

CHRISTIE'S

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CHRISTIE'S 30TH SWISS ART AUCTION

Zurich – Christie's 30th Swiss Art auction will offer a selection of the best examples – from classic to contemporary - on 22 September at the Kunsthaus Zürich. Comprising 134 works, the auction is expected to realise in the region of CHF 12 million and will be on public view three days ahead of the sale. 22 works from the Dr. Rudolf and Leonore Blum collection will mark the beginning of the auction; all works will be all offered for the first time since their purchase in the early 1950s to 1970s. The couple started their collection with buying contemporary Swiss Art, turning their attention in the 1960s to the international art scene of the 20th century, including British art, Impressionist and Modern, Asian art as well as African tribal art and antiquities. The Blum's never missed an opportunity to continue to add Swiss masterpieces to their collection, such as Fritz Glarner's *Relational Painting no. 61*, painted in 1953 and exhibited at the XXXIV biennale of Venice in 1968 (estimate: CHF 500,000-700,000, *illustrated below*).

"The image is to be understood as a balanced whole in which every element is in relation to every other element."



With this quotation, Fritz Glarner introduces the viewer to his "relational paintings" which are based upon geometric composition. Narrow, upwards striving rectangles are set against a grey background. Glarner, who moved in 1936 to New York was heavily inspired by the city's architecture; like skyscrapers, the forms appear to develop a rhythm of their own. The canvas is divided into verticals and horizontals, at a slight slant of 15 degrees in order to preserve some structural elements. According to Glarner, the title "relational painting" refers not only to the relations between the individual elements, but also to their relation with the viewer. A dialogue is established between the observer and the painting (estimate: CHF 500,000-700,000). Other works from the Blum collection include three paintings by Varlin, such as a *Portrait of the lawyer Blum*, dated 1958 (estimate: CHF50,000-70,000) or Max Bill's *konstruktion* dated from 1937, a sculpture made out of one piece of grey granite

(estimate: CHF80,000-120,000).

THE MOST FAMOUS SWISS ARTIST FAMILY – THE GIACOMETTIS



Augusto Giacometti's *Tuscan Garden*, painted in 1912 is the cover lot of the 30th Swiss Art auction and demonstrates why the artist has been widely recognised as the pioneer of the Swiss abstract art movement (estimate: CHF600,000-800,000, *illustrated left*). Giacometti covered large areas of the canvas by placing greens, reds, blues and violets next to each other, like mosaic stones with the result that, in certain areas, the canvas shines through, and the thickly applied colour gives the painting its special texture. These vibrant daubs of colour fill the entire surface of the painting – so-called all-over-patterning – and create a sense of great lightness and impression of space, which is underlined by the steps in the centre of the painting, inviting the viewer to take a

walk through the garden. **Giovanni Giacometti** is represented by a selection of aquarelles; works by Alberto Giacometti include *lampadaire modèle étoile* (estimate: CHF120,000-180,000) formerly from the estate of his brother Bruno Giacometti, who was a very well respected Swiss architect, and a drawing, entitled *Half portrait with horse* (estimate: CHF120,000-160,000); a lamp by Diego Giacometti *Lampe aux anneaux* has an estimate of CHF100,000 to CHF150,000.

SWISS MODERN MASTERS

Cuno Amiet's *Self-portrait*, dates from around 1930 and is one of the many self-portraits the artist created over the span of his career, starting in 1883, at the age of just 15, when he produced his first self-portrait (estimate: CHF300,000-400,000, *illustrated right*). The viewer finds himself in Cuno Amiet's atelier, looking at Amiet's reflection in a mirror, placed close to the window. The view to the outside is divided into a rectangular format through the sash bars of the window. In the upper left-hand corner, we can identify a house, while the corresponding right half is filled with trees and bushes. The colour palette of the outside area is kept in pastel pinks and violet tones, enriched with yellow accents. Inside the atelier the artist used a richer and darker, mainly green palette. Amiet incorporates anew the three-part composition of the painting – the mirrored reflection, the atelier and the outside view – through his brush strokes by making the outside increasingly more expressive than the inside. In doing so, this mirrored self-portrait in front of the atelier's window shows the multi-layeredness of Cuno Amiet's experiments with colour and form.



It is rare to offer early works by Cuno Amiet, due to a fire which broke out on the 6th of June 1931 in Munich at the Glaspalast, where 51 works by the artist were exhibited (estimate: CHF300,000-400,000, *illustrated right*). *Die Wäsche*, dates from 1904, showing a washing line strung between some trees in a field, with freshly washed white linen. The horizontally ordered linen fills the centre of the painting and divides the work into three segments. The upper third is fringed with autumn trees scattered throughout the field, while a diagonal pathway leads across the grass towards the upper right hand corner of the painting.



The washing that is drying and fluttering in the breeze dominates the middle section. Having completed her task, a woman in a blue robe, who is standing directly behind a thin tree trunk, is leaving. The lower segment is taken up with a grassy field and three tree trunks, two of which create a frame for the painting, while the third is to the left of the painting's central axis. The colours of this painting are highly effective, with Amiet focusing on earthy brown tones, while setting accents with the white of the washing and the blue robe of the washer woman. Cuno Amiet's virtuoso use of colour points to artists like van Gogh and Gauguin, whose works he came to know deeply while staying in Brittany in 1892.



The sale features seven works by **Ferdinand Hodler**, **two of which** have previously hung in the artist's apartment in Geneva: *Figur zu Blick in die Unendlichkeit*, 1914 (estimate: x-x) and *Portrait of Régina Morgeron*, 1911 (estimate: x-x). Régina was painted three times by Hodler in 1911 and this version appears to be the more worked upon and the completest of them all. Rather than choosing the artist's typical strictly symmetrical frontal approach, Hodler chooses to paint her head slightly tilted to one side, her torso at an angle from her right shoulder, and the décolleté fully uncovered. It is an image of feminine grace combined with a coquettish expression that is provocative for the viewer. In this work, Hodler leaves the colours to speak for themselves (estimate: CHF500,000-700,000).

The second work from the artist's apartment is a preliminary study Hodler made for his monumental work, "Blick in die Unendlichkeit", a composition of uniform feminine figures in blue commissioned by the Zurich Kunstgesellschaft for the southern wall of the staircase for the then newly built Kunsthaus in Zurich. Like some of Hodler's other female figures, the combination of an incredible lightness and fragility and an enormous strength, gives this female figure an almost physical presence (estimate: CHF800,000-1,200,000).



At first glance, *Champ de blé soleil couchant*, painted by **Félix Vallotton** in 1910 seems to be a very typical work by the artist of this period (estimate: CHF250,000-350,000). The foreground of the painting is in strong contrast to the background, its entire surface displays vivid colours creating clearly divisible sections of the work. Vallotton's preference for strict image arrangement is also evident in this painting. The slightly curved vertical lines of the wheatfield are broken up by the horizontal lines. While the movement of the painting as a whole is

towards the right, crows in the sky are flying towards the left. Through these subtle counterpoint movements, or interruptions, the viewer's eye is playfully directed towards the constant collisions of lines.

SWISS CONTEMPORARY ART

Several works in this section are from the Blum collection, including a group of works by **Louis Soutter**, who played an essential part in the Swiss Art Brut movement, as well as works by **Le Corbusier**, such as *Nature morte sur un guéridon* from 1928, where the top of the small round table is tilted vertically in the tradition of cubism, while the objects – decanters, glasses, the eggholder with egg, the jug and dice - are viewed from the front and in a two-dimensional way (estimate: CHF7,000-10,000).



Within his circle of friends, **Daniel Spoerri** was the most radical in meeting the challenge of New Realism for an art work to come into existence with as little intervention by the artist as possible. Whatever the artist found on his table, he put his signature to it and declared it to be art. Artistic alienation was achieved by using a simple, but effective, trick: objects were secured directly onto the tabletop, which was then moved from a horizontal into a vertical position and hung on the wall. By making these changes, a transformation of

reality took place, an artistic alienation par excellence. These snare-pictures, also known as "tableaux-pièges", brought the artist his international recognition (estimate: CHF20,000-25,000, *illustrated on page 5*).

Works by other renowned Swiss artists such as Max Bill, Hans Art, Niki de Saint Phalle, Sylvie Fleury, Fischli/Weiss, Dieter Roth, Albert Anker, Giovanni Segantini can be admired three days ahead of the sale, during the free public view which opens on 19 September at the Grosser Vortragssaal Kunsthaus Zürich.

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Public viewing at the Grossen Vortragsaal of the Kunsthaus Zürich

Friday, 19 September	12.00-18.00pm
Saturday, 20 September	10.00-18.00pm
Sunday, 21 September	10.00-18.00om

Auction to take place in the Grossen Vortragssaal of the Kunsthaus Zürich

Monday, 22 September at 18.00pm **About Christie's**

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in the first half of 2014 that totaled £2.69 / \$4.47 billion, making it the highest half year total in Christie's history. 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 around 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 & Contemporary, Impressionist & Modern, Old Masters and Jewellery. Private sales in the first half of 2014 totalled £498.9 million (\$828.2 million).

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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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