

Sotheby's

Press release Paris

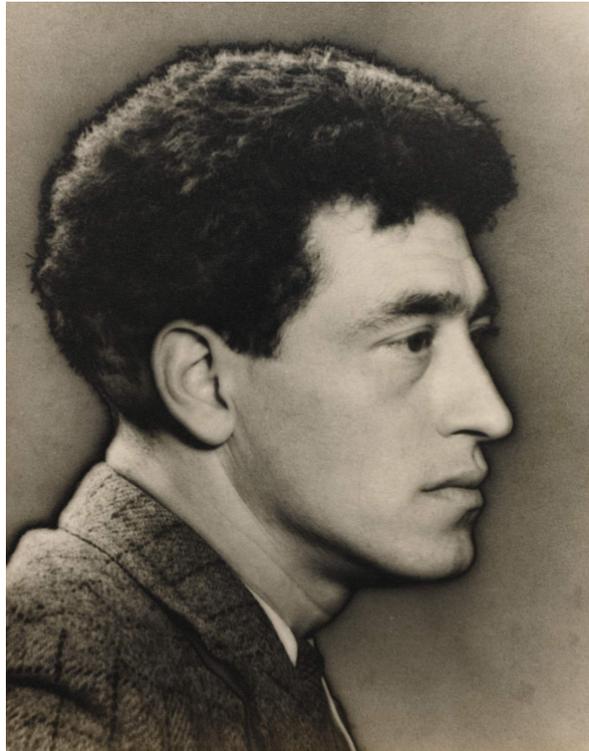
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Modernism

Photographs

from a major private collection



Man Ray, Alberto Giacometti (estimate: €80,000-€120,000)

12 Prints Celebrate Modernist Photography

Man Ray – Paul Strand – André Kertész – Brassai

Paris, 10 October 2018: Sotheby's will be staging two remarkable photography sales in Paris on **9 November**.

The first auction will include 12 lots celebrating modernist photography, all from a major private collection, including two outstanding prints by Paul Strand. The collection also features iconic works, like a fine portrait of Alberto Giacometti by Man Ray and one of André Kertész's greatest masterpieces: a period print of *Cello Study*, which belonged to his personal collection.

***Cello Study*: an icon of André Kertész's Paris period.**



The artist kept this print throughout his life (**estimate: €400,000-€600,000**). He printed three or four copies in Boulevard Montparnasse, all dating from 1926, the year he took the photograph. He considered this icon of modern photography one of the most powerful images from his Paris period.

After moving to France in 1925, he spent a lot of time with key figures of the contemporary art world like Man Ray, Mondrian, Brancusi, and his fellow Hungarian Brassai. That is when he received a commission from the violinist Feri Roth, who wanted to spread the word about his new string quartet. Kertész produced one of his greatest masterpieces with this radical composition. In this work, the focus is on the sensitive, musical part of the instrument. The cello is stripped down to its essentials in an image that is simultaneously minimalist, graphic and poetic.

Two masterpieces by Paul Strand

This stunning print by Paul Strand, ***Fern, Early Morning Dew* (estimate: €200,000-€300,000)**, 1927, may be the only extant platinum print of this photograph. There are, however, silver prints in various institutions, like the Paul Strand Archive/Aperture, the George Eastman House, Rochester and the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

As John Szarkowski, former head of photography at New York's Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), said in his book *Looking at Photographs*, this "miniature landscape" is thus extremely rare. The collection also includes another of Strand's photographs: a vintage silver halide print of ***Boat and Sheds, Gaspé, 1929* (estimate: €60,000-€80,000)**.



He took it during his first trip to Gaspésie, when the construction of a new road had recently opened up the region to visitors. Here the photographer's intention was to express "Man's interaction with his environment, between earth, sea and sky."

Brassaï: photographer of Paris streets



Gyula Halász came to the fore in 1932 under the pseudonym **Brassaï**, establishing himself as the photographer who pinpointed the very essence of the city in his pictures. "I became a photographer to capture the beauty of streets and gardens in the rain and fog, to capture Paris by night." In 1933, he published his first collection, "Paris la nuit", which was a huge success, leading his friend Henry Miller to dub him "the Eye of Paris".

Brassaï took many photographs of the Avenue de l'Observatoire, all now in various museums, but he did not often adopt the point of view seen in *L'Avenue de l'Observatoire de Nuit* (estimate: €30,000-€50,000).

Lastly, we can mention a superb portrait of **Alberto Giacometti** by **Man Ray** (estimate: €80,000-€120,000) from 1934.

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Photographs from a distinguished private collection

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Photographs

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**Estimates do not include the buyer's premium. Prices achieved include the hammer price and the buyer's premium, and are net of any fees paid to the purchaser when the purchaser has provided an irrevocable bid.*

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Photographs



**Monumental masterpiece
by Richard Avedon**

'Dovima With Elephants', 1955

Extremely rare print from the original negative

Registration no. 2001 – 002 of 25 October 2001
Sale conducted by Cyrille Cohen

Paris, 10 October 2018: Sotheby's will be staging two photography sales on 9 November during **Paris Photo**. The first, entitled "Modernism", will showcase a remarkable private collection and the second will be our annual Photography sale. This year, an extraordinary print of **Richard Avedon's** iconic ***Dovima With Elephants*** (Estimate: €600,000-900,000) will dazzle connoisseurs and collectors.

Monumental print of Richard Avedon's 'Dovima With Elephants', 1955



This photograph, which marked a turning point in the history of fashion photography, was ranked by *Time Magazine* as one of the 100 most influential images of all time. No other picture so magnificently illustrates Richard Avedon's genius in highlighting feminine elegance set off to perfection by *haute couture*.

This photograph is one of the only two of that format taken from the original negative – the other is in the Smithsonian's collections in Washington, DC. Avedon gave it to a friend and wrote a touching dedication: "*From my home to yours*".

In 1955, Carmel Snow, editor-in-chief of Harper's Bazaar, commissioned the young Richard Avedon to shoot the Fall *haute couture* collections. This picture shows the American model Dovima in a black evening gown designed by the young Yves Saint-Laurent in his first collection for Christian Dior. Dovima, born Dorothy Virginia Margaret Juba, shot to fame after being spotted in the streets of Manhattan by a collaborator of Vogue magazine. The very next day she was photographed by Irving Penn, and was signed by Ford Model Management before the year was up. Nicknamed "The Dollar a Minute Girl", she was immortalised by the best photographers of the era, including Irving Penn, Horst P. Horst, Erwin Blumenfeld and, of course, Richard Avedon, who considered Dovima the most remarkable and unconventional beauty of her time.

The composition brings together seemingly opposing imagery: Dovima's undulating pose echoes the elephants' trunks, while the dress' fluid cut contrasts with the roughness of their skin. Avedon's virtuosity, inventiveness and precise eye shine through every aspect of the photograph, making this a truly exceptional work.

35 daguerreotypes by Girault de Prangey

Making their first appearance at auction, the sale includes a fine group of 35 daguerreotypes



by **Joseph-Philibert Girault de Prangey** from a private collection. While his name is still relatively unknown by the general public, Giraud de Prangey was truly a pioneer, and his work is now much sought-after by collectors. He travelled from Italy to Turkey between 1842 and 1845 and produced numerous daguerreotypes along the way. He started off in Rome, where he took many photographs, some of which are for sale on 9 November, including this 1842 view of **the Arch of**

Constantine (estimate: €12,000-18,000). His prolific output led the director of the Villa Medici to write to a mutual friend, "Mr Girault de Prangey daguerreotypes all he can here: everything is grist to his mill – monuments, streets, *pifferari* and cardinals alike. He even intends to point his instrument at the Holy Father."

His photographs are now found in the world's leading museums. An exhibition devoted to him, "Monumental Journey, the Daguerreotypes of Girault de Prangey", is opening at the Metropolitan Museum of New York in January 2019. This sale will be an unexpected opportunity for 19th century photography collectors to acquire unseen daguerreotypes of outstanding quality.

Surrealist photographs

A selection of Surrealist works will include a fine first edition of **Hans Bellmer's *Jeux de la Poupée* (estimate: €80,000-120,000)** with a text by Paul Eluard; a ***Vue d'Atelier*, c. 1923, by Constantin Brancusi (estimate: €30,000-50,000)** and a hypnotic ***Autoportrait au chat* by Claude Cahun (estimate: €15,000- 20,000)**.

The latter is a unique piece making its first appearance at auction. The piece dates from 1927 in which the artist portrays herself holding a cat, sitting on a cat-shaped rug, gazing at the camera. This portrait is imbued with a typically Surrealist eeriness due to the use of *chiaroscuro*, which reveals only part of her face, the intriguing presence of the cats and the intensity of her expression.



Her highly personal vision expressed her complex feelings of duality through deliberately cultivated androgyny. She has been recently rediscovered through her self-portraits and has become a central figure in the ongoing discussion on gender, making her an extraordinarily modern artist.

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