

Sotheby's

Press release: Paris

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Alain and Candice Fraiberger Collection

**Historic Contemporary Artworks
loaned to leading museums around the world**



Arman - Atlan - Basquiat - Boltanski - Bublex - Buren - Carter - César - Christo & Jeanne-Claude - Decrauzat - Dubuffet - Echakhch - Etienne-Martin - Gilbert & George - Hains - Hartung - Hiquily - Houseago - Lam - LeWitt - Masson - Mathieu - Noonan - Raynaud - Raysse - Ruby - Van Velde - Venet - Villeglé - Zhijie

Paris, November 2017 – Sotheby's is honoured to be offering the collection of Alain and Candice Fraiberger on 6 December in Paris. This meticulously-chosen group of 35 works consists of works ranging from the post-war period to the contemporary era. Leading international artists are represented, including **Jean-Michel Basquiat, Gilbert & George, Jean Dubuffet, César, Wifredo Lam, Hans Hartung, Georges Mathieu.**

The Alain and Candice Fraiberger collection paints a picture of the people who patiently assembled it over the last forty years: subtle, elegant, and enlightened. With consistency and discernment, the Fraibergers brought together a group of museum-worthy artworks, including masterworks by Jean-Michel Basquiat, Jean Dubuffet or Wifredo Lam. Through their travels around the world in search of historical pieces, they have succeeded in building a unique collection which mirrors their strongest convictions, as well as the remarkable scope of their knowledge and deep understanding of modern and contemporary art.

The majority of the works has been exhibited in the world's leading museums, including the **Guggenheim, Centre Georges Pompidou, Tate Modern, Stedelijk museum, Palazzo Reale, Whitechapel Gallery, Carnegie institute, Grand Palais and Castello di Rivoli.**

The most important work in this magnificent collection is the ***Head and Scapula* painted by Jean-Michel Basquiat in 1983** at the height of his powers, at the age of only 23. This work is one of the most striking he ever produced. Marked by the spontaneity that already characterised his graffiti of the late 1970s, the pictorial composition evinces the intensity and energy that characterised the brief life of one of the great geniuses of contemporary painting (**estimate: €5 to 7 million**).

Basquiat's entire work is summed up in this painting: the thickness of the successive layers, the re-paintings, the red rings, the hieratic quality of the scowl, the black man and all the themes associated with the subject. With the almost classical, clean-lined composition of this half-length, three-quarter face portrait, Basquiat executed a masterpiece with a powerful presence, the like of which had not been seen since Schiele and Matisse.

With ***Les riches fruits de l'erreur*, painted on 12 March 1963, Jean Dubuffet** found what was to become the essential spirit of *L'Hourloupe*. Starting with this picture, his paintings would now define themselves as a kind of cellular agitation, where the



eye perceives elusive images, as though in a huge puzzle suggesting figures that come together and fall apart (estimate: €3.5-5 million).

At the core of this museum-quality collection, the sale includes a remarkable group of sculptures by **César**. With the monumental ***Centaure (Hommage à Picasso)*, 1983**, a masterpiece of statuary estimated at **€300,000-500,000**, César challenged the relationship of volume to surface so effectively that ***Tubes*, 1959 (estimate: €300,000-500,000)**, became similar to painting without being one. He was not the first to use iron: Picasso and Gonzalez had done so before him. But he had a unique way of working, assembling and shaping it, through the use of a new technique, arc welding, which provided a flexibility unknown to his elders.



Other works by the French sculptor in the sale include ***Plaque Berlingot*, 1978**, and ***Brigitte*, 1980**, each estimated at **€50,000-70,000**.



***À Trois centimètres de la Terre (1962)*, masterpiece by Wifredo Lam**, belongs to a series of key works from the early 1960s, when the artist was at the peak of his art (estimate: **€2.5 to 3.5 million**).

Here, the angular forms of the seemingly levitating bodies and the sharp profile of the faces constitute a horizon emphasised by the arrow, while the suspended knife threatens the dancers like a sword of Damocles. This sculptural composition makes use of images and themes from African poetry, whose evocative power was so often celebrated by the artist. His images, taken from voodoo and *santeria* iconography, are assembled like a collage, primarily to make the painting visually coherent.

The singular work of art history's most celebrated duo expresses **Gilbert & George** an exceptional, emancipated and militant commitment. ***The Penis* (estimate: €700,000-**

1 million) combines photography, a medium they have always used, with a black and white drawing that contrasts with the explosive red of the central panels. Here, the drawing is a photographic reproduction of graffiti found in a public lavatory. This particularly crude representation contrasts with the pose adopted by Gilbert & George, impassive witnesses of a scene that could offend an unsuspecting public. This monumental work has a complex significance, reflecting British society in the midst of an identity crisis, protesting against an ancient, archaic and obsolete order.



The collection also includes major works by **Hans Hartung**, *T1956-13*, 1956 (estimate: €500,000-700,000), and **Georges Mathieu**, *Vivent les cornificiens!*, 1951 (estimate: €300,000-500,000).

Auction in Paris: 6 December 2017

Exhibition: 1 to 6 December



** Estimates do not include the buyer's premium; prices include the hammer price and buyer's premium*

Images are available on request.

The catalogue can be viewed online at www.sothebys.com or on the "Sotheby's Catalogue" iPad app