

CHRISTIE'S

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CHRISTIE'S TO OFFER 1943 PICASSO MASTERPIECE FORMERLY IN THE GANZ COLLECTION

**ALONGSIDE THE ROCKEFELLER PICASSO, THE MOST
IMPORTANT PAINTING BY THE ARTIST TO APPEAR AT
AUCTION SINCE *LES FEMMES D'ALGER (VERSION 'O')***



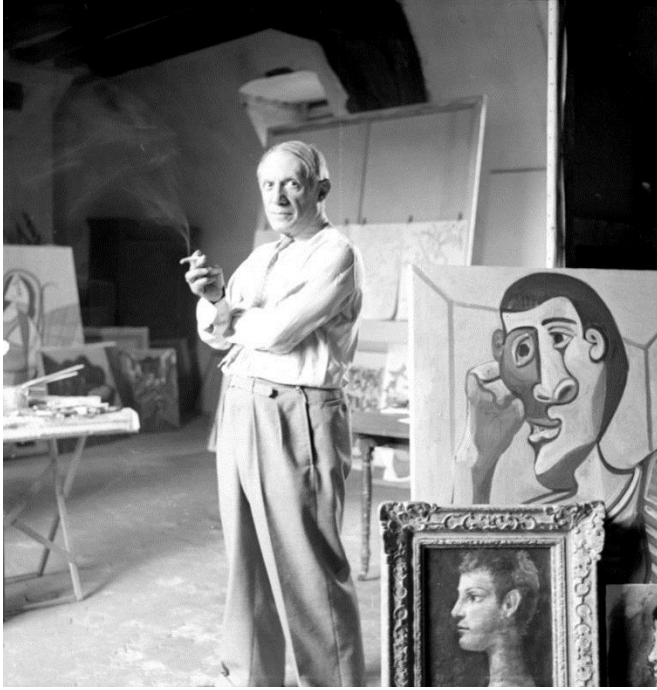
Pablo Picasso, *Le Marin*, 28 October 1943, oil on canvas. Estimate upon Request

On View in Hong Kong from March 31-April 3

New York – This spring, Christie's is privileged to offer Pablo Picasso's *Le Marin*, 28 October 1943 (estimate upon request), in the May 15 Evening Sale of Impressionist and Modern Art. Executed at the height of Occupation, *Le Marin*, widely recognized as Picasso himself, clad in his iconic striped fisherman's jersey, offers one of the most profound and revealing views into the artist's wartime psyche.

Adrien Meyer, Co-Chairman, Impressionist and Modern Art, Christie's New York, remarked: "From the depth and power of expression to his striped Breton shirt, *Le Marin* is an extraordinarily vivid portrait of the artist. We are delighted to debut this remarkable image in Hong Kong, which is such an integral region to the burgeoning market

for the artist. Painted at Picasso and western civilization's lowest ebb in World War II, *Le Marin* is art history and 20th-century history writ large. That *Le Marin* once hung in the legendary collection of Victor and Sally Ganz, makes this picture all the more exceptional."



Picasso in his studio, rue des Grands Augustins, Paris, France 1944' by Lee Miller. Photo: © Lee Miller Archives, England 2018. All rights reserved. leemiller.co.uk. Art: © 2018 Estate of Pablo Picasso / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Le Marin last appeared at auction in 1997, as part of the legendary sale of the Collection of Victor and Sally Ganz. Over their lifetime together, Victor and Sally Ganz assembled what is still one of the most celebrated collections of the 20th Century. "All in all, he was the best collector we had..." remarked Leo Castelli, "For anyone who wants to know this period, they must look at Victor and apply his lessons." Of all the artists that they collected, the Ganzes were most committed to Picasso, acquiring his works exclusively over two decades, including *Les Femmes d'Alger (Version 'O')*, which became the most expensive work of art ever sold at auction when it realized \$179.4 million at Christie's New York in May 2015. *Les Femmes d'Alger (Version 'O')* continues to hold the world record for Picasso and is the second-highest result for any work at auction.

Prominently hung in their Manhattan living room, *Le Marin* was purchased by Victor Ganz for \$11,000 in 1952 from the publisher Harry Abrams. It was Picasso's only male image in the Ganz Collection.

According to his own testimony, Picasso's earlier 1938 portrait of Maya in a sailor suit (gifted after the artist's death to the

Museum of Modern Art, New York) is also a self-portrait. This painting, like the present picture, was originally titled *Le Marin*. Jerome Seckler, who interviewed Picasso, recounted their discussion of that portrait:

I described my interpretation of his painting, *Le Marin*, which I had seen at the Liberation Salon. I said I thought it to be a self-portrait... He listened intently and finally said, "Yes, it's me, but I did not mean it to have any political significance at all."

I asked why he painted himself as a sailor. "Because," he answered, "I always wear a sailor shirt. See?" He opened up his shirt and pulled his underwear--it was white with blue stripes!

Created only weeks after the most dangerous crisis Picasso faced in World War II, *Le Marin* reflects the artist's emotional and psychological distress. In 1944 Picasso said, "I have no doubt that the war is in the paintings I have done." Perhaps no painting which he made during the Occupation more directly conveys this feeling than *Le Marin*.

At the outbreak of the war Picasso elected to stay in France, despite offers to move to Mexico and the United States, expressing at the time that "Most certainly, it is not a time for a creative man to fail, to shrink or to stop working".

Although Picasso was a Spanish citizen, the decision to stay in France required a great deal of courage. As the painter of *Guernica*, he was an internationally recognized anti-fascist. In a speech, Hitler had denounced him by name. German agents regularly visited his studio in search of incriminating evidence, during which they insulted him and destroyed his paintings.

It was previously thought that these threats never rose above the level of harassment. However, a letter found in the Archive Picasso, dated September 16, 1943 – just five weeks before he painted *Le Marin* – demonstrated that the Nazis planned to deport Picasso to a concentration camp.

Picasso was saved only by the intervention of friends, Dubois and Cocteau, and especially by Arno Breker, Hitler's favorite sculptor, who spoke to Hitler on the artist's behalf. Other people in Picasso's circle were not so lucky. Max Jacob, who had been one of Picasso's closest friends, was deported to a concentration camp in the spring of 1944 and died there. That August, the Allies would liberate Paris.

Estimated in the region of \$70 million, this masterpiece of the Second World War is set to realize one of the five highest prices for the artist at auction.

Note to Editors

- Highlighting the May Sale of The Collection of and Peggy Rockefeller is Pablo Picasso's Rose Period masterpiece, *Fillette à la corbeille fleurie* (Young Girl with a Flower Basket) from 1905. [Click here for more information.](#)
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Public Exhibition:

Hong Kong: March 31-April 3

Auction:

Impressionist and Modern Evening Sale
New York
May 15, 2018

About Christie's

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Alongside regular sales online, Christie's has a global presence in 46 countries, with 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, Hong Kong, and Shanghai.

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