

CHRISTIE'S

Contacts: Carine Decroi
Beverly Bueninck

+331 40 76 85 88
+331 40 76 84 08

cdecroi@christies.com
bbueninck@christies.com

A PAINTING BY JOAN MIRÓ FROM ACTOR GÉRARD DEPARDIEU'S COLLECTION AT CHRISTIE'S PARIS



JOAN MIRÓ – *Le lézard aux plumes d'or* – 1969

Estimation: €700.000-1.000.000

Paris – On May 23rd the *Impressionist and Modern Art Department* is delighted to present 97 works of art at auction. The total estimate of the sale ranges between 8 and 12 million euros. Among the highlights of the sale is *Le Lézard aux plumes d'or* by Joan Miró coming from the personal collection of actor Gérard Depardieu which is expected to realise between 700.000 and 1.000.000 euros.



Inspired by the dramatic large scale open field style of painting as pioneered by such artists as Jackson Pollock and Franz Kline, in the 1960s, Miró, after moving into the large studio he had always dreamed of, began also to make work on an ever-increasing scale. *Le lézard aux plumes d'or* is one of several works on this poetic theme that Miró made in the mid-1960s at a time when he was pursuing the joint influences of recent American painting and of Japanese calligraphy on his own uniquely gestural style of painting.

American Painting, Miró admitted, had "showed me a direction I wanted to take but which up to then had remained at the stage of an unfulfilled desire. When I saw these paintings, I said to myself, "you can do it, too: go to it, you see, it is O.K.!" You must remember that I grew up in the school of Paris. That was hard to break away from" (Joan Miró, quoted in «Interview with Margit Rowell», 1970, M. Rowell, *Joan Miró Selected Writings and Interviews*, London, 1987, p. 219). In addition to this, a visit to Japan in 1966 for a retrospective of his work held in Tokyo allowed Miró to meet with Japanese poets, potters and calligraphers whose art he had always admired. In particular, as he recalled of this visit, "I was fascinated by the work of the Japanese calligraphers and it definitely influenced my own working methods. I work more and more in a state of trance, I would say almost always in a trance these days. And I consider my painting more and more gestural" (*ibid*). As Miró's work of the 1960s progressed he became freer and more at ease with his working process. Similarly, as a work such as *Le lézard aux plumes d'or* demonstrates, as a direct result of this practice, Miró's forms grew more open and expansive, his gestural lines more dramatic and flowing while the poetic nature and integrity of his pictorial vocabulary remained essentially the same. In this large-scale and comparatively open-form work the earth-bound figure lizard is boldly set against a dusty landscape while menacing figures lay in her path. Segregated into distinct fields of pure colour, the smooth flowing calligraphic lines of Miró's powerful glyph-like imagery also signify strongly the transient path and process of their own creation.

Le lézard aux plumes d'or was conceived in conjunction with the eponymous poem by the artist, and served as the basis for the series of thirteen color lithographs illustrating the text. This portfolio was published by Murlot in 1971.

Sale: Tuesday 23 May 2012 à 17 pm.

Exhibition: Saturday 19 May from 10am to 6pm, Monday 21 May from 10am to 6pm, Thursday 22 May from 10am to 5pm, Wednesday 23 May from 10am to noon.

Christie's: 9 avenue Matignon, 75008 Paris

####

Images and catalogue available on request

www.christies.com

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in 2011 that totaled £3.6 billion/\$5.7 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. Founded in 1766 by James Christie, Christie's has since conducted the greatest and most celebrated auctions through the centuries providing a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 450 auctions annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from \$200 to over \$100 million. Christie's also has a long and successful history conducting private sales for its clients in all categories, with emphasis on Post-War and Contemporary, Impressionist and Modern, Old Masters and Jewellery. Private sales totaled £502 million / \$808.6m in 2011, an increase of 44% on the previous year.

Christie's has a global presence with 53 offices in 32 countries and 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, and Hong Kong. More recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in growth markets such as Russia, China, India and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Mumbai and Dubai.

**Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and do not reflect costs, financing fees or application of buyer's or seller's credits.*