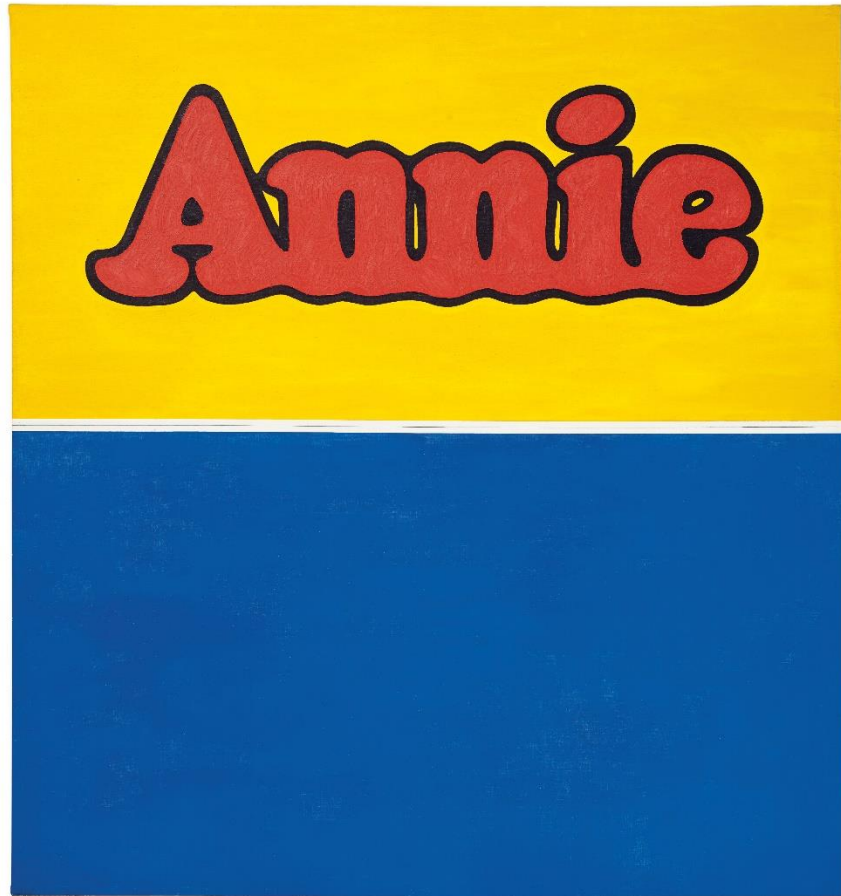


CHRISTIE'S

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ED RUSCHA'S PIVOTAL CANVAS *ANNIE*, 1962 TO HIGHLIGHT ONE: A GLOBAL SALE OF THE 20TH CENTURY



ED RUSCHA, *Annie*, oil and graphite on canvas, Executed in 1962. \$20,000,000-30,000,000

NEW YORK – On July 11, **ONE: A Global Sale of the 20th Century** will be highlighted by Ed Ruscha's groundbreaking early painting, *Annie*, 1962 (estimate: \$20-30 million). Measuring nearly six feet tall, this large-scale canvas is an early example of what would become his signature style, and demonstrates the unique and pioneering approach to art that would make him one of the most celebrated artists of his generation. His seemingly simple aesthetic presents a completely novel way of looking at art and understanding its iconography.

Kat Widing, Specialist, Post-War and Contemporary Art, New York, remarked: "Christie's is thrilled to present Ed Ruscha's *Annie* as a top highlight of our new global 20th century sale. This spectacular painting has remained in the same private collection since 1987. Initially exhibited at the famed Ferus Gallery in Los Angeles, *Annie* is an icon of 20th century art and a hallmark of Ruscha's career."

Inspired by the comic books featuring the popular children's character, *Annie* is the first in a series of paintings that have formed the backbone of the artist's career. It is also a motif that he has returned to again and again throughout his career, working with it in different mediums over a dozen times; from an early pencil drawing in 1961, to one of his famed liquid word paintings (*Annie, Poured from Maple Syrup*, 1966, Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena), and *Annie—2008*, the present painting has become one of Ruscha's most iconic and enduring works.

Unlike the artist's other paintings from this period in which he rendered words in utilitarian, industrial type, the contoured word 'Annie' is the first instance where the artist appropriated typography directly from a pop culture source, the comic strip *Little Orphan Annie*. The letter's red, curvaceous outlines are encased in a black silhouette, providing both depth and structure.

By taking the typography of a popular comic strip as his source, Ruscha located *Annie* firmly within the Pop tradition. But, while on the East Coast Andy Warhol was painting his *Coca-Cola Bottles* and Roy Lichtenstein was rendering his comic book *Kiss* paintings, on the West Coast Ruscha was looking at the words and phrases in a different light, thinking about them beyond the physicality of the painted surface. So, unlike Warhol and Lichtenstein—whose early paintings of cartoon characters were inspired by the cultural ubiquity of those characters—Ruscha's interest in the character of Annie herself is almost non-existent. Completely expunged from the composition, he negates the figure of Annie, instead focusing solely on the formal qualities of the typography used to render her name.

Painted in 1962, *Annie* is one of Ed Ruscha's earliest fully painted canvases. Executed in his favored 71 x 67 inch format, along with *Actual Size*, 1962 (Los Angeles County Museum of Art) and *OOO*, 1962-63 (Museum of Modern Art, New York), *Annie* has become a cornerstone of his career and is reproduced in countless catalogues of the artist's work.

In 1963, Ruscha came to the attention of Irving Blum, the legendary dealer and owner of the Ferus Gallery in Los Angeles. That same year, the gallery honored him with his first solo show, an exhibition in which *Annie* was included. Blum was immediately struck by Ruscha's energy and originality, and speaking in 2002, Blum recalled that "[Ruscha] was doing fascinating work... and has gone on to have a really brilliant career."

Annie marks a pivotal point in the artistic canon of the 20th century as the tradition of painting fought to maintain its relevance in light of the early beginnings of Pop Art. In works such as this, Ed Ruscha successfully connects the painterly tradition with the contemporary culture of advertising and mass-media.

ONE: A Global Sale of the 20th Century: This July, Christie's will launch a revolutionary relay-style auction concept. Entitled **ONE: A Global Sale of the 20th Century**, this sale will present masterpiece-level works of 20th Century Art together in a curated live-online hybrid sale, blurring category boundaries and bringing clients together in an unprecedented way.

Launching in Hong Kong, the sale will then transition to auctioneers in Paris and London, concluding in New York. Each city will host a pre-sale public exhibition staged in line with the appropriate regional health advice at the time, complemented by a ground-breaking virtual exhibition and digital marketing campaign to connect with global audiences and support the auction event. Bidders will be able to participate both online, via Christie's LIVE online bidding channel, and where regional, government advice allows, clients and phone bidders will be welcomed in each saleroom location.

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had auction sales in 2019 that totaled £4.5 billion / \$5.8 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and international expertise. Christie's offers around 350 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.

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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**Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and are reported net of applicable fees.*

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