CHRISTIE'S AMERICAN ART SALES MAY 21

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Christie's announces the American Art sales on May 21, which will feature a strong selection of works from private collections, many of which have never appeared at auction. This sale season presents strength across all genres of American Art, including works by the most important artists from 19th and 20th Centuries. The American Art sale on May 21 will commence at 10 a.m. with 74 lots, followed by Visions of the West: American Paintings from the William I. Koch Collection at noon with 68 lots.

The sale is led by Two Puritans by Edward Hopper. Painted in 1945, Two Puritans, which depicts a pair of austere Cape Cod houses in South Truro, Massachusetts, and is widely thought to be an intimate and revealing double portrait of the artist and his wife, Jo, is also a testament to Hopper's dogged dedication to realism in the face of a changing visual world that increasingly championed abstraction. Expected to realize between $20-30 million, the painting has remained in private collections since its creation and this is the first time it is being offered at auction. Two Puritans has been exhibited at such renowned institutions as the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Tate Modern in London, and it was most recently included in a major retrospective of the artist's work organized by the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid, which traveled to the Grand Palais in Paris in 2012. Click here to read the complete press release.

Also offered in the sale is Edward Hopper's House with Dead Trees, a rare large-scale watercolor executed in 1932 (estimate: $2,500,000-3,500,000). This work, one of only a handful of watercolors of this size left in private hands, depicts, with arresting simplicity and nuanced interpretation, a home in South Truro on Cape Cod. Here, Hopper demonstrates his mastery of the watercolor medium and his celebrated ability to create hauntingly beautiful and poignant scenes from his everyday surroundings.

Thomas Hart Benton's Ozark Autumn is a masterwork of the artist's signature Regionalist style depicting the picturesque landscape and inhabitants of his native Midwest (estimate: $2,000,000-3,000,000). This rare and important work was painted in 1949, and presents a group of farmers laboriously harvesting corn by hand. Benton imbues Ozark Autumn with a sense of motion through his use of sinuous line, expressive brushwork and rich color, and the composition has a spiraling configuration, which pulls each individual element into a unifying scheme of visual rhythm. The painting has been in the family of its original owners and never before appeared on the market.

Among the highlights of American Modernism is Arthur Dove's Boat Going Through Inlet (estimate: $2,500,000 – 3,500,000). Heralded as the very first abstract artist, as a result of a series of works in 1910-11, Arthur Dove's entire career can be defined by his innovative and ever evolving approach to both subject matter and media. From the earliest pastels, to the assemblages, to seminal masterworks such as the painting featured here, executed on tin, Dove's manipulation of his material is as integral to his work as his varied choice of subject matter. It is this spirit of experimentation that makes Dove one of the most compelling artists of the 20th century. Painted circa 1929, Boat Going Through Inlet reflects Dove's unwavering fascination with the natural world coupled with his passionate investigation into abstraction, quintessential elements that made him renowned as one of the most important American Modernist painters. We are also pleased to announce the sale of Georgia O'Keeffe's East River with Sun. Executed in 1926, is the first of three treatments of the East River the artist rendered in pastel and it has been in the same family since it was acquired directly from Alfred Stieglitz in 1927.

Leading the selection of 19th Century works is Frederic Church's majestic painting, Mount Newport on Mount Desert Island (estimate: $5-7 million). Painted during important period of his early career circa 1851-53, Mount Newport on Mount Desert Island is a pristine example of Church's luminous representations of man's exploration in the wilderness. Click here to read the complete press release.

Visions of the West: American Paintings from the William I. Koch Collection represents the breadth of Western Art with works spanning the 19th Century to the present day. Highlights include the most important historic artists of the genre including Thomas Moran, Frederic Remington, Henry F. Farny, William Robinson Leigh, and Philip R. Goodwin, among others. The sale also features notable examples by many of the most important contemporary Western artists, including Howard Terpning, Martin Grelle, Tom Lovell and G. Harvey, among others. Representing a wide variety of Western subjects, the sale represents an excellent opportunity for new and established collectors alike. Click here to read the complete press release.

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