

# CHRISTIE'S

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## COURBET, MILLET, AND BÉRAUD LEAD CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK SPRING SALE OF 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY EUROPEAN ART

**New York** - On April 28, Christie's will present the spring sale of *19<sup>th</sup> Century European Art* in New York, which will feature works of exceptional quality by Jean-François Millet, Gustave Courbet, Jean Béraud, Louis Marie de Schryver, Joaquín Sorolla y Bastida and others. Comprised of 72 carefully selected lots mostly sourced from private US collections, the sale will appeal to discerning collectors and showcases a full spectrum of styles.

Leading the sale is **Gustave Courbet's** *Les Récits de la Grand-Mère Salvan (Les trois soeurs de Courbet)* (estimate: \$800,000-1,200,000). Courbet's early *oeuvre* is notable for the large number of portraits he painted of his immediate family and close friends. The importance of the present work is that it differs from the Romantic, almost troubadour style of his first portraits and self-portraits. The scene is observed as if through a half-open door, with a strong contrast between the blurred background shadows and the strongly lit, well-defined features of the four women. It is perhaps no coincidence that Courbet was to maintain possession of this painting until almost the end of his life, selling it only in 1874 when in need of funds after his exile to Switzerland.



Among the Barbizon School highlights is **Jean-François Millet's** *Woodcutter in the Forest* (estimate: \$300,000-500,000), painted shortly after Millet's arrival in Barbizon, the small village outside the Forest of Fontainebleau. *Woodcutter in the Forest* is one of Millet's first successful efforts to shape a substantial painting around these characteristic laborers. As an object, *Woodcutter in the Forest* is unusual, for on the back of the wooden panel Millet sketched a life study of a young woman removing linens from a closet. Together, the

forest and household scenes provide a vivid measure of the breadth of Millet's creative interests during these vital years around 1850. Frequently returning to a page of sketches to make another drawing on the verso, *Woodcutter in the Forest* is the only known instance in which Millet used the back of a painted panel to start another composition. This sketch in bright sanguine crayon of a young housewife has an unexpected air of casual intimacy and is a reminder that Millet would later become one of the most observant chroniclers of women's daily labors since the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The sale also features a strong selection of works from the *Belle Époque*. Consigned from an important Midwestern collection is **Jean Béraud's** *Le boulevard Saint-Denis à Paris* (estimate: \$500,000-700,000), which depicts a bustling day in the city. Using the architecture of Paris to set his scene, Béraud concentrates the viewer's gaze down the center of the composition, which is a *tour-de-force* of movement, color and atmosphere.



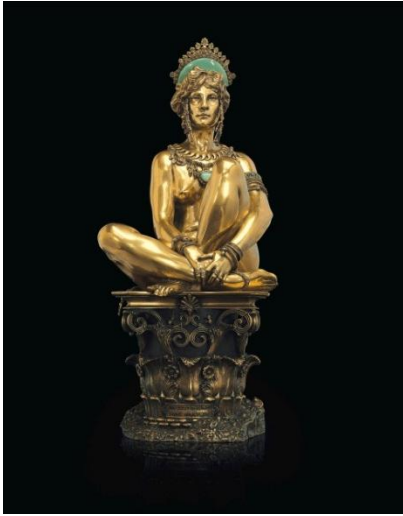
Another *Belle Époque* highlight is **Louis Marie de Schryver's** *The Little Flower Seller on the Champs-Élysées* (estimate: \$200,000-300,000). As a member of the privileged upper class, de Schryver innately understood the spirit of the *Belle Époque* and the leisure activities of the fashionable set in Paris. The artist had a special affinity for the proliferation of flower vendors on the boulevards of Paris and chose them as they central focus of his *oeuvre*.



Influenced by his love for his family, **Joaquín Sorolla y Bastida's** *El beso* (estimate: \$600,000-900,000) is a poignant look at a man's dedication and passion for both his art and his loved ones. *El beso* is a tender portrait of Sorolla's daughter, Elena, kissing a bronze bust of her mother, Clotilde, which they kept in the house and remains in the Sorolla Museum in Madrid. The sculpture was executed by Mariano Benlliure, who was close friend of Sorolla and knew the family well. Elena, barely more than a toddler, has climbed up on a chair in order to give her mother (in the form of a statue) a kiss. Sorolla enhances the lightness of the moment by executing the painting in pale colors and swift, broad brushstrokes. The brushwork demonstrates the development of a more Impressionist style which Sorolla adopted later on in his career. Through the use of this light palette and quick, broad brushstrokes, Sorolla has eliminated any somber overtones that might be read into the painting and has instead captured a moment of pure emotion between the artist, his daughter and his wife.







Among the sculpture highlights in the sale is **Jean-Léon Gérôme's** bronze work *Corinthe* (estimate: \$120,000-180,000). Left unfinished until the time of his death, the work was posthumously completed for the Paris *Salon* of 1904 by his assistant Louis-Emile Décorchement. Displayed in marble and seated atop a column with enamels and jewels the work was declared a 'definitive masterpiece' by critics. *Corinthe* delves deeper in its allegory of the ancient Greek city known historically as a prosperous center of trade with the Near East and Mediterranean civilizations.

The sale also features a superb selection of Orientalist pieces including work from prominent American expatriate artist **Frederick Arthur Bridgman** (estimate: \$150,000-200,000) and the popular Italian artist **Alberto Pasini** (estimate: \$200,000-300,000) as well as several works from British Maritime artist **Montague Dawson** (estimates from \$10,000).

#### ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS



Alberto Pasini (Italian, 1826-1899)  
*Market day, a capriccio of the Old City Shores, Constantinople*  
oil on canvas  
\$200,000-300,000



Frederick Arthur Bridgman (American, 1847-1928)  
*Women at the Fountain*  
oil on canvas  
\$150,000-250,000



Federico del Campo (Peruvian, 1837-1927)  
*The Grand Canal, Venice*  
oil on canvas  
\$220,000-300,000



Montague Dawson F.R.S.A., R.S.M.A. (British, 1895-1973)  
*Engagement between Mediator and three French and two American Ships*  
oil on canvas  
\$70,000-100,000

PRESS CONTACT: Elizabeth Van Bergen | +1 212 636 2680 | [evanbergen@christies.com](mailto:evanbergen@christies.com)

#### About Christie's

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*\*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.*

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*Images available on request*

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