

CHRISTIE'S

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A NEW YORK STATE OF MIND: AN IMPORTANT PRIVATE COLLECTION TO HIGHLIGHT CHRISTIE'S 20TH CENTURY SALES IN NEW YORK THIS OCTOBER



NEW YORK – This Fall, Christie's will offer **A New York State of Mind: An Important Private Collection** across its 20th Century Evening Sale on October 6 and its Day Sales on October 7. The collection offers a selection of works that underscores the collector's passion for New York artists, highlighting several of its most emblematic movements including Abstract Expressionism with works from Joan Mitchell, Adolph Gottlieb and Helen Frankenthaler as well as New York Neo-Expressionism, which is represented by Jean-Michel Basquiat and David Salle. The sale will also be across additional sales of Impressionist and Modern Art, Prints and Multiples, Decorative Arts and Chinese Works of Art taking place this Fall.

Johanna Flaum, Head of Department, Post-War and Contemporary Art, remarked: *"In this moment, it is particularly exciting to be offering such a dynamic group of works from many of the artists who firmly rooted New York at the center of the global art world. From the lyricism of Joan Mitchell's New York period, to the electricity of Jean-Michel Basquiat's downtown art scene, this collection captures the unrelenting energy and beauty of New York City."*

Leading the collection is Jean-Michel Basquiat's *MP*, 1984 (\$4-6 million) – *pictured page one, right*, which will be sold in the October 6 Evening sale. Alive with the charisma of both artist and sitter *MP* is a rare and beautiful portrait by the artist. Against a spare off-white background adorned with xeroxed sheets of text, symbols and drawings, Basquiat depicts Michael Patterson, a friend from the vibrant nightlife scene of 1980s New York. The two were regulars at Area, the short-lived Tribeca club infamous for its themed parties and extravagant, theatrical sets. Basquiat deejayed and sometimes even painted there; his then-girlfriend Jennifer Goode, whose brothers Eric and Chris co-owned the club, was one of its art directors. "The silver bar is where worlds collide", wrote Jesse Kornbluth in a 1985 profile in New York Magazine. "Andy Warhol

might be brushing up against Malcolm Forbes, Keith Haring and Jean-Michel Basquiat against David Byrne or Giorgio Armani, Scavullo and Joan Rivers against Phoebe Cates or Henry Geldzahler. And if no one's mixing, Stephen Saban, the Boswell of the night, will push them together, later to remind them what happened in his column in *Details*. Patterson recalls that he didn't take Basquiat seriously when he first asked him to sit for a portrait. He saw Basquiat again at Area a fortnight later, and the artist asked why he hadn't showed up. Patterson travelled from his Long Island home to Basquiat's studio on Great Jones Street for his first sitting, and entered the pantheon of art history.

MP stands as a vivid record of a creative exchange between the two men, and of the electric cultural moment in which they met. In the present work, Patterson is immortalized as a regal presence. Rare among Basquiat's works in depicting a subject from life, *MP* is also remarkable for its charge of personality. He captures Patterson's face with deft economy, staring coolly out of the canvas with large, sensitive eyes. It is clear that Patterson held particular fascination for Basquiat. Later that year, he would sit for a second painting – also titled *MP* – making him likely the only man painted from life more than once by Basquiat.

Also highlighting the October 6 Evening Sale is Joan Mitchell's *Untitled*, circa 1958-1959 (\$3.5-5.5 million) – *pictured page one, left*. Dating from an important moment in Joan Mitchell's early practice, the present work is a sumptuous vision that demonstrates the flourishing of her painterly language during the mid-1950s. Painted in 1958-1959, before Mitchell's permanent move to France, the work stems from a thrilling creative period during which she took her place at the forefront of the New York School. Moving back and forth between Paris and America, she drew upon the combined influences of Post-Impressionism, Fauvism and Abstract Expressionism, creating a unique language grounded in memories of the natural world. Contemporaneous with early masterpieces such as *Ladybug* (Museum of Modern Art, New York) and *George Went Swimming at Barnes Hole, but It Got Too Cold* (Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo)—both created that year—the present work captures the emotive lyricism that distinguished Mitchell from her peers.

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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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**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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Images available on request

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