Andy Warhol's Dollar Sign Estimated at £400k Up For Auction

Monday 22 June, 2015

Andy Warhol's *Dollar Sign* from 1982, estimated at £400,000-600,000, is one of the highlights of Bonhams Post-War and Contemporary Art Sale in London on 1 July. The work is arguably the best of its kind ever to come to auction.

Unusually large for this series, and marked by its intensity and clarity of colour, this exceptional example is also fresh to the market. Composed of thick vivid paint forming five dollar signs against a jet black background, the painting embodies Warhol at his most animated.

Dollar Sign is a case of Warhol not just making money out of art, but making art out of money. In his book, *Warhol*, David Bourdon writes that the series can be seen as "insolent reminders that pictures by brand-name artists are metaphors for money". That never bothered Warhol, who brazenly declared his interest in making money from his art with his Factory 'production line'.

The artist wrote in *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol*: "I like money on the wall. Say you were going to buy a $200,000 painting. I think you should take that money, tie it up, and hang it on the wall. Then when someone visited you the first thing they would see is the money on the wall."

Warhol drew the *Dollar Sign* image by hand, and the work's sketchy dashes of acrylic paint are reminiscent of the strokes of Warhol's original pencil drawings. Although it was his skills as a draughtsman which allowed him to initially break in to the art world, he is better known for appropriating pop culture images from mass media, generating expensive glamour out of banality. Having tried and failed to find a dollar sign symbol which met his requirements, Warhol made his own. In his hands, the $ is an exuberant icon, his own trademark logo.

Warhol, born poor in Depression-era Pittsburgh, printed rows of bleak grey dollar bills early in his career. When he returned to the motif in the 1980s with the colourful dollar sign series, he was very rich indeed. He launched the prints at a star-studded opening at the Leo Castelli gallery in New York, noting in his diary, 'All the heavyweights were there.'

Ralph Taylor, Bonhams Director of Contemporary Art, said: "This is a classic image from one of Warhol's most important series, and the five distinct, brilliantly coloured signs overlaid on a jet-black background make it unique. It comes from a wonderful collection where it has rested privately for nearly 30 years, and we are honoured to offer arguably the greatest example of its kind ever to come to auction."

Other highlights from the sale:

- Three other Warhols, including *Campbell's Soup Box* (1986), estimated at £30,000-50,000.
- Anish Kapoor's 2012 *Untitled* – a monumental magenta disc in stainless steel, estimated at £400,000-600,000.
- Banksy's *Keep it Real* (2002), estimated at £40,000-60,000, and*Rat with Umbrella* (2004), estimated at £30,000-50,000.
- A work by Anselm Kiefer, subject of a solo show at the Royal Academy last year, estimated at £250,000-350,000.

-ENDS-

For further information and images call Hallie Swanson at +44 (0) 20 7468 8363, or email press@bonhams.com.

NOTES FOR EDITORS

Bonhams, founded in 1793, is one of the world's largest auctioneers of fine art and antiques. Today, the auction house offers more sales than any of its rivals. The main salerooms are in London, New York and Hong Kong. Sales are also held in the UK, in Knightsbridge, Oxford and Edinburgh; in the US, in San Francisco and Los Angeles; in Europe, in Paris and Stuttgart and in Sydney, Australia. Bonhams also has a worldwide network of offices and regional representatives in 25 countries offering sales advice and valuation services in 60 specialist areas. For a full listing of forthcoming sales, plus details of Bonhams specialist departments, please visit www.bonhams.com.

Media:



Related Sectors:

Entertainment & Arts ::

Related Keywords:

Andy Warhol's Dollar Sign ::

Scan Me:

If you would rather not receive future communications from Bonhams, let us know by clicking here.
Bonhams, 101 New Bond Street, London, London W1S 1SR United Kingdom

Company Contact:

_

Pressat Wire

E. support[@]pressat.co.uk

View Online

Additional Assets:

Newsroom: Visit our Newsroom for all the latest stories:
https://www.wire.pressat.co.uk