nuages* remained in his possession for 50 years, until his death in 1988. After that, the painting was bequeathed to a foundation named after Scelsi's sister, Isabella.

It is a work Dalí painted at a time of great trepidation and turbulence, capturing what the poet Robert Browning would have called his "home-thoughts from abroad". Above all, it reflects the fact that Gala, Dalí's other half, was all that he had left.

*Alastair Smart is an art critic for The Telegraph, The Independent, and The Mail on Sunday, among other publications. He is writing a book on Raphael.*

Sale: Impressionist & Modern Art  
London  
Thursday 26 March at 5pm  
Enquiries: India Phillips +44 (0) 20 7468 8328  
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## In Dalí's mind



**Cave in the rocks** Where does one start? Perhaps with Freud... the symbol is sexual, but for Dalí it could at the same time evoke the craggy landscapes of his native Catalonia.

**Girl skipping** The happiness of youth. Dalí remembered fondly his idyllic childhood holidays in Cadaqués. The girl skipping also appeared a 1936 triptych painted for Edward James, the Surrealist collector.



**Barren tree** Symbolises ancient wisdom that has withered in the modern world. In Dalí's best-known work, *The Persistence of Memory* (1931), one such dead tree acts as a support for a melting watch.

**Burning giraffe** The giraffe first featured in Dalí's film, *L'Âge d'Or* – a statue is thrown from a window. It developed into a symbol for "the masculine cosmic apocalyptic monster", as Dalí put it.



**Mountain village** A nostalgic view of his hometown Figueres, somewhere for which Dalí yearned when in self-imposed exile with Gala in New York.

**Reclining man** In an interview, Dalí described himself "reclining like a figure in Ingres or David... without my aggressive verticality". The pose is thoughtful but, for him, also luxuriantly passive.



**Family group** A reference to idyllic family life, perhaps a reaction to the arrest and torture of Dalí's own sister – and earliest muse, Ana Maria. Dalí retains the playfulness of the skipping girl.



© Denise Loeb

# Rouge et noir

The French President called him ‘the world’s greatest living artist’. Now one of the rarest works by Pierre Soulages, with red behind his trademark black paint, has come to auction.

**Martin Gayford** salutes a masterpiece

In 1947, Pierre Soulages showed his work for the first time at the Salon des Indépendants in Paris. He was surprised and flattered to discover that Francis Picabia, a veteran of many avant-garde movements, greatly admired his exhibit. When they met, the great man asked his age. Soulages said that he was 27. Picabia replied that he would pass on the advice Pissarro had given him when he was young: “With your age and with what you do, it won’t be long before you have a lot of enemies!”

This anecdote gives a sense of the astonishing historical sweep of Soulages’s career. The interchange with Picabia took place 73 years ago. On Christmas Eve 2019, Soulages celebrated his 100th birthday, an event that was marked by an exhibition at the Louvre in Paris.

As David Hockney recently noted, painters can live and work far into old age – especially if there is some harmony in their existence. But few artistic careers, ever, have lasted as long as that of Soulages. Jackson Pollock was only six years his senior; Yves Klein was nine years younger. Both – now dead for more than half a century – seem to belong to distant epochs.

Yet Soulages still spends every day in his studio, doing the only thing he has ever wanted to do: paint. And what he is doing now is visibly related to what

**Above**  
Pierre Soulages  
in his studio, 1954

**Right**  
Pierre Soulages (born 1919)  
*Peinture* 128,5 x 128,5 cm,  
16 décembre 1959,  
1959  
Estimate:  
£5,500,000 - 7,500,000  
(\$7,150,000 - 9,750,000)







**Above**  
Zao Wou-Ki's *Rouge, bleu, noir*  
(Red, blue, black) from 1957.  
Zao was not only a stylistic fellow  
traveller, but also a personal friend  
of Soulages

he showed all those years ago. Of the Salon des Indépendants in '47, he recalled that all the other pictures were colourful, while his was “very dark”. In comparison, “it looked like a fly in a glass of milk”.

His painting has been dominated by black since his childhood, but within that near century of work Soulages distinguishes “three ways of black, three different fields of action”. These include black on a lighter ground; black on black; and black with other colours “seeping out” in places, “exalted by the surrounding black”.

One further approach, however, does not fall entirely within these categories – it is a dramatic rarity within his epic output, with not more than 15 canvases, according to the catalogue raisonné, created using this particular technique and combination of colours (red and black). Soulages’s third method involved placing a canvas on the floor and scraping away upper layers to let the vivid colour “seep out”; but for these 15 paintings, Soulages applied a solid layer of colour – a vivid red in the case of *Peinture 128,5 x 128,5 cm, 16 décembre 1959*, which is offered as the leading lot in Bonhams’ Post-War & Contemporary Art Sale in London on 12 March – then applied solid black on top in such a way as to let a little red to be seen through it.

Art critics and historians love stylistic labels, and just as assuredly artists themselves do not. “It is fatal to name ourselves!”, Willem de Kooning protested, and Soulages would no doubt agree. Naturally, the term ‘abstract expressionist’ – which de Kooning

disliked – has been attached to Soulages, as well as several others: ‘tachiste’, ‘art informel’, ‘lyrical abstraction’. He rejects them all, but also insists that he isn’t very interested in the question.

His work does have obvious affinities with that of his contemporaries on both sides of the Atlantic, among them Mark Rothko, Robert Motherwell and Franz Kline, all of whom he met in New York in the

**“Soulages still spends every day  
in his studio, doing the only thing  
he has ever wanted to do: paint”**

1950s. However, Soulages insists that his development has been individual and independent, beginning from his earliest youth in his hometown of Rodez, in the Aveyron region. He was attracted to the prehistoric and Romanesque art that is found thereabouts – and also to the woods in winter.

Soulages began painting bare branches at the age of seven, and admits they are a continuing fascination: “A black tree in winter is a kind of abstract sculpture.” It would be wrong, however, to suggest his paintings are depictions of trees – or anything outside the pictures themselves. To emphasise that, he gives them titles that simply note their physical dimensions and the date they were completed. This places each picture



**Left**  
“Soulages is Europe”, said Mark  
Rothko: Rothko’s *Light Red Over  
Black*, 1957

**Below**  
Soulages places himself in the grand  
tradition of European art: note the  
colours used by Caravaggio for his  
*Martyrdom of Saint Ursula* (1610)





**Left**  
At home with his work:  
Pierre Soulages, 1954

**Above**  
Pierre Soulages (born 1919)  
*Peinture 65 x 92cm, 9 février 1960*,  
1960  
oil on canvas  
Estimate: £700,000 - 1,000,000  
(\$900,000 - 1,300,000)

not just within his own oeuvre, but in a long sequence of people making marks with paint that stretches back to prehistory.

Soulages has loved dark hues ever since those childhood experiences. Indeed, he describes falling for the lustrous blackness of ink to such a degree that his mother laughed at him for using it to paint snow. However, it is only – only! – for the last 40 years that Soulages has used black exclusively. The work that Picabia spotted at the Salon des Indépendants was executed on a white surface in brown-black walnut stain – which Soulages had begun using in 1946.

Although black has so long been his signature pigment, Soulages has often remarked that he is actually working with the reflections gleaming on the paint – that is, with light. Since as far back as 1979, he has used no other pigment in his pictures, which he has described as “*outré-noir*”, meaning “beyond black”. Soulages coined this term by analogy with French examples such as *outré-Manche*, ‘beyond the Channel’ (in other words, Britain).

So, given we are naturally interested in categorisation, Soulages presents us with an interesting question: where do we place him as a painter? This issue is unresolved more generally with European abstraction of the 1950s and ’60s. The conventional view is that American artists were the leaders, and that the most important innovation of the period could justly be called, as did the critic

Clement Greenberg, “American-type painting”. But the reality was more complicated: a case of parallel development. Soulages is one of a small number of European painters of the period – Hans Hartung, Serge Poliakoff, Gillian Ayres – who deserve far more credit.

It turns out that the prediction of Picabia’s with which we began was not quite right. Rather than enemies, Soulages often encountered colleagues and fellow-explorers. At a dinner party in New York, he met Rothko, who did initially go on the attack. “Soulages is Europe”, he announced – and he knew all about European museums. They were full of martyrdom and crucifixions. “Europe! Concentration camps, gas chambers, crematoriums. Me, I prefer bird songs.” Soulages countered by saying he had been to the Met the day before, and it was full of paintings of suffering saints and Christ on the cross – and he had yet to find the museums of Native American art. In other words, America and Europe had a lot in common, historically and artistically. Then Rothko invited him to lunch and they became good friends.

*Martin Gayford is an art critic, whose most recent book, The Pursuit of Art, was published in September 2019.*

Sale: Post-War & Contemporary Art  
London  
Thursday 12 March at 4pm  
Enquiries: Ralph Taylor +44 (0) 20 7447 7403  
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# In good company

Born out of Empire, 'Company paintings' are a superb hybrid of West and East, says *William Dalrymple*



**Opposite**

*An English officer, probably Sir George Nugent, smoking a hookah, with a retinue of Indian servants, Calcutta, c.1811-12 (detail) gouache on paper  
15 x 20 in (38 x 53cm)  
Estimate: £12,000 - 15,000  
(\$16,000 - 20,000)*



The National Library of Wales

**Left**

*A large gathering at a riverside ghat Murshidabad or Patna, late 18th/early 19th century watercolour on paper  
14½ x 19½ in (37 x 49.5cm)  
Estimate: £6,000 - 8,000  
(\$8,000 - 10,000)*

**Above**

*George Nugent, in the uniform of the Pembroke Cavalry, 1798*

About 2 o'clock, wrote Lady Nugent in 1812, "we sat down to tiffin. Afterwards Mr Wilson showed me some specimens of ivory work, etc, and several people attended with drawings for sale. I bought a number of different sorts, done by natives, to add to my collection." The purchase came at a difficult moment for the Nugents. After a distinguished military career in the Americas and the Caribbean, Sir George Nugent had given up a seat in Parliament to accept what should have been his crowning glory: appointment as Commander-in-Chief in India.

Sadly, soon after his arrival in Calcutta, he and his wife Maria both clashed with the new Governor General, Lord Moira, and Nugent was promptly, and humiliatingly, replaced as Commander-in-Chief. Nugent was relegated to Commander of the East India Company's Bengal Army. Insulted by the demotion, he instead chose to return to England the following October. The paintings offered at Bonhams' Islamic and Indian Art sale in London in March are records of this unhappy sojourn in the East.

From the beginning, India had not really worked out for the Nugents. Used to the easy hierarchies of colonial America and the straightforwardly brutal master-slave relationships of Caribbean plantations, the hybridity and cultural complexity of India came as a shock. A revealing moment came on a tour up country, when the Nugents were introduced to William Fraser, the Indophile Assistant Resident at the Delhi court. The formidable Lady Maria Nugent, was horrified by the degree to which Fraser and his friend Edward Gardner had 'gone native':

"They both wear immense whiskers, and neither will eat beef or pork, being as much Hindoos as Christians,"

she wrote in her journal. "In our conversations together, I endeavour to insinuate everything that I think will have any weight with them. I talk of the religion they were brought up in, and of their friends, who would be astonished and shocked at their whiskers, beards, &c. &c. All this we generally debated between us," concluded Lady Nugent, "and I still hope they will think of it." There is no evidence they gave her suggestions the slightest consideration.

For William Fraser had become something of a White Mughal. He had begun to prune his moustaches in the Mughal manner and fathered "as many children as the King of Persia" from his harem of "six or seven legitimate [Indian] wives." Soon after his arrival in Delhi, William had sought "learned natives... of whom there are a few, and in poverty, but those I have met with are real treasures." He had become a close friend of Ghalib, then the greatest of Indian poets, a pupil of Delhi's greatest Islamic scholar, Sheikh Abdul Aziz. He habitually wore Mughal clothes. As the French traveller and botanist Victor Jacquemont put it: "[Fraser is] half-asiatick in his habits, but in other respects a Scotch Highlander, and an excellent man with great originality of thought, a metaphysician to boot." Later, he was to become one of the greatest patrons of the hybrid part-Late Mughal, part-European style of painting, of which Lady Nugent's Patna paintings were also fine examples. The completed volume of paintings commissioned by William Fraser, now known as the Fraser Album, are today regarded as some of the finest of all Indian artworks, with single pages passing hands for around a quarter of a million pounds.

These paintings, often of astonishing brilliance, and possessing a startlingly hybrid originality, represent the



last phase of Indian artistic genius before the onset of the twin assaults – photography and the influence of Western Colonial art schools – ended an indigenous tradition of painting going back 2,000 years.

The artists who produced these works were drawn from a wide variety of Indian artistic traditions – Mughal, Maratha, Tamil and Telugu – and an equally wide range of castes and communities, ranging from titled imperial office-holders like the grand Mughal artist Ghulam Ali Khan, whose family worked on the Fraser Album, to much more humble artists like Sewak Ram of Patna, who painted Lady Nugent’s drawings. These artists were commissioned by an equally diverse cross-section of East India Company officials and their wives. What they had in common was a scholarly interest in India’s rich culture, history, architecture, society and biodiversity.

Since the art historian Mildred Archer began writing on the subject in the 1950s, these paintings have been known as ‘Company School’, an English translation of an Urdu term (*Kampani qalam*) that she found being used for such works in Patna. The term is useful and is probably unavoidable, but it is also problematic, for it emphasises Colonial patronage of these works over the artistic endeavours of the brilliant Indian artists who actually painted them; and it has led to the genre being left in something of a post-Colonial limbo, largely disowned by Indians and forgotten and ignored by the descendants of their former Colonial masters.

As the brilliant art collected by Lady Nugent demonstrates, the very diverse works that have come to be grouped as ‘Company School paintings’ include art of great brilliance. But, astonishingly, while there have been several shows of Company painting in India and

the United States, until the recent *Forgotten Masters* show at the Wallace Collection there had never been an equivalent exhibition in the United Kingdom, despite this country possessing unrivalled masterpieces both in museums and in private collections. The reason for this is not aesthetic so much as political.

Through the 1950s and ’60s, the art of Empire came to be regarded in Britain with something between deep ambivalence and profound distaste: paintings with Indian, African or Caribbean imperial themes came to be regarded, at best, as fuddy-duddy or, at worst, as mawkishly jingoistic. Most were simply taken off the walls

## “The Sheep Eater was seen by Lady Nugent as an alarming curiosity”

and sent into storage. A few were packed off to languish in the provinces: *The Remnants of an Army*, Lady Butler’s famous image of Dr Brydon – the sole survivor of the disastrous 1842 Retreat from Kabul – one of the iconic paintings of the Empire, was quietly taken to languish in a regimental museum in Somerset.

Today, barely any major British gallery still shows a significant collection of art connected in any way with the former British Empire: which was, for better or worse, the most important thing the British ever did, a historical movement that, arguably more than any other, transformed the destiny of the modern world. The greatest collection of paintings of the British in India is found not in London but in the Victoria Memorial in Calcutta. Disowned by subsequent history, the art



#### Opposite

*Maria, Lady Nugent carried in a palanquin, 1812*  
18 x 37 1/2 in (45.5 x 95.5cm)  
Estimate: £8,000 - 12,000  
(\$10,000 - 16,000)

#### Left

*The famous sheep-eating fakir, Jurah Geer Berah Geer*  
Calcutta, c. 1800 (detail)  
13 x 20 in (33.5 x 50.5cm)  
Estimate: £10,000 - 15,000  
(\$13,000 - 20,000)

#### Above

*The Hook Swingers (charak puja) Murshidabad,*  
late 18th/early 19th century  
18 x 29 in (47.5 x 74cm)  
Estimate: £8,000 - 12,000  
(\$10,000 - 16,000)

commissioned by the Company has effectively been orphaned and ignored, in both India and the West.

But once 'Company Painting' is understood as the fruitful result of the catalytic patronage of great Indian artists by admiring British patrons it is possible to appreciate these unusually beautiful paintings as an Indian art – indeed one of the most interesting and fecund phases of Indian painting. Caught in the crosswinds of East and West, these forgotten masterpieces were merely the last phase of India's artistic interaction with the wider world. Now, for the first time, they are beginning to get the attention they deserve.

Sewak Ram, who painted some of the images bought by Lady Nugent – notably the funeral on the ghats and *The Hook Swingers* – was unquestionably one of the most talented of 'Company' painters. He migrated to Patna in 1790, probably from Murshidabad and began producing vibrant images of different caste occupations, ceremonies and festivals. One set, now in the India Office Library, was purchased by Lord Minto, and a second set, acquired by Lord Amherst, is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

The most fascinating of Lady Nugent's images is, however, by an anonymous artist. British patrons of Indian art like Lady Nugent were not just interested in portraiture, buildings and history, they were also fascinated by the eccentricities and oddities of the India they found themselves in. Where today one would pull out a mobile phone to snap, Lady Nugent summoned a talented Indian artist to paint the scenes she saw.

'Jura Geer Berah Geer the Sheep Eater', who became something of a celebrity in late 18th-century northern India, was probably a Hindu ascetic, one of the Aughar Aghori, who followed the Tantric path – something also

suggested by his wild appearance and red dhoti. One Company official noted in 1795 that the Sheep Eater lived in Soron, near Khasganj in modern Uttar Pradesh, a town famous in Hindu mythology as the place where Vishnu's boar avatar, Varaha, slew then disembowelled the demon Hiranyaksha. Jerry Losty speculates that the Sheep Eater modelled his evisceration of sheep on Varaha's evisceration of the demon; certainly some sort of Tantric rite seems to be at work, which Rind's inscription outlines: the Sheep Eater takes the sheep in his teeth, rips out its intestines, then drinks its blood. After this, he tears the ribs out, the throat, devours the hind-quarters, and finally "eats the Caustic Plant called Madar as a Salad".

The Sheep Eater, seen by Lady Nugent merely as a weird and alarming curiosity, was almost certainly following what he believed to be a profoundly esoteric religious path. The misunderstanding is symbolic of the increasing gap of understanding that was developing at this period between the British Company colonisers and the unhappily colonised Indians. Tragically, only 40 years later, that gulf of understanding and sympathy would manifest in the Great Uprising of 1857, the largest anti-colonial revolt to take place anywhere in the world in the entire 19th century.

*William Dalrymple is the curator of Forgotten Masters: Indian Painting for the East India Company, which is at the Wallace Collection until the end of April. [wallacecollection.org](http://wallacecollection.org)*

Sale: Islamic and Indian Art  
London

Tuesday 31 March at 11am

Enquiries: Oliver White +44 (0) 20 7468 8303

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[bonhams.com/islamic](http://bonhams.com/islamic)

**Below**

The star of the Schnuerer  
Collection at Amelia Island – the  
1958 Mercedes-Benz 300 SL  
Estimate: \$900,000 - 1,100,000

# The marque of a winner

Forget stolid limousines, says *Richard Williams*,  
the Mercedes-Benz DNA is – and always  
has been – motor-racing



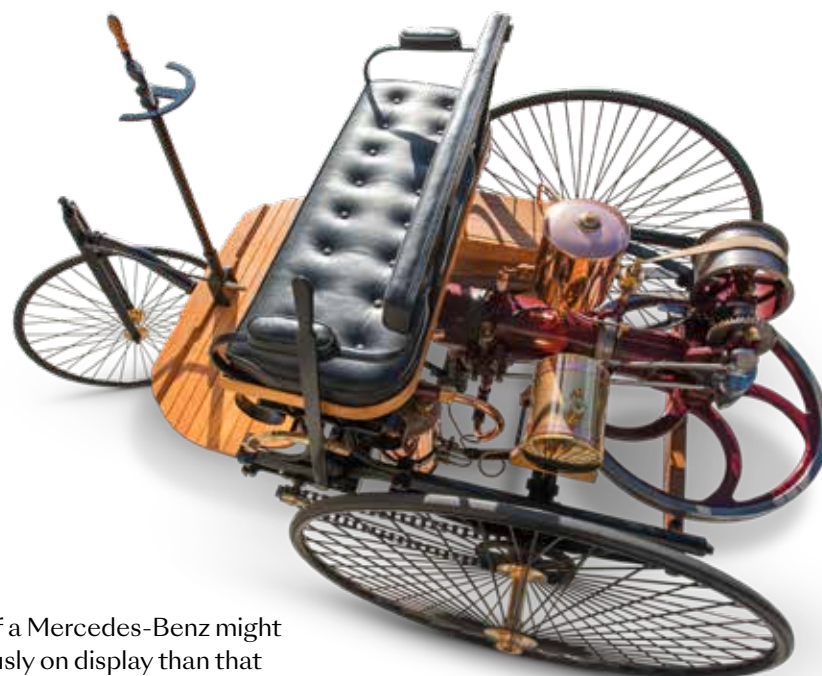


**Left**  
The assembly line at the Mercedes factory in Untertürkheim

**Below**  
Replica of the 1886 Benz Patent Motorwagen – the world's first motor car  
Estimate: \$60,000 - 80,000



**Left**  
Emil Jellinek with his daughter, Mercedes, in his arms. Her name, appropriately enough, translates as *mercies*, from the Latin word for 'gracious gifts'



To Ian Fleming, they were “ruthless and majestic”. A Mercedes-Benz, he decided, was just the sort of car that Hugo Drax, one of his early villains, would drive. As a young man travelling in Europe in the 1930s, the author of the James Bond novels had watched the Mercedes Grand Prix team crush all opposition, just as they had before the First World War and would do again with the masterful Lewis Hamilton.

Few cars radiate the qualities associated with Mercedes-Benz more impressively than the charismatic 1958 300SL roadster from the Gerhard Schnuerer Collection, expected to achieve \$1.1-1.3 million in Bonhams Amelia Island sale in March. Its rakish bodywork and the advanced under-bonnet engineering unmistakably evoke the purposeful aura of the cars with which Juan Manuel Fangio and Stirling Moss won just about everything going in the mid-1950s, when the Mercedes team re-emerged with another of those comebacks that tend to leave their competitors in the dust.

The soul of a Mercedes-Benz might be less obviously on display than that of a Ferrari or an Aston Martin. Perhaps it is obscured by the ubiquity of the black limousines with the three-pointed star purring through the streets of the world's great capitals, their poker-faced chauffeurs ferrying industrialists and government officials from one rendezvous to another. Perhaps it is hidden by the sense of sheer mechanical competence that radiates from vehicles whose bloodline goes back to the very dawn of the automobile.

Anyone in search of that soul might start by examining the workers at the Mercedes factory in Untertürkheim, a suburb of Stuttgart. There were just a few hundred of them when the works opened in 1904. They were Swabians, local men noted for their diligence, tenacity and plain-spoken manner, a combination of virtues sometimes misconstrued by outsiders as stolidity, stubbornness and a preference for old-fashioned ways. All these qualities were brought to bear in the factory's cluster of buildings, including a forge,

and a woodwork and upholstery department, where patterns of behaviour were established that, despite changes in technology, remain a part of the modern company's identity and its *modus operandi*.

Now separated only by a hyphen, Mercedes and Benz were once fierce rivals. In the 1880s, Gottlieb Daimler – whose cars would soon adopt the name Mercedes – and Karl Benz competed with each other to create the world's first road-going vehicle propelled by an internal combustion engine. Daimler bolted one of his engines on to a two-wheeled frame (held upright by stabilisers, like a child's bike); Benz installed one in a three-wheeled chassis. When Daimler's company went one better, building the first petrol-engined four-wheeled vehicle in 1890, Benz responded with the first petrol-engined truck.

# A history in cars



▲  
**Benz Patent Motorwagen  
1886**  
*Estimate: \$60,000 - 80,000*  
A replica of the Benz Patent Motorwagen. Powered by an internal combustion engine, it is considered the world's first motor car.



▼  
**Benz 10hp Mylord Coupé  
c.1897**  
*Estimate: \$500,000 - 750,000*  
The Mylord Coupé features Benz's 'boxer' engine, which used horizontally opposed pistons to ensure good balance and smoother running.



▲  
**Benz 50hp Victoria Tourer  
1911**  
*Estimate: \$400,000 - 500,000*  
449.3ci T-Head inline 4-cylinder engine. Believed to be the sole known surviving 50hp Benz, this motor car was reportedly delivered to Titanic passenger, Charles Melville Hays.



▼  
**Type 230 W143 Cabriolet B  
1936**  
*Estimate: \$160,000 - 200,000*  
The company's first foray into the medium-priced family car market. The Cabriolet was a response to the Depression, which had hit the luxury car sector hard.

Although their factories were only 90 miles apart in the south-west of Germany – Benz was located in Mannheim – the two men never met. But they continued to lock horns, even in the courts over a patented type of ignition (Daimler sued Benz, and won), and eventually the rivalry moved to the realm of speed competition, where both firms found highly promotable ways of demonstrating the excellence of their products to potential customers. Long after the two companies had been merged, and both men were dead, that competitive instinct survived, on and off the racetrack, through generation after generation.

Karl Benz had sent a car to compete in the very first motor race, from Paris to Rouen in 1894. Fifteen years later, the futuristically streamlined Blitzen Benz was taken to Brooklands, the world's first purpose-built racetrack, where it set a new world speed record of 124mph – considerably faster than any plane, train or automobile of its time.

Gottlieb Daimler died of heart failure in 1900, aged 65, having lived to see his firm license its engines to manufacturers in France, Britain, Austria and the United States, but not its racing successes. A year after his death, a new 35hp model was commissioned by the diplomat and entrepreneur Emil Jellinek, Daimler's distributor in France. "I don't want a car of today or tomorrow," he said. "It will be the car of the day after tomorrow." He ordered 36 of them on condition that the name was changed to that of his infant daughter, Mercedes.

The plans for Daimler's move to Untertürkheim, a small town on the bank of the Neckar river noted mainly for its vineyards, was hastened when fire destroyed its original factory in neighbouring Bad Cannstatt in 1904. The blaze also incinerated the entire team of racing cars with which the company had intended to contest that year's Gordon Bennett Cup, the forerunner of today's Formula One Grands Prix.

In 1903, the team had burnished the company's image by winning the Cup on a circuit in Ireland with a car painted white, the German national racing colour, and driven by the Belgian ace Camille Jenatzy. Now the fire had ruined their hopes of retaining the trophy on home ground in

**"It will be the car of the day after tomorrow"**

front of Kaiser Wilhelm, who would attend the event in full military uniform, only to see the victory on a circuit in the Taunus mountains taken by a French team.

Benz scored a significant overseas success in 1910, finishing first and second in the United States Grand Prize in Savannah, Georgia. In the last major European race before hostilities broke out in the summer of 1914, the Mercedes team – headed by Christian Lautenschlager, a factory test-driver – took the first three places in the French Grand Prix, a seven-hour race over public roads outside Lyon. Then, as the

war in Europe neared the end of its first year, the American hero Ralph De Palma took his Mercedes to victory in the 1915 Indianapolis 500.

The ravages of Germany's post-war economic collapse and the ripple effect of the Wall Street Crash forced the two companies to create the first big merger of the country's automobile manufacturers. A new chairman, Dr Wilhelm Kissel, took over in 1926, and a brilliantly original designer, Dr Ferdinand Porsche, created the new company's range of SSK sports cars, supercharged dream-machines that swept to victory in the 1929 Tourist Trophy, the 1931 German Grand Prix and the same year's Mille Miglia, all in the hands of Rudolf Caracciola, a hotelier's son from Remagen who became the new idol of Germany's sporting public. When Adolf Hitler announced, on coming to power in 1933, that a national Grand Prix programme would take its place in his grand motorisation project alongside the building of an autobahn network and the creation of a 'People's Car', Kissel lobbied for a share of the budget.

The team he built set new standards in both technical and organisational terms. At Untertürkheim, more than 300 workers concentrated solely on designing and building the racing cars, constantly developing new technologies. Alfred Neubauer, the team manager, introduced the use of pit signals, brought military precision to the work of the mechanics, and colour-coded the drivers' helmets and the radiator grilles of the cars for easy recognition: white for Caracciola,



▲  
**300 SL Roadster**  
**1958**

*Estimate: \$900,000 - 1,100,000*  
The convertible successor to the Gullwing made its debut in 1957. As well as state-of-the-art handling, the 300 SL had disc brakes on all four wheels.

▼  
**Mercedes-Benz SLR McLaren Coupé**  
**2006**  
*Estimate: \$250,000 - 300,000*  
Built in collaboration with the McLaren Formula One team, the SLR used a brake-by-wire system and active aerodynamics.



▲  
**Mercedes-Benz E320 CDI 'Rally'**  
**2007**

*Estimate: \$20,000 - 25,000*  
This diesel-powered E320 wears livery from the E-Class Experience, a 28-day, five-leg, 8,500-mile drive from Paris to Beijing that took place in 2007.



red for Manfred von Brauchitsch, blue for Hermann Lang and British Racing Green for Richard Seaman, the young Englishman.

Taken on in 1937 as a reserve, Seaman triumphed in the 1938 German Grand Prix at the Nürburgring – the year's biggest race – and was leading the following year's Belgian GP in heavy rain at Spa when he crashed, his car catching fire and burning him so badly that he died the same night. He was the first of only three British drivers to represent Mercedes in Grand Prix racing. Stirling Moss was the second, winning his home race at Aintree in 1955 ahead of his team leader, Juan Manuel Fangio. The third is Lewis Hamilton, who now has 84 Grand Prix wins to his name, all of them powered by Mercedes engineering.

From an artisan's workshop to global partnerships, from flimsy petrol-driven cyclecars to an all-electric road-rocket, through world wars, economic crises, workers' strikes and boardroom battles, the story of Mercedes-Benz is the story of the modern world. And every car bearing the three-pointed star – from Hamilton's glittering F1 Rennwagen to the humblest A-class hatchback – carries a sliver of that history, a heritage beyond price.

*Richard Williams is the author of A Race with Love and Death: The Story of Britain's First Great Grand Prix Driver, Richard Seaman, published March 2020.*

Sale: Amelia Island Auction  
Fernandina Golf Club, Florida  
Thursday 5 March at 10am  
Enquiries: Michael Caimano +1 917 206 1615  
michael.caimano@bonhams.com  
bonhams.com/motorcars

## Company ledger

**1871**  
Karl Benz establishes his first company with August Ritter in Mannheim. Ritter is unreliable, so Benz pays him off using the dowry of his wife, Bertha.

**New Year's Eve, 1879**  
Benz gets his gas-driven two-stroke engine working for the first time. He has worked on his vision of a 'vehicle without horses' intensively since 1878.

**October 1883**  
Benz & Co. Rheinische Gasmotoren-Fabrik is founded with Max Kaspar Rose and Friedrich Wilhelm Esslinger.

**1884-1886**  
Internal combustion engine is invented, separately, in two locations: Benz produces a petrol-powered three-wheeler car and Gottlieb Daimler, with Wilhelm Maybach, a petrol-powered stagecoach.

**29 January 1886**  
Benz patents his 'vehicle with gas engine operation' – the 'birth certificate' of the automobile.

**5 August 1888**  
Bertha Benz becomes the first person to undertake a long-distance journey in a petrol-driven automobile, driving 100km to visit her mother with her teenaged sons – inventing brake pads along the way.

**May 1890**  
Due to their frustrations with Benz's car obsession, Rose and Esslinger are replaced. Rose leaves Benz with the advice: "Don't waste your time on motor cars." With new partners, the company evolves into Germany's second-largest engine manufacturer and the world's leading producer of automobiles.

**28 November 1890**  
Daimler establishes Daimler-Motoren-Gesellschaft, with Max Duttendorfer and Wilhelm Lorenz. While Duttendorfer wants to produce stationary engines, Daimler prefers to focus on vehicle production. Unhappy with his contract, head designer Wilhelm Maybach leaves DMG in February 1891, but is secretly funded by Daimler to continue work.

**March 1901**  
Emil Jellinek, long-time admirer of Maybach,

promises to buy 36 automobiles if Maybach designs a race car for him. Considered the first modern automobile, the Daimler-Mercedes – named after Jellinek's daughter – is a racing sensation.

**September 1902**  
DMG patents the 'Mercedes' brand name.

**June 1909**  
DMG registers both a three-pointed and four-pointed star as trademarks. A three-dimensional star adorns the front radiator of vehicles from 1910.

**1924**  
DMG and Benz & Cie both hit by inflation and poor sales after WWI. They enter a joint venture in May.

**June 1926**  
The world's two oldest automotive manufacturers are fused into Daimler-Benz AG, presenting their first product range at the Berlin Motor Show in October.

**Second World War**  
Mercedes launched several successful vehicles, including the first diesel-run passenger vehicle, the 260 D Model, but also collaborated with the Nazi regime. Following the war, Daimler-Benz joined a German Industry Foundation initiative providing humanitarian aid for former forced labourers.

**1954**  
The company launches their 300 SL (Gullwing) model. Famous owners will include Clark Gable, Grace Kelly, Frank Sinatra and Alfred Hitchcock. The company breaks sales record with \$1bn turnover.

**1981**  
Airbags are first introduced onto the European market, beginning with the 1981 S-Class.

**1998**  
Daimler merges with Chrysler in the world's largest cross-border deal – valued at \$38 billion.

**2013**  
Lewis Hamilton starts driving for the Mercedes Formula One Team – going on to win five World Champion titles with the team.

**2016**  
Nico Rosberg wins the 2016 Formula One World Championship driving for Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport.



## The world's most expensive handbag ►

The world record for the most valuable handbag is currently held by the 1001 Nights Diamond Purse (pictured right) by the internationally famous jeweller Robert Mouawad. In 2010, the bag had an original price of \$3.8 million. Incorporating 4,517 diamonds (105 yellow, 56 pink, and 4,356 colourless) with a total weight of 381.92 carats, the bag was hand-crafted by ten highly skilled artisans, working for a total of 8,800 hours.

### Opposite

Grace Kelly in 1956 – shielding the early signs of pregnancy from the paparazzi with her beloved Hermès sac à dépêches, thereafter universally known as the 'Kelly bag'.

### Below

Hermès Tri-Colour Kelly  
Estimate: £3,000 - 5,000  
(\$4,000 - 7,000)



# A handbag?

The history of the handbag is a tale of women's growing independence, argues **Alexandra Shulman**. Lady Bracknell would *not* approve

There is a rock painting in the caves at Tassili n'Ajjer in Algeria that includes a figure leading a goat, and from the crook of their elbow dangles a bag. Who knows what it contained. But there it was, some time previous to 8000 BC, a smallish bag – companion to daily life.

Many millennia later, handbags have become considerable business, as necessary in many ways as that goat would have been. Although for some years they have been the main driver for many luxury companies, in the total span of fashion history the handbag is a relative newcomer – compared to shoes, coats, hats and dresses. Handbags only really came into existence, in the way we now regard them, around the end of the 19th century.

Their status grew in direct proportion to women's social mobility, becoming an essential accessory as carrying a bag was a sign of affluence rather than drudgery.

My handbag of the moment, in green leather by Anya Hindmarch, holds an iPhone, three pairs of spectacles, two leather notebooks, a bottle of water, earphones, a paperback book, car and house keys, yesterday's newspaper, two hairbands, a makeup bag,

three credit cards and some loose change. It is a 21st-century bag – hauled around from day to night, containing my personal survival arsenal.

To house all this paraphernalia, it needs to be substantial. But the first handbags were minute, delicate fabric reticules that hung from the wrist rather than hefty things to be slung over a shoulder. Miniature, but of huge consequence, since carrying these reticules was a marker of how, for the first time, it was deemed acceptable for women's 'stuff' to be seen in public, rather than held in pockets stitched onto the underside of clothes.

Women led small lives. They scarcely travelled, were rarely without a chaperone, and were usually entirely financially beholden to men. It was when this unsatisfactory state of play started to radically change that so too did their bags. By the start of the 20th century, increasing numbers of women began to be employed, and as a result moved around more, even if that was only from the home to the city centre. The more privileged would have keys to their own property and carry cash for shopping in the new department stores that were growing up in the cities.

As the consequences of the First World War demolished the social hierarchy, women's lives were transformed. The death of a generation of young men necessitated a female workforce, the suffragette movement demanded emancipation, and the



## Symbol of feminine power

Britain's first female prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, became so associated with the handbag she carried that her scolding of cabinet ministers became known as a "handbagging". In 2018, Westminster Council turned down proposals for a public statue of Lady Thatcher over concerns about the design "not reflecting her role as PM" – and suggested a handbag should feature in any revised design.



## Hidden signals

One of the social functions of the hand-held fan was to make discreet signals. The Queen revived the practice with her handbag, using it to tell staff when she wishes to be moved on from a conversation. She is said to own more than 200 of the hard-wearing Launer designs, including vintage styles inherited from the Queen Mother.



popularity of handbags grew to accompany this new world outside the home. In tandem, the bags became status symbols themselves. You have only to look at some of the exotic clutch bags of the 1920s to see how ornate and precious they could be – like jewellery designed to be envied.

For the first time, women began to apply make-up in public, bringing out beautiful compacts, papers of rouge, tubes of lipstick and small vials of perfume. They began to smoke, carrying slim cigarette-cases and elegant lighters. They had busier and more independent lives, which required small engagement diaries that travelled with them rather than sitting at home on their correspondence desks. All of these things needed to fit into their handbags.

By the 1950s, as the austerity of the aftermath of another world war disappeared, fashion was growing into a substantial business. Ready-to-wear clothing was expanding, while designers like Christian Dior, Cristóbal Balenciaga and Coco Chanel became famous names, recognised even by those who couldn't afford their sumptuous clothes. Or the bags that they began to design to complement those clothes. Bags that were given their own names, like the bon-ton Hermès Kelly or Chanel's quilted leather 2.55 – both offered at the Bonhams Designer Handbags and Fashion sale in London in April.

It was during the 1990s that handbags grew into the vastly popular item that we know today, covering acres of floor space in stores, and page after page on shopping sites. This is less to do with what we carry in our bags than with the increase of brand-name recognition, particularly in luxury. Prada's nylon tote, the Fendi Baguette, the Hermès Birkin – these were items that became an essential part of the fashion lexicon not just in one market, but around the world. It-girls shared the spotlight with It-bags, and the

handbag became the pillar of luxury fashion houses' expansion into new markets like Russia, India and Asia. Once handbags were like trusty retainers, something we kept around for ages, but now few people carry the same style of bag for long – with the notable exception of the Queen and her black leather Launers. Women literally own handbag wardrobes.

It was perhaps predictable, given the high visibility of bags, that they would ultimately become such big business. They are seen with us everywhere, placed on tables, carried on arms, used indoors and out, summer and winter. They are an easily recognisable status symbol and also a hugely convenient item to buy somebody else – a big factor in the success of

## “There is nothing, really nothing at all, not to like about handbags”

the handbag market. Bags don't need to fit. Unlike clothes, most bags suit most people. They are a delightful and often generous gift, but not as personal as jewellery, nor as difficult to judge as clothes. In short, when you think about it, there is nothing, really nothing at all, not to like about bags.

*Alexandra Shulman was Editor-in-Chief of British Vogue for 25 years until 2017. Her latest book is Clothes... and Other Things that Matter.*

*The exhibition Bags: Inside Out runs at the V&A from 25 April 2020 to 31 January 2021.*

Sale: Designer Handbags and Fashion  
London  
Wednesday 22 April at 2pm  
Enquiries: Meg Randell +44 (0) 20 7393 3876  
meg.randell@bonhams.com  
bonhams.com/handbags

## The Louis Vuitton Speedy

Originally created by special request for Audrey Hepburn, 'The Speedy' was the first handbag produced by Louis Vuitton. Made as a smaller interpretation of the brand's popular Keepall bag, it has remained unchanged in design since its launch in 1930.

## The Gucci Jackie

Gucci's 'Jackie O' bag was an immediate hit when it was launched in the 1950s. Regularly spotted under the arm of the US President's wife, the bag was renamed by Gucci after the First Lady in 1961. When Alessandro Michele joined Gucci, he chose Kate Moss to front the New Jackie bag campaign in 2014. The advert, shot in the style of airport paparazzi, showed Moss using the bag to shield herself. It was seen as a homage to Jackie Kennedy's characteristic style and reserve in the face of public attention and the glare of the media.

## The Birkin

In 1984, Jean-Louis Dumas, the Head of Hermès, found himself by chance sitting on a flight next to Jane Birkin, the English model, singer and actress. Birkin complained that she could not find a bag large enough to carry her daughter Lou's bottles. Dumas took note, designing a deep and supple holdall on the back of an Air France paper bag. Hermès would name the bag 'the Birkin'.

## Popularity

One of the world's most popular bags is the Longchamp Le Pliage bag, with ten sold every minute. Inspired by origami, it was named after the French verb 'to fold'.



## The Kelly

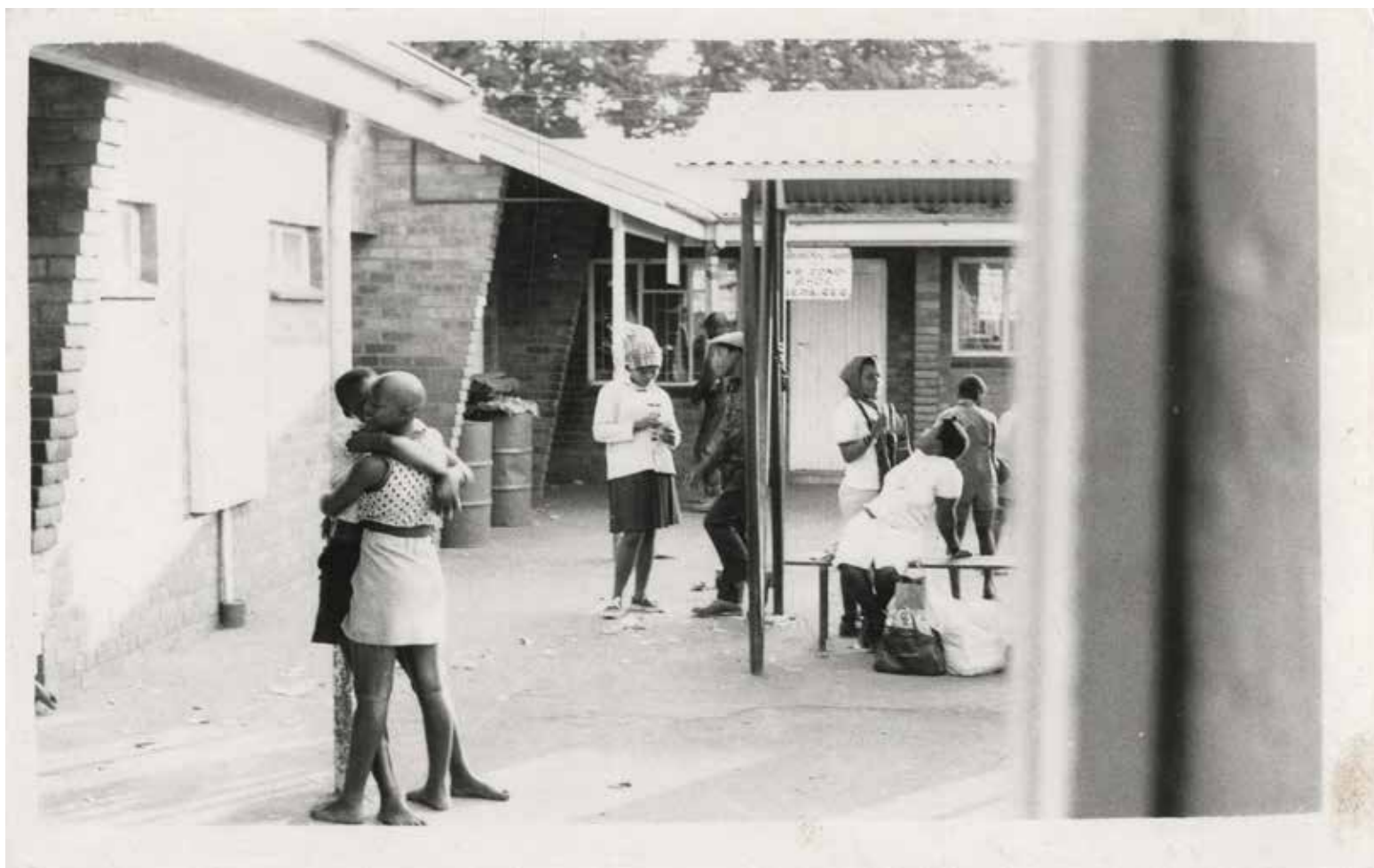
Grace Kelly started using the Hermès sac à dépêches during the filming of Alfred Hitchcock's *To Catch a Thief*, but it wasn't until she was Princess of Monaco that she would make the bag famous worldwide. While pregnant with Princess Caroline, Kelly used the oversize Hermès bag to shield her stomach from the paparazzi. After a photograph of her using her sac à dépêches in this way made the cover of *Life* magazine in 1956, the company renamed the design 'the Kelly bag'.

## The first It-bag

According to British *Vogue*, the Fendi Baguette is the first official It-bag, made popular by Sarah Jessica Parker's character Carrie Bradshaw in the HBO series *Sex and the City*.

## The world's oldest handbag

In 2012, archaeologists at a site near Leipzig uncovered what they consider to be the world's oldest handbag. In a grave dating from 2500 to 2200 BC, excavators found more than a hundred dogs' teeth, arranged tightly together. They believe them to be decoration for the front of a bag, the fabric or leather of which had disintegrated. It reveals an aesthetic consideration beyond pure function, suggesting bags like this were fashionable with the upper echelons of the time.



Above  
Outside the studio of  
Z.J.S. Ndimande and Sons  
in Greytown, South Africa

# Black and white

There weren't many places in apartheid South Africa where people could be themselves. Richard Ndimande's studio was an exception, says **Ekow Eshun**

In 1968, Richard Ndimande took over the running of the photographic studio Z.J.S. Ndimande and Sons. The studio had been founded by his father in 1940, and it had won a clientele among the black residents of Greytown, in what is now the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa.

But what might have been a proud moment for Richard was, at best, bittersweet. This was also the

**“What might have been a proud moment for Richard was bittersweet”**

year that the South African government enforced the Group Areas Act in Greytown. The law assigned racial groups to different residential and business sections in urban areas. It gave the government power to displace anyone who was not deemed to be in the right area,

breaking up homes, families and communities in the process. Greytown was designated a white district, and Richard was forced to move the studio to Enhlalakahle, a semi-rural location outside Greytown.

Business at the new site was poor. Customers found the location off-putting. You had to get a permit from a special office in town to travel there. Gangs of boys roamed the neighbourhood scaring visitors. Yet it was in Enhlalakahle, during the 1970s, that the captivating black-and-white photographs were taken. They will be offered as a single lot in Bonhams Modern and Contemporary African Art in March.

The pictures are formally staged portraits, in a simple setting. A dark curtain functions as a backdrop and a few props, such as a basket of plastic flowers, crop up on recurring occasions. In many pictures people wear Western clothes to striking effect, like the young man who leans on a stool,

From the archive of 1,126 loose  
images and four albums from  
the photographer's studio of  
Z.J.S. Ndimande and Sons  
in Greytown  
Estimate: £6,000 - 9,000  
(\$7,000 - 12,000)



checked cap tilted at a rakish angle over one eye. Or the two women who stand side by side, clad in matching sweaters, sunglasses and dark skirts, and have the same unsmiling expression. Due to its location, the studio's clients were mainly Zulu, and in some photos we see people posing for the camera in traditional beadwork ceremonial costumes, such as another pair of young women, also identically dressed, in headdresses and beaded necklaces, with cloths caped over their shoulders.

Photography took hold in southern Africa around the mid-19th century. Victorian-era images emphasised the exotic and the ethnographic, feeding Western fantasies of Africa as a place of primordial savagery. Images of the tribal warrior, the mother and child, the semi-naked black woman in 'nature' were popular fodder for postcards and prints.

But the influential curator, the late Okwui Enwezor has argued that photography in South Africa was only truly 'invented' in 1948, with the introduction of apartheid. Once racial segregation became embedded in the legal framework of South Africa, photography was transformed from ethnographic studies of 'native types' into a powerful social instrument. The camera became a tool of state control – blacks were required to carry at all times a passbook containing their photo, which stipulated where they were allowed to travel and work. And taking pictures also acted as a type of activism. Groups like the documentary photo collective Afrapix, whose members include now-celebrated figures such as Santu Mofokeng, Cedric Nunn, Lesley Lawson and Guy Tillim, bore witness to apartheid's vicissitudes, turning visual documentation of the period into a potent weapon in the liberation struggle.

Richard Ndimande's pictures were taken under circumstances of duress. But they have a pride and self-assertion to them that belies the context within which they were produced. Within the confines of the studio, a state of utopia reigns, free from the politics of race and space that governed daily life for black South Africans.

The individuals in Ndimande's portraits are able to choose how to dress, how to pose, how to represent themselves on film. Standing before the camera, they assert their full humanity. Who's to say, for example, why one woman has opted to be pictured wearing nothing but what seems to be her underwear. Is the image for a lover perhaps? Or is it, maybe, for herself – a memento of her youth that she can look back on in years to come?

Intriguingly, Ndimande's portraits sometimes carry a hidden message only intended for the original recipient of the photograph. A photo taken in 1975 shows a young woman in traditional dress holding an *isibebe*, a beaded panel necklace. Among the Zulu, beadwork is a craft that has historically been practised by girls and young women as a form of both decoration and communication.

Before the advent of mobile phones, a young woman making beaded jewellery might embed a secret message to a prospective male suitor into

#### Right

From the archive of 1,126 loose images and four albums from the photographer's studio of Z.J.S. Ndimande and Sons in Greytown  
Estimate: £6,000 - 9,000  
(\$7,000 - 12,000)

## “The portraits sometimes carry a hidden message only intended for the original recipient of the photograph”

its design, using colours, patterns or sometimes wording understood only by the two of them. Jewellery containing 'Zulu love letters' was sent to young men working far from home due to the strictures of the Group Areas Act, which prevented them from living in the cities with wives or girlfriends. Rather than send the jewellery itself by post, the young woman in Ndimande's studio sends a photograph. The *isibebe* reads *zinhle zonke*: “Everything is beautiful”. She is happy with the status of her relationship. In another picture, a less-fortunate woman, perhaps spurned in love, wears a necklace whose beads spell out the bleak message *imihlola yami*, “It is my bad luck”.

The intimacy and elegance of Ndimande's photographs brings to mind the images of other African portraitists of the same period. The best-known artists in the genre, such as Cameroon-born Samuel Fosso and the great Malian photographers Seydou Keita and Malick Sidibé, are lauded internationally. But, in recent years, photographers who worked anonymously for years in studios across the continent are starting to receive their due. A short list of names might include Sanlé Sory in Burkina Faso, Cameroon's Studio Jeunesse, Felicia Abban in Ghana and, in South Africa, S.J. 'Kitty' Moodley of Pietermaritzburg and Durban's Bobson Sukhdeo Mohanlall. In all their work, as well as that of Richard Ndimande himself, the studio becomes a site of thrilling artistic expression – a space where, not just sitters, but photographers are free to articulate themselves as fully, and freely, as possible.

*Ekwon Eshun is author of Africa State of Mind, a major new survey of contemporary photography from Africa, published by Thames & Hudson in March.*

Sale: Modern & Contemporary African Art  
London

Wednesday 18 March at 5pm

Enquiries: Helene Love-Aotey +44 (0) 20 7468 8213

helene.love-allotey@bonhams.com

bonhams.com/macaa



**Below**

John Singer Sargent (1856-1925)  
*Mrs John C. Tomlinson*, c.1904  
oil on canvas  
62 x 42in (157.5 x 106.5cm)  
Estimate: \$200,000 - 300,000  
(£150,000 - 230,000)





#### Left

Benjamin N. Duke, Mary's grandfather, acquired the 1009 Fifth Avenue mansion (across from The Metropolitan Museum of Art) in the early 1900s, and it remained in the Duke family for more than 100 years. John Singer Sargent's portrait, opposite, was hung in the drawing room.

# Charity began at home

The Dukes were a family of extraordinary wealth – and exceptional generosity. **Jack Pickering** relives the high life of the early 1900s

It is hard to comprehend how rich the heirs of the great fortunes were in the early years of the 20th century, an era that became known as ‘the Gilded Age’. In the 19th century, the Dukes’ entrepreneurial spirit had seen them for one particular year earning the equivalent of more than 1% of the GDP of the entire United States. Scions of a family of grand American philanthropists, Mary Lillian (1887-1960) and Angier Duke (1884-1923) would spend their time at fabulous hotels like The Breakers in Palm Beach, Florida, when not at one of the family estates. What else were rich young things to do?

For most people, it is difficult to imagine, say, walking on a whim into Cartier on New York City’s Fifth Avenue and purchasing \$123,840 worth of precious jewels, including a “diamond choker composed of round diamond links and three oval motifs at intervals, each motif having a large round diamond in center” (\$18,500) and a “fancy shaped diamond pendant and chain” (\$38,500). Yet this is precisely what Mary Lillian Duke Biddle was able to do on 17 November 1931. On that single day, in the early years of

the American Great Depression, she spent the equivalent of \$1,932,465.51 in today’s money, and she would return to Cartier to add further items each day that week.

So it may come as a surprise that, like the patricians of old rather than the air-headed socialites that typified their own social set, Mary Lillian and Angier were great patrons of the arts. Mary Lillian was a devotee of the opera and

**“Mary Lillian and Angier both sat for portraits by Joaquín Sorolla y Bastida”**

theatre. She and Angier both sat for portraits by Joaquín Sorolla y Bastida, and the siblings mixed in the same glittering circles as John Singer Sargent, Joseph Urban and Florenz Ziegfeld Jr.

The Dukes were a family of extraordinary wealth – and exceptional generosity. Mary Lillian established a



## The fine art of living

Mary Duke Biddle Trent Semans (1920-2012; shown with her grandfather, Ben, and mother, Mary Lillian) accomplished an extraordinary amount. As a powerful member of The Duke University Board of Trustees and the first female chairman of The Duke Endowment, she helped guide these institutions to their current success. This part of the US was once characterised by racial segregation. Semans' accomplishment was fostering inclusivity in her university, city and state. It was more than just her responsibility, it was her passion. In the early 1950s, Mary was elected to the Durham City Council, then rose to become the city's mayor pro tem, both firsts for women.

For Mary, art was essential to life – telling stories, promoting a greater understanding of others, and bridging cultures and lifestyles. She was an accomplished piano player and maintained lifelong friendships with painter John Koch and composer Iain Hamilton. However, she had no truck with elitism: to encourage access to the fine arts, she helped found the North Carolina School of the Arts in the 1960s – the country's first public conservatory. She also created The Mary Duke Biddle Gallery for the Blind at the North Carolina Museum of Art, where sight-impaired visitors could experience a museum, feeling masterpieces by artists such as Rodin. In 1971, with her husband, she received the North Carolina Award, the state's highest civilian honour.

charitable organisation in her own name: since 1956, the Mary Duke Biddle Foundation has disbursed approaching \$45 million to worthy causes. And their informed commitment to fine art continued into the next generation. Mary Duke Biddle Trent Semans, Mary Lillian's daughter, purchased a portrait of Mrs John Canfield Tomlinson by Sargent on sight at a “decorator's showcase on 63rd Street” in 1961 – perhaps it reminded Semans of her childhood and her mother's milieu. This evocative work is (along with works by John Koch, Thomas Sully and Thomas Eakins) among the many treasures from the Mary Duke Biddle Trent Semans Foundation offered

## “In this defeat, the Dukes saw opportunity”

at Bonhams American Art sale in May, in addition to works in Old Master Paintings in April, and Fine European Ceramics in July.

It all makes a fascinating contrast with the life of Mary Lillian and Angier's uncle, James Buchanan Duke, who was arguably the most consequential individual in the entire history of North Carolina. Along with his older brother Benjamin Newton Duke (Mary Lillian and Angier's father), James Buchanan created the modern cigarette in the mid-1880s. Twenty-five years later, in 1911, their company – the American Tobacco Company, then one of the largest in the world – lost a monopoly lawsuit brought

by Roosevelt's administration. Yet, in this defeat, the Dukes saw opportunity. They diversified their portfolio, damming the rivers of the Carolinas to create the region's first electric grid, in the process founding the Duke Power Company (now Duke Energy, and still the largest investor-owned utility in the US).

Given men of this calibre, the philanthropy of the family comes as no surprise. These efforts were largely led by Ben Duke, but it was his brother, James B. Duke, who left the most significant philanthropic mark. In 1924, James created The Duke Endowment, one of the nation's largest private foundations, and thereby endowed Duke University. That endowment – with additional support from the family – has enabled the university to become one of the most prestigious in the world, while Duke University Hospital is globally recognised as a leading healthcare provider. Through programmes supporting education, healthcare, children's and family services, and the Methodist Church, The Duke Endowment has improved the lives of countless Carolinians.

*Jack Pickering is a writer and biographer.*

Sale: American Art  
New York  
Wednesday 20 May at 2pm  
Enquiries: Jennifer Jacobsen +1 917 206 1699  
jennifer.jacobsen@bonhams.com  
bonhams.com/americanart

1  
Thomas Eakins  
(1844-1916)  
*Baby Girl Playing and Seated Boy with Book: A Double-Sided Work*, 1876  
oil on board  
12 x 10in (30 x 25.5cm)  
Estimate: \$15,000 - 25,000  
(£12,000 - 20,000)

These intriguing studies were painted back-to-back by Eakins on a single piece of artist board. On the front, a baby girl plays with her toys; on the back (not shown), a little boy, engrossed in his book, sits on a tiny chair. Eakins was a very significant figure in American realism – as well as a photographic pioneer, who conducted important experiments in the attempt to capture movement on film – and Mrs Semans seems to have been aware of his stature, collecting works also by his close associates (including Robert Henri).



1



2

2  
John Koch (1909-1978)  
*Siesta*, 1962  
oil on canvas  
30 x 25 1/4in (76.5 x 64.1cm)  
Estimate: \$40,000 - 60,000  
(£30,000 - 45,000)

An important figure in 20th-century realist painting, Koch is best known for light-filled paintings of urban interiors, frequently his own Manhattan apartment. His works often juxtapose Classical allusions and modern settings. Both intimate and distancing, *Siesta* draws the viewer into a familiar world that nonetheless remains inaccessible. It featured on the cover of *Time* magazine in 1964 to illustrate an article titled 'Sex in the US: Mores & Morality'.



4

3  
John Koch (1909-1978)  
*Summer Night*, 1965  
oil on canvas  
77 1/4 x 43in (196 x 109cm)  
Estimate: \$80,000 - 120,000  
(£60,000 - 90,000)

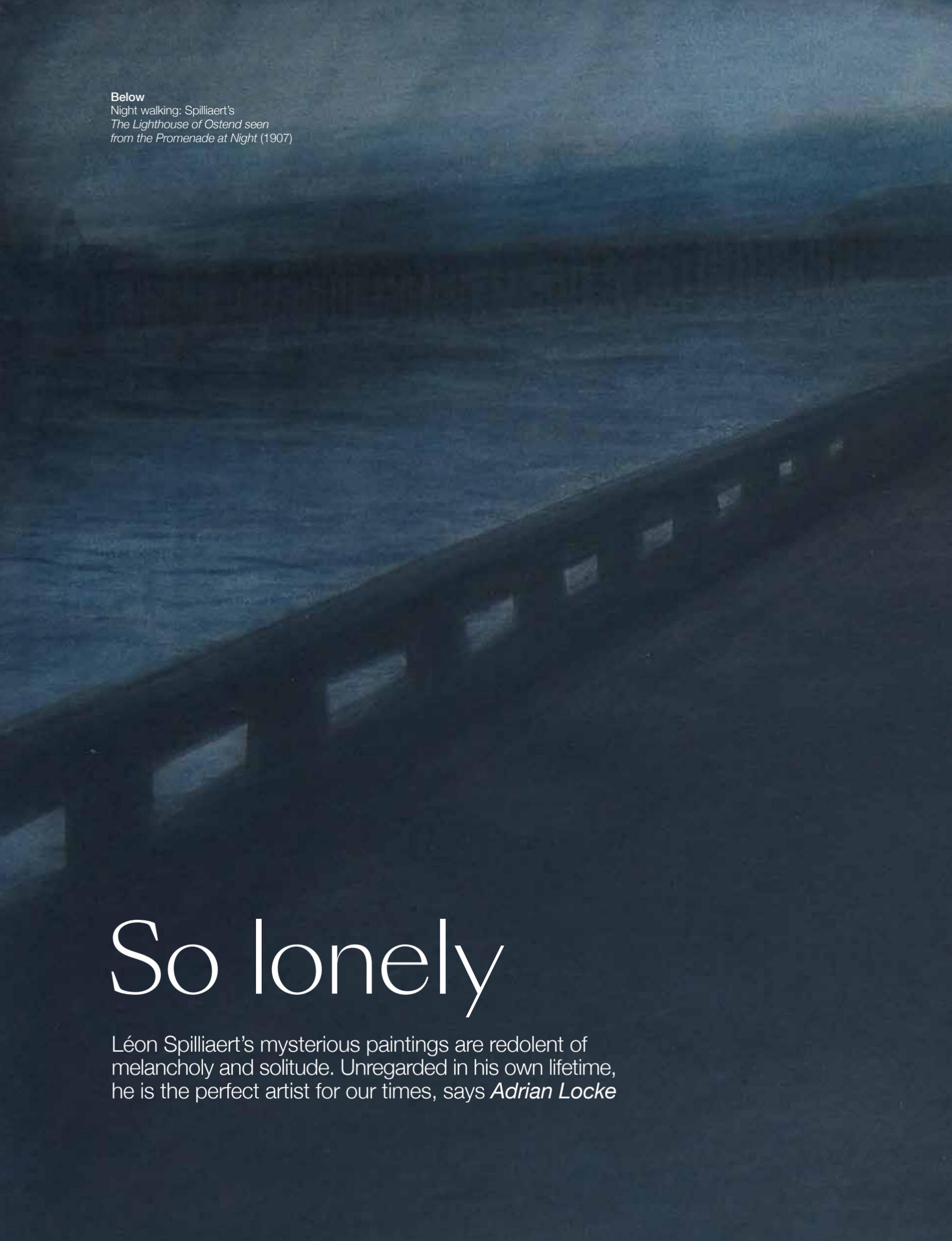
Another dramatically lit work by Koch. It makes you feel as if you've arrived from a backroom to join the family sprawling over their Colonial Revival verandah, finally feeling the cool of the night after a humid day. Koch was a family friend – and clearly a cherished artist: the Duke collection had six of his pictures.

4  
Thomas Sully (1783-1872)  
*Sarah Coxe*, 1813  
oil on canvas  
36 x 29in (91.4 x 73.7cm)  
Estimate: \$7,000 - 10,000  
(£5,000 - 8,000)

Famous for his historical art (adapted for use on US coins), Sully was also a great portraitist, whose clientele ran from presidents (both Jefferson and John Quincy Adams) to musicians. The elegant red shawl in this picture highlights Scully's mastery of texture and quick, loose brushwork.



3



**Below**

Night walking: Spilliaert's  
*The Lighthouse of Ostend* seen  
from the Promenade at Night (1907)

# So lonely

Léon Spilliaert's mysterious paintings are redolent of melancholy and solitude. Unregarded in his own lifetime, he is the perfect artist for our times, says *Adrian Locke*



Those familiar with the work of Léon Spilliaert will instantly recognise his uncanny ability to use absence to signal presence. His dark, brooding visions of the North Sea and Ostend, the town where he was born and grew up, transport you there – leaving a strong taste of the sea on your lips and the feel of the wind driving through your hair. For those to whom he is currently an unknown quantity, you are increasingly likely to encounter his work, with his reputation growing because his images still resonate today. Haunting, atmospheric, mysterious, introspective, lonesome – these are just some of the words that come to mind when describing Spilliaert's art. Dark and fathomless, his images connect to disaffected youth

and those dealing with the individual fears of isolation, solitude and loneliness in the modern bustling world.

As Mark Twain once wrote, the worst type of loneliness is not to be comfortable with oneself. If aloneness starts within, Spilliaert conveys brilliantly the myriad manner in which such feelings prey on one's mind and undermine self-confidence. His remarkable ability to capture a moment – quite unlike the freeze-frame of a photograph – transmits a sense of uncertainty, leaving the viewer not just to ponder what they are seeing, but attempting to comprehend what came before and, in other cases, to foretell what comes next. The serenity of the image is displaced, its beauty and technical mastery tinged with a sense of loss, of melancholy, of isolation.



**Above**  
*Sea Wall, Light Reflections*  
 (1908) demonstrates Spilliaert's  
 mastery of subdued light effects

**Right**  
 Spilliaert's melancholic  
*Absinthe Drinker* (1907)



**Far right**  
*My Father's Workshop* (1907):  
 Spilliaert's father, Léonard-  
 Hubert, was a perfumier



These images appear to chronicle Spilliaert's life, but there is no accompanying text to refer to, to help navigate that particular narrative. The secret of his work is the mystery: tantalising, tangible but somehow still undefined.

A number of facts are known. Léon Spilliaert was born in Ostend on the North Sea coast of Belgium on 28 July 1881, the eldest child of Léonard-Hubert, owner of a successful perfumery (*My Father's Workshop*, 1907) and a hair salon (where one of his brothers worked), and Léonie (née Jonckheere), who ran the Spilliaert household on Kapellestraat 2. Thanks to the patronage of the Belgian royal family, particularly Leopold II, Ostend had transformed from a small fishing port into a thriving belle époque seaside resort known as the 'Queen of Beaches'. Regular rail connections to Brussels and ferry crossings to Dover made it a popular and fashionable resort, complete with grand hotels, a casino, a racecourse and a promenade on which was situated the Royal Villa. Nevertheless, Ostend is a town of two halves. During the harsh winter months, it seems to contract – the vibrant crowds that throng the beach and promenade throughout the summer vanish.

Spilliaert was a self-taught artist, having abandoned formal art education due to ill health. He would continue to suffer from stomach ailments throughout his life. His two passions were his art and literature. An avid reader, Spilliaert was particularly drawn to the writings of Friedrich Nietzsche and Edgar Allan Poe. It was wonderful then that, in 1902, he was engaged by the successful Brussels publisher Edmond Deman to illustrate books by French and Belgian Symbolist writers including Stéphane

Mallarmé, Maurice Maeterlinck and Émile Verhaeren. Deman, who had previously commissioned Édouard Manet and Odilon Redon to illustrate his publications, would be a great influence on the young artist.

Two years later, Spilliaert – armed with a letter of introduction from Deman – travelled to Saint-Cloud on the outskirts of Paris to meet Verhaeren. They struck up an enduring friendship and, over time, Verhaeren introduced Spilliaert to numerous artistic and literary figures, including the Austrian author Stefan Zweig and the Belgian playwright Fernand Crommelynck. During these years, literary themes dominated Spilliaert's work. However, he never felt settled in Paris and, after a few months, returned to the family home in Ostend.

Due to his health problems, Spilliaert suffered from insomnia. As a means of tackling his sleeplessness, he strolled through the empty streets and along the deserted promenade late at night. Walking distracted him from the physical discomfort of his stomach ailments and gave him space to tackle his existential thoughts. Spilliaert's lack of critical (as well as financial) success also preyed on his mind. On his return from these walks, he would sit down in the house and, in the dead of night, create works from memory, with his chosen media – Indian ink wash, watercolour, gouache, charcoal, pencil, pen and Conté crayon – his drawing board propped on a bentwood chair or on his lap. Often responding to the diffused or reflected light of the streetlights, the dampness of the streets and pavements, or moonlight over the dark, brooding sea, Spilliaert created a powerful sequence of atmospheric images



**Above**  
An obsession with oceans: Spilliaert's *The Shipwrecked* (1926)



**Above right**  
*Young Woman on a Stool*, painted by Spilliaert in 1909



**Right**  
*Promenade and Casino of Ostend* (1909) – Spilliaert obsessively revisited the seafront in his work

that capture the stillness of his home town at night (*The Lighthouse of Ostend seen from the Promenade at Night*, 1907, and *Lights Reflected on the Promenade at Night*, 1907). He was very experimental, too, introducing highly unusual perspectives and bold geometries into his work (*Promenade and Casino of Ostend*, 1907). These remarkable viewpoints challenged conventional representations of the town, encouraging viewers to look afresh at once familiar features. Dynamic angles created paths leading nowhere that seemed to disappear in the distance. These disconcerting images perhaps refer subconsciously to his own profound sense of solitude and loneliness. Among some of Spilliaert's best known and most admired works from this period are a number of self-portraits. He would continue to depict himself throughout his life (*Self-Portrait*, 1927). Those that he produced over the two-year period from 1907 to 1908, when he was in his mid-20s, retain their extraordinary intensity. Still living with his parents and continuing to suffer from ill health, these unnerving reflections capture an unsettled young man battling with his physical and mental well-being.

The North Sea was a source of endless fascination for Spilliaert. In 1908, he rented an attic studio on the Visserskaai, with commanding views over the bustling port and navigation channel below (*The Navigation Channel with Fishing Boats*, 1909). With its wide beach, lighthouse, grand promenade, fishing industry and dramatic, ever-changing skies, Ostend inspired him and provided him with an infinite amount of source material. His solitary night-time walks through the familiar streets and along the seafront both calmed and enthused him.

In December 1916, Spilliaert married Rachel Vergison and the following March, when Ostend was occupied by the forces of the German Empire, they tried unsuccessfully to move to Geneva and join the Pacifist movement led by French writer Romain Rolland. With little money and expecting a child, they decided to settle instead in Brussels, where their daughter Madeleine was born in November 1917. From that time on, they oscillated between Brussels and Ostend, and Spilliaert's work noticeably changed. His palette became more colourful and his work shook off that characteristic sense of loneliness and melancholy (*Three Figures on the Promenade*, c.1920, and *Le Château d'Eau*, 1922). When in Brussels, he enjoyed walking alone among the ancient beech and oak trees in the nearby Forêt de Soignes (Sonian Forest); it acted, in some ways, as a substitute for the North Sea, which remained his favourite subject.

Spilliaert is an artist for our time. His once unfashionable subjects – the self, solitude, insomnia – are better understood and much more accepted. Outside literature, few have captured the essence of human fragility better than this once peripheral artist, whose work deserves to be more widely appreciated.

*Dr Adrian Locke is the co-curator of an exhibition of Léon Spilliaert's works at the Royal Academy of Arts, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London SW1. The exhibition runs until 25 May, admission £12. [royalacademy.org.uk/exhibition/leon-spilliaert](http://royalacademy.org.uk/exhibition/leon-spilliaert)*

*Bonhams exhibition of Spilliaert's work runs from 20 to 26 March at 101 New Bond Street, London W1. Admission free.*



# Sound of music

The Salzburg Festival is one of the wonders of civilisation. But the cultural experience doesn't stop there, says *Lucinda Bredin*

**Left** A city of forts, spires and domes. **Below left** The Mirabell Gardens **Above right** St Peter's cemetery **Right** The Dom Platz **Far right** Salzburg has a collective sweet tooth **Above right** The Modern Art Museum, the fortress of the avant-garde



I'm sure there are prodigies who love Salzburg from childhood, but, when I first went, I couldn't leave fast enough. It was too gemütlich for a dishevelled teenager on an Interrail holiday.

Every commercial enterprise that wasn't peddling Mozart, was flogging chocolate – and, of course, there were a number of shops that combined the two to ghastly effect. But then two things happened: I accepted that people over the age of 40 had the right to roam. And I embraced opera.

The Salzburg Festival, founded in 1920 by Richard Strauss, Hugo von Hofmannsthal and Max Reinhardt, is an event that unashamedly revolves around music. This year, the 100th anniversary, has 222 performances in 44 days – and those are just the core events. In short, the city is marinated in music from mid-July to the end of August. Festivalgoers, some of whom stay for up to three weeks, develop their own routine in preparation for that night's opera. They walk in the Mirabell gardens, hike in the surrounding mountains, swim in the icy Fuschl lake, eat light but doubtless expensive lunches, before walking, bedecked in bling, to the epicentre – the **Festival theatre**.

This austere building from the 1960s makes up for its

uncompromising exterior with two spectacular halls, one of which is hewn out of rock, with the side of the mountain visible on stage. There, the highlights this year include Anna Netrebko in *Tosca*; Cecilia Bartoli in *Don Pasquale*; Franz Welser-Möst conducting a new production of Strauss's *Elektra* with Ausrine Studyte in the title role. There is also the full cycle of Beethoven's 32 piano sonatas played by Igor Levit.

But for me, one of the chief pleasures of visiting the Festival is to interleave performances with serious sightseeing. Salzburg was an independent Archbishopric – it was only in 1816 that it was definitively handed over to the Austrian Empire. The local salt mines were such a generator of revenue that the ruling Archbishops could indulge themselves by turning a medieval city into a baroque extravagance. When a fire conveniently wiped out the Cathedral in 1598, it provided carte blanche. The resulting **Salzburger Dom** and the nearby **Residenz** for the Archbishop are impressively huge and lavish – the Residenz has an enfilade of reception rooms with much gilt, but little furniture. It doesn't really become diverting until you reach a series of Wunderkammern with collections of exotic shells, bizarre scientific instruments and geological specimens. The star of the show is a bronze Eucharistic dove with Limoges enamelling. The nearby **Abbey of St Peter** and its cemetery swap pomp for atmosphere. The catacombs, which look like anchorite caves, have been clawed out of the mountain. It is well worth going in. A claustrophobic flight of stone steps leads you up into caverns with rough-hewn slabs that serve as altars.

Salzburg is one of the very few places in the world that has spectacular car parks, which – like the catacombs – have been tunnelled out of the Mönchsberg Mountain. One way of travelling inside the mountain is to take a



high-speed lift that was cut through the rock for visitors to the **Modern Art Museum**. Built in 1998, this defiantly hideous building is like a grey storage unit, plonked on the summit as if rebuking the city below for its beauty. God knows how it was nodded through planning. But, as they say, the best view in Salzburg is when you are inside, since you can't see it. A survey show of Secessionist painter Wilhelm Thöny is there until July; from June, there is also an exhibition of new work by Yinka Shonibare.

Given the small size of Salzburg, it is to its credit that it has so many art galleries showing contemporary art – it says something about the tastes of the clientele for the opera, too. Thaddaeus Ropac has a gallery, at the entrance of the **Mirabell gardens**, that is a byword for elegance. This season he has exhibitions of Stephan Balkenhol and Robert Wilson. The publicly funded Künstlerhaus doesn't shy away from challenging work, either – Omer Fast's virtual-reality film *The Invisible Hand* is now a semi-permanent installation.

One of my favourite works in the city is the *Salzburg Panorama*, which has its own museum. Early in the 19th century, the artist Johann Sattler made the arduous journey up to the **Hohensalzburg Fortress** that dominates the city's skyline, and drew a detailed outline of the city from five different angles. He transferred the drawing to a vast, 85ft-long canvas, which was fixed to a drum. The result was a painting that captures Salzburg, just as it was that autumn day in 1824. All the clocks show 4 o'clock. There are no railway tracks, and there are cows where one would expect to see Würstel stalls, but apart from that the astonishing surprise is that Salzburg has lived through 200 years of upheaval, including a pair of World Wars, and still looks more or less the same.

Lucinda Bredin is Editor of Bonhams Magazine.



#### Where to stay:

There is a pantheon of Salzburg heroes: Mozart, Herbert von Karajan... and Florian, the concierge at **Hotel Bristol**. Florian is rightly fêted by festivalgoers. Tickets, restaurants, torn gowns, medical emergencies... he sorts stuff. He has such a legion of fans that this is the only place they will stay. As for the hotel, it has had a recent facelift without detracting from its essential character. (There are still acres of red plush.) Have a look yourself at the website [bristol-salzburg.at](http://bristol-salzburg.at).

The other hotels high on the list for the Festival are the **Sacher**, overlooking the Salzach river and located, like the Bristol, in the 19th-century Neustadt, and the **Goldener Hirsch** in the Altstadt. This is housed in a 15th-century building on the Getreidegasse, Salzburg's equivalent of a high street, if such a vulgar concept could exist in such a place. For a more country-estate feel, try **Schloss Leopoldskron**. Formerly owned by Max Reinhardt, one of the original founders of the Festival, it has become more famous now for its lake and ornamental ironwork, both of which feature in *The Sound of Music*.

There's no point pretending that these hotels are anything but humongously expensive during the Festival. In spring months, however, they are surprisingly reasonable.

#### Where to eat:

Austria has a reputation for restaurants that offer little else than Wiener Schnitzel, Frankfurter Würstel and liver dumplings. This turns out to be almost entirely true – except in Salzburg. In keeping with the sophisticated palates of visitors to the Festival, there are 19 entries in the Michelin Guide, two of which – **SENNS Restaurant** and **Ikarus** –

have two stars each. But eating after the opera is always a challenge. Four courses at 10.30pm? Really? **Carpe Diem**, [pictured below] a restaurant-cum-cocktail bar (with its own Michelin star) adopts a flexible approach by serving food in small cones in an ultra-modern setting. Sounds a bit *unusual*, but it actually works. For a place for lunch, go for a fabulous view. Both the **Modern Art Museum** and the **Hohensalzburg Fortress** have excellent restaurants and sweeping panoramas. For a traditional schnitzel experience, the historic landmark **Stiftskeller St Peter** is the one. In operation since 803, it is the oldest restaurant in Mitteleuropa. **L.B.**

#### The Salzburg Festival

Dates: 18 July-30 August

Tickets can be bought directly from the Salzburg Festival website ([salzburgfestival.at](http://salzburgfestival.at)) from 27 March onwards.

For information about all aspects of Salzburg, contact Salzburgerland Tourist Office ([salzburgerland.com](http://salzburgerland.com)).





Ritual + Culture: Fine  
Southeast Asian Arts  
Hong Kong  
Online sale  
3 April - 14 April

Widayat (Indonesian, 1923-2002)  
*Adam and Eve in Paradise*, 1970 (detail)  
oil on canvas  
145 x 130cm (57 x 51in)  
Estimate: HK\$700,000 - 1,000,000  
(\$90,000 - 130,000)

Enquiries: Wang Zineng  
+65 8133 1623  
zineng.wang@bonhams.com  
bonhams.com/contemporary



## New York Photographic memory

The veteran American photographer Bruce Davidson has been a member of the famous Magnum Photos cooperative for more than 60 years – and remains one of its brightest stars. Although an acclaimed fashion photographer, Davidson is best known for his clear-eyed but sympathetic portrayals of communities on the margins. His great 1970 work of photojournalism *East 100th Street* took two years to complete, and shows life in a poverty-stricken part of East Harlem. A selection of prints from the series, formerly owned by the legendary Magnum photo editor Jimmy Fox, lead the Photographs sale in New York in April. Reflecting on the project, Davidson recalled that when he first started work in East Harlem a resident told him, “What you call a ghetto, I call my home”, and much of the power of the images comes from his ability to see the world through the eyes of the people whose lives he is recording. As he said, “I entered a lifestyle and, like the people on the block, I love and hate it and keep going back.”

**Image:** *East 100th Street* series by Bruce Davidson

**Estimate:** \$40,000 - 60,000

**Sale:** Photographs  
New York, 3 April

**Enquiries:** Laura Paterson  
+1 917 206 1653

[laura.paterson@bonhams.com](mailto:laura.paterson@bonhams.com)



# Around the Globe

**Andrew Currie** highlights a  
selection of Bonhams sales worldwide





## Los Angeles *California dreaming*

When 18-year-old Elmer Wachtel left his home in Maryland for California in 1882, with dreams of becoming a painter, he could not have imagined what great success awaited him, nor how closely he would become identified with the Golden Age of his adopted state. A talented musician, he played first violin for the Los Angeles Symphony Orchestra while scraping together enough money to attend art school. Wachtel shared the passion of the French Impressionists for painting outdoors direct from nature, but the result is distinctly Southern Californian. Seascapes and coastal scenes were a favourite theme, as seen in *The California Coast* that is offered at the Californian & Western Art sale in Los Angeles. The painting shows Wachtel's mastery, both of composition and of the contrasting play of natural light on land and water, which fascinated him throughout his working life.

**Image:** *The California Coast* by Elmer Wachtel

**Estimate:** \$100,000 - 120,000

**Sale:** California and Western Art

Los Angeles, 17 March

**Enquiries:** Scot Levitt, +1 323 436 5425  
scot.levitt@bonhams.com



## Los Angeles *Light fantastic*

If you have ever tried to blow glass, or even just watched it being done, you will know how fiendishly difficult it is to get right. The technique takes years of practice to perfect. The American glass-artist Dale Chihuly started his career in 1965 and is now regarded as one of the world's masters, having taken the ancient art to new heights. Following the practices of the legendary Murano glass-producers in Venice, Chihuly works with teams of glassblowers to produce pieces on a scale that would be impossible if undertaken alone. The *Clear and Gold Chandelier* to be offered in Los Angeles in March is a perfect example of this approach. The chandelier is huge. Executed in 2000, it is 396cm by 396cm or, in imperial measurement, 13ft by 13ft – twice the length of an average double bed. Chihuly has been described as a sculptor in glass. It is hard to disagree.

**Image:** *Clear and Gold Chandelier*  
by Dale Chihuly

**Estimate:** \$100,000 - 150,000

**Sale:** Modern Design | Art  
Los Angeles, 29 March

**Enquiries:** Jason Stein +1 323 436 5466  
jason.stein@bonhams.com



## Taipei *Chairman Hu*

Bonhams Taiwan has moved to a brand new office in Taipei as part of the company's long-term strategy in the region. Conveniently located in the centre of the city, the new space measures about 100 square metres, has dedicated facilities for client meetings and provides plenty of room for showcasing the highlights of upcoming sales. The office move was masterminded by Bobbie Hu – who was recently appointed Bonhams Chairman, Greater China, and is based in Taipei – and Edward Wilkinson, Executive Director, Asia.

**Enquiries:**

Bobbie Hu

+886 227 577070

bobbie.hu@bonhams.com

## Edinburgh Currie in favour

The Scottish painter Ken Currie is a great admirer of George Grosz and Otto Dix, German artists of the early 20th-century Neue Sachlichkeit ('New Objectivity') movement. His *Night Out*, which comes to the Scottish sale in Edinburgh in May, is a perfect example of their influence on his work, with its highly political content and visceral images of social deprivation. Painted in 1988 at Currie's Gallowgate studio in Glasgow, the painting depicts the block bars and heavy-drinking culture of a community devastated by the decline of heavy industry. Three menacing figures – one dressed as a skeleton and sporting the red liberty cap of the French Revolution (and a Hitlerian moustache); another playing the flute to evoke the Orange marching bands – trample over a man, whose walking stick, books and glasses have been sent flying across the pavement. The books are a recurring Currie motif, reflecting the Glasgow tradition of working-class self-education from which so many political and trade union figures sprang.

**Image:** *Night Out*  
by Ken Currie



**Estimate:** £40,000 - 60,000

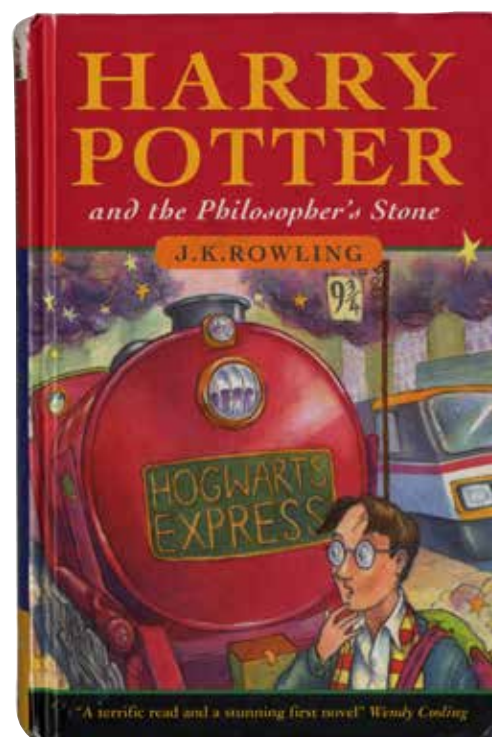
**Sale:** The Scottish Sale

Edinburgh, 20 May

**Enquiries:** Chris Brickley

+44 (0) 131 240 2297

chris.brickley@bonhams.com



## London Signature edition

Imagine being the first person to read one of the most famous books in the world. Somebody who has had that privilege is Bryony Evens. In 1996, while working for a literary agency, she picked up a three-chapter submission from the slush pile and plunged into the world of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. Hooked, Bryony asked J.K. Rowling to send the entire book, and the rest is history. Bryony has told her story many times – she even appeared on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* – and now she is selling her personal signed copy of the novel at the Fine Books and Manuscripts sale in London in March. She didn't actually meet J.K. Rowling until 1988, when she queued up for a signature at the Cheltenham Literary Festival. The author's inscription speaks for itself: 'To Bryony – who is the most important person I've ever met in a signing queue & the first person ever to see merit in Harry Potter. With huge thanks J.K. Rowling'. The 'huge' is underlined four times.

**Image:** *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, signed and inscribed by the author J.K. Rowling

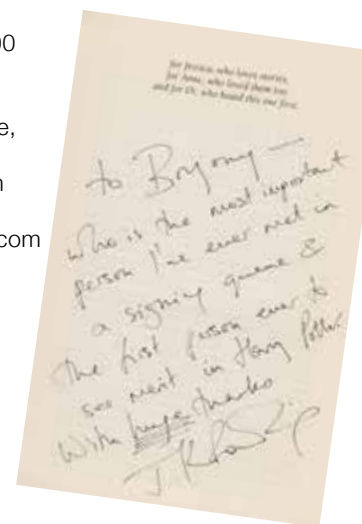
**Estimate:** £70,000 - 90,000

**Sale:** Fine Books, Atlases, Manuscripts & Historical Photographs, Knightsbridge, 11 March

**Enquiries:** Luke Batterham

+44 (0) 20 7393 3828

luke.batterham@bonhams.com



## Stafford Legend

For aficionados of Triumph motorcycles, the name Les Williams has as much cachet as the machines he worked with. Williams was manager of the firm's factory works racing team, overseeing victories across the 1960s and '70s, including at the Thruxton 500 and Bol d'Or races. He was also the co-creator of 'Slippery Sam', the Triumph Trident T150 that would go on to win five consecutive TT production races, and he later invented the limited-edition Triumph Legend. It may come as a surprise, then, that his own collection comprised rival British marques – notably including a 1930 AJS 350cc, one of the most successful Grand Prix campaigners

of its era. It is offered at the Spring Stafford Sale – the motorcycle team's annual season opener – which will feature machines spanning more than a century of history and innovation, from early pioneers in the field to 21st-century superbikes.

**Image:** The ex-Les Williams, 1930 AJS 350cc R7 Racing Motorcycle

**Estimate:** £25,000 - 35,000

**Sale:** The International Classic Motorcycle Show, 24-26 April

**Enquiries:** Ben Walker

+44 (0) 20 8963 2819

ben.walker@bonhams.com

UK

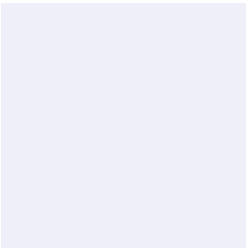
New Bond Street, London

MARCH

- Thu 12 Mar 4pm  
Post-War and Contemporary Art
- Wed 18 Mar 5pm  
Modern and Contemporary African Art
- Fri 20 Mar-Thu 26 Mar  
Léon Spilliaert Exhibition
- Thu 26 Mar 5pm  
Impressionist and Modern Art
- Tue 31 Mar 11am  
Islamic and Indian Art

APRIL

- Tue 7 Apr 2pm  
The Greek Sale
- Wed 8 Apr 2pm  
19th Century and British Impressionist Art
- Tue 21 Apr 3pm  
Modern and Contemporary Middle Eastern Art
- Wed 22 Apr 10am  
The Jacob Collection: an Important Collection of a Distinguished Private Swiss Collector



- Wed 29 Apr 2pm  
London Jewels
- Wed 29 Apr-Wed 13 May  
Modern and Contemporary African Art – Online Sale
- Thu 30 Apr 10.30am  
Fine and Rare Wines

MAY

- Wed 13 May 2pm  
Fine Netsuke from a European Private Collection
- Thu 14 May 10.30am  
Fine Chinese Art
- Thu 14 May 2pm  
Fine Japanese Art
- Wed 20 May 10am  
Islamic Art – Online Sale
- Wed 20 May 2pm  
Fine Decorative Arts, 1200-1900

Montpelier Street, London

MARCH

- Wed 11 Mar 11am  
Knightsbridge Jewellery
- Wed 11 Mar 1pm  
Fine Books, Atlases, Manuscripts and Historical Photographs
- Wed 18 Mar 10am  
Home and Interiors
- Tue 24 Mar 1pm  
British and European Art
- Wed 25 Mar 1pm  
Modern British and Irish Art

APRIL

- Wed 1 Apr 10am  
Decorative Art and Design
- Wed 8 Apr 10.30am  
Old Master Paintings
- Wed 22 Apr 11am  
Knightsbridge Jewels
- Wed 22 Apr 2pm  
Designer Handbags and Fashion
- Wed 29 Apr 11am  
Prints and Multiples
- Wed 29 Apr 2pm  
The Marine Sale

MAY

- Mon 11 May 10.30am & Tue 12 May 12pm  
Asian Art
- Tue 19 May 1pm  
Watches and Wristwatches
- Wed 20 May 10.30am  
Fine Glass and British Ceramics
- Wed 20 May 10.30am  
Worcester Porcelain British Ceramics

Regions

MARCH

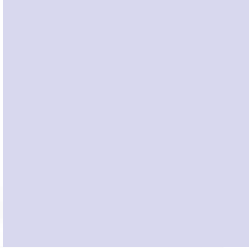
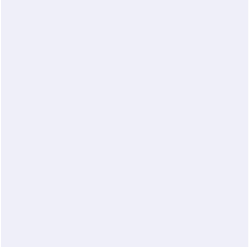
- Wed 4 Mar 11am  
Whisky Sale Edinburgh
- Wed 18 Mar 11am  
Asian Art Edinburgh
- Sat 21 Mar 1pm  
Bonhams MPH – March Auction Bicester, Bicester Heritage
- Sun 29 Mar 1pm  
Goodwood Members Meeting Chichester, Goodwood

APRIL

- Wed 1 Apr 10am  
Home and Interiors Edinburgh
- Fri 24 Apr-Sun 26 Apr 11am  
The Spring Stafford Sale Stafford, Staffordshire County Showground
- Wed 29 Apr 11am  
The Sporting Sale Edinburgh

MAY

- Wed 6 May 11am  
Edinburgh Jewels Edinburgh
- Sat 17 May 11am  
The Aston Martin Works Sale Wormsley, The Wormsley Estate
- Wed 20 May 10am  
The Oak Interior Oxford
- Wed 20 May 11am  
The Scottish Sale Edinburgh
- Sat 30 May 1pm  
Bonhams MPH – May Auction Bicester, Bicester Heritage



# New York Jewels

New York

Tuesday 19 May

A 15.52 Carat Old-Mine Cut Diamond Ring

Estimate: \$125,000 - 175,000

(£95,000 - 133,000)

A 14k Gold and Ruby Bracelet, Cartier

Circa 1960

Estimate: \$6,000 - 10,000

(£4,500 - 7,500)

An Emerald, Ruby and Diamond Parrot Brooch, Cartier

Circa 1955

Estimate: \$8,000 - 10,000

(£6,000 - 7,500)

Enquiries: Brett O'Connor

+1 212 461 6526

[brett.oconnor@bonhams.com](mailto:brett.oconnor@bonhams.com)

[bonhams.com/jewelry](http://bonhams.com/jewelry)



World

North America

MARCH

- Sun 1-Wed 11 Mar 10am  
The Medical and Scientific  
Library of W Bruce Fye  
Part III – Online Sale  
New York
- Thu 5 Mar 11am  
The Amelia Island Auction  
Fernandina Beach  
Golf Club
- Fri 6 Mar 10am  
Extraordinary Books  
and Manuscripts  
New York
- Fri 6 Mar 12pm  
Gemstones –  
Online Sale  
Los Angeles
- Mon 9 Mar 10am  
The Rock H Currier  
Collection of Cut and  
Polished Minerals  
Los Angeles
- Tue 10 Mar 10am  
California Jewels  
Los Angeles
- Tue 10 Mar 6pm  
The Estate  
of Diahann Carroll
- Mon 16 Mar 11am  
Traditional/Individual:  
Modern Native  
American Art  
Los Angeles
- Tue 17 Mar 1pm  
California and Western Art  
Los Angeles
- Sun 29 Mar 10am  
Modern Design | Art  
Los Angeles
- Tue 31 Mar 10am  
Prints and Multiples  
Los Angeles

APRIL

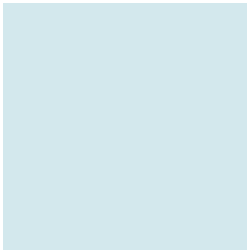
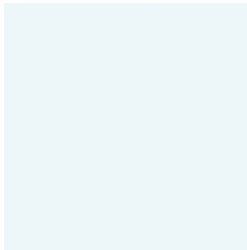
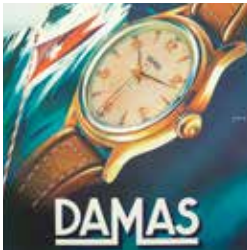
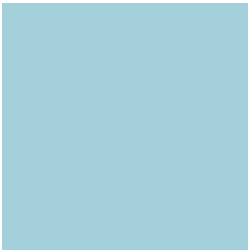
- Fri 3 Apr 2pm  
Photographs  
New York
- Wed 8 Apr 10am  
Made in California:  
Contemporary Art  
Los Angeles
- Mon 20 Apr 10am  
The Elegant Home  
Los Angeles
- Wed 22 Apr 1pm  
The Art of Time  
New York
- Tue 28 Apr 2pm  
19th Century  
European Paintings  
New York
- MAY
- Thu 5 May 10am  
California Jewels  
Los Angeles
- Mon 11 May 1pm  
African, Oceanic  
and Pre-Columbian Art  
New York
- Tue 12 May 1pm  
Rock and Roll Memorabilia  
Los Angeles
- Tue 12 May 5pm  
Impressionist  
and Modern Art  
New York

- Wed 13 May 5pm  
Post-War and  
Contemporary Art  
New York
- Mon 18 May 10am  
Natural History  
Los Angeles
- Tue 19 May 10am  
Lapidary Works of Art,  
Gemstones and Minerals  
Los Angeles
- Tue 19 May 2pm  
New York Jewels  
New York
- Wed 20 May 1pm  
The World of Gold,  
Opals and Other  
Phenomenal Gems  
Los Angeles
- Wed 20 May 4pm  
American Art  
New York
- Thu 21 May 10am  
Modern and Contemporary  
Prints and Multiples  
New York
- Thu 26 May 12pm  
Native American Art –  
Online Sale  
Los Angeles
- Sun 31 May 10am  
Greenwich Concours  
d'Elegance Auction  
Greenwich

Rest of the World

MARCH

- Mon 2 Mar 9am  
Watches – Online Sale  
Hong Kong
- Thu 12 Mar 2pm  
Hong Kong Jewels  
and Jadeite  
Hong Kong
- Thu 26 Mar 9am  
Watches – Online Sale  
Hong Kong
- Fri 27 Mar 10am  
Chinese Paintings –  
Online Sale  
Hong Kong
- Fri 27 Mar 6pm  
Ritual + Culture:  
Fine Southeast Asian  
Arts – Online Sale  
Hong Kong
- APRIL
- Wed 8 Apr 10am  
Fine Chinese Paintings  
Hong Kong
- MAY
- Mon 8 May 7.30pm  
The Monaco Sale  
'Les Grandes Marques  
à Monaco'  
Monte Carlo
- Tue 12 May 6pm  
Australian Art  
Melbourne
- Wed 13 May 5pm  
The Grice Collection  
Sydney
- Wed 13 May 6pm  
Single Owner Sale  
Sydney
- Wed 13 May 6pm  
Asian Art  
Sydney
- Fri 15 May 10am  
Fine and Rare Wine  
and Whisky  
Hong Kong
- Tue 19 May 6pm  
Australia Jewels  
Sydney
- Sun 24 May 10am  
Hong Kong Jewels  
and Jadeite  
Hong Kong
- Mon 25 May 2pm  
Hong Kong Watches  
Hong Kong
- Tue 26 May 10am  
Fine Chinese Ceramics  
and Works of Art  
Hong Kong





## The Marine Sale

London

Wednesday 29 April

2pm

Montague Dawson (British, 1890-1973)

*First Home* (detail)

signed 'MONTAGUE DAWSON' (lower left)

watercolour and gouache

42 x 66.5cm (16½ x 26¼in)

Estimate: £12,000 - 18,000

(\$16,000 - 23,000)

Enquiries: Leo Webster

+44 (0) 20 7393 3863

leo.webster@bonhams.com

bonhams.com/marine

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All sale dates are subject to change. Readers are advised to contact the department concerned for exact details.  
  
For information and details of sale

# Designer Handbags & Fashion

London

Wednesday 22 April

2pm

Includes the Private Collection  
of Barbara Taylor Bradford OBE

Left: Hermes Navy Leather and Toile Kelly  
Estimate: £2,000 - 3,000 (\$3,000 - 4,000)

Center: Hermes Green Leather and Toile Trim Bag  
Estimate: £700 - 1,000 (\$900 - 1,300)

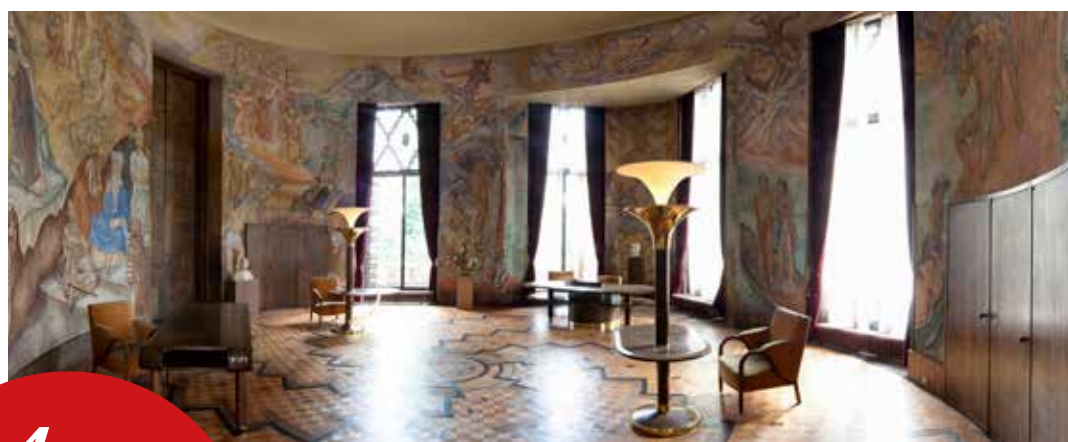
Right: Hermes Tri-Colour Kelly  
Estimate: £3,000 - 5,000 (\$4,000 - 7,000)

Enquiries: Meg Randell  
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Photo: © José Costellar



All images © Palais de la Porte Dorée, Photo Lorenzo

## My Favourite Room



### Christian Louboutin has his eyes opened to the world

As a child, I would go past the Palais de la Porte Dorée every weekend, but the façade – with its ‘stone tapestry’ – was so imposing, even faintly scary, that I didn’t dare go in. It was only when I heard that inside the building was the largest aquarium in France, that I summoned up the courage to enter. Even then I loved fish.

The Palais had been built as a centrepiece for the Paris Colonial Exhibition in 1931. On either side of the grand hall that stretched the width of the building were two rooms that had a profound effect on me. One was known as Paul Reynaud’s Oval Room – a reception room used by Reynaud, who was the Minister for the Colonies. This room had an African theme. It was designed by Émile-Jacques Ruhlmann, using materials that had been brought back from countries such as Côte d’Ivoire and Mali. The other was Marshal Lyautey’s salon, which had an Asian narrative and a most beautiful dome, with frescoes showing Buddha meditating and Confucius teaching. There was also superlative furniture, designed by the cabinetmaker Eugène Printz. Everything in both rooms was created to make a statement about the two cultures.

These rooms changed my world. It was my first discovery of different civilisations and different points of view. My family originally came from Brittany, and my life was constructed around a triangle, moving between Paris (where I was brought up), Brittany, and sometimes the north of Spain or Italy. But that’s about it. The idea

that there was an exotic world beyond, and waiting to be discovered, was intoxicating.

One feature was particularly exciting: a handle in the African salon made from an ivory tusk. There was also a chair with three legs rather than four. It was a revelation that things were not just created for function, but for beauty as well. It triggered my imagination about how there was a spectrum of objects I didn’t know existed that could be used for purposes as yet undreamt of.

### “The idea that there was an exotic world beyond... was intoxicating”

This month, there is an exhibition at the Palais about my life and work. Accompanying it is an ‘imaginary museum’ – a room in which I have gathered objets d’art that have been sources of inspiration, and which links the show to a place where I first experienced aesthetic emotions. I have to thank this museum for setting me off on a journey to discover other cultures, both in real life and in the mind. And, of course, for letting me see the fish.

*Christian Louboutin is a fashion designer.*

*‘Christian Louboutin, L’Exhibition[niste]’ runs until 26 July at Palais de la Porte Dorée, Paris. palais-portedoree.fr*

Goodwood Members'  
Meeting Sale:  
Collectors' Motor Cars  
Chichester, Goodwood  
Sunday 29 March  
1pm

*Full restored example*

1963 Aston Martin DB4 Series V Vantage Convertible

Estimate: £800,000 - 1,000,000

(\$950,000 - 1,200,000)

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WILENSKY  
EXQUISITE MINERALS

Nature as an expression of aesthetic



Tourmaline on Quartz with Cleavandite  
Ferreira Mine, Minas Gerais, Brazil  
20 cm tall