



Bonhams

MAGAZINE | AUTUMN 2015 ISSUE 44

Africa Now

Carving out a place
in contemporary art

Keith Richards' Bentley

The lost weekend

Darwin and the divine

A. N. Wilson on
God and the naturalist

The Attenborough Sale

Dickie's final bow

and

Matthew Girling

Bonhams Global CEO

The private bank for historic motor racing



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The British Museum

New
free
gallery



A Rothschild Renaissance Treasures from the Waddesdon Bequest

The Waddesdon Bequest is a superb collection of nearly 300 important and beautiful medieval and Renaissance pieces, left to the Museum by Baron Ferdinand Rothschild. It was originally displayed at Waddesdon Manor, the Baron's home in Buckinghamshire, after which the Bequest is named. Visit the stunning new gallery now and discover more about the Bequest's amazing story through a series of events.

Curator's introduction to the Waddesdon Bequest

Fri 18 Sep, 13.30

Dora Thornton, Curator of the Waddesdon Bequest, gives a 45-minute illustrated introduction to the new gallery.

Free, booking essential

The Waddesdon Bequest and Waddesdon Manor: a legacy of collecting

Fri 25 Sep, 18.30

This panel discussion will trace the history of Waddesdon Manor and the Waddesdon Bequest. Chaired by Dora Thornton, British Museum, speakers include Pippa Shirley from Waddesdon Manor, Michael Hall, author of *Waddesdon Manor: The Biography of a Rothschild House*, and leading authority on metalwork, silver and jewellery Charles Truman.

£5, Members/concessions £3

Waddesdon Manor: a Rothschild creation

Fri 23 Oct, 13.30

Pippa Shirley, Head of Collections and Gardens at Waddesdon Manor, offers a fascinating account of the Manor with a focus upon its founders the Rothschild family, the formation of their magnificent collections and legacy.

Free, booking essential

Cabinets of curiosity in English and Irish country houses

Fri 23 Oct, 18.30

Tim Knox, Director of the Fitzwilliam Museum, introduces the extraordinary world of collectors of curious objects and how this fashion developed throughout the 17th to 20th centuries in England and Ireland.

£5, Members/concessions £3

Information and booking:
britishmuseum.org

Hippocamp pendant. Enamelled gold jewel set with emeralds and pearls. Probably French, early 19th century. WB.156.



THE ROTHSCHILD FOUNDATION

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© courtesy SCAI THE BATHHOUSE

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El Anatsui (Ghanaian, born 1944)

Al Haji, 1990

Africa Now Sale on 15 October

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MOTORING EDITION

It's back:

1972 Maserati Boomerang

The Chantilly Sale, France, 5 September

A photograph of Ai Weiwei standing in his studio. He is a man with a long white beard, wearing a dark jacket and trousers. He is standing in front of a brick wall. To his right is a large, abstract sculpture made of dark, crumpled material. In the background, there are wooden frames and a workbench with various tools and materials.

Book now

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Ai Weiwei

Until 13 December

royalacademy.org.uk

#AiWeiwei

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Ai Weiwei in his studio in Beijing, taken in April 2015. Photo © Harry Pearce/Pentagram, 2015

Editor's letter



Philip Hollis

It has just been announced that Matthew Girling is the new Global CEO of Bonhams. This prompted a rejig of our latest issue so that we could interview Matthew, the only CEO of a major auction house to take sales as an auctioneer. On page 14, amongst other things, he talks about how exciting it is when specialists guide someone new to a particular collecting area and turn the buyer into a connoisseur.

It led me to think about the notion of inspiring figures and how an individual's 'lightbulb moment' can transform an idea, a theory, a piece of art. Let's look no further than Charles Darwin. It's now acknowledged that the naturalist drew on the theories of others in his field, yet it was his popularisation of the now famous phrase 'survival of the fittest' that catapulted him into the pantheon of great thinkers. And while we are on the subject of pantheons, how did religion – specifically, Christianity – sit with his discoveries? A fascinating letter outlining Darwin's views on God is on offer in New York's History of Science Sale. On page 22, the celebrated writer A.N. Wilson studies its importance.

Darwin had most of his major ideas while on a five-year voyage on HMS *Beagle*, serving as the ship's naturalist. Paul Klee was similarly

struck while on a visit to Tunisia in 1914. After experiencing a completely different type of light from that of Northern Europe, his views on colour were radically and irreversibly changed; a revelation that affected all his subsequent paintings. Martin Gayford examines the impact of this and discusses a work in New York's Impressionist Art sale in November, on page 50.

Another artist, Cai Guo-Qiang, creates 'explosion events', using gunpowder as if graphite to scorch the surface of his 'drawings'. This technique combines the ancient Chinese arts of both firework-making and calligraphy – and once again, it is this inspiring fusion of ideas that produces such striking work, an example of which is offered in Hong Kong's Contemporary Art Sale in October.

The film director Richard Attenborough took ideas and transformed these into art. An array of his film memorabilia – to be sold, with his collection of modern art at Bonhams Knightsbridge – gives a glimpse behind the scenes of the work of one of the greats. Finally, the word inspiration, as you know, originates in the notion of breathing in. We hope that there are works in the magazine that provoke similar gasps of excitement. Enjoy the issue.

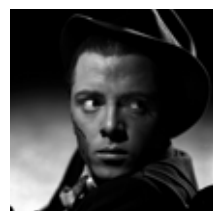
Lucinda Bredin

Contributors



A.N. Wilson

Like Charles Darwin, the biographer, novelist, essayist and columnist Andrew Wilson grappled with his Christian faith. He spent a year training for the priesthood before deciding to concentrate on his writing. His well-known books include *God's Funeral: The Decline of Faith in Western Civilization*. On page 22 he interprets Darwin's highly significant letter.



Barry Norman

The distinguished critic and broadcaster on film was a lifelong friend and admirer of Richard Attenborough, one of cinema's most distinguished actors and directors. Who better, then, to introduce the sale of his paintings and memorabilia? Turn to page 36 for a glimpse of some glorious aspects of his filmmaking, including stills, scripts and props.



Louisa Buck

A leading commentator on contemporary art and a former Turner Prize judge, Louisa is a correspondent for *The Art Newspaper* and columnist for *The Telegraph*. On page 28, the co-author of *Commissioning Contemporary Art* asks the new director of the National Portrait Gallery in London to sketch out his plans.



Raymond Blanc

The chef and restaurateur has done much to promote and perfect the pleasures of his native cuisine for British food lovers. He chooses the French-speaking world, though, for the setting of his greatest gastronomic experience – the grand dining room of Alain Ducasse's Le Louis XV restaurant at the Hotel de Paris in Monte-Carlo. See page 72.



Farah Nayeri

A culture writer and contributor to *The Economist*, *The International New York Times* and *The Independent*, Farah began her career in Paris with *Time Magazine* and *The Wall Street Journal* Europe before joining *Bloomberg News*. On page 40, she examines how the art world discovered African art and profiles three artists in Bonhams Africa Now Sale.



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Fine Jewellery

London

Thursday 24 September

12pm

An art deco multi-gem, diamond and enamel 'Tutti Frutti' bracelet, by Cartier, 1929

Estimate: £350,000 - 550,000

(\$550,000 - 900,000)

Enquiries: Sabrina O'Cock +44 (0) 20 7468 8277

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bonhams.com/jewellery





News

In and out of Bonhams' salerooms

*

Prince of Denmark

Danish car enthusiast, Henrik Frederiksen, is offering his collection of 48 rare motor cars for sale with Bonhams in a single-owner sale, *The Frederiksen Auction*, on 26 September. The sale takes place at Frederiksen's residence at Lyngsbækgaard, a 16th-century manor house in a national park, built for the Danish royal family. The cars have been meticulously looked after on the grounds for years. "Cars are a kind of art," declared Frederiksen. "I think they're beautiful." The sale features predominantly pre-war motor cars from marques including Rolls-Royce, Bentley and Maybach. One car on offer, the Maybach Zeppelin, is an exemplary model of German pre-war craftsmanship, presented as a gift from the Reichsmacht to the Maharajah of Patiala.

Enquiries: Jakob Greisen +1 (415) 503 3284; jakob.greisen@bonhams.com



The 1933 Maybach DS-8 Zeppelin Cabriolet

★

On the field of valour

Waterloo Uncovered is an exciting new charity that combines ground-breaking archaeology with veteran care and recovery. On 21 September, Bonhams is hosting a panel discussion, chaired by Jeremy Paxman, below right, and featuring historians, army veterans and archaeologists, to explore the history and interpretations of the battle and introduce the work of the charity. Tickets are available for a suggested donation of £50. All proceeds from the evening will go towards *Waterloo Uncovered's* future work, which provides a unique opportunity for veterans to participate in an important dig, as well as supporting their recovery.

For more information, please contact info@waterloouncovered.com



Scottish Art

Edinburgh

Wednesday 16 September

2pm

Stanley Cursiter (1887-1976)

Summer Afternoon (detail)

signed and dated 'Stanley Cursiter 1923'

oil on canvas

51 x 61.5cm (20 x 24 1/4in)

Estimate: £30,000 - 50,000

(\$50,000 - 70,000)

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bonhams.com/scottishart



News

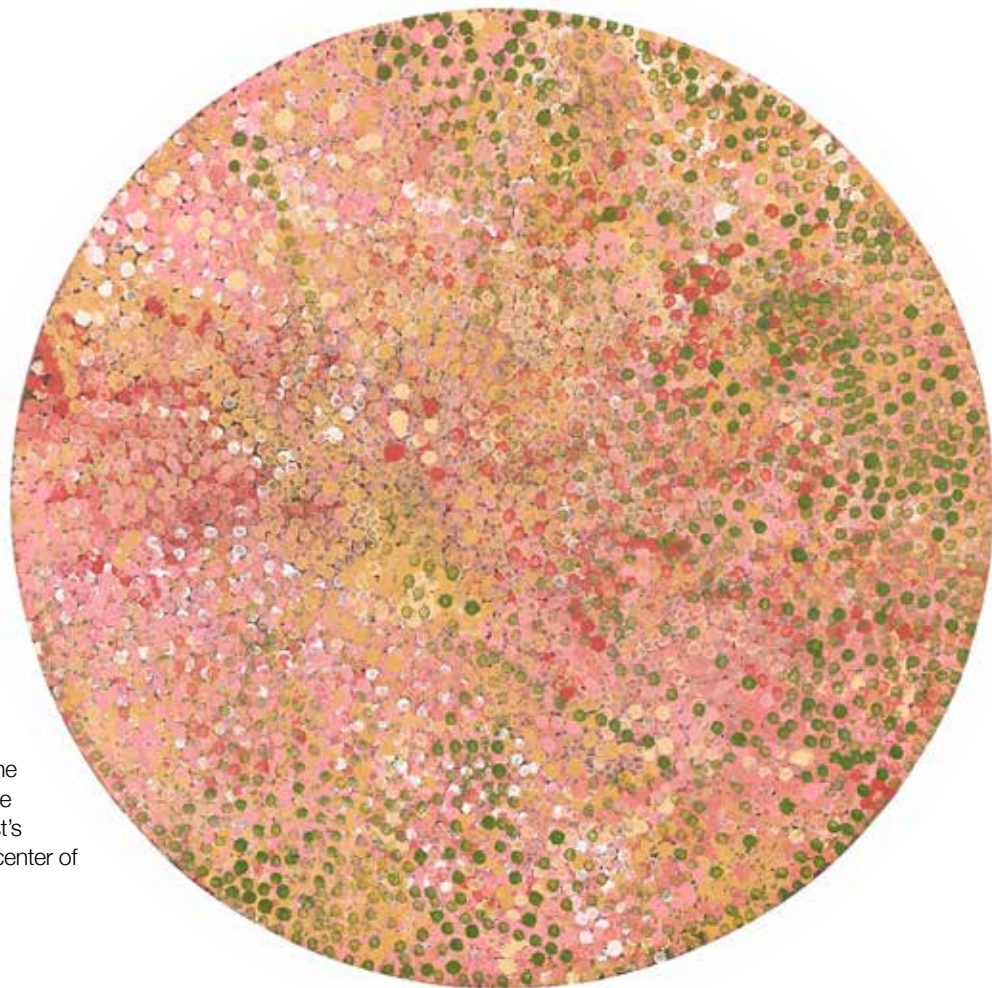


Vroom with a view

Thomas Vroom first encountered Australian Indigenous art in New York in 1991, igniting a lifelong passion. The hundreds of works he collected over the next two decades went on to form one of Europe's largest, most valuable and significant collections, in the Aboriginal Art Museum in Utrecht. Now repatriated, more than 300 of these works feature in Bonhams single-owner sale of *The Thomas Vroom Collection* in Sydney on 6 September.

When Vroom first saw the work of Emily Kngwarreye (1910-1996) – Australia's most celebrated Indigenous artist – in the 1990s, he famously drove 250km to the artist's community, arriving unannounced, desperate to meet her. Among the auction's 30 works by Emily Kngwarreye is a rare roundel, *My Alalgura*, with an estimate of AU\$10,000 - 15,000. The first circular canvas by the internationally renowned artist ever to have appeared at auction, its tondo form complements the artist's signature use of overlapping dots of colour. She developed this style by building upon the Aboriginal technique of precise adjacent marks which emerged in the 1970s. The title refers to the artist's traditional country, located in Utopia, north-east of Alice Springs in the center of Australia.

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Top: Magnus Renfrew and Kevin Chau
 Below: Caroline Wilson, Sian Westerman,
 Mabel Au-Yeung



Hong Kong Dinner

To celebrate the first anniversary of Bonhams' state-of-the-art saleroom in Pacific Place, Bonhams Hong Kong and Cazenove Capital Management held a black tie dinner, the highlights of which were a talk on the Hong Kong art market by Asian art adviser, Catherine Maudsley, as well as a concert by young musicians from the Hong Kong Dulcimer Orchestra. Caroline Wilson, British Consul General to Hong Kong and Macao, was clearly inspired, surprising guests with her own impromptu performance on the *yangqin*, the Chinese hammered dulcimer. Her Excellency officially opened the saleroom in May 2014.



Hope Spinel's Eternal

Spinel stones have been mined in Tajikistan's Kuh-i-Lal ('red mountain') mines since the seventh century – Marco Polo described how the "fine and valuable gems" were dug only for the king, who owned the entire supply. This example, to be sold in the *Fine Jewellery* sale on 24 September, is one such gem, estimate £150,000 - 200,000.

The jewel, once owned by Louis XIV, was bought by Henry Philip Hope, famous for giving his name to the Hope Diamond in the Smithsonian Museum in Washington, D.C. Hope kept the two jewels together, in the 16th drawer of his velvet-lined jewel cabinet.

After profligate heirs frittered away the Hope fortune, the collection was sold at auction, and the jewel next emerged in the ownership of Lady Mount Stephen, née Georgiana Tufnell (1864-1933). Gian, as she was known, was the second wife of a Canadian millionaire peer. A former lady-in-waiting to Queen Mary's mother, she once lost a £2,000 necklace on the way to Windsor Castle. She also gave Queen Mary a necklace which Princess Margaret wore on her wedding day. Fitting company for a spinel from the royal mines.

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emily.barber@bonhams.com





TCM Presents ... Treasures from the Dream Factory

New York

Monday 23 November

1pm

A Judy Garland-worn 'Dorothy' dress
from *The Wizard of Oz*

Estimate: \$800,000 - 1,200,000
(£500,000 - 800,000)

Enquiries: Catherine Williamson
+1 (323) 436 5467
entertainment.us@bonhams.com
bonhams.com/entertainment

News



Glass from the past

Bohemia's spa towns became social hotspots in the early 19th century, as Europe's aristocrats descended each 'season' for vigorous hunting, followed by a healing spa session (a messy mud bath at Franzensbad was supposed to be excellent for gout). The region's glassmakers, heirs to an age-old industry, responded enthusiastically, as demonstrated in September's Part II of Bonhams *Masterpieces of Bohemian Glass* sale, the contents of an outstanding private collection. Hunt winners were awarded glass trophies featuring traditional hunting scenes, engraved using Tiefschnitt, the carving away of glass to create intaglio reliefs. Prominent glass artist August Böhm died in penury, but his work is now highly prized.

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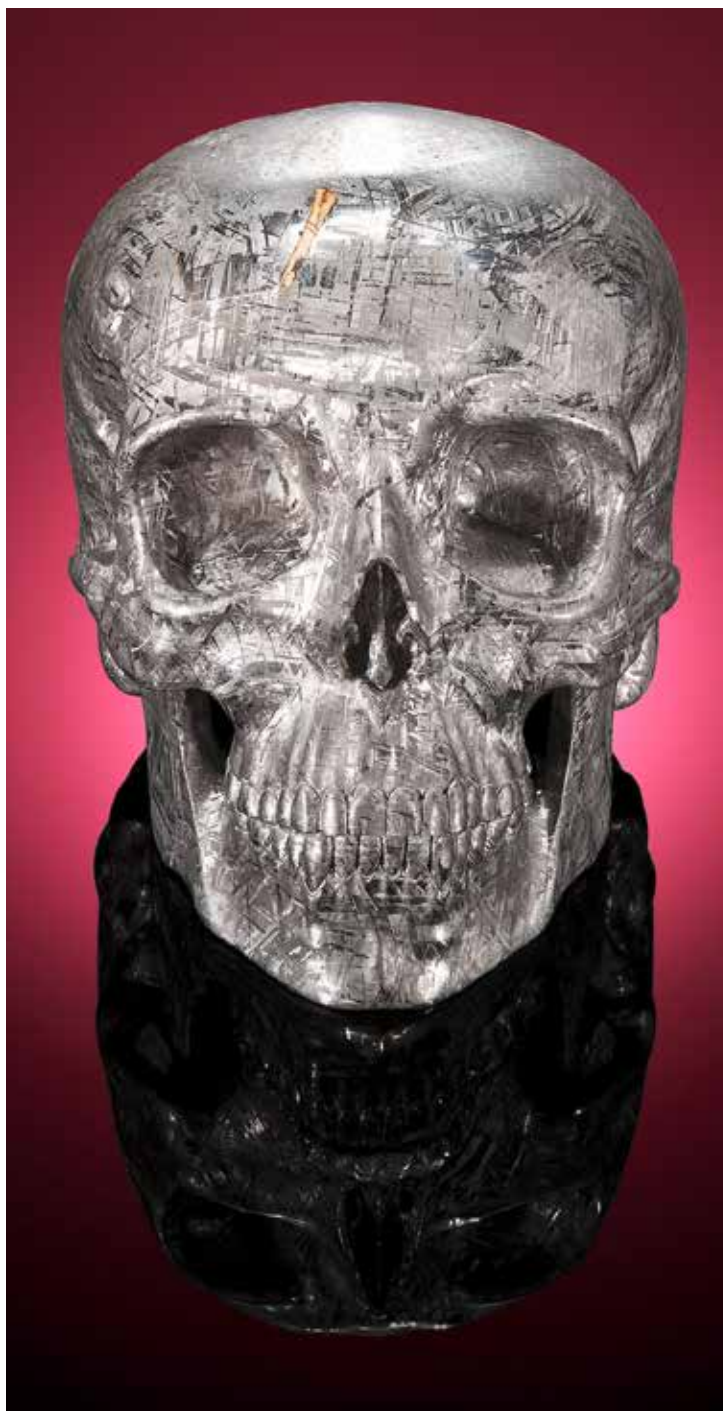


Out of this world

Skulls have served as 'memento mori' since medieval times, famously in sumptuous 'Vanitas' scenes, the name at once a shorthand for the painting's didactic function – "all is vanity!" – and a commentary on the vanity of the memento itself. The symbol has been executed in ivory, rock crystal and diamond, but for his skull, artist Lee Downey looked to more exotic materials, sourcing a block of Gibeon, a rare meteorite rock found only in the asteroid belt zone in Namibia. The sculpture, titled *Yorick*, is offered in the sale of *Lapidary Works of Art, Specimen Gemstones and Minerals* at Bonhams Los Angeles on 24 November.

Downey is based in Bali, where he has been learning his trade from master carvers for decades. He has made skulls from jet, woolly mammoth ivory, and bowling balls, but the skull, which is the largest-ever Gibeon sculpture, was his most ambitious choice to date. It had to be acid-etched to reveal the 'Widmanstätten pattern', Gibeon's unique geometric markings, not found in any material that comes from earth. A symbol of mortality and human frailty, expressed in four-billion-year-old extraterrestrial iron. Fittingly, Downey finds that "spending time with it is oddly humbling". Estimate available on request.

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What happened next...



Horse sense

In June's Modern and Contemporary Sale of Indian Art in London, M. F. Husain's *Horse* made £47,500.



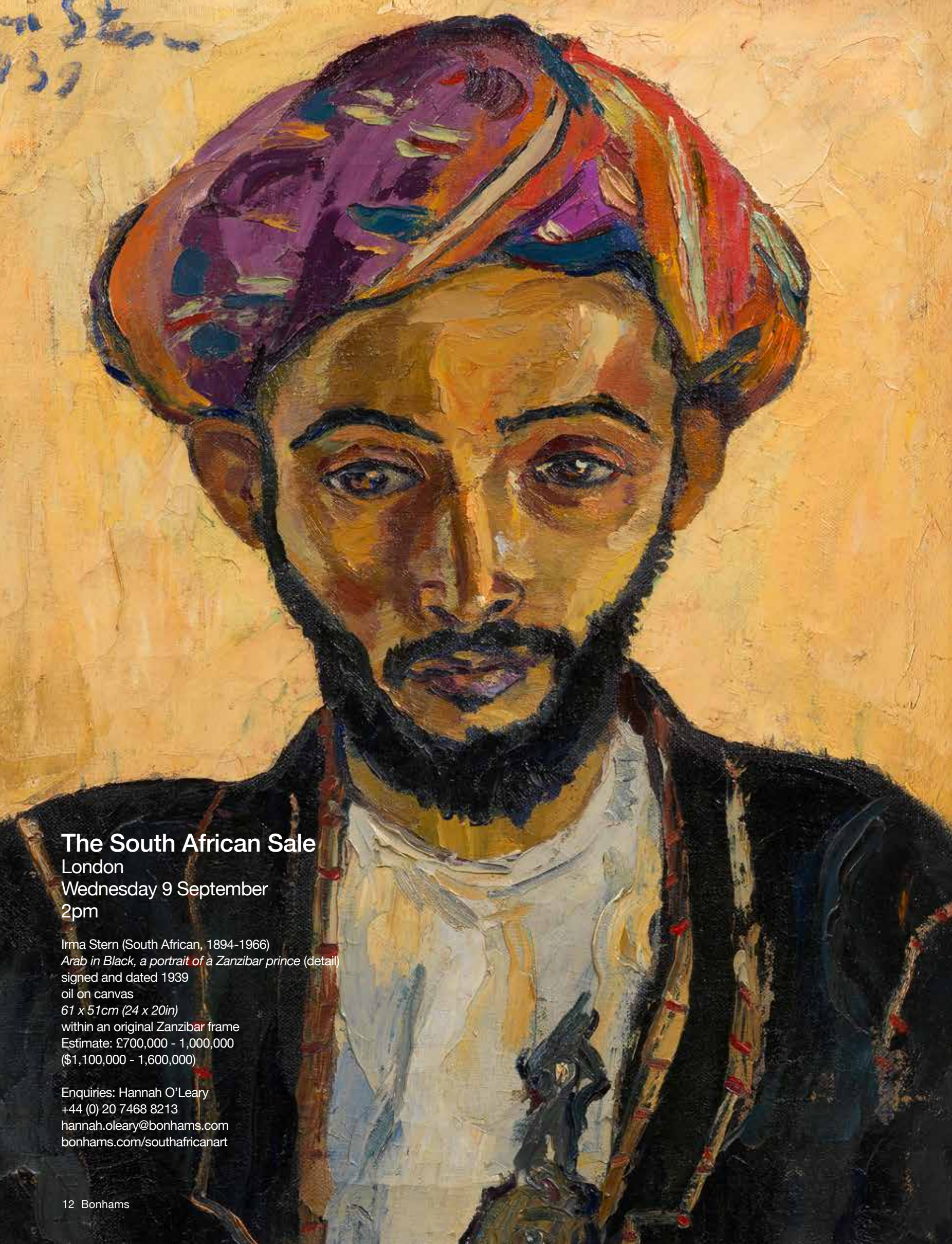
Mirror, mirror on the wall...

One of the highlights of July's highly successful London sale of Post-War & Contemporary Art was a work by Anish Kapoor, *Untitled*, which fetched £626,500.



Chinese album

An album of landscapes by Wang Hui sold for HK\$35,960,000 (£3m) in Hong Kong in May.



The South African Sale

London

Wednesday 9 September

2pm

Irma Stern (South African, 1894-1966)

Arab in Black, a portrait of a Zanzibar prince (detail)

signed and dated 1939

oil on canvas

61 x 51cm (24 x 20in)

within an original Zanzibar frame

Estimate: £700,000 - 1,000,000

(\$1,100,000 - 1,600,000)

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News

*

'Evans above

"Oh you pretty Chitty Bang Bang, Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, we love you..." sing the lyrics to one of the best-loved children's movies of all time, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*. Unusually, the film's star was a flying motor car. In September, a spectacular replica Chitty is included in Bonhams *Goodwood Revival* sale as one of 12 cars owned by *Top Gear* presenter Chris Evans, who also has six Ferraris in the auction.

Complete with polished aluminium bonnet, leather seats, wooden body, and broad red and yellow wings, the car's designers faithfully kept to the original model. After Evans purchased the car, he made it road legal, so it can at least fly along the highway.

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*

Hen do

In April, Bonhams' *A Century of Iraqi Art*, the first-ever sale dedicated to modern Iraqi art, shone a spotlight on the masters of the Baghdad Modern Group. The sale was a considerable success for head of Modern and Contemporary Middle Eastern Art, Nima Sagharchi. He hopes that "bringing together some of the most important works from this period will lead to the emergence of a new perspective on the contemporary cultural history in Iraq".

The top lot in April's sale was Shakir Al-Said's *Cubist Cockerel* which sold for £194,000. This October in Part II of the sale, Jewad Selim's *The Hen Seller* (estimated at £300,000 - 500,000) takes on the fowl motif. The hen, a subject of ancient Arab artefacts and a traditional symbol of rural plenty, was a way in which the Group could "solve the [artistic] identity problem in our contemporary awakening by following the footsteps of the 13th century [Iraqi] painters". Painted in 1951 at the height of his folk modernist style, the lighthearted and boisterous picture revels in the rich aesthetic of the Baghdad street.

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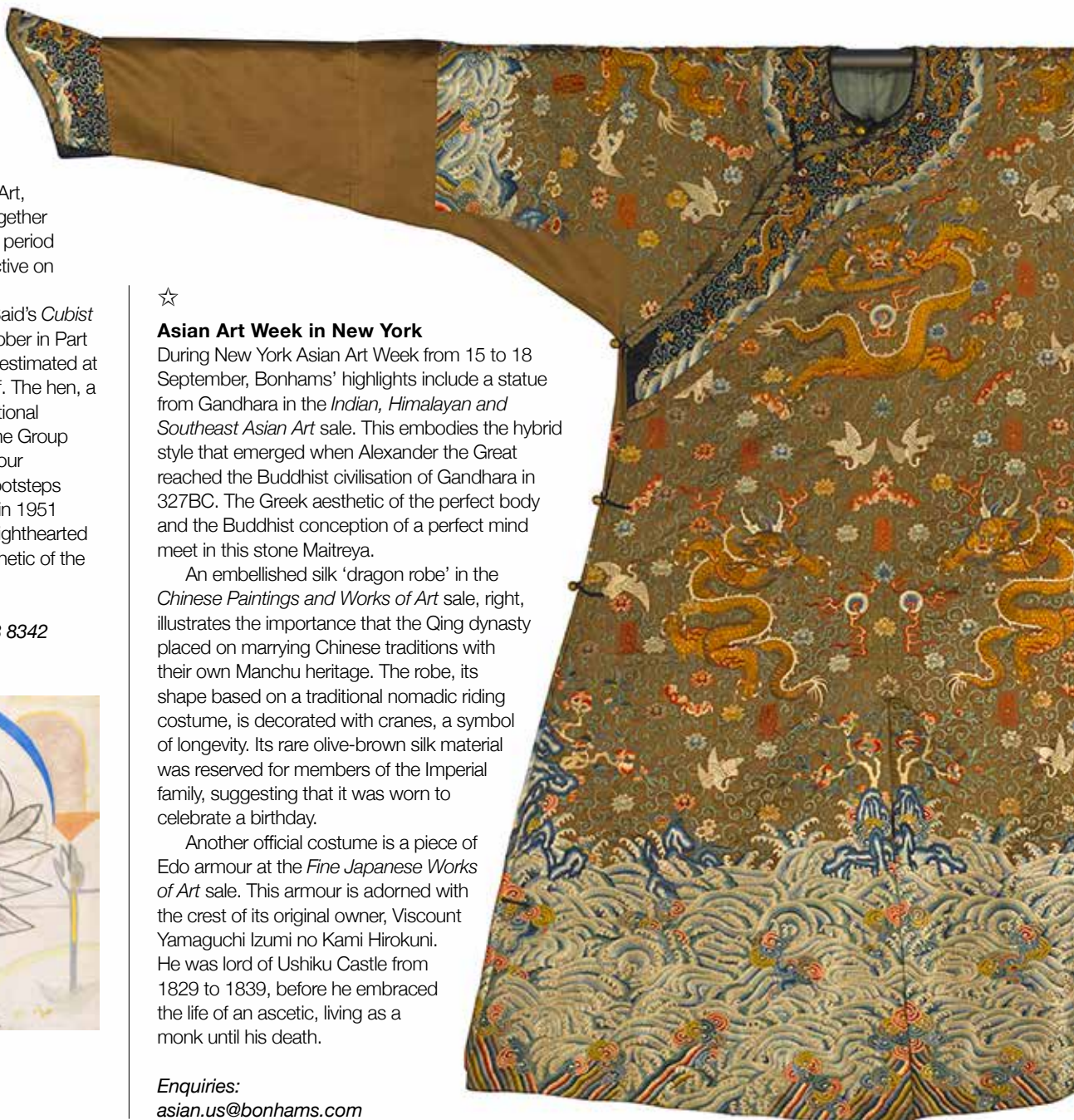
Asian Art Week in New York

During New York Asian Art Week from 15 to 18 September, Bonhams' highlights include a statue from Gandhara in the *Indian, Himalayan and Southeast Asian Art* sale. This embodies the hybrid style that emerged when Alexander the Great reached the Buddhist civilisation of Gandhara in 327BC. The Greek aesthetic of the perfect body and the Buddhist conception of a perfect mind meet in this stone Maitreya.

An embellished silk 'dragon robe' in the *Chinese Paintings and Works of Art* sale, right, illustrates the importance that the Qing dynasty placed on marrying Chinese traditions with their own Manchu heritage. The robe, its shape based on a traditional nomadic riding costume, is decorated with cranes, a symbol of longevity. Its rare olive-brown silk material was reserved for members of the Imperial family, suggesting that it was worn to celebrate a birthday.

Another official costume is a piece of Edo armour at the *Fine Japanese Works of Art* sale. This armour is adorned with the crest of its original owner, Viscount Yamaguchi Izumi no Kami Hirokuni. He was lord of Ushiku Castle from 1829 to 1839, before he embraced the life of an ascetic, living as a monk until his death.

Enquiries:
asian.us@bonhams.com



Ringmaster

Matthew Girling joined Bonhams in 1988 to work in the jewellery department. Now is the newly appointed Global CEO. He talks to **Lucinda Bredin**

Photograph by
Martin Maybank

Matthew Girling:
“Bonhams has expertise
second to none when it comes to
works at the very top end”

It's been an eventful past two years for Bonhams. Among the many landmark moments there was the unveiling of the new headquarters in New Bond Street, the opening of the Hong Kong saleroom and the sales of the £17.5m Fragonard portrait of duc D'Harcourt and of the most valuable car ever at auction, a Ferrari 250 GTO for a world-beating \$38m at the Quail Lodge Sale in the US. But for Matthew Girling, who was appointed Global CEO in August, this is history. It's part of Bonhams and its 200-year heritage, but this is a business in which one has to look constantly forwards.

Having ruled half the Bonhams universe – in his case, Europe and Asia – Girling is now extending his vision worldwide. As he says, “During the past decade, we have developed into a company that can operate at the highest level. Bonhams has expertise second to none when it

“Oh yes, I won't shy away from taking any sale, however modest”

comes to valuable works at the very top end, be it paintings, jewels, cars, watches or Chinese vases. We

have proved time and again that we have the knowledge, contacts – and hunger – to compete on the world stage.”

Girling is based in New Bond Street. His office is a pristine white cube with a window set into the ceiling that frames a square of the sky. “It's perfect for being in tune with the weather,” he says. On the walls, there are two paintings – a Braque and a Paul Klee – to be offered in this season's sales. “I like to get used to them, to live with them to see different aspects in different light. I've become



so attached to some works that, come sale-time, it's been very hard to let them go.” Today he is wearing the blue suit in which he had his greatest saleroom success: the sale of a ‘fancy deep blue’ diamond that made £6.2m in 2013. Girling, who first joined Bonhams as a jewellery specialist in 1988, was the auctioneer, and, after what is known in the business as ‘frenzied bidding’, he knocked the gem down to Laurence Graff, the self-styled King of Diamonds. I ask if he will continue to take auctions now he has his new role. “Oh yes, I won't shy away from taking any sale however modest, because I think you get a sense of the market standing up there in a way that you don't in an office.”

It makes him the only CEO of a major auction house who takes auctions on a regular basis, and this is an aspect of Bonhams which is in the company's DNA: it is an auction house run by auctioneers. Girling thinks that is just one of the many features that separates Bonhams from the other houses. “What we are good at is bringing art to auction and selling it. We are not a finance house, a gallery, or a luxury goods emporium ... our specialists use their



Left: Fragonard's portrait *François-Henri, duc d'Harcourt*, sold at Bonhams for a world-record £17 million

Above: An exceptional blue diamond sold for £6.2 million in 2013 – Girling was the auctioneer; a Ferrari 250 GTO sold in the US for almost £23 million

Right: Matthew Girling



knowledge gleaned from years and years of working in the field to evaluate and devise a strategy for each and every piece. We aim to treat every lot as if it is the star on the cover of the catalogue."

Girling is justly proud of this bespoke approach: "We do give a very personal touch to what we do and we put our clients first. We always say, 'We listen to what you want, advise you accordingly and we will come up with innovative ways of bringing your item to market, whether it is selling it in one of our salerooms on a different continent, using our global network of contacts or creating a story about it for the nationals'. But all the time we'll listen to what people would like to do with their property. Take the family of Lauren Bacall. The reason they came to Bonhams was that they knew her legacy would be honoured and dealt with by our specialists in a respectful manner."

But Bonhams isn't afraid of taking a punt either. During Girling's reign, new stand-alone sales in areas previously unexplored by other houses such as Africa Now, Century of Iraqi Art and the South African Art sale show how

specialists constantly explore new markets. "I see Bonhams developing niches that have perhaps been overlooked – as well as guiding and advising buyers. Our relationships with our clients are for the long-term. It's incredibly exciting to guide someone new to a particular field and turn them into a connoisseur."

With his evident passion for jewellery, Girling is the epitome of a Bonhams connoisseur-cum-specialist. Born in London, his first job was working in a jewellery shop. "I have always felt a connection with jewellery. My ne'er-do-well grandfather mined sapphires in Australia, only to gamble away the fortune he made. His one legacy was a passion for stones, and I have spent my life working with them." After prospecting for diamonds and working at the Royal Jewellers, Garrard, Girling turned his back on retail and in his twenties went to read English at Sussex University. But in 1988 he joined Bonhams in Knightsbridge which was still a family business – in Matthew's words, "small, friendly, and slightly chaotic". It was here he found his vocation. As he says, "I don't

think a day goes by when I don't handle jewellery. Even though I am making decisions about the strategy of a company that employs more than 700 people worldwide, I think it is very important to have a connection with the fundamentals of what we do. I understand the business from the bottom up."

Although the auction business is based on people, Bonhams has invested heavily in its buildings – and to remarkable effect. The Hong Kong saleroom opened in Pacific Place last year; the New York headquarters in Madison Avenue is about to be given an extensive refurbishment, as are the Knightsbridge salerooms; while 101 New Bond Street, designed by the architectural practice, Lifschutz, Davidson and Sandilands, has won a hatful of awards since it opened in 2013. As Girling says, "The building made an instant impact and means we can display works in a manner that is second to none. For instance at the first major sale after the opening, we sold the Fragonard which was a world record for the artist, for any Rococo painting – and became the most expensive Old Master work sold that year. Since then, because of our museum-standard facilities, we've welcomed an exhibition of the Burrell Collection on a rare outing from its Glasgow home. In September, we have the first-ever installation by the Japanese artist Kohei Nawa."

So things have changed since those days in Knightsbridge and now that Girling has a remit to oversee the company worldwide, he will continue to draw together different aspects of the business. There are no boundaries for innovative ideas. "If there are wonderful initiatives taking place in Hong Kong and Los Angeles, they should be imported to London – and vice versa. Auctioneering is a

"Our future audience might take part through Apple TV"

global business and so is Bonhams. Thanks to the internet our bidders can participate in live auctions from anywhere in the world – in an average sale

around half the bids are online and that will only increase. Our future audience might well take part through Apple TV or a digital watch. These changes are very exciting and we've had 200 years of adapting to technological change in this business, beginning with the advent of the telephone. But what people want isn't going to change, is it? They want somebody they trust to come along and say, 'How can we help you to buy or sell something?' Trust, knowledge and an ever-increasing network of contacts ... these will always be core to the business."

Lucinda Bredin is Editor of Bonhams Magazine.



Left: Bonhams award-winning new building on New Bond Street, designed by Lifschutz, Davidson and Sandilands



Below: Bonhams New York office takes pride of place on Madison Avenue; Hong Kong offers sleek new sales rooms





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Auto erotic

Rolling Stones guitarist Keith Richards' 1965 limited-edition motor was the perfect vehicle for his rock-star lifestyle. Satisfaction guaranteed, says **Neil Lyndon**





© Gered Markowitz

Opposite: Keith Richards with Blue Lena

Left: Brian Jones with Richards and Anita Pallenberg, and (above) Richards with his car

If cars could talk, many might tell a tale to make their owners blush.

If, however, the 1965 Bentley S3 Continental Flying Spur originally registered JLP 400D could recall the excesses it bore and the scenes in which it was a mute accessory, the old beauty might itself shudder to the bottom of its bespoke chassis.

This was the car that Keith Richards bought at the end of 1965, just before his 23rd birthday – not long after the guitarist had conceived the Rolling Stones' first global smash hit single and brought himself riches with *(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction*.

Richards spent some of his share on a place in the country and a motor fitting to his status. He bought Redlands, a Grade II, 16th-century farmhouse in West Wittering, Sussex. And he went to H.R. Owen's showrooms in Berkeley Square, where he picked out the Bentley.

The 6.2 litre V8 engined four-door Flying Spur was an unusual car and a discerning choice. One of a limited edition of only 87 cars, Richards' S3 Continental (chassis BC68XE) had aluminium coachwork hand-crafted by Mulliner Park Ward, with the twin headlamps that had been recently introduced for all new cars from Bentley/Rolls Royce. It was fitted with Connolly leather upholstery, a Radiomobile 920T Transistor radio, Sundym glass and Dunlop whitewall tyres. The car will be sold by its current owner at Bonhams in September.

The purchaser made some modifications to his own taste. Like many owners at that time, Richards added a folding Webasto sunroof. More individually, he also – according to *Life*, his 2010 autobiography – installed

a “secret compartment in the frame for the concealing of illegal substances”. He called the car ‘Blue Lena’ – ‘blue’ for the shade of paint in which the bodywork had been finished, and Lena in honour of Lena Horne.

The esoteric name itself suggests unusual connoisseurship. The film *Stormy Weather* from which Lena Horne's best-known hit was drawn, was made in 1943, the year Keith Richards was born. How many barely educated 23 year-olds who were reaping riches from London's 1960s pop culture would even have known of the existence of the former Cotton Club dancer, jazz singer and civil rights activist? Might Dave Clark of *Glad All Over* or Reg Presley of The Troggs have acknowledged the influence of Lena Horne?

Similarly, the S3 Continental Flying Spur reflected

uncommon judgement. The range of cars appropriate to the status of newly-rich pop stars in the mid-1960s was, in retrospect, narrow and still impoverished by post-war austerity. You could, of course,

buy a customised Mini or an E-type Jaguar – and many did – but those were mass-produced, run-of-the-mill choices, available to anybody who had made a few quid. If you wanted a car that signalled that you had vaulted far beyond the class restraints of stuffy old Britain and one, also, which manifested its owner's total cool, the options were few. Ferraris, Maseratis and Porsches of the time were maddeningly unreliable and near-impossible to drive even if the driver's wits weren't addled with drugs. A Rolls-Royce – as chosen by John Lennon and Brian Jones – seemed to convey an idea of yourself as royalty. The two-door version of the Bentley Continental was a driver's car, custom-made for amateur road racers such

“Richards installed a secret compartment in the frame for ‘the concealing of illegal substances’”

as the Tory MP, Alan Clark. For one who intended to be chauffeured most of the time and get up to a whole lot of no good in the back seats, the four-door S3 Continental Flying Spur was an inspired choice. JLP 400D was to witness its owner getting up to no good at world-beating, record-breaking levels.

Little more than a year after occupying his ancient house and taking delivery of the noble Bentley, 'Keef' was in serious trouble. The very acts of acquiring and flaunting possessions that had always been regarded as the exclusive birthright of Britain's ruling class may have needled the Establishment beyond endurance. While the Beatles jiggled and bowed at the London Palladium for the Royal Command Performance and were decorated with MBEs at the behest of the Prime Minister Harold Wilson, who treated the Liverpool mop-tops as if they were his personal pets, the nasty, dirty, libidinous Rolling Stones were persistently getting on the wrong side of the law and viewed as a threat to national order.

On 12th February 1967 – acting on an insider's tip-off and with the collusion of the Fleet Street press – police raided Redlands, where Richards had been hosting a weekend party for guests including Jagger, Marianne Faithfull, George and Patti Harrison and some well-known figures in London's underground.

They found amphetamines on Jagger, marijuana in the house and Jagger's girlfriend Marianne clothed only in a fur rug (in his autobiography, Keith Richards adamantly denied everlasting rumours about Ms Faithfull and a Mars bar). Jagger was found guilty of possession and Richards of allowing drugs to be used on his property. Both were bailed pending an appeal, which they won.

In the time before his trial, Richards suggested to the band's other guitarist, Brian Jones, that they should pile

“Richards and Pallenberg were left alone in the back of the Bentley, where it did not take long to emerge that each was attracted to the other”

into the Bentley – which “had carried us on many an acid-fuelled journey” – and motor to Morocco where they could enjoy drugs unchecked. Richards' chauffeur was driving; Keith sat in the front passenger seat, feeding 45s into the car's Phillips record player, while Brian was in the back with girlfriend Anita Pallenberg and Deborah Dixon, both models and actresses.

The group was soon depleted in numbers. In Toulouse, Brian Jones fell ill with pneumonia and was taken to hospital. Deborah Dixon had endured more than enough of the party by the time the car reached Spain and fled for home in Paris. Richards and Pallenberg were left alone in the back of the Bentley,



Opposite: 'Blue Lena', formerly the property of Keith Richards, 1965 Bentley S3 Continental Flying Spur Sports Saloon. Estimate: £400,000 - 600,000 (\$650,000 - 950,000)

Right: Richards, the perpetual Romeo, with Anita Pallenberg, his partner of 13 years

Below: Up on the roof: Cecil Beaton's portrait of Brian Jones and Anita Pallenberg in Morocco



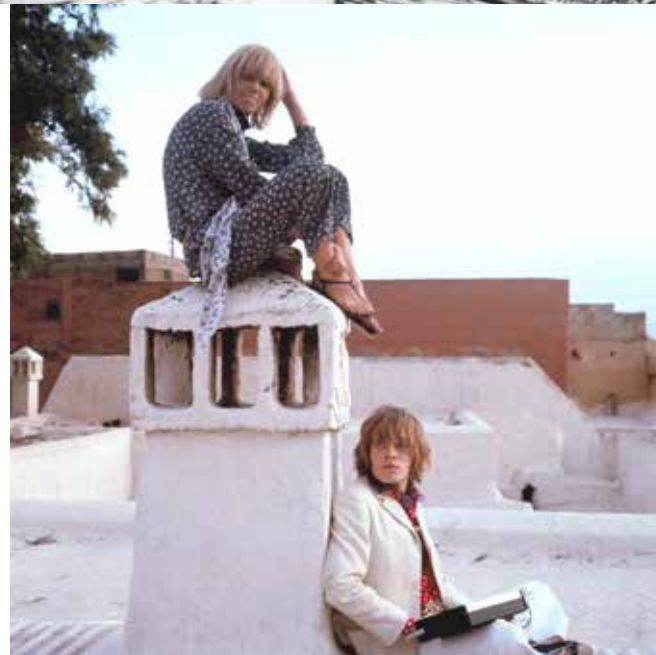
where it did not take long for the mutual admission to emerge that each had always been attracted to the other. Nature then took its timeless course. History, as recorded by Keith Richards, does not reveal whether the Bentley was actually in motion for the consummation on its back seat.

History as recorded by the snitch, the late Tony Sanchez, does, however, yield other moments involving Blue Lena, Keith Richards and Anita Pallenberg. Sanchez became Keith's gofer in 1968 and, in his own creepy memoirs, told the story of driving his employer in the Bentley to lurk in Belgravia's Lowndes Square, near the house where film director Nicolas Roeg was making *Performance* with Pallenberg and Mick Jagger. Richards suspected that his girlfriend and his closest band member were continuing their on-screen sexual relationship when the cameras had stopped rolling. He was right. In revenge, he went to bed – or, perhaps, to Bentley – with Marianne Faithfull.

Richards did sometimes drive Blue Lena himself but while he liked to think of himself as "a good driver", those excursions frequently resulted in damage both to the car and to his passengers. The gravest incident occurred when he fell asleep at the wheel while driving away from the Knebworth festival in 1976 with seven passengers in the car including his own young son, Marlon. When the Bentley hit a tree, Marlon's nose struck the dashboard where – according to his own memories – it left a distinct imprint in the veneers.

That damage was to be repaired, along with the mess that had been made of Blue Lena's majestic coachwork. Even the badge bar beneath the radiator was restored.

It's touching today to see that, in photographs of Keith Richards with Blue Lena, that badge bar was bearing an



RAC member's emblem – a classic symbol of belonging for conformist, bourgeois Britain. Shaking off the conventions of the old country must have been harder than it seemed – even for the wildest man in rock.

Neil Lyndon is a journalist, author and former motoring correspondent of the Sunday Telegraph.

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A full-length portrait of Charles Darwin, an elderly man with a long white beard and balding head, wearing a dark blue coat. He is holding a dark hat in his left hand. The background is a dark, textured brown.

Yours faithfully

Did Charles Darwin believe in God? A letter sheds light on the beliefs of a conflicted man for whom religion would always be at odds with his theory of evolution. **A.N. Wilson** reads between the lines

John Collier
Replica
1883

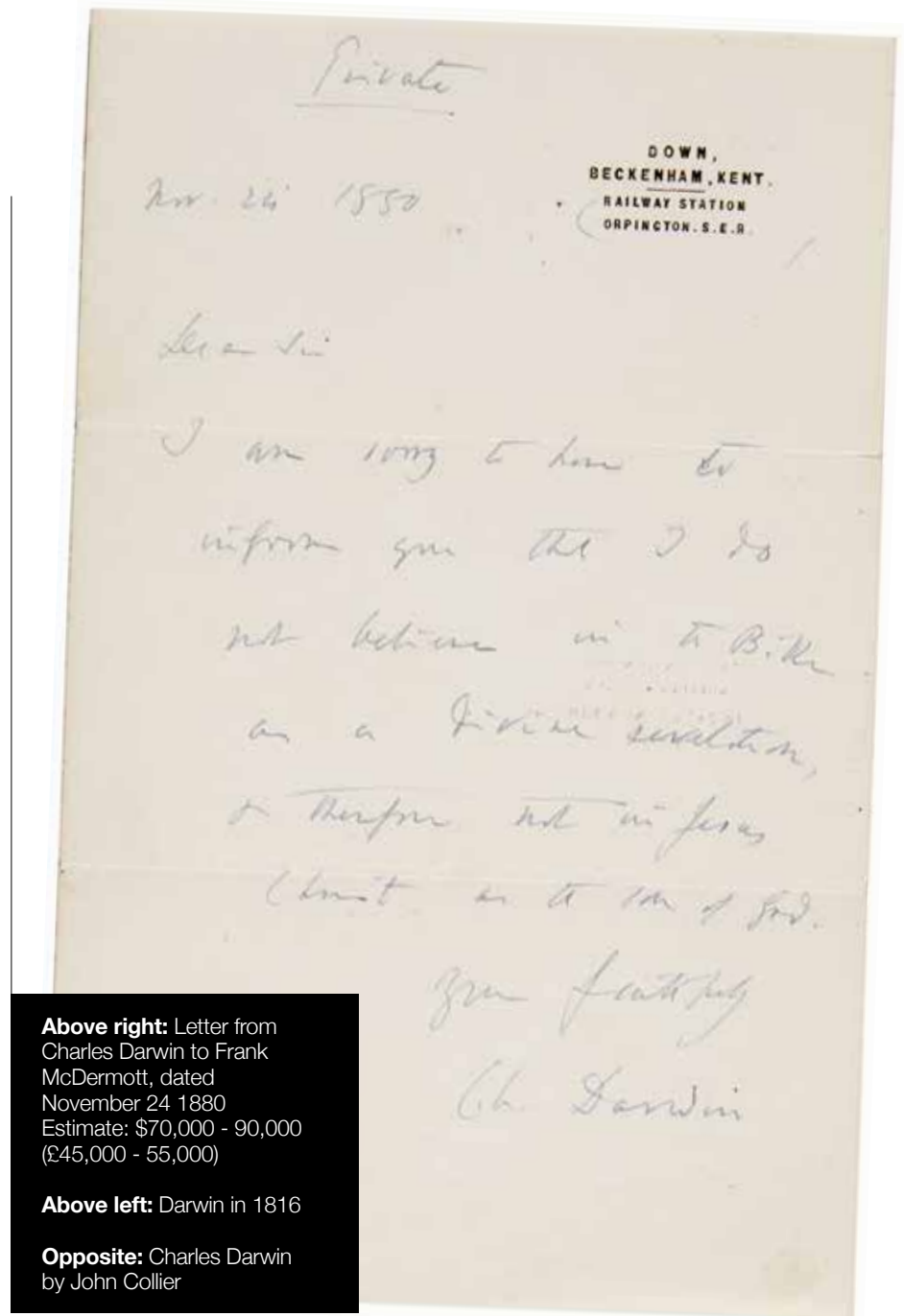


© English Heritage Photo Library

It is a short letter, but it is highly revealing. A young barrister, Frank McDermott, who had been reading Darwin's books with interest, wrote in 1880 to ask the great naturalist if Darwinism was compatible with Christianity. McDermott wanted "a yes or no to the question, do you believe in the New Testament?" – and promised not to reveal the recipient's answer to the "theological papers". The elderly Darwin did not know the young man, but took him at his word, marking his reply 'Private'. "I am sorry to have to inform you," he wrote, "that I do not believe in the Bible as a divine revelation & therefore not in Jesus Christ as the son of God. Yours faithfully". He left open the question of whether he believed in God at all.

The trajectory of Darwin's life is often depicted, especially by those who find him a gentle or sympathetic character, as if – in the matter of religious belief – he was a leaf blown by the wind, a man driven into agnosticism, if not absolute unbelief, by the sad consequence of having discovered the truth of how species evolve. As a young man, Darwin had been intended by his doctor father to be a clergyman of the Church of England. With this end in view, he was sent to Christ's College, Cambridge, and passed his exams, which involved reading a book called *Evidences of Christianity*, by a Fellow of Christ's and archdeacon of Carlisle named William Paley.

Darwin also enjoyed reading Paley's book *Natural Theology* – which has become famous in our own time because the evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins used its most famous analogy as the title for his bestseller, *The*



Above right: Letter from Charles Darwin to Frank McDermott, dated November 24 1880
Estimate: \$70,000 - 90,000
(£45,000 - 55,000)

Above left: Darwin in 1816

Opposite: Charles Darwin by John Collier

Blind Watchmaker. The analogy is as follows: if you were walking across a field and came across an elaborately-constructed pocket watch, you would, when you saw how intricately it worked, conclude that it had a maker. By the same token, Paley had argued, when you find out about the laws of nature, the mind is ineluctably led to conclude that the universe did not appear by chance, but is the product of intelligent design.

Darwin certainly seems to have believed this as a young man, but by middle age, in spite of, or because of, being married to a very devout evangelical Christian – his cousin Emma – he had stopped regarding himself as an orthodox believer. His surviving children were unbelievers. And it is reasonable to suppose that the death of his beloved daughter Annie, aged ten, finished off the last vestiges of belief for him.

The persistence of his wife's faith was obviously a source of tension between them, even though they were

"His wife's religious faith was a source of tension between them, even though they were a loving couple"



a loving couple. Darwin, who had lost his own mother when he was nine, made Emma into a mother substitute. He called her 'Mammy'. Anger with the loved one who is lost plays a large part in the grieving process, but Darwin's anger with Susannah, his mother, for not being there, could not overtly be directed against dear, placid, kind Emma. It could very easily, however, be fired at 'Mammy'.

From quite early in his marriage, even before the death of Annie, Darwin had become an agnostic. The theory that species evolve by an impersonal process of micro-mutation, what he called 'natural selection', was not in fact unique to him, though he would always trumpet it as 'my theory'. The scientist Alfred Russel Wallace had come up with the same idea almost simultaneously, as had a lesser-known amateur zoologist named Edward Blyth, a pharmacist from Tooting, whose articles expounding the theory of natural selection young Darwin had read shortly in the 1830s after his second voyage on *HMS Beagle*, on which he had been the ship's naturalist.

What made Darwin's contribution to the subject distinctive was that, from the beginning, there was a theological obsession running through it. He had believed in Paley's 'natural theology' – but only, it would seem with the 'watch' analogy. He does not refer to the later part of Paley's book, which expands and makes warm the other reasons for considering theism plausible.

Darwin then came to disbelieve. He likened it to becoming colour blind. As he lost his religious faith, he also recorded his inability to appreciate poetry, and his loss of musicality. To avoid startling the public, he continued, in his published writings, to refer to a 'Creator', but his critics

realised that this was simply a metaphor for the impersonal force of nature which drove forward 'natural selection'. He had somehow come to convince himself it was a substitute for God, disproved the Bible and made Christianity redundant, even when some of his staunchest allies, such as Thomas Huxley, professed a belief in 'macro-mutation', or evolution by leaps and starts.

Nowadays, the Darwinians are divided into two camps. Those who follow the late American biologist Stephen J. Gould accept that all the palaeontological evidence shows evolution happening in strange leaps, whereas those led by Richard Dawkins insist that only micro-mutation can be true. All this is the confused legacy of Darwin's original theological dilemmas. Believers in God are not committed to saying how God created the world, and there have been as many Christian thinkers who, like Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, passionately believed in Darwinianism, as those who believed that we came into being by a different process.

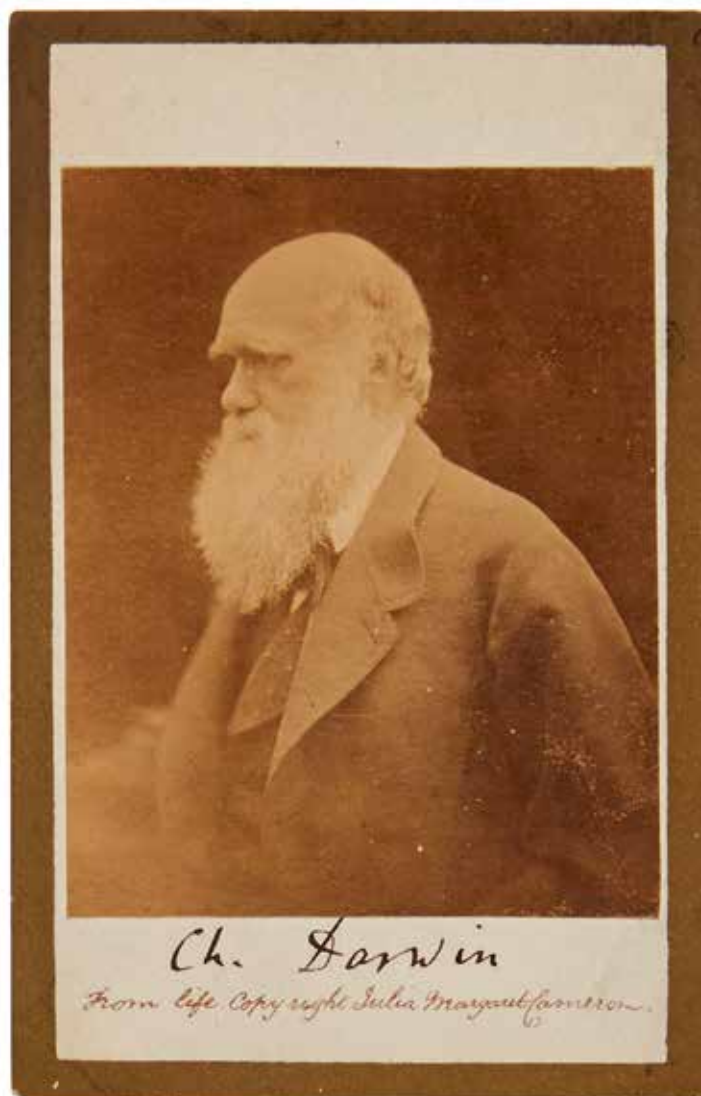
“Darwinism was a way for the Victorian rich to stay in their villas and ignore the plight of the poor”



Opposite: Darwin and his wife Emma in 1840

Above (from top): Darwin's daughter Annie, who died aged ten; his 'tree of life', sketched in his Notebook B while on HMS Beagle

Above right: Photograph of Darwin in 1868, signed Ch. Darwin, by Julia Margaret Cameron
Estimate: \$25,000 - 30,000 (£16,000 - 19,000)



This late letter from Darwin, to be sold by Bonhams in New York's History of Science and Technology Sale, is confirmation that towards the end of his life, Darwin was prepared to 'come out' as an atheist, albeit in private. He remains one of the most knowledgeable, wide-ranging and comprehensively-minded naturalists the world has ever known – way up there with Aristotle, Pliny, and Linnaeus. His collections of specimens and his wide observation of birds, beetles, geology and so on were prodigious.

Alongside this, however, went a sort of anti-religious mania. Darwinism and the 'struggle for existence' was a way for the Victorian rich to remain in their selfish villas and carriages, ignoring the plight of the poor, and persuading themselves that this was 'the way things are'. Darwin, looking like a prophet, told them that their gross selfishness was the law of nature. That was why they made him a hero and buried him in Westminster Abbey. And why the Bank of England places the face of this very, very rich but muddled man on £10 notes.

A.N. Wilson is an award-winning novelist, biographer, journalist and the author of The Victorians and After the Victorians.

Sale: History of Science and Technology
New York
Tuesday 21 September at 1pm
Enquiries: Cassandra Hatton +1 212 461 6531
cassandra.hatton@bonhams.com
bonhams.com/science

A life in brief

1809 Darwin is born in Shropshire into a well-connected and enlightened family – his grandfathers were the industrialist Josiah Wedgwood and Erasmus Darwin, a doctor with radical ideas about how species develop.

1825 Darwin begins his studies in medicine at Edinburgh University and is exposed to more free thinking on the subject of 'transmutation', as evolution was then called.

1827 He abandons his medical training and goes instead to Cambridge, where studying for the clergy leaves him time to indulge in his hobby of collecting beetles in the Fens.

1831 He grabs the chance to become ship's naturalist on HMS Beagle, his home for five years as he crossed the globe collecting specimens, reading about the natural world and pondering how and why some species survive.

1839 Darwin's account of his travels, known as *The Voyage of the Beagle*, is published but, conflicted by his Christian upbringing, he is not yet ready to go public with his emerging theory of 'natural selection'.

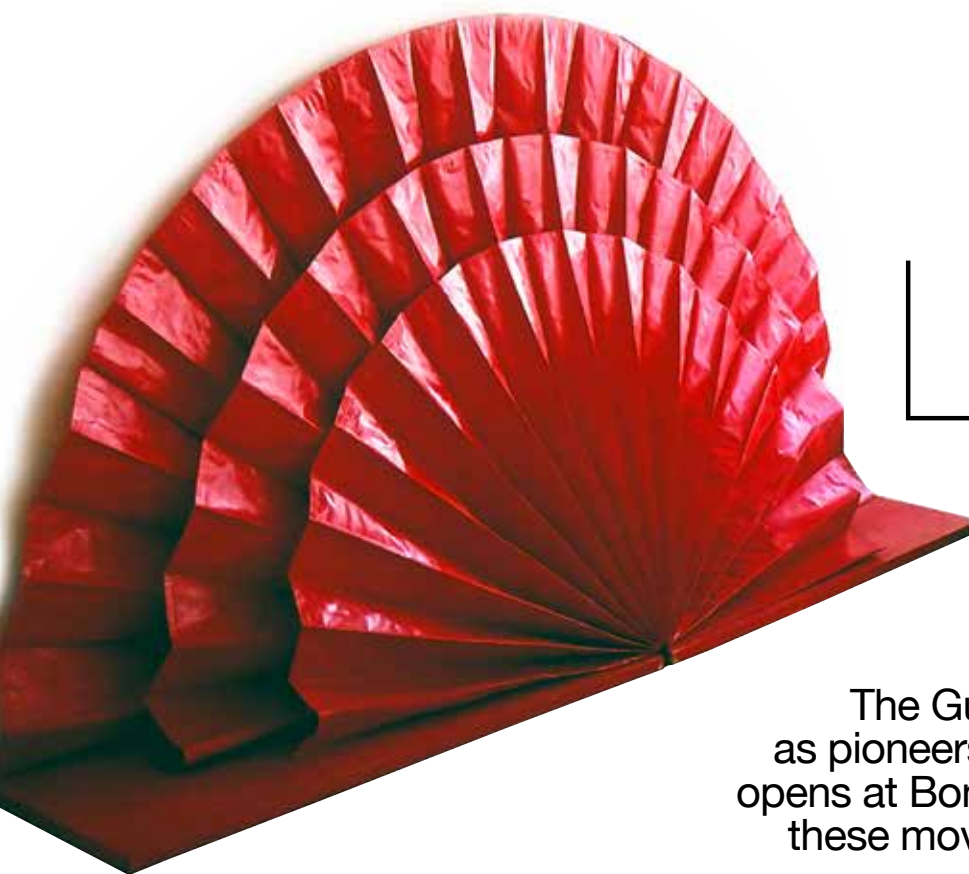
1858 After being contacted by the explorer and naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace, who was developing similar theories, Darwin presents his ideas to leading naturalists at the Linnean Society in London. Wallace is overseas and out of contact, but his contribution is acknowledged by Darwin.

1859 Though devastated by the death of his infant son from scarlet fever – three of his ten children died – wracked by ill health and concerns about inbreeding through his marriage to his cousin Emma, Darwin finally publishes *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*.

1869 He uses the expression 'survival of the fittest' for the first time in the fifth edition of *On the Origin of Species*, now a controversial bestseller.

1871 In *The Descent of Man*, he finally expounds his theory that men and apes shared a common ancestor. While his ideas shocked Victorian society – Darwin himself was caricatured as an ape – many people had come round to his way of thinking.

1882 Darwin dies and is buried in Westminster Abbey.



Light bulb moment

The Gutai and Zero groups are now recognised as pioneers of live art. As an exhibition of their work opens at Bonhams, **Hans Ulrich Obrist** explains why these movements are now more relevant than ever



© Ito Ryoji and the former members of the Gutai Art Association

The emergence of the Gutai group in Japan in the mid-fifties represents one of the great moments of the avant garde in the post-war era – although it is only finally beginning to receive the attention it deserves now. In 1954, Shozo Shimamoto and Jiro Yoshihara, empowered by the climate of freedom in the immediate period following the end of the American occupation, founded the group during the gathering together of a disparate collection of artists near Osaka.

It was Yoshihara, in the group's manifesto, who first stated that Gutai (which literally

“The western art world is becoming aware that art history has a polyphony of centres”

translates as concrete) stands for embodiment. And at the first Gutai exhibition held in 1955 in Tokyo, the group's artists responded with wild enthusiasm to his call to arms.

Having previously painted with his feet, Kazuo Shiraga stripped down to his underwear to writhe in pools of mud, while Saburo Murakami threw himself through paper screens. Later in 1956, Atsuko Tanaka would don her *Electric Dress*, a glowing assemblage of incandescent bulbs, wire and paint.

I recently met the great Takesada Matsutani – who was a member of the group after 1963 – and spoke to him about this legacy of experimentalism. In his archives I saw a

number of the amazing New Year's cards that the group made and sent to each other, and that foreshadow so much of the mail art of the 1960s.

That interest in embodiment, not only in performance art, is one of the reasons Gutai is so relevant in the digital 21st century. The age of the internet, (counter-intuitively perhaps), has seen a return to live art as evidenced by artists from Roman Ondák to Tino Sehgal.

Among the preoccupations of the Gutai group was a fascination with the beauty that arises from damage or decay. This is perhaps one of the threads that connects the group with the other avant-garde movements of the same generation, particularly Zero, but also with English artists such as John Latham and Gustav Metzger, for whom the memory of war and of destruction was an important common experience.

Another legacy of the war was the discrediting of the pre-war hierarchies, and both Zero and Gutai are remarkable for their horizontal inclusive nature and the absence of formal inclusion or exclusion mechanisms. Traditionally, many western avant-garde movements have been markedly vertical. As André Breton famously said, “You are in, or you are out”, or Michele Bernstein's statement, “You are a Situationist or you are not”.

Neither in Gutai nor in Zero do you see that level of proscription. They represent a less militaristic, less top down, less hierarchical – a more 21st-century style of working and organising. Which is perhaps another reason why they are of great relevance at the moment.

Above: *Red Fan* by Kazuo Shiraga, 1965, which features in the Bonhams exhibition, has only been seen once in public in the past 30 years

Below: *Footprints*, Akira Kanayama, 1956

© Ashiya City Museum



© Ashiya City Museum



Gutaidea

This October, Bonhams is exhibiting 20 works from the Gutai and Zero groups, along with pieces by Yayoi Kusama. These are all from the 1960s, acknowledged as the most important period of production for the groups' artists. This is the first time that an exhibition has been organised that puts these two movements alongside each other. Highlights include Kazuo Shiraga's *Fan* (shown opposite), an important suite of works by Schoonhoven, a large piece by Günther Uecker, and a 'Phallic display' by Yayoi Kusuma.

Since many of these works have not been seen in public since the 1960s, this is a rare and fascinating opportunity to discover a pair of the most important and cutting-edge movements of post-war art.

Zero vs Gutai, Bonhams New Bond Street, 11-20 October.
bonhams.com/zerovsgutai

While the group's work anticipated much of the performance art of the 1960s, at the time they largely met with indifference, both at home and abroad. Sadly, this was a common reaction to non-western art movements at the time, when the western centrality of art history went unchallenged. Fortunately, the western art world is becoming aware that art history has a polyphony of centres.

And now, thanks primarily to an interest amongst working artists, Gutai, which anticipated so much of what was to come, is finally getting the attention it deserves.

Hans Ulrich Obrist is Co-Director of the Serpentine Galleries

Above: *Electric Dress*,
Atsuko Tanaka, 1956

Top left: Shozo Shimamoto
in the act of painting, 1956

Below left: Takesada
Matsutani's *Entrance to 14th
Gutai Art Exhibition*, 1964



The great and the good

The National Portrait Gallery, one of the world's best-loved collections, has a new director. Nicholas Cullinan outlines his vision to **Louisa Buck**

**Opposite**

Nicholas Cullinan, surrounded by the NPG's Tudor portrait collection, is only the 12th director in the gallery's 159-year history

Left and above

The gallery's elegant interior and façade house the world's foremost collection of portraits

When he took up his post in April this year, Nicholas Cullinan became the twelfth director in the National Portrait Gallery's 158-year history, and at 37, one of its youngest. "I'm really enjoying it – it's a fantastic job!" he enthuses as he pours me tea in his modest office tucked up a side street around the back of the NPG building near Trafalgar Square. "I feel that the National Portrait Gallery is especially relevant right now, because so much of what we learn about history and society is through images of people. We have a very different remit from other institutions and I think that's why the public loves us so much and what makes our displays and exhibitions so special."

The gallery's collection of more than 200,000 portraits of famous or historically significant 'Great Britons' stretches back to the 16th century and ranges from Holbein's cartoon of Henry VIII to Spencer Murphy's photographic portrait of Benedict Cumberbatch. The NPG has become not only one of the country's most visited art galleries, beloved by tourists and the British public alike, but also – as its founder, the fifth Earl of Stanhope wished – a repository of British history. It boasts the finest collection of Tudor portraits in the world, as well as famous images such as the 'Chandos' portrait of William Shakespeare, and Branwell Brontë's portrait of his sisters. Although there are other portrait galleries – the Smithsonian in Washington, and the

National Portrait Galleries of Scotland and Australia, for example – the NPG is the world leader.

Recently, the gallery has cannily tapped into our obsession with celebrity, with exhibitions devoted to Mario Testino's portraits and images of Audrey Hepburn packing in the crowds. Some portraits – such as Sam Taylor-Wood's film of a sleeping David Beckham are almost celebrities in their own right. Portraits are commissioned – about five a year – purchased and donated, with the gallery's trustees deciding who is worthy of inclusion.

"Sam Taylor-Wood's film portrait of a sleeping David Beckham is almost a celebrity in its own right"

Cullinan's youth and disarmingly modest manner belie a formidable track record. He came to the NPG after two years as a

curator at the Metropolitan Museum in New York. The Courtauld Institute graduate had previously been a rising star at the Tate. Yet alongside his impressive CV, international contacts and desire "to commission the best possible portraits and to work with great artists", Cullinan is also committed to extending the scope of the NPG. "I'm constantly talking to people from other disciplines," he says. "We are not just about art: we're about all forms of culture, society, literature, science, engineering, sport – from



All images © National Portrait Gallery, London

the filter of the past. “Contemporary art is very dear to me, but I don’t think you necessarily have to show it to be relevant to the present. I’m looking at a lot of the historic works we have and asking: what should we see now?” So be prepared for an NPG that may be more proactive in getting to grips with history as it unfolds – as well as recording what happened next.

Central to this role is the NPG’s rolling programme of temporary exhibitions, which are often more international in scope and can address wider issues concerning identity and portraiture. These range from the recent blockbuster devoted to John Singer Sargent’s portraits of artists and friends, to Ketaki Sheth’s photographs of the little-known Sidi community of Africans living in India. But as the gallery’s exhibitions are already programmed up to 2017, we will have to wait and see how the new director will make his mark. “There are some great things coming up – including Giacometti this October – but none of them are my shows,” he says. “I’m working with colleagues to shape the programme but it’s too early to talk about it now.”

One thing to expect under Cullinan’s directorship is a commitment to the NPG’s collaboration with artists. Cullinan acknowledges that Grayson Perry’s recent project, *Who Are You?* is “a model we’d like to pursue. It was before my time,” he acknowledges, “so I can’t take any credit, but the whole project was fantastic.”

It is early days, but it seems that under this new director continuity will co-exist with change.

Louisa Buck is a British art critic and the author of *Owning Art: The Contemporary Art Collector's Handbook*.

Opposite

Clockwise from top left: Grayson Perry’s *Comfort Blanket*, part of his *Who Are You?* project; George Romney’s portrait of the first Earl of Liverpool; a portrait of Van Dyck, Doreen Lawrence, photographed by Suki Dhanda.

Above

A rush of blood to the head: Mark Quinn’s *Self* (2006)

Nicholas Cullinan's NPG favourites



Shami Chakrabarti (2011)
by Gillian Wearing



The Brontë Sisters (circa 1834)
by Branwell Brontë



King Henry VIII; King Henry VII
(circa 1536-1537)
by Hans Holbein the Younger



King Charles II (1630)
by Unknown artist



William Wilberforce (1828)
by Sir Thomas Lawrence



Big bang theory

Cai Guo-Qiang creates 'explosion events' using gunpowder and flame.
Ron Rosenbaum meets this artist with a passion for pyrotechnics

Cai Guo-Qiang may be the only artist in human history who has had some one billion people gaze simultaneously at one of his works. The internationally-lauded explosives artist created the fireworks sculpture for the opening of the Beijing Olympics in 2008 that was televised around the world. If you're one of the few earthlings who hasn't seen it, here's Cai's description: "The explosion event consisted of a series of 29 giant footprint fireworks, one for each Olympiad, over the Beijing skyline, leading to the National Olympic

Stadium. The 29 footprints were fired in succession, travelling a total distance of 15 kilometres, or 9.3 miles, within a period of 63 seconds."

But a mere billion pairs of eyes is not enough for the Chinese-born artist's ambition. He's seeking additional viewers for his works, some of whom may have more than two eyes. I'm speaking of the aliens, the extraterrestrials that Cai tells me are the real target audience for his most monumental explosive work. These include huge flaming earth sculptures

Above: Cai Guo-Qiang
 (b. 1957)
*Escalator: Explosion
 for Pompidou, 2003*
 Gunpowder, paper
 304 x 812cm
 (119¾ x 319¾in)
 Estimate:
 HK\$9,000,000-15,000,000
 (£750,000 - 1,250,000)



such as *Project to Extend the Great Wall of China by 10,000 Metres*, in which Cai detonated a spectacular six-mile train of explosives, a fiery elongation of the Ming dynasty's most famous work. Meant to be seen from space, he wants to open "a dialogue with the universe", he says.

His blazing 'crop circle' in Germany, modelled on those supposed extraterrestrial signs carved in wheat fields, called for 90 kilograms of gunpowder, 1,300 metres of fuses, one seismograph, plus an electroencephalograph and an electrocardiograph to monitor electrical activity in his brain and heart. The two medical devices were there to measure Cai's physiological and mental reactions as he stood in the centre of the explosions to symbolise, he told me, that the echoes of the birth of the universe can still be felt in every molecule of every human cell.

Maybe there's the sly wink of a showman behind these interspatial aspirations, but Cai seems to be distinctive among the current crop of international art stars in that he produces projects that aren't about irony, or being ironic about irony, or being ironic about art

Gunpowder plot

Escalator: Explosion for Pompidou (above), to be sold at Bonhams Hong Kong in October, is a gunpowder drawing conceived by Cai in 2002 as part of an explosion project for the landmark Centre Pompidou in Paris, famous for its 'inside out' escalators. Cai's original plan was to set off a series of fireworks in the form of an escalator in the sky; next came another set of fireworks outlining the frame of the building. Finally, the last set of fireworks would soar like a fire dragon along the actual escalator, highlighting a key symbol of the centre.

Although the plan was never realised in this form, because of safety concerns in the densely populated area, in 2003 Cai creatively reinvented the spectacle on a 2-D surface in this large-scale drawing. The black and brown traces on the paper are a reminder of the powerful explosion when the gunpowder was ignited. On the upper left side of the work is an image of an escalator, that is also reminiscent of lightning in the sky. The middle section gives the impression of the façade of the Centre Pompidou. Finally, the lower right section has a slender stretch of flame, like a fire dragon ascending into the night.



about irony. He really wants to paint the heavens like Michelangelo painted the Sistine Chapel ceiling. Only with gunpowder and flame.

Cai (as everyone calls him, pronouncing it 'Tsai') moved to America in the 1990s. At his spare East Village Manhattan studio with its stone lion guarding the big red door, we sit at a glass table flanked by wall-size wood screens: his gunpowder 'drawings'. These are large white surfaces upon which Cai has ignited gunpowder to make unexpectedly beautiful black tracers, an example of which

is to be sold at Bonhams in Hong Kong. They form works of abstract art reminiscent of traditional Chinese calligraphy, or those negative telescopic photo prints of deep space in which the scattered stars and galaxies are black on white. Violence transformed into ethereal beauty.

Above (clockwise from top left): The artist; *Unmanned Nature* (2008), with a 45 metre-long, four metre-high gunpowder drawing, was exhibited this year in Manchester's Whitworth Gallery; *Head On* (2006), has 99 wolves leaping en masse and colliding with a glass wall

Fit and younger-looking than his mid-50s, with a severe brush-cut of hair, Cai tells me about his childhood with the help of his translator. It is a story of profound family sorrow during the Cultural Revolution – and a “time bomb” in his house. “My family lived in Quanzhou, across the strait from Taiwan,” he says, where it was routine to hear artillery batteries firing at the island which the mainland regime wanted to reincorporate into China.

“These were my first experiences of explosions. My father,” Cai explains, “was a collector of rare books and manuscripts” – and adept at the delicate art of calligraphy. But when the Cultural Revolution began in the mid 1960s, Mao Zedong turned his millions of subjects against any sign of intellectual or elite practices, including any art or literature that was not propaganda.

‘Intellectuals’ were beaten, jailed or murdered by mobs and their works burned in pyres. “My father knew his books, scrolls and calligraphy were a time bomb in his house,” Cai recalls. So he began burning his precious collection in the basement. “He had to do it at night, so that no one would know.”

Cai tells me that his father later went into a strange self-exile, afraid that his reputation as a collector of books would lead to his death. He left home and took refuge in a ruined Buddhist nunnery where the last remaining 90-year-old devotee gave him sanctuary. “My father would take sticks and trace characters in puddles on the ground,” Cai says. The calligraphy would disappear when the water evaporated, leaving behind, Cai once wrote, “invisible skeins of sorrow,” although they seem to be inscribed on his son’s memory and heart.

His father’s art echoes in his son’s – calligraphy in water and now in fire. In using deadly gunpowder, he is seeking to transform it into the ethereal art of calligraphy. Instead of his father’s Marxism, Cai says, his great influence is Chinese Taoist spirituality. Feng shui, Qi Gong and Buddhism play a role as well, their roots intertwined. He has written of a shaman he knew as a youth who protected him, and of his search for shamans in other cultures.



Above left: Cai sprinkles gunpowder onto canvas in preparation for the installation of *Chaos in Nature* (2012)

Above right: *Footprints of History: Fireworks Project* for the Opening Ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games

“Spiritual mediums,” he believes, “channel between the material and the unseen world to a certain degree, as art does.” And he sees his art serving as a similar kind of channel, linking ancient and modern, Eastern and Western sensibilities. Feng shui and quantum physics.

As a youth, he says, “I was unconsciously exposed to the ties between fireworks and the fate of humans, from the Chinese practice of setting off firecrackers at a birth, a death, a wedding.” He sensed something in the fusion of matter and energy – perhaps a metaphor for mind and matter, humans and the universe – in these explosions.

By the time of the political explosion of Tiananmen Square in 1989, Cai had left China and was in Japan, where “I discovered Western physics and astrophysics”. And it was here that he found a focus also on the dark side of big bangs: Hiroshima and Nagasaki. He would later win the

Hiroshima Art Prize for one of his most brilliant creations, *The Earth Has Its Black Hole Too*. For this, he dug a deep hole in the ground in the park near the target for the atomic bomb, then used 114 helium balloons at

“My father knew his books were a time bomb in his house – so he burnt them at night, so that no one would know”

various heights to hold aloft 2,000 metres of fuse and three kilograms of gunpowder, which together formed a vast spiral to mimic the orbits of heavenly stars. The ignition kicked off from the highest and outermost point, burning inward and downward before disappearing in the ‘black hole’ in the centre of the park.

Cai returned to Japan to make nuclear power the subject of his art in the wake of the 2011 Fukushima nuclear plant disaster. “The problem is that you cannot see all the radioactive waves the way you can see the smoke left behind by gunpowder,” he explains. The project involves local people planting cherry blossom trees, densely packed

together so they can be seen from outer space. Eventually, he wants to plant 100,000. He hopes the trees will slowly mutate from the invisible radioactivity in the soil, a way of making visible the invisible, in a twisted artistic tribute to the mangled beauty that had been ravaged and could be reborn in strange ways.

Earlier this year, *Unmanned Nature* (2008) was exhibited in the landscape gallery at the newly reopened Whitworth Gallery in Manchester – the first time that the installation had been shown outside Japan.

After our conversation, we join his colleagues for a lunch of many Eastern and Western dishes, while Cai tells me about his continuing ‘dream’ project, in which he goes around the world (next stop, Brazil) creating a “ladder to the sky” of fire, symbolizing his desire to invite extraterrestrials to descend, or for us to ascend to meet them. As I leave, I pat the head of the lion in the hope that the beast will protect us should Cai’s aliens turn out to have less than benign intentions.

Ron Rosenbaum is a writer for Slate. This is an abridged version of an article that appeared in the Smithsonian magazine.

Sale: Modern and Contemporary Art
Hong Kong
Saturday 3 October at 2pm
Enquiries: MeiLing Lee +886 2 8758 2898
meiling.lee@bonhams.com
bonhams.com/contemporary

A black and white portrait of Barry Norman. He is wearing a dark, wide-brimmed hat and a dark jacket over a light-colored shirt and a patterned tie. He has a serious expression and is looking slightly to the left. He is holding a dark cigar in his right hand. The lighting is dramatic, with strong shadows on his face and the hat.

The reel thing

Barry Norman celebrates the life and work of
Richard Attenborough, one of cinema's most
remarkable figures – and his friend for 50 years

BR/CP/113.



Richard Attenborough, who died last year aged 90, was not only one of the most significant figures the British film industry has ever produced, but an art collector and connoisseur, the energetic patron of countless charities and, for more than 50 years, a friend of mine. My father Leslie directed him in the film *Dunkirk* and 'Dickie' and his wife Sheila Sim came to my wedding.

Journalistic hacks, unbiased by any knowledge of the man, sneered at him as a 'luvvie', but he was never that. Yes, he called everyone 'Darling' but only, as he told me, "because I can never remember anyone's bloody name".

He was sentimental, too, confessing once that he could shed tears if someone merely greeted him in the street. But along with that he was instantly likeable and unfailingly polite. He was small and plump but also tough, driven and given to getting his own way with relentless courtesy.

William Goldman, who wrote the screenplay for Dickie's film *A Bridge Too Far*, said that given the amount of work he got through he was entirely the wrong shape. "Because of the incredible energy he uses every day he should be tall and gaunt and slim like Henry Fonda. Instead he's cherubic."

Cherubic – and indefatigable. During a movie career that began in 1942 in Noël Coward's *In Which We Serve*, he appeared in 60 films, produced 13 and directed 12. As an actor he starred in films such as *Brighton Rock*, which made him a star, *The Great Escape*,

10 Rillington Place (as the serial killer John Christie) and *Jurassic Park*. But it was as director and producer that he made his biggest contribution to the industry.

This prodigious output is represented in a collection of personal memorabilia – including film posters, stills, screenplays and awards – to be sold by Bonhams at Knightsbridge in October, along with paintings from his modern British art collection.

"He called everyone 'Darling' but only, he told me, 'because I can never remember anyone's bloody name' "

Lord Attenborough was quite simply a man who got things done, who would never take no for an answer and who regarded no obstacle as insurmountable. This he proved in the 20 years he spent getting *Gandhi* made. In that time, to help finance the production he sold much of his original art collection and was deterred by nothing, not even the crass Hollywood executive who dismissed his project with the words, "Hey, Dickie, who wants to see a movie about a little brown guy in a loincloth carrying a pole?"

Well, actually, almost everybody did, especially when *Gandhi* won eight Oscars – including one for Dickie as the director, an award which he immediately tried to give to Steven Spielberg who, he thought, deserved it more for *ET: The Extra-Terrestrial*.



Opposite: As Pinkie, the baby-faced thug, in *Brighton Rock* (1947)

Top: Attenborough was one of the towering figures of 20th-century cinema

Above: The original print of *Gandhi*

Top ten, both sides of the camera



Barry Norman picks his all-time favourite films by Richard Attenborough, director and actor

The actor

1. *Brighton Rock*

In his breakthrough role, 24-year old Attenborough plays seedy small-town gangster Pinkie Brown in Terence Rattigan's 1947 adaptation of Graham Greene's novel.

2. *The Guinea Pig*

A year later, he stars as a 14-year-old shopkeeper's son who has problems fitting in as scholarship boy at a posh public school.

3. *Private's Progress*

In this 1956 comedy, Attenborough plays a reluctant young Second World War conscript who gets caught up in a stolen art scam.

4. *The Great Escape*

As Squadron Leader Roger 'Big X' Bartlett, he helps mastermind the escape from a German POW camp in this classic war movie of 1963.

5. *10, Rillington Place*

The 1971 dramatisation of the notorious case of British serial killer John Christie featured Attenborough as the murderer.

The director

6. *Oh, What a Lovely War!*

This musical satire about the First World War won a Golden Globe and five BAFTAs – not bad for Attenborough's 1969 directorial debut.

7. *Gandhi*

1982 saw him win the Academy Award for best director – one of eight for his epic movie about India's most celebrated leader.

8. *A Bridge too Far*

Another classic war movie, this time from 1977, about the failed 1944 attempt by British forces to capture bridges held by the Germans.

9. *Cry Freedom*

Set in apartheid-era South Africa, the 1987 award-winning political drama tells the story of activist Steve Biko, who died in police custody.

10. *Shadowlands*

The story of how *Narnia* creator and Oxford academic C.S. Lewis falls for an American poet who dies from cancer garnered more Academy Awards and BAFTAs in 1993.



That was typical of both Dickie's modesty and his honesty – the latter quality was to be seen in the films he directed. Not for him blockbusters aimed at teenagers; he liked films with a political bite such as *Gandhi* and *Cry Freedom*, the story of Steve Biko and an angry attack on the iniquity of apartheid in South Africa.

But at the same time he had a deep appreciation of the commercial side of the film business. "The Oscars aren't everything," he said, "but anyone who says he doesn't care about them isn't telling the truth. The Oscars changed *Gandhi* from an art-house movie into a blockbuster."

His career as a director began more or less by accident with the musical *Oh! What a Lovely War* in 1969. Originally he intended only to produce it, but he told me, "I couldn't find any other bugger willing to direct it, so I had to do it myself – even though I knew bugger all about directing and was an innocent abroad."

The film, a star-studded satire on the British military handling of the First World War, was an immediate success and Dickie rapidly became one of the main driving forces of Britain's film industry as the director/producer of movies such as *Young Winston*, *A Bridge Too Far*, *Magic*, *Chaplin* and *Shadowlands* – all serious works which required an audience to bring its brain with it.



Beyond resin: Replica prop cane based on the one used by Richard Attenborough in *Jurassic Park*
86.5cm (34in) long
Estimate: £3,000 - 5,000
(\$4,750 - 8,000)



Below left:

Mary Newcomb

(British, 1922-2008)

Landscape, Suffolk

oil on canvas

76.5 x 81.5cm (30 x 32in)

Estimate: £12,000 - 18,000
(\$18,500 - 28,000)

Below: Howard Hodgkin

(British, born 1932)

Indian Tree

etching

910 x 1020mm (35¾ x 47¼in)

Estimate: £6,000 - 8,000
(\$9,250 - 12,500)



His approach to directing was simple and straightforward, shunning flamboyance and fancy directorial tricks. When I was talking to him just before his 80th birthday he said, "Somebody once said about me, 'The trouble with Attenborough is that he cares more about the story than the style.' And, you know, that's the nicest compliment anyone ever paid me."

Another time, reflecting on his life, he said he was sometimes angry about "stupidity and intolerance" but "never a pessimist and very, very rarely depressed". One thing that did bother him, though, was the increasing emphasis on film as a business rather than an art form.

If he were around now with cinemas full of prequels, sequels, remakes and comic-book

"The Oscars aren't everything, but anyone who says they don't care about them isn't telling the truth"

movies, he would be bothered about that.

"People must be allowed to fail," he said then. "Today they're not, but if we don't venture, cinema will die and become merely a form of money-making."

In the best sense of the words he was an old-fashioned filmmaker, one who wanted people to feel the quality not the width. He was always prepared to fail, to take a gamble, to persist against the odds – and there was an endearingly Quixotic aspect to him in the way he was constantly tilting against the hostile windmills of Hollywood and its safety-first policy, which made it unwilling to allow anyone to venture and, terrible thought, fail.

He showed that quality in the years he spent getting *Gandhi* made – and he was still showing it in the last two decades of his life as he tried



and tried again to raise finance for a film about Thomas Paine, the 18th-century English republican, who was involved in the French and American revolutions and was tried for sedition.

That was one battle Dickie didn't win but, had he lived, he would be fighting still, because he knew no other way. It will be a very long time before anyone comes close to replacing him.

Barry Norman is a writer and leading authority on film.

Sale: Richard Attenborough:

A Life Both Sides of the Camera

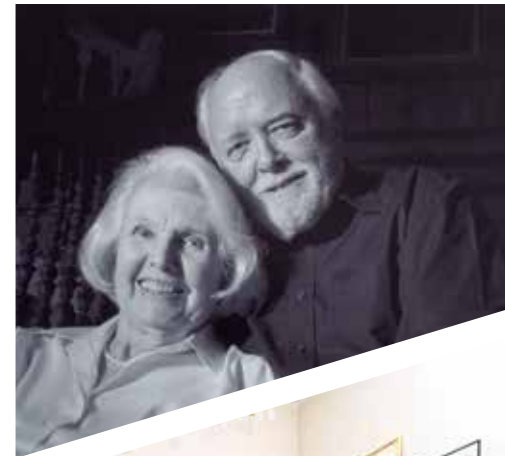
Bonhams Knightsbridge

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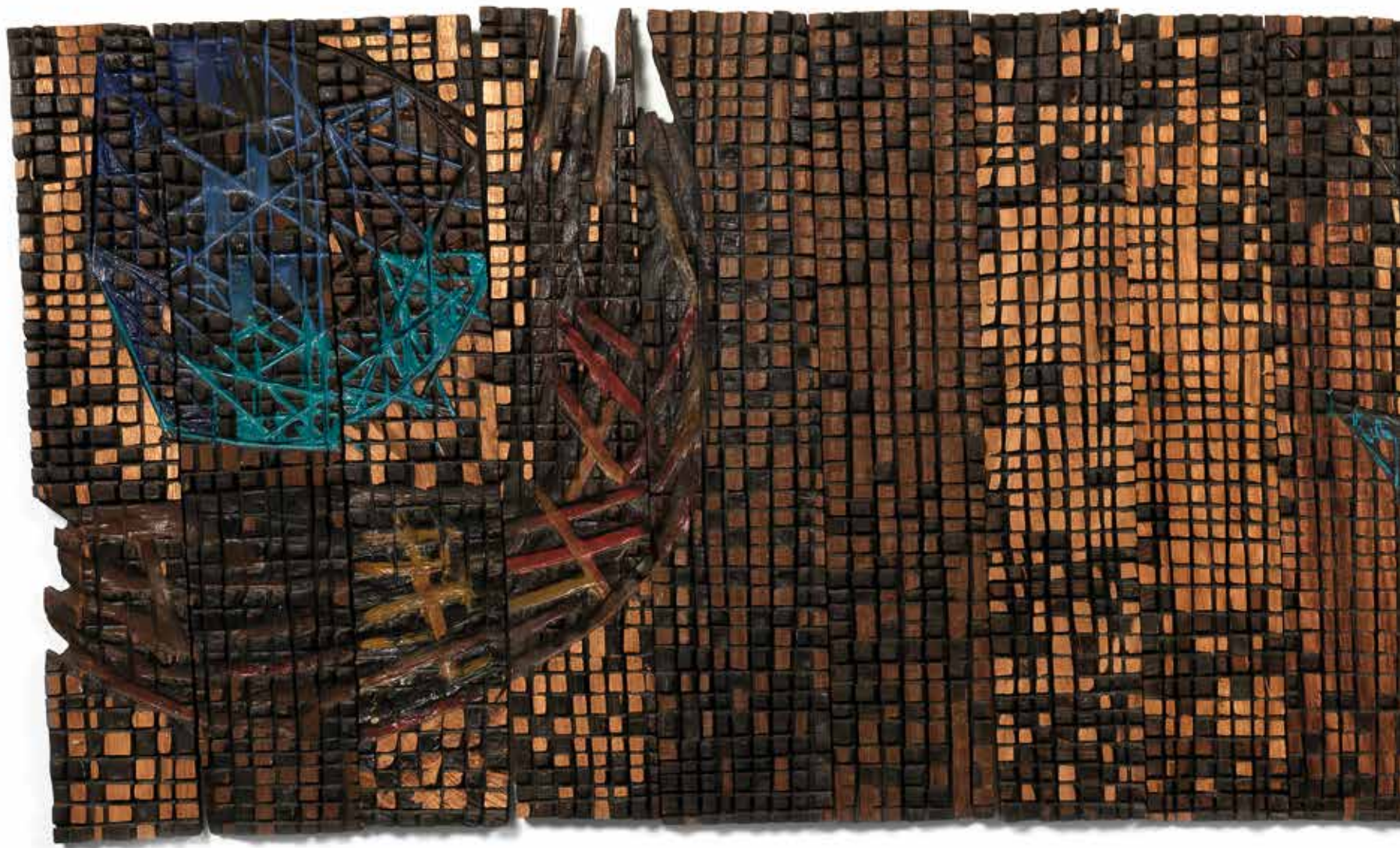
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Clockwise from above left:

Attenborough's Oscars for Best Picture and Best Director for *Gandhi*; with his wife, Sheila Sim; his study, packed with awards, clapper boards and other memorabilia from a lifetime in the movies



Under African skies

African art has taken its place in the sun. **Farah Nayeri** charts its rise and profiles three artists in Bonhams Africa Now sale

This has been an auspicious few years for African contemporary art. In an historic first, last year's edition of the 120-year-old Venice Biennale was curated by an African-born curator: Okwui Enwezor (director of the Haus der Kunst in Munich). Artists born in Accra, Lagos, Lubumbashi, Maputo and Nairobi had works included in the main Venice Biennale exhibition. And this year marked the debut of the 1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair in the US.

How times have changed. Thirty years ago, the continent was virtually excluded from the Western contemporary art scene. 'African art' still evoked visions of centuries-old tribal masks and totemic wooden sculptures found in ethnographic museums. Artists actually living and working in Sub-Saharan Africa were almost entirely overlooked by Western museums, curators, gallerists and auction houses.

Why the interest today? To begin with, the art world

is seeking alternatives to the West's headline artists, partly out of a thirst for the new, and partly because the West's biggest names now command stratospheric prices. Secondly, African artists portray an enchanting universe using motifs and colour palettes that are unusual to the Western viewer. Finally, these works offer aspiring collectors an affordable way into the market, and provide established ones with a fresh investment opportunity.

"The art world is seeking alternatives to the West's headline artists, and African art portrays an enchanting universe, using motifs and colour palettes that are unusual to the Western viewer"

The West's awakening can more or less be traced back to a milestone exhibition: *Magiciens de la Terre*, staged in 1989 at the Centre Pompidou and the Grande Halle de la Villette in Paris. Its curator, Jean-Hubert Martin, was shocked to find at the time that contemporary art was the preserve of artists originating from NATO member



Above: El Anatsui
(Ghanaian, born 1944)
The Pilgrims
carved wood relief
with acrylic
52.5 x 170.5cm (20¾ x 67in)
Estimate: £30,000 - 50,000
(\$50,000 - 80,000)

countries. So *Magiciens* focused on all five continents, giving numerous artists from Africa (including Chéri Samba, see box overleaf) their first exposure in the West. Though criticised in its time, the exhibition blazed the trail for other landmark shows, such as *Africa Explores* at New York's New Museum in 1991, and *Africa Remix* at London's Hayward Gallery in 2005.

Over the last decade, much progress has been made. In 2009, Bonhams launched its *Africa Now* contemporary-art sales, the world's only auction series focusing on the continent. In late 2011, Tate set up an African art acquisitions committee and named a dedicated curator. And in 2013, the 1:54 Art Fair (named after Africa's 54 component countries) was launched at London's Somerset House to spotlight artists from Africa and the African diaspora. There was a real need for it, recalls its Moroccan-born founding director Touria El Glaoui. Important artists whom she encountered in Ghana, South Africa, Nigeria and Morocco were utterly absent from international museum shows, art fairs and biennales, where the predominant names "would be white, male and hail from Europe and the Americas".

Nevertheless, the African contemporary art market is only just making the transition from infancy to adolescence. The 1:54 fair had 10,000 visitors last year – one-sixth the number at Frieze London. Auction records for many African artists, even star names, are in the five digits. The African contemporary art market still has plenty of room to grow.

EL ANATSUI

Alcohol distillers in Africa recycle the bottles that contained their brand of whisky, brandy or rum, but throw away the caps, seals and labels that came with them. Those discarded items are important materials in the art of Ghanaian-born artist El Anatsui. He stitches bottle tops together with copper wire and produces giant wall-sized artworks that are today in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Smithsonian and the British Museum.

Born in 1944, Anatsui studied sculpture and art as a young man, and took up a career in academia, moving to Nigeria in 1975. He sculpted as well, of course, crafting objects out of ceramic fragments and timber. His mastery of wood is clearly in evidence in *The Pilgrims*, above, a carved wooden relief, and in *Al Haji* (1990), a minutely-carved abstract sculpture from earlier in his career.

One day, on a random walk around his studio, he discovered a pile of discarded bottle tops. To Anatsui,



Left: El Anatsui
(Ghanaian, born 1944)
Al Haji
wooden sculpture
184cm high (72½in)
Estimate: £100,000 - 150,000
(\$160,000 - 240,000)

“When Anatsui discovered a pile of discarded bottle tops, he realised that these encapsulated the history of the West’s relationship with Africa”

these pieces of litter – which had once capped bottles of Dark Sailor, Nobleman or King Edward liquor – encapsulated the history of the West’s relationship with Africa. Drinks, after all, were among the items that Europeans brought to Africa to start trading with the continent. They were a currency in their time, used to pay for goods, and even, on occasion, for slaves. To Anatsui, they carried layers of history and meaning.

Today, Anatsui works with a host of other found materials: milk tins, iron nails, cassava graters. Yet it is the bottle-cap works that have made him an international celebrity, and that appeal the most to museums and collectors; one of them hung over the facade of the Palazzo Fortuny at the 2007 Venice Biennale. They evoke the traditional textiles of Ghana, but inevitably also the tapestries of 17th-century Europe, and the shimmering paintings of Gustav Klimt.

CHERI SAMBA

Chéri Samba – born in the Congolese village of Kinto M’Vuila in 1956 – was one of 10 children of a blacksmith, and the eldest son. His father had high hopes that he would take up the family trade. Yet Samba did nothing of the sort. At age 16, he packed his bags and moved to the capital, Kinshasa. There, he got himself a job as a sign painter, working alongside other up-and-coming artists of his generation. Three years later, he opened his own studio and became an illustrator for an entertainment magazine.

Those formative years helped make Samba the artist that he is. His splashy, billboard-style paintings are executed in cheery, cartoon-like colours. To Samba, colour is synonymous with life itself, and he makes dazzling use of it, notably in the work he is best known for: *J’aime la couleur* (2003). In it, the artist portrays himself as a figure made of spiralling ribbons of colour, holding a bright yellow paintbrush between his teeth, and with a bright blue sky in the background. His paintings often carry tongue-in-cheek inscriptions that satirize tradition and politics but also offer thought-provoking comments on more grave issues such as AIDS and poverty. Samba – who became known in the West with the 1989 Paris exhibition, *Magiciens de la Terre* – has appeared in both solo and group shows at the Fondation Cartier in Paris, including this year’s *Beauté Congo*. He is today one of the top-selling artists from the continent.

Right: Chéri Samba
(Democratic Republic of
Congo, born 1956)
J'aime la couleur
inscribed, signed and dated
'J'AIME LA COULEUR.../
Cheri Samba/ 2003'
(lower left)
oil on canvas
121 x 151cm (48 x 59½in)
Estimate: £25,000 - 35,000
(\$39,000 - 55,000)

Below: Gonçalo Mabunda
(Mozambican, born 1975)
Weapon Throne
welded metal and
decommissioned weapons
94 x 82 x 55cm
(37 x 32¼ x 21¾in)
Estimate: £7,000 - 10,000
(\$11,000 - 15,600)



GONÇALO MABUNDA

Gonçalo Mabunda was born at a violent time in Mozambican history: in 1975, the very year that his country gained independence from Portugal, and two years before it launched into a murderous civil war that left a million people dead. The little boy was only seven when he first came into contact with weaponry on the occasion his uncle, a soldier in the ruling party's military wing, displayed his personal panoply.

Today, Mabunda (a star of the African contemporary-art scene) is known for crafting seamlessly elegant sculptures – thrones, chairs, decorative masks – out of weaponry. His *Weapon Throne* is made of clearly recognisable mortar shells, shell casings, and rifle magazines. The armaments he uses in his works are similar to the ones that his uncle used, only they have been de-commissioned. At the civil war's end in 1992, Mozambique had an estimated seven million weapons scattered across the country. Mabunda sometimes wonders whether one of the random pieces in his atelier might have killed or harmed someone he knew. In any event, the sculptures he produces with them are unquestionably striking: as reminiscent of African tribal art as they are of the early Cubist assemblages of Pablo Picasso.

Farah Nayeri is a culture writer and contributor to The International New York Times.

Sale: Africa Now
New Bond Street
Thursday 15 October at 2pm
Enquiries: Hannah O'Leary +44 (0) 20 7468 8213
hannah.oleary@bonhams.com
bonhams.com/africanow





The shape shifter

The work of Kohei Nawa is as amorphous as the digital manipulations he uses to create his sculptures. As he prepares to create a special installation at Bonhams, **Matthew Wilcox** strives to keep up with all the artist's plans and projects

Before I came to London, I didn't really like contemporary art," says Kohei Nawa – an unexpected admission from a man hailed by *The New York Times* as "one of Japan's most sought-after artists" and a "creative force". The Kyoto-based sculptor, 39, is explaining his pivotal decision to spend a year studying at the Royal College of Art in London in 1998. "I had seen an Antony Gormley solo show in Shikoku, and was struck by how he extracted a sense of emotional power out of even simple materials. So I decided to come and check it out."

Trim and polished, Nawa – unlike his swelling, sometimes sprawling organic sculpture – makes a neat figure; dressed in black, he emits a sense of cool and control. The look is something he credits to his ongoing partnership with Rei Kawakubo, the creative director of global fashion brand Comme des Garçons, whom he describes as an "inspiration". Theirs is one of a number of cross-disciplinary collaborations that have punctuated Nawa's career.

"I designed some headwear for the Comme des Garçons spring/summer show in 2012. After the fashion show, Rei asked me to contribute to the interiors for her New York and Tokyo stores. Actually, until working with her I had zero interest in fashion – but I thought maybe I should give her clothes a go." He points to his shirt: "This is one of hers."

In September, Nawa – who now also counts Antony Gormley and Anish Kapoor among his ever-expanding circle of friends and contacts – will return to England as one of the emerging superstars of the Asian arts scene. In London

he will present his first-ever UK installation as part of the *She Inspires Art* fundraising event to be held at Bonhams on behalf of the humanitarian organisation Women for Women International.

When I meet Nawa, he is in full flow, pacing the floors of Bonhams' three-storey building, taking in the corridors, windows and ceilings, admiring the light and weighing up the possibilities of the space for the installation. It is the second time he has flown to London at his own expense to measure up the space for his installation. "I'm really pleased to join Women for Women International in helping to raise vital funds to support women survivors of war and conflict," he enthuses.

The centrepiece of the show will be (appropriately) his 2012 figure of a woman, *Trans Double Yana (Mirror)*, a characteristically high-tech piece that combines computer-aided design with the traditional Japanese obsession with craft. *Trans* is the product of the cutting-edge digital sculptural techniques that typify the artist's way of working. "We create a 3-D scan of a person or an object, and then apply a technique called 'texture mapping', by which we

"We create a 3-D scan of a person, then use 'texture mapping' to give the effect of something emerging from a parallel world"

are able to magnify or diminish elements within the 3-D data. We are trying to give the effect of something emerging from a parallel world." He adds, "Science, and particularly biological science, rather than the arts, has always been the biggest influence on my work."

Nawa, who was born in 1975, originally trained at Kyoto City University of Arts, where

On reflection To create his 2012 sculpture, *Trans Double Yana (Mirror)*, Kohei Nawa used texture mapping to warp elements of the original human figure



he was exposed to the vast quantities of religious art stockpiled in the former capital's thousands of temples, which he admired for its focus on process rather than self-expression.

Discussing other influences, he says, "Of course, movements like Gutai – the radical post-Second World War group – are an influence but, in fact, Mono-ha has had a larger impact on my work." The Mono-ha ['school of things'] group of 1968-73, which included Nobuo Sekine and Susumu Koshimizu (whom Nawa studied under at university) was important in Japan for its emphasis on materials and audience participation. As Nawa says, "Mono-ha taught me to look at the relationships between materials."

Nawa first attracted critical attention in 2003 with the launch of his signature *PixCell* series, a series of found objects – often pieces of taxidermy ordered from the internet – that he would cover with transparent crystal glass beads of varying sizes. The self-coined title, combining pixel and cell, encapsulates the juxtaposition of organic and technological elements that continue to characterise his work; these have latterly taken the form of a series of seemingly uncontrolled agglomerations of resin, foam, water, oil and glue.

Clockwise from above: Nawa's installation *Foam* (2013) created a cloud-like landscape with soapy bubbles; from his series, *Direction*; the mixed-media piece, *Throne* (2011); the artist at work in his studio



me with incredulity. “Cool Japan?” he asks, “Lame. I can’t think of anything worse.”

Nawa is perhaps the most famous example of ‘the post-Murakami generation’, whose work appears bound together by a thread of high-tech virtuosity, and whose members are increasingly visible overseas. Aiko Miyanaga exhibited her disintegrating naphthalene sculptures in June last year at the West End’s first dedicated Japanese gallery, White Rainbow, while the work of Tabaimo (Ayako Tabata) – unnerving digital riffs on traditional woodblock prints – can be found in MoMA and the National Museum of Australia. Meanwhile, Nawa’s friend, the Paris-based audio artist Ryoji Ikeda, recently completed a residency at Cern in Switzerland, home of the the Large Hadron Collider.

All but the latter are the products of Kyoto’s thriving art schools, where Nawa continues to dedicate a fair amount of his time to teaching – something which he says invigorates his work: “Kyoto is full of universities and young people, and the mix of history and youth, energy and potential, creates a powerful dynamic.” Nowhere more so than at his studio in a formerly disused sandwich factory on the Uji River in Kyoto. The factory, called Sandwich, is the hub from which Nawa’s team of around 40 artists, technicians and students coordinate his diverse projects.

Yet in spite of the apparent shared interests and themes, Nawa rejects the idea of any kind of collective regional or even national artistic identity. “To be honest I don’t really have that many friends who are artists,” he admits. “I get on much better with architects.” He rattles off a list of superstar names: “Arata Isozaki, Toyo Ito, Kazuyo Sejima, Rem Koolhaas, Junya Ishigami...”

“My sculpture is based around interaction, about creating an experience within a space, similar to what architecture aims to do, which is why I’m currently working on 15 architecture projects as well as about 40 artworks.”

It is the freedom of this outlook, the mix of traditional craftsmanship with cutting-edge technology, that characterises the new Japanese approach. Nawa embodies a theory of artistic and design convergence made possible by technology, as he explains with satisfaction. “Architectural design has existed as a flat or 2-D discipline, but now, like everything else, it has been thrown open by the emergence of 3-D digital technology, and with that transition, sculpture, architecture, film and game design are all converging.”

Matthew Wilcox is Deputy Editor of Bonhams Magazine.

Kohei Nawa’s installation is part of *She Inspires Art*, an event in aid of Women for Women International. Open to the public on 15 & 16 September, Bonhams, New Bond Street. womenforwomen.org.uk

“Nawa is dismissive of official efforts to promote the country’s contemporary artists. ‘Cool Japan? Lame. I can’t think of anything worse’”



Since the launch of *Pixcell*, Nawa’s career has gone from strength to strength, culminating in first prize at the Asian Art Biennale in Bangladesh in 2010. While at the Aichi Triennale in Japan in 2013, his installation *Foam* – a shimmering cloudscape set in a pitch-black room – attracted both popular and critical acclaim. Meanwhile, his work has been snapped up by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne.

This is something of a boom time for Japanese contemporary artists. In 2012, Yayoi Kusama was the subject of a major retrospective at Tate Modern, while last year Yoshitomo Nara starred at Frank Cohen’s Dairy Art Centre in London. Even the Japanese government is on board, after decades pushing the genteel arts of tea ceremony and flower arrangement. Not that everybody is happy about it. Asked what he thinks of ‘Cool Japan’ – the Ministry for Cultural Affairs’ billion-dollar effort to promote the country’s contemporary artists Nawa looks at

Venerable beads

A lifetime's passion for Native American art and a career in films has enabled horseman extraordinaire Mario Luraschi to amass an outstanding collection, as *Jim Haas* discovers



A Ute beaded shirt
22in (56cm)
Estimate: \$80,000 - 120,000
(£50,000 - 80,000)



Above: Luraschi's house in France is packed with elements of Luraschi's finds



Above right: A Crow pipe tomahawk
23½in (58.5cm)
Estimate: \$50,000 - 70,000
(£30,000 - 45,000)



Right: A Crow beaded lance case
43in (109cm)
Estimate: \$20,000 - 30,000
(£15,000 - 20,000)

Far right: Mario Luraschi, surrounded by some of his prized collection



“At a Native-American theme park in France, he would lead out his fellow Indian braves to attack a train”

Mario Luraschi bought his first piece of Native American craft at the age of 13 – a pair of moccasins, demonstrating, so the story goes, that a great journey starts with small (in)steps. The renowned horse trainer and stunt rider's collection of Native American art and artefacts now comprises some 600 pieces, from which he is offering a selection of choice examples at Bonhams Native American art sale in San Francisco. These include a rare Upper Missouri River beaded war shirt, a Sioux quilled cradle and doll, as well as a fine Crow pipe tomahawk.

As a boy growing up in Paris, Luraschi was obsessed with Native American culture – an interest that was inspired more by books than by Hollywood. “Of course I was interested in westerns, but more important was what I read. I wanted to understand why the Indians in the films are portrayed as the bad guys, when the reality was so different.” This in turn sparked an interest in horsemanship, and by 18 the young Frenchman was an accomplished rider.

After leaving school, he found work at a Native American-themed amusement park in France – the Vallée des Peaux Rouges, which included an Indian village from which Mario would lead out his fellow Indian braves to attack a train.

“One day, a big film crew arrived. They couldn't get one of the stunts right, so I stepped in to help...” Luraschi went on to work on more than 500 films in the US, as well as directing his own.

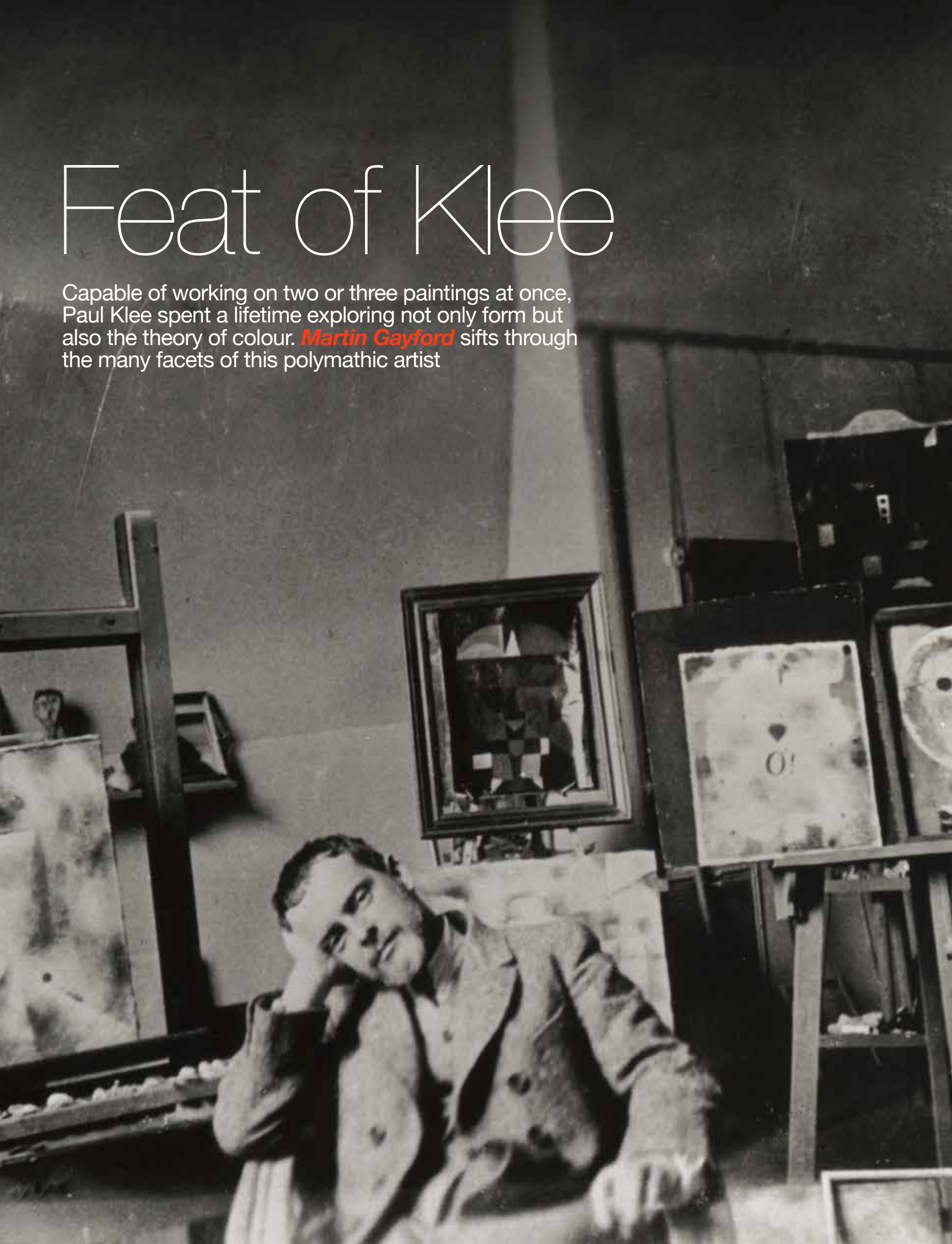
Fortunately as an adult he has been able to spend substantial amounts of time in the American West, not only working on films, but recruiting other riders for the cavalry spectacles he organises for Disney, among others. This extensive travelling has allowed him to indulge his fine eye for Native American art and artefacts. “I have spent a lot of time on the reservations casting for Disney. In Montana, the Crow and Cheyenne are very fine riders. I also spent a year living in Santa Fe in New Mexico. It was a fantastic time not just for me, but for my collection.”

Jim Haas is Director of Native American Art at Bonhams, San Francisco.

Sale: Important American Indian Art from the Collection of Mario Luraschi
San Francisco
Monday 14 September at 11am
Enquiries: Jim Haas +1 415 503 3294
jim.haas@bonhams.com
bonhams.com/native american

Feat of Klee

Capable of working on two or three paintings at once, Paul Klee spent a lifetime exploring not only form but also the theory of colour. **Martin Gayford** sifts through the many facets of this polymathic artist



Opposite: Portrait of the artist: a 1922 photograph of Klee in his studio, described by his Bauhaus colleague Lothar Schreyer as “the wizard’s kitchen”

Right: Paul Klee (1879-1940)
Südalpiner Ort, 1923
 watercolour and gouache on paper
 13½ x 12in (34cm x 30 cm)
 Estimate: \$500,000 - 700,000
 (£325,000 - 450,000)



When, early in 1921, Paul Klee gave his first lecture at the Bauhaus in Weimar, he made an unusual entrance, backing through the door into the classroom. Then, according to his colleague, the painter Georg Muche, “without looking at his audience, he went straight up to the blackboard and began lecturing and drawing”.

Klee, who was ambidextrous, drew in chalk with both right and left hands while simultaneously speaking in a low voice to the students behind him. His playful sense of humour had got him in trouble at school in Bern, where he drew caricatures in his notebooks and scandalised the authorities with a magazine, *The Bug*, that he produced with friends. To conclude his Bauhaus lecture, according to Muche, Klee put two arcs on the board, intersecting at one end and just touching at the other. “And this is the fish of Columbus!” he announced; then he left the room.

Paul Klee both was and was not a fish out of water at the Bauhaus. It was an institution dedicated to a new, modernist synthesis of all the arts, the highest expression of which was in

architecture. Its director was – not surprisingly – one of the most influential of modernist architects, Walter Gropius.

Architecture was certainly one of the most important themes of Klee’s work, and had been long before he joined the Bauhaus. His painting *Südalpiner Ort* [South Alpine Village] from 1923 – to be sold at Bonhams’ November Impressionist and Modern Art sale in New York – is quite characteristic in that way. It is a picture

of a place: not one he studied directly from the motif, but one with which he was familiar from his youth and upbringing in Switzerland, where he was born in 1879. It seems to show houses, four-square and sturdy, rising against a mountainous slope. The texture of

the surface – and the purplish greys of the colour range – suggest winter light, sturdy upland vegetation and a huddle of dwellings.

Klee’s temperament and approach, however, were not entirely suited to the Bauhaus emphasis on the collective work of many exponents of varied crafts. Although he taught in the workshops devoted to metal work, stained glass, book binding and weaving, as well as on the celebrated ‘preliminary course’ – which prepared

“Klee’s sense of humour got him in trouble at school in Bern, where he drew caricatures in his notebooks”



Top: *View of St Germain* is a pivotal work, showing how Klee was inspired to use colour following a visit to Tunisia in 1914

Above: *Redgreen and Violet-Yellow Rhythms* (1920) combines abstraction with fir-tree details

the students in such subjects as colour theory and the relationship of forms – Klee was in essence a painter, and one whose credo came close to the doctrine of art for art's sake. "The picture has no particular purpose," he told his Bauhaus class. "It only has the purpose of making us happy." He believed in art as the expression of an inner creative force: "The artist does not want to reproduce the Lord God... he wants to be that Lord himself."

Far from being collective, his own work was meditative and solitary. The painter Lyonel Feininger and his wife Julia observed Klee at work. For hours he would sit quietly in a corner of his studio, smoking his pipe, "apparently not occupied at all – but full of inner watching". Then he would quietly get up, and "with unerring sureness he would add a touch of colour here, draw a line or spread a tone there, thus attaining his vision with infallible logic in an almost subconscious way". One wonders whether, while meditating on *Südalpiner Ort* in his studio – as well as rhythm, colour and form – he was thinking of Münchenbuchsee, the village near Bern where he was born.

Another colleague, Lothar Schreyer, who was in charge of the stage workshop at the Bauhaus, would hear Klee pacing back and forth in the studio above his, a soft sound he initially thought might be the painter's big tomcat, Fritz. In fact the sound was the result of Klee's tendency to work on two or three paintings at once, moving back and forth between them, "choosing his materials, testing, peering, creating". Schreyer thought of Klee's studio as "the wizard's kitchen". He recalled that "the whole of our Bauhaus in Weimar was a kind of laboratory", but this "was the place where the real magic potions were brewed".

Despite – or perhaps because of – his habit of working on several pictures simultaneously, Klee's work was quite diverse. Paintings from the same period differ in the degree to which they do or do



Above: Key figures of the Bauhaus movement, including Walter Gropius, Vassily Kandinsky and László Moholy-Nagy, along with Paul Klee, gather on the roof of the Bauhaus building in Weimar (right)



not seem to depict the external world. Famously, Klee proclaimed in 1920, “Art does not reproduce the visible, it makes visible.”

Nonetheless, *Südalpiner Ort* is unusually representational – but not uniquely so. Klee’s father was German, and the artist studied painting in Munich. Later in that same year, 1923, Klee went on a three-week holiday with his wife Lily and son Felix to the German island of Baltrum in the North Sea. There he produced 16 watercolours, including some surprisingly representational views of dunes and waves. More often, his work grew out of inner musing on form, colour and a deep interest in visual rhythm, connected with a love of music inherited from his parents.

Once, Klee confessed to Georg Muche, he was painting away in his studio, when “suddenly, I don’t know why, I had to dance”.

“Art does not reproduce the visible,” Klee famously proclaimed in 1920. ‘It makes visible’

A painting such as *Redgreen and Violet-Yellow Rhythms* (1920), in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, is a composition of pulsing squares

and rectangles of differing sizes and hues. It is as abstract as a Mondrian – except that here and there among the cubes little fir trees grow, giving it a sense of space and place: another Alpine landscape.

Picture of a Town (Red Green graduated) was painted, to judge from the cataloguing number Klee gave it, rather later in 1923 than *Südalpiner Ort* (the former is no. 90, the latter no. 26). It is another colouristic fandango of rectangles, except in this case, a couple are surmounted by semi-circles. It is just enough to transform an abstraction into a faint suggestion of a north African cityscape. Probably, this picture is an echo of Klee’s journey to

Tunisia in 1914 – one of the formative experiences of his artistic life – just as *Südalpiner Ort* harks back to his Swiss origins.

In Tunisia, Klee confided to his diary on April 8th, 1914 that his head was “full of the impressions of last night’s walk”. He got down to work at once on a watercolour of the Arab quarter. “Colour and I are one,” he declared in his diaries. “I am a painter.” At a deeper level he felt he had begun “the synthesis of urban architecture and pictorial architecture”.

The germ of this idea had been planted even earlier, when in the winter of 1901-1902, the youthful Klee visited Italy. Looking back, he felt that, although the great buildings of Italy were “utilitarian structures”, architecture had remained the purest of the arts. “The easily discernible structure of its form, its spatial organism, has been the most salutary school for me”.

This was the level at which Klee wholeheartedly concurred with the architectural emphasis of the Bauhaus. Every painting, he believed, should be in a sense architectural. It was necessary for “a scaffolding of the painting to be built”. Buildings, even blueprints, were favourite subjects of his. It was not for nothing that he entitled another of his pictures from 1923, *Pictorial Architecture*. That’s what his pictures always were; but *Südalpiner Ort*, with its lighted windows in the dusk offers an almost nostalgic variation on that theme.

Martin Gayford is the co-author of Rendez-Vous With Art; his most recent book is Eileen Cooper: Between The Lines.

Sale: Impressionist and Modern Art
New York
Tuesday 3 November at 1pm
Enquiries: William O’Reilly +1 212 644 9135
william.oreilly@bonhams.com
bonhams.com/impressionist



Military Commission for the trial of Lincoln's conspirators



President Andrew Johnson



William H Seward, Secretary of State

Seat of power

All the presidents – and their men – posed with a humble chair in a photographer's studio. **Madelia Ring** investigates

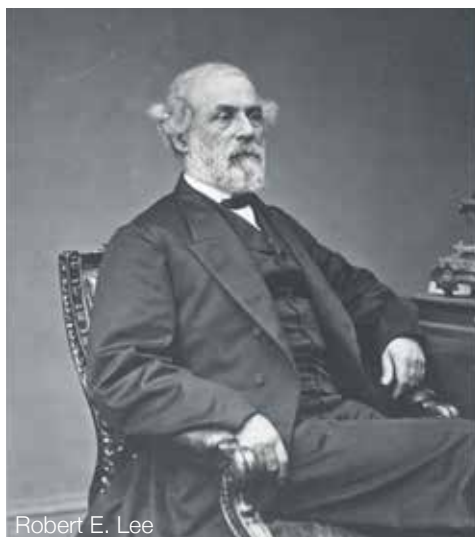


William T Sherman



President Abraham Lincoln with his son, Tad

Left: The important Matthew Brady studio carved oak armchair, made by Bembe & Kimbel, New York, circa 1857
Estimate: \$150,000 - 250,000
(£100,000 - 160,000)



Robert E. Lee



President Ulysses S. Grant



President James A. Garfield and his daughter



Andrew Carnegie



American chieftain



President Rutherford Hayes

To mark the occasion of his speech at the Cooper Institute in New York in 1860, an obscure lawyer from the backwater state of Indiana decided to have his portrait taken. He chose the experienced photographer, Matthew Brady, who had the nous to pull up the collar on his sitter's shirt to conceal the ill-favoured man's gangling neck.

The resulting image of Abraham Lincoln, which was widely distributed along with his speech, would in time become the model for the portrait on the five-dollar bill. Lincoln later declared, "Brady and the Cooper Institute made me President."

According to legend, it was in gratitude to Brady that Lincoln later gave the photographer a chair, designed by cabinetmakers Bembe & Kimbe – to be offered in New York's Fine Furniture sale on 26 October – and which became the central prop in the photographer's subsequent portraits of Washington's rich and powerful.

The list of Brady's subjects reads like a *Who's Who* of the 19th century: no fewer than five presidents sat in his chair, as well as all

manner of senators, generals, chieftains and princes. These disparate sitters are united not only by this one object, but by their stiff expressions, the consequence of a special metal contraption designed to hold their necks in place for the tortuous 15 seconds that the shutter took to do its work.

Brady went on to be a chronicler of the American Civil War, the first major conflict to be extensively photographed: his exhibition of 1862, *The Dead of Antietam*, gave an unprecedented and unflinchingly graphic depiction of the realities of war.

While the images displayed on this page are undoubtedly less shocking, nonetheless they give a fascinating glimpse into the past.

Madelia Ring is a specialist in European Furniture and Works of Art at Bonhams New York.

Sale: Fine Furniture, Silver, Decorative Arts and Clocks
New York
Monday 26 October at 10am
Enquiries: Madelia Ring +1 212 710 1300
madelia.ring@bonhams.com
bonhams.com/furniture

"A special metal contraption held the sitters' necks in place for the tortuous 15 seconds"



G.A. Townsend, Mark Twain and David Gray

Marine Paintings

London

Wednesday 7 October

2pm

Norman Wilkinson (British, 1878-1971)

The Cunard Liner Lusitania Speeding

Past the Fastnet Lighthouse (detail)

signed and dated

oil on canvas

76.2 x 101.6cm (30 x 40in)

Estimate: £20,000 - 30,000

(\$35,000 - 50,000)

Enquiries: Rhyanon Demery

+44 (0) 20 7393 3865

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bonhams.com/marine



Rising Suntory

Japanese malt is taking the world by storm. **Matthew Wilcox** explains why the country's whisky is no longer lost in translation

"Mr Bob-san, imagine you're relaxing in your study. There's a bottle of Suntory whisky on the table. Now, with intense feeling, slowly, look at the camera, as if to an old friend, like Bogie in *Casablanca* saying, 'Here's looking at you kid...' Suntory time!"

When Bill Murray's character was asked by an increasingly hysterical director to channel Bogart for a whisky advert in the 2003 film, *Lost in Translation*, the effect may have been pure bathos, but in fact, the picture painted by the director perfectly encapsulates the aspirations of millions of Japan's malt fanatics.

For the discerning Tokyo drinker, the ideal remains a hazily-lit bar, where – long after the last commuter trains have left Shinjuku – the errant salarymen can while away the night (or morning), lost in a delicious fug of whisky, cigarette smoke and Blue Note reissues.

At the heart of this is a love affair with whisky. While the vagaries

"The Japanese have spent the past 90 years obsessively creating their very own hard-boiled wonderland"

of fashion in the West may have condemned malt to the endless cycle of premature death and much-hyped rediscovery (with headlines such as Whisky Galore As Sales Surge!; Whisky The Next Gin!?), the Japanese have spent the past 90 years obsessively creating their very own hard-boiled wonderland in the midst of Tokyo's 300,000 bars.

Scotland may have Japan whipped for quantity of distilleries by a ratio of ten to one, but the Japanese have carved out their own space in the market by matching the manic search for quality that distinguishes their home market.

And now, the rest of the world is starting to pay attention too, kickstarted it seems, by the massive publicity generated from appearing alongside Scarlett Johansson. For the third year in a row, the Japanese have won the

Whisky World Championship, while a Japanese whisky has been named the world's best in Jim Murray's Whisky Bible 2015. Meanwhile, Suntory picked up the Distiller of the Year award for the fourth time at the 2014 International Spirits Challenge.

Bonhams expert Martin Green explains what makes Japanese malt so interesting. "It tends to be lighter and more aromatic than Scotch," he says, "showing great purity, similar to a Speyside, but with a completely distinctive and exotic character of its own."

While the success of Japanese whisky may be a recent phenomenon, the roots of the whisky industry in Japan stretch surprisingly deep, dating back to 1872, when a shipment was made from Edinburgh to Yokohama. The first whisky distillery in Japan was set up 50 years later in 1923, when Shinjiro Torii, the founder of Suntory, bought a plot of land in Yamazaki, on the outskirts of Kyoto – a place already famous for its

association with the tea ceremony, owing to the quality of the water.

In fact, many of the families involved in whisky production have

had hundreds of years of experience as distillers, making Japan's own indigenous spirit, *shochu*. One such distiller is Ichiro Akuto, who is the 21st generation of his family in the business. A complete set of Ichiro's Playing Card Series was the highlight of Bonhams August whisky sale in Hong Kong.

The ongoing success of this industry should ensure that some corner of the floating world will remain forever Bogart – even if Rick's was a 'gin joint'.

Matthew Wilcox is Deputy Editor of Bonhams Magazine.

Sale: Fine & Rare Wine, Cognac & Single Malt Whisky
Hong Kong
Friday 20 November at 6pm
Enquiries: Daniel Lam +852 3607 0004
daniel.lam@bonhams.com
bonhams.com/whisky



That's the spirit:
Karuizawa 1981 #348 Noh
Estimate: HK\$ 23,000 - 33,000
(£1,900 - 2,700)



Costa nostra

Syracuse is the ideal base from which to explore the eastern part of Sicily, says **Christopher Newall**

I began my love affair with Sicily in Syracuse. Set on the south-eastern coast, it is one of the most gloriously beautiful and historically fascinating cities of the Mediterranean. Although it is connected to the mainland by a causeway, Syracuse was built, back in the eighth century BC, on the island of Ortygia, and so enjoyed an invaluable defensive position. Consequently, the city was fought over by – among others – Athens, neighbouring Greek colonists on Sicily, Carthage and, finally, Rome.

By reading Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War*, one can follow *in situ* the events of Athens' disastrous attack on the city in 415-13 BC as they unfolded, and the strategic significance of landmarks such as the **Plemmyrium** and **Epipolae Ridge** will be understood. **Ortygia's cathedral** was built as a Doric temple to celebrate the victory of the Syracusans, while on the mainland there are the ancient quarries where the Athenian captives were held. The determined traveller will want to see the **Castello Eurialo**, built by the tyrant Dionysius I in an attempt to safeguard the city against further attack, and which is the most complete system of military defence to survive from Magna Graecia. And the city's **Archaeological Museum** contains some of the greatest treasures of ancient art.

Ortygia itself offers so many delights. Caravaggio's *Burial of St Lucy* – a painting full of Baroque dynamism and featuring Syracuse's own patroness, now in the church of **Santa Lucia alla Badia** – reveals 17th-century Syracuse's antiquarian sense of its own history. The genius of the great Sicilian Renaissance artist, Antonello da Messina, is glimpsed in his *Annunciation* in the **Museo Bellomo**.

The centre of the town consists of a labyrinth of lanes, piazzas and hidden courtyards, crowded with medieval, Catalan Gothic and Baroque churches, palaces and simple houses. It is glorious to explore. Fragments of the ancient city lie about, with the remains of a sixth-century BC **Temple of Apollo** guarding the causeway. Close to this temple is a market in which a stupendous display is made of all the fish of the Mediterranean, as astonishing in zoological terms as it is stimulating to the appetite.

Syracuse is also a wonderful base from which to explore the eastern part of the island. The landscape of the interior is magnificent, and its agricultural productivity

“Caravaggio's *Burial of St Lucy* reveals 17th-century Syracuse's antiquarian sense of its own history”

is a clue as to why so many successive waves of migrants adopted Sicily as their home. The limestone gorges of **Pantalica** are stupendous. Here, tomb embrasures, carved in the cliff faces by the indigenous Sicel people, date from the second millennium BC. The coastline to the south – **Montelbano** country – meanwhile, offers charming port towns, expanses of beach and the **Vendicari Nature**



Clockwise from left: The cathedral in Syracuse; the city has been repelling invaders since the 8th century BC; Edwardian splendour at the Grand Hotel Villa Igiea in Palermo; Mount Etna lowers over Catania; the amphitheatre at Palazzolo Acreide



Reserve, a place where flamingos gather.

Inland lies the town of **Palazzolo Acreide**, where the visitor may wander through the site of a city built by Greek colonisers and explore a beautifully preserved theatre from the third century BC. There are also the towns of **Ragusa**, **Modica** and **Noto** (the last especially loved by British enthusiasts for the Baroque, notably the Sitwells, who visited in the 1920s), built from a honey-coloured sandstone after a cataclysmic earthquake in 1693.

Most beautiful of all is **Catania** – one of the jewels of European architecture, yet under-appreciated. Set on the coast to the north of Syracuse and beneath the outline of Etna, its streets and squares are laid out for sceneographic effect, with erotically curvilinear church façades.

Head off the beaten track, and you can see glimpses of the unchanging face of Sicily. Legend has it that there are still villages where the Sicilian dialect is spoken with a peculiar inflexion derived from the Normans, who settled here in the 11th century.

The eastern part of the island has always been more prosperous, better administered and less affected by the blight of the Mafia than the west (although tourists should seek to guard themselves against street-crime in Catania). Here especially, Sicily may be seen to be emerging from the miasma of political neglect and interference, and with a new spirit of confidence and optimism.

Speaking of optimism, the island is larger than it seems on a map, and one should resist the temptation of trying to see too much. Slow travel is the key.

Christopher Newall is the author of The Art of Lord Leighton.



When in Sicily ...

Where to stay

Sicily boasts some of the most luxurious and expensive hotels in the world. In Taormina, the **Grand Hotel Timeo** and the **San Domenico Palace Hotel** vie for first place in terms of sybaritic splendour. At the former, on arrival, one is asked whether one prefers linen or cotton sheets, and rooms are made up accordingly. A little less indulgent, but always welcoming and close to the shops and restaurants, is the **Hotel Villa Belvedere**.

In Palermo, beyond the harbour, is the **Grand Hotel Villa Igiea**, a magnificent relic of Edwardian elegance. In the city's historic centre two hotels are particularly to be recommended: the **Centrale Palace** and the **Grand Hotel Piazza Borsa**, while the **Grand Hotel et des Palmes** claims the distinction of having been Wagner's choice of accommodation.

Syracuse is not well provided with hotels, although at least one new one is under construction. There are, though, various small-scale establishments, such as the **Royal Maniace**, **Albergo Domus Mariae** and **Alla Giudecca**, which are both comfortable and characterful.

All over the rest of Sicily, new hotels are opening which are beginning to attract larger numbers of tourists. A few months ago, I stayed in the delightful **Palazzo Cerami** in Catania. Also proliferating are so-called *agriturismos* – converted farm buildings in the countryside, ranging from basic but serviceable to distinctly upmarket, often with swimming pools. Visit agriturismo.it for more details. **C.N**

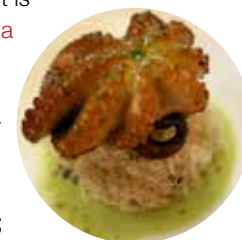
Where to eat

Sicilian cuisine is renowned for its freshness and simplicity, with



the main influences coming from the Greek, Arab and Norman conquerors. The favourite dishes are simple – *pasta con le sarde* (sardines), *caponata di melanzane* (a vegetable stew with aubergines and olives) and *gelato*.

Perhaps the most renowned restaurant is chef Ciccio Sultano's **Il Duomo** (cicciosultano.it) in Ibla, near the hilltown of Ragusa. Memorable dishes here include salami of goat with vegetables; dry-roasted tuna with bottarga and anything that includes the famous Sicilian red prawns. The rival two-star Michelin restaurant is Pino Cuttaio's **La Madia** (ristorantelamadia.it) in the nondescript town of Licata. Savour dishes such as rice balls with red mullet ragout and wild fennel; smoked cod with pine nuts or fried baby octopus on a chickpea base (right).



As a complete contrast, there is **Da Maggiore** (magiore.net), a bargain restaurant in Chiaramonte Gulfi, just north of Ragusa, where the menu is almost nothing but very high quality pork. The *costata ripiena*, a double chop, is well worth trying.

Finally, in Syracuse, **Ristorante L'Ancora** (ristoranteancora.com) is a deceptively simple establishment that serves some of the best seafood in Sicily. **Bruce Palling**

Fine Jewels

New York

Tuesday 13 October

2pm

A diamond ring, Harry Winston, 1949

Estimate: \$70,000 - 90,000

(£45,000 - 60,000)

Enquiries: Caroline Bostock +1 212 461 6526

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Around the Globe

Matthew Wilcox looks at a selection
of Bonhams' sales around the world



Hong Kong *Bright spark*

At a time when cultural activities were restricted in mainland China due to the tumultuous Civil War and equally disastrous Cultural Revolution, the mid-20th century saw an artistic flowering in the Chinese diaspora. Born in Shanghai in 1935, Hsiao Chin left for Taiwan in 1949, and in 1952 studied under Li Chun-Sen, an important figure in the development of modern Chinese painting. Alongside his fellow artists, Hsiao spearheaded Taiwanese art through a series of ground-breaking annual exhibitions starting in 1957. His expressive 1985 work, *Volcano*, will be sold at Bonhams in Hong Kong in October. A political and cultural radical, Hsiao Chin was part of the Ton Fan group, commonly known as the 'Eight Great Outlaws' because of their opposition to the Nationalist government's rejection of the avant-garde.

Image: *Volcano* by Hsiao Chin, 1985

Sale: Modern & Contemporary Art,
Hong Kong, 3 October

Estimate: HK\$900,000 - 1,500,000

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New York *Nobel gesture*

The first workable treatment for pernicious anaemia was announced in 1926, after it was discovered that patients who ate a half pound of raw liver every day were soon cured of the symptoms of the deadly disease. Until then, most sufferers of the condition were expected to die within three years of diagnosis. Following this breakthrough, the American physicians George Minot, William P. Murphy and George Whipple succeeded in preparing effective liver extracts, which, taken orally, constituted the primary treatment for pernicious anaemia until 1948. The Nobel Prize medal awarded to Minot for his pioneering work is to be sold at Bonhams

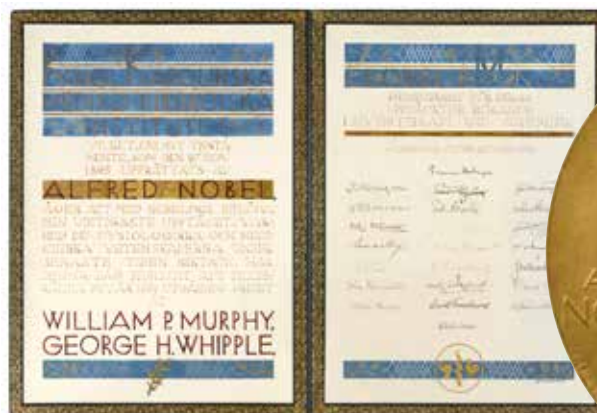
History of Science and Technology Sale in New York in September. Cassandra Hatton, newly appointed head of the History of Science and Technology department said, "It is interesting to note that Minot himself suffered from diabetes and, had it not been for the discovery of insulin by earlier Nobel Prize winners in the 1920s, he would almost certainly not have lived to make his own important contribution."

Image: George Minot's Nobel Prize Medal and Diploma

Sale: History of Science & Technology,
New York, 21 September

Estimate: \$200,000 - 300,000

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Knightsbridge

Stunning Blow

1957 was a pivotal year for London-born artist Sandra Blow (1925-2006). She was raised in the capital, where her father had been a fruit wholesaler at Spitalfields market, then studied at Central St. Martins under Ruskin Spear, and at the Royal Academy Schools. But 1957 was the year Blow left London and moved to Cornwall. A painting from this key period in her life will be offered at the Knightsbridge sale of Modern British and Irish Art in September. The artist rented a cottage in Zennor from Patrick Heron, before moving to a house in Tregerthen where D.H. and Frieda Lawrence had lived during the First World War. Cornwall proved a healthy change for her – she had been an habitu   of Soho’s notorious Colony Club and an intimate of bohemians such as Lucian Freud and John Minton. The change of pace invigorated Blow’s work and soon she was showing alongside artists such as Ben Nicholson, Barbara Hepworth, Peter Lanyon, Roger Hilton, Terry Frost and Heron. In 1957 she featured in the first John Moores biennial exhibition in Liverpool and, in the following year, was included in the Young Artists section at the Venice Biennale. She won the International Guggenheim Award in 1960 and second prize at the third John Moores exhibition at the Walker Art Gallery in 1961.

Image: Sandra Blow (below left); *White Painting*, 1957

Estimate: £8,000 - 12,000

Sale: Modern British & Irish Art, Knightsbridge, 15 September

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   National Portrait Gallery, London



Zurich

Swiss role

Bonhams has appointed Zurich native Andrea Bodmer as its first regional representative in the city. Bodmer trained in the law before joining a major international auction house. “It’s so different with art, when you believe in what you’re selling,” she says of her career switch. An “Impressionist fan” at first, she became interested in contemporary art at Art Basel. “The more you understand, the more you appreciate it. I compare it to a language,” says Bodmer, who speaks English, German and French, and studied at the Sorbonne. Inspired by the success of Bonhams in Geneva, she looks forward to introducing young collectors, particularly, to the company. Bodmer, who has also lived in Geneva, London and New York, values an international approach – before starting, she is travelling on the trans-Siberian railway.

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Edinburgh

Island idyll

Renowned for his interiors of elegant Edinburgh townhouses and their inhabitants, and his vibrant still lifes, the Scottish Colourist Francis Cadell (1883-1937) was also inspired by travel within his native land. In particular, he loved the Hebridean island of Iona that he first visited in 1912 and which features prominently in his work. T.J. Honeyman, biographer and friend of the Colourists – and the man who coined the term for the movement – considered Cadell’s Iona pictures the archetypal Colourist works. During the 1920s Cadell spent several summers with fellow Colourist Samuel Peploe on painting trips to the island. A work from this period will be offered at the Edinburgh sale of Scottish Art in September.

Image: *An Old Croft, Iona* by Francis Cadell

Estimate: £60,000 - 80,000

Sale: Scottish Art, Edinburgh, 16 September

Enquiries: Chris Brickley +44 (0) 131 240 2297
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Impressionist & Modern Art

New York

Tuesday 3 November

1pm

Georges Braque (French, 1882-1963)

Pichet et serviette (detail)

signed 'G Braque' (lower left)

oil on canvas

13½ x 22in (34 x 55.6cm)

Estimate: \$300,000 - 500,000

(£200,000 - 300,000)

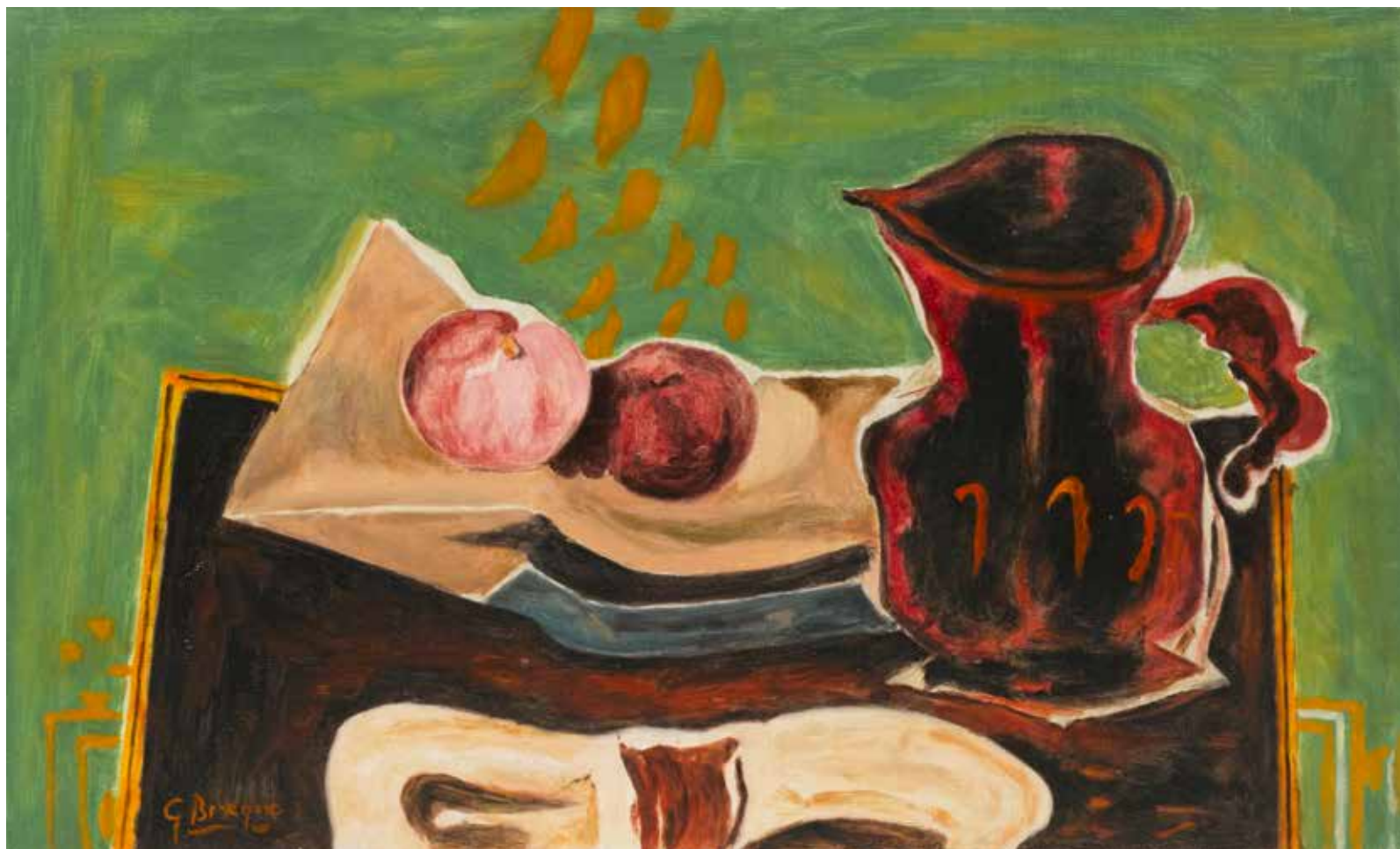
Enquiries: William O'Reilly

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London

New Bond Street

SEPTEMBER

Thur 3 September 10.30am
Fine & Rare Wines

Wed 9 September 2pm
The South African Sale

Thur 24 September 12pm
Fine Jewellery

Wed 30 September 11am
Masterpieces of Bohemian
Glass, Part II

Wed 30 September 2pm
Antiquities

OCTOBER

Mon 5 October 5pm
Modern & Contemporary
South Asian Art

Tues 6 October 2pm
Islamic & Indian Art

Wed 7 October 2pm
A Century of Iraqi Art Part II
& Modern & Contemporary
Middle Eastern Art

Thur 15 October 2pm
Africa Now - Contemporary
Africa

Fri 16 October 4pm
Contemporary Art

Thur 22 October 10.30am
Fine & Rare Wines

Fri 30 October 1pm
London to Brighton Run
Sale, Veteran Motor Cars &
Related Automobilia

NOVEMBER

Wed 4 November 12pm
Britain - Defining the Interior

Tues 10 November 1pm
The Misumi Collection of
Important Works of Lacquer
Art and Paintings: Part II

Tues 10 November 1.30pm
The Edward Wrangham
Collection of Japanese Art:
Part VI

Thur 12 November 10am
Fine Chinese Art

Thur 12 November 1pm
Fine Japanese Art

Wed 18 November 2pm
Europe - Defining Style

Wed 18 November 3pm
Modern British & Irish Art

Tues 24 November 2pm
Prints & Multiples

Wed 25 November 2pm
The Greek Sale

Wed 25 November 3pm
The Russian Sale



Knightsbridge

SEPTEMBER

Tue 8 September 12pm
Period Design

Wed 9 September 11am
Jewellery

Tue 15 September 2pm
Modern British & Irish Art

Tue 15 September 1pm
Watches & Wristwatches

Wed 16 September 1pm
Prints & Multiples

Tue 22 September 1pm
British & European Art

Tue 22 September 1pm
The Jonathan Minns
Collection of Model Steam
Engines

Wed 23 September 10.30am
Asian Art

Wed 30 September 11am
Silver, Objects of Vertu
including Flatware & Portrait
Miniatures

OCTOBER

Wed 7 October 11am
Decorative Arts from 1860

Wed 7 October 11am
Jewellery

Wed 7 October 2pm
Marine Paintings

Tue 13 October 12pm
Period Design

Wed 21 October 10am
Richard Attenborough: A Life
Both Sides of the Camera

Tue 27 October 1pm
Scientific, Technological
& Mechanical Musical
Instruments

Wed 28 October 1pm
Old Master Paintings

NOVEMBER

Mon 2 November 10.30am
Fine European & British
Ceramics & Glass

Mon 2 November 10.30am
Fine Glass & Paperweights

Tue 3 November 11am
Travel & Exploration

Wed 4 November 11am
Jewellery

Mon 9 November 10.30am
Asian Art

Tue 10 November 1pm
Watches & Wristwatches

Wed 11 November 1pm
Books

Tue 17 November 11am
Decorative Arts from 1860

Tue 17 November 12pm
Distinguished Designs &
Post-War Silver

Tue 17 November 2pm
Modern British, Irish & East
Anglian Art

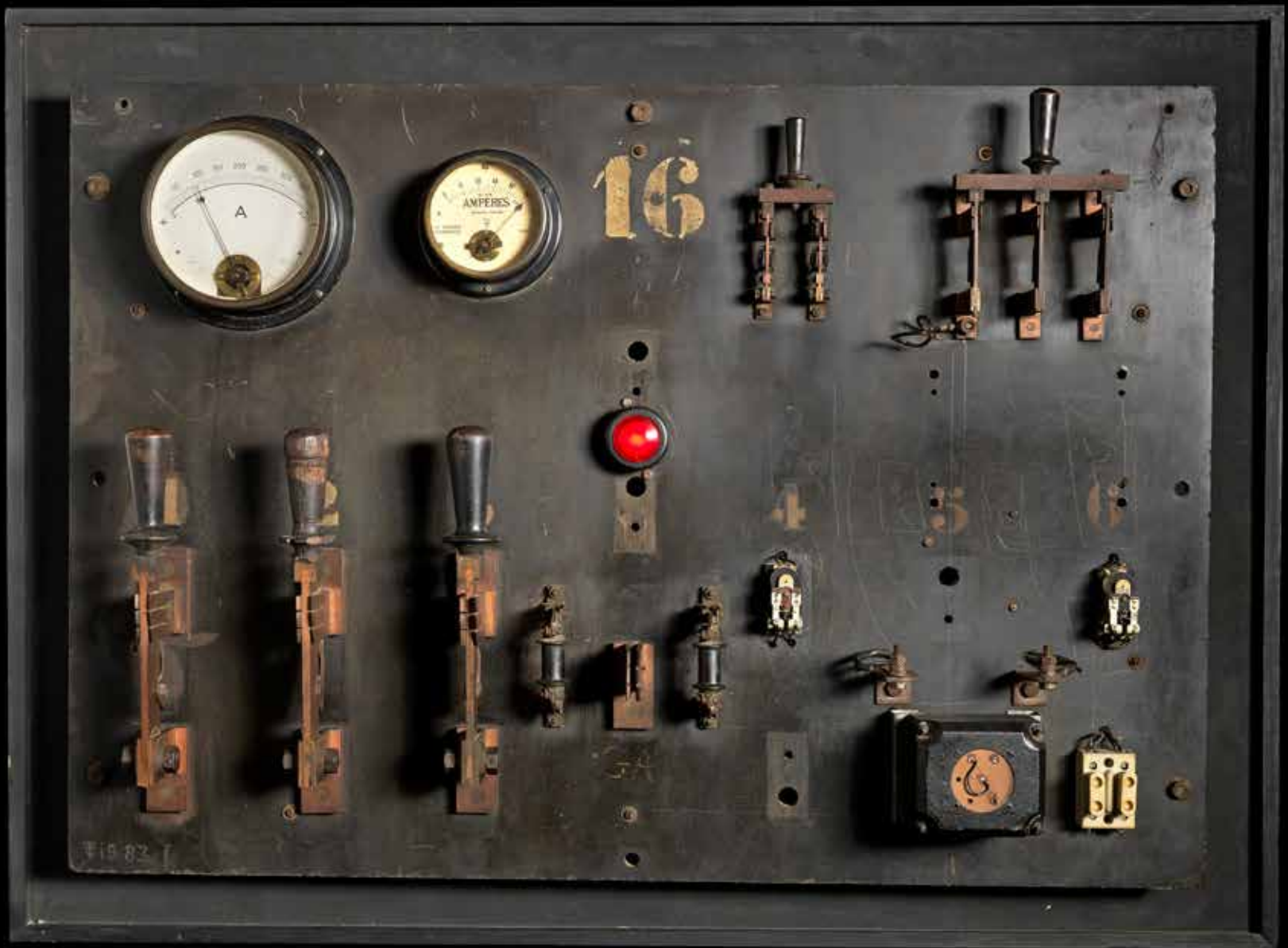
Thur 19 November 10am
Medals, Bonds, Banknotes
& Coins

Tue 24 November 1pm
Victorian & British
Impressionist Art

Wed 25 November 10.30am
Antique Arms & Armour

Wed 25 November 11am
Jewellery





The Greek Sale

London

Wednesday 25 November

2pm

Takis (Panayiotis Vassilakis) (Greek, born 1925)

Tableau, 1983

signed and dated (lower left)

mixed media mounted on wooden panel

85 x 115cm (33½ x 45¼in)

Estimate: £35,000 - 45,000

(\$60,000 - 75,000)

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Regions

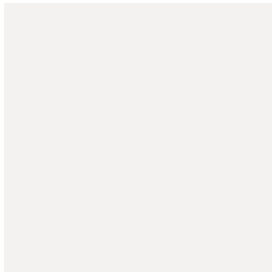
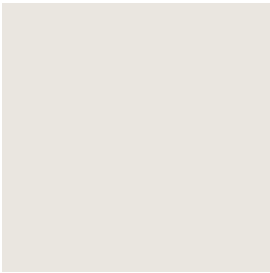
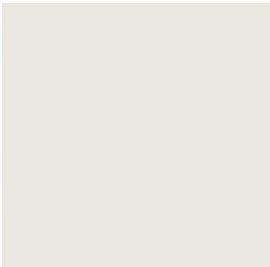
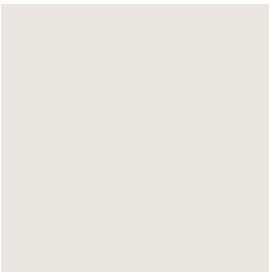
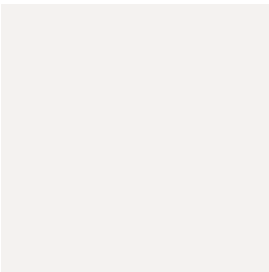
Hong Kong & Australia Sales

SEPTEMBER
Sat 5 September 11am The Beaulieu Sale: Collectors' Motor Cars & Motorcycles Beaulieu, National Motor Museum
Tue 8 & Wed 9 September 10am Art & Antiques Oxford
Sat 12 September 11am Goodwood Revival Chichester, Goodwood
Wed 16 September 2pm Scottish Art Edinburgh
Wed 30 September 11am The Oak Interior Oxford
OCTOBER
Wed 7 October 11am Whisky Edinburgh

Wed 14 October 11am The Sporting Sale Edinburgh
Sun 18 October 10.30am The Autumn Stafford Sale: Important Collectors' Motorcycles Stafford, Staffordshire County Showground
Thur 29 October 11am The Winter Antique & Picture Sale Edinburgh
NOVEMBER
Wed 11 November 11am European Glass & Ceramics Edinburgh
Wed 18 November 11am Asian Art Edinburgh

SEPTEMBER
Sun 6 September 2pm Important Australian Art Sydney, The Jewish Women's Association Hall & Melbourne, Como House
Wed 23 September 2pm Jewellery & Jadeite Hong Kong
Thur 24 September 5pm Fine Writing Instruments Hong Kong
Thur 24 September 7pm Watches & Wristwatches Hong Kong
OCTOBER
Sat 3 October 2pm Modern & Contemporary Art Hong Kong
Mon 26 October 11am Asian Art Sydney, Paddington

NOVEMBER
Sat 14 November 4pm Prints, Photographs & Works on Paper Hong Kong
Fri 20 November 6pm Fine & Rare Wine, Cognac & Single Malt Whisky Hong Kong
Sat 21 November 10am Fine Chinese Works of Art Hong Kong
Sat 21 November 10am Fine Chinese Paintings Hong Kong
Wed 25 November 2pm Important & Rare Cameras Hong Kong
Mon 30 November 6pm Important Australian Art Melbourne, Como House & Sydney, Paddington



Modern British & Irish Art

London

Wednesday 18 November

3pm

Dame Elisabeth Frink R.A. (British, 1930-1993)

Dog, conceived in 1992

signed and numbered 'Frink 49/50'

bronze with a dark brown patina

29.2cm (11½in) high

Estimate: £50,000 - 80,000

(\$80,000 - 130,000)

Small Standing Dog, conceived and cast in 1991

signed and numbered '3/8/Frink'

bronze with a red/brown patina

34.7cm (13¾in) long

Estimate: £50,000 - 80,000

(\$80,000 - 130,000)

Enquiries: Penny Day +44 (0) 20 7468 8366

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North American Sales

SEPTEMBER

Mon 14 September 10am
Coins & Medals
Los Angeles

Mon 14 September 10am
Chinese Art from the
Scholar's Studio
New York

Mon 14 September 11am
Important American Indian
Art from the Collection of
Mario Luraschi
San Francisco

Mon 14 September 12pm
Art & Artifacts of America
San Francisco

Mon 14 September 1pm
Indian, Himalayan &
Southeast Asian Art
New York

Tue 15 September 1pm
Fine Japanese Works of Art
New York

Fri 18 September 10am
Fine & Rare Wines
San Francisco

Mon 21 September 10am
Single Owner
Los Angeles

Mon 21 September 1pm
History of Science &
Technology
New York

Tue 22 September 10am
Fine Books & Manuscripts
New York

Thur 24 September 10am
Fine Furniture, Silver,
Decorative Arts & Clocks
New York

Mon 28 September 9am
Art + Decor
San Francisco

Mon 28 September 10am
California Jewels
Los Angeles

OCTOBER

Mon 5 October 9am
Art + Decor
Los Angeles

Mon 5 October 9am
Preserving the Automobile
Simeone Foundation
Automotive Museum

Sun 11 October 10am
Made in California:
Contemporary Art
Los Angeles

Tue 13 October 10am
Asian Decorative Arts
San Francisco

Tue 13 October 1pm
Fine Jewelry
New York

Mon 19 October 10am
Design
Los Angeles

Mon 19 October 1pm
Japanese Papers
New York

Tue 20 October 10am
Prints & Multiples
San Francisco & Los Angeles

Tue 20 October 1pm
Conflicts of the 20th Century
New York

Tue 20 October 1pm
Art of the Samurai
New York

Tue 27 October 10am
20th Century Decorative Arts
Los Angeles

Tue 27 October 1pm
Photographs
New York & San Francisco

NOVEMBER

Sun 1 November 10am
Single Owner
Los Angeles

Tue 3 November 1pm
Impressionist & Modern Art
New York

Wed 4 November 1pm
19th Century European
Paintings
New York

Mon 9 November 10am
Antique Arms & Armor &
Modern Sporting Guns
San Francisco

Mon 9 November 1pm
Fine Oriental Rugs & Carpets
Los Angeles

Tue 10 November 1pm
Post-War & Contemporary
Art
New York

Mon 16 November 9am
Art + Decor
San Francisco

Mon 16 November 10am
Jewelry
Los Angeles

Mon 16 November 10am
Natural History
Los Angeles

Tue 17 November 1pm
Post-War & Contemporary
Prints & Multiples
New York

Wed 18 November 1pm
American Art
New York

Fri 20 November 10am
Fine & Rare Wines
San Francisco

Mon 23 November 3pm
The World of Opals
Los Angeles

Mon 23 November 10am
Entertainment Memorabilia
New York

Mon 23 November 6pm
California & Western
Paintings & Sculpture
Los Angeles

Tue 24 November 10am
Lapidary Works of Art,
Gemstones And Minerals
Los Angeles





Prints & Multiples

San Francisco
& Los Angeles
Tuesday 20 October
10am

Richard Diebenkorn
(American, 1922-1993)
Blue Surround, 1982
Color etching and aquatint
Estimate: \$80,000 - 120,000
(£50,000 - 75,000)

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(* Indicates saleroom)

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Readers are advised to contact the
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For information and details of sale dates
about the objects and paintings pictured,
please contact Customer Services at
Bonhams New Bond Street on
+44 (0) 20 7447 7447.



Europe: Defining Style

Fine European Furniture, Sculpture
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London

Wednesday 18 November
2pm

A Swedish early 19th century Gustav IV gilt-bronze,
pink and clear cut-glass eight-light chandelier
Estimate: £20,000 - 30,000
(\$30,000 - 50,000)

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My Favourite Room

When he first visited Alain Ducasse's Le Louis XV, **Raymond Blanc** remembers being overwhelmed by the gilt – and then by the gastronomy



My favourite room could easily have been the theatre of the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford-upon-Avon – where I went within days of arriving in England, 40 years ago, to see *Romeo and Juliet* – or somewhere closer to home in Oxford. But no, strangely for a good Republican like me, it is the impossibly grand dining room of Alain Ducasse's Le Louis XV at the Hôtel de Paris in Monte-Carlo. I suppose it helps that I have had some of my greatest food experiences of my life in that opulent room, but there is more to it than that.

My first visit was nearly 30 years ago and I was welcomed by Ducasse himself, who surprised me by offering some amazingly simple Jabugo ham and sheep's milk that was barely fermented.

"My initial thought was, 'My God, there is so much gilt everywhere'"

and the footstools for ladies' handbags with staff everywhere. Suddenly, this over-gilded Baroque style room seemed to be haughty and made for royalty, not for a simple soul like me.

This prejudice of mine vanished the moment the wonderful food started arriving: it was friendly, approachable and perfectly cooked. There were lovely slices of vegetables – carrots, turnips and fennel – which had been doused in ice water, so that they curled into beautiful sculptures, and served up in exquisite bowls, with a perfect tapenade of truffles and heavenly olive oil.

However, after we sat down and drank vintage champagne, my initial thought was, "My God, how much gilt there is everywhere!" At first, I felt a little unwell with the profusion of gold and the sculptures

This was followed by a dish of Rascasses or Scorpion Fish, which most chefs would not dream of serving in a three-star Michelin restaurant, but here these were combined with extraordinary Provençal herbs. And then there was the profoundly simple slow cooked shoulder of lamb on the bone. That room has stayed with me and now holds no fears as I have experienced the magic Ducasse can perform. The setting is heavenly and triumphant, and has nothing to do with Ancien Régime stuffiness.

Typically, he never stands still and has just spent months remodelling the dining room, modernising the furnishings and installing a giant circular chandelier with hundreds of pieces of glass and thousands of bulbs to mimic the light of fireflies. Beneath it, there is an even more radical addition – an 'office' that fulfills different functions during the evening – first for bread and dairy distribution, then for sommeliers to decant their wines, the preparation of certain dishes and serving of cheeses and ice cream. Only someone with Ducasse's self-assurance would undertake such a radical rethink of such a classical room.

He is a master and – along with my friend Gérard Passédat at Le Petit Nice in Marseilles – the greatest chef when dealing with Mediterranean and Provençal cuisine. I must have been at least ten times and it remains the best restaurant experience of my life.

Raymond Blanc, OBE, is one of the world's most respected chefs; raymondblanc.com

Le Louis XV, Hôtel de Paris Monte-Carlo, Place du Casino, MC 9800, Principality of Monaco; alain-ducasse.com



Britain – Defining Style

London

Wednesday 4 November

12pm

Sir William Dick (British, 1879-1961)

The Catapult

green patinated bronze figure

63.5cm high

Together with a plaster maquette of the same model

Estimate: £15,000 - 20,000

(\$25,000 - 40,000)

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