Bonhams

MAGAZINE SPRING 2017 ISSUE 50

Op Art Paintings that resonate

Matisse His cutting edge

Salvador Dalí A family affair

The Harlech Collection Jackie Kennedy's long lost love letters

and Jackie Collins Hollywood life



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Principal Entrance to the Mosque of Wazir Khan, by Mohammed Din, ca. 1880 © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

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Post-War & Contemporary Art London Wednesday 8 March See page 28

MOTORING EDITION See inside for details

Fine Jewelry New York

New York Monday 24 April 3pm

A Fine Ruby and Diamond Dress Clip, Cartier \$300,000 - 400,000 (£250,000 - 350,000)

Enquiries: Kate Wollman +1 212 461 6519 kate.wollman@bonhams.com bonhams.com/jewelry



Editor's letter



Last month I was in Antibes standing on the terrace of the Picasso Museum. It was a glorious day. To my left in the far distance were the Alps, lightly dusted with snow against a china blue sky; in front of me were the sea and a line of elongated figures – sculptures by the French artist, Germaine Richier. A year ago, Bonhams' Post-War & Contemporary Art sale in London had

a section that drew attention to a particular truth in the art market: works by artists who are women are often undervalued compared to their male counterparts. Richier, who featured in that auction, is a case in point. A contemporary of Giacometti, her work is valued currently at one-tenth of his and yet, at the Picasso Museum, takes pride of place.

This season, Bonhams continues to mine the theme. The two artists leading the Post-War & Contemporary Art sales in London and New York are Bridget Riley and Helen Frankenthaler, both of whom have had buoyant positions in the art world – and art market – since they burst on the scene. On page 28, Gareth Harris writes about how Riley's work mesmerised New York in the 60s, while Francesca Gavin discusses Frankenthaler's innovative contribution to Colour Field painting.

This issue has a strong presence of powerful women. A.N. Wilson writes about Elizabeth Barrett Browning, who freed herself from

her overbearing father and subsequently proved herself a far more radical political thinker than her husband, Robert. Her original manuscripts are on offer in New York's Fine Books Sale in March. What she scratched out is as interesting as the words that stand.

The Jackie Collins Sale in Los Angeles gives a perspective on another author. Collins wrote in a different time for a more diverse audience. One of her skills was to use her life in Hollywood as inspiration, and many of the works of art and pieces of jewellery in the sale appear in Collins' novels, as Jane Shilling points out on page 32.

Collins was a style icon for the 80s, but the indisputable figurehead for the 60s was Jacqueline Kennedy. We all know the glossy image of Jackie O, as she became, but a series of letters found in a locked box in north Wales written by her to David Ormsby Gore, Lord Harlech, show the vulnerability beneath her carapace. These letters, which are among the lots offered in London's Harlech Sale this March, reveal for the first time her reasons for marrying Aristotle Onassis – and turning down Lord Harlech's marriage proposal. In the words of Felix Pryor, who catalogued the letters, it is a heartrending insight into her anguish.

Xmunda Bredin

Contributors



Alastair Sooke Art critic and broadcaster Alastair Sooke has interviewed some of the biggest names in the art world, among them Damien Hirst, Anish Kapoor and Jeff Koons. On page 36, he recalls his conversation with Picasso's lover Françoise Gilot about Matisse. Sooke's acclaimed BBC documentaries include Modern Masters and The Treasures of Ancient Rome.



Jilly Cooper Novelist, journalist and superstar, Jilly Cooper is the best-selling author of 42 novels including *Riders, Polo* and *Wicked!* Jilly, who has sold more than 11 million books in the UK alone, most recently published *Mount!* – a characteristically saucy romp through the world of flat-racing. On page 32 Jilly pays tribute to her friend, Jackie Collins.



Jane Shilling The author, critic and columnist Jane Shilling shares with the best-selling novelist Jackie Collins an affection for fine jewels and feisty heroines. To celebrate the sale of Jackie's collection of art and jewellery at Bonhams Los Angeles, Shilling explores the glamorous life that the novelist always claimed was far stranger than her fiction.



A.N. Wilson

Andrew Wilson's many books include God's Funeral: The Decline of Faith in Western Civilization and biographies of Jesus, Hitler and Queen Victoria. On page 50 the biographer, novelist, essayist, columnist and broadcaster writes about a revealing collection of manuscripts by Victorian poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning.





Conrad Shawcross The youngest living member of the Royal Academy, Conrad Shawcross's mechanical sculptures based on philosophical and scientific ideas, have most recently been displayed at the RA Summer Exhibition. In March, a work of his will be on sale at Bonhams in aid of Cure, the Parkinson's charity. On page 72 he reveals his favourite room.

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Impressionist & Modern Art

London Thursday 2 March 5pm

René Magritte (1898-1967) *La folie Almayer*, 1959 (detail) signed 'Magritte' (lower right) gouache on paper *25.1 x 19.4cm (10 x 7½in)* Estimate: £300,000 - 500,000 (\$350,000 - 600,000)

Enquiries: India Phillips +44 (0) 20 7468 8328 india.phillips@bonhams.com bonhams.com/impressionist

Magritte



News in and out of Bonhams' salerooms

☆

Super thangka

Thangkas, used as one of the principal meditational tools in Tibetan Buddhist practice, are exquisite examples of Asian art, made by painting cotton or silk with ground mineral pigments. Some of the finest are to be found in the Jongen Schleiper Collection, which will be offered in the Fine Chinese Art and Asian Art sales in London in May. This remarkable assemblage, which features nearly 50 of the Buddhist devotional paintings, was formed mostly in the 1970s and was published by Armand Neven in *Études d'Art Lamaïque et de l'Himalaya* in 1978.

Enquires: Asaph Hyman +44 (0) 20 7468 5888 asaph.hyman@bonhams.com

Top: Detail from a thangka triptych of the Panchen Lamas of Tashilhunpo Tibet, dated by inscription to AD 1835 Estimate: £200,000 - 300,000



Above: A rare and important white porcelain reticulated flowerpot stand, Joseon Dynasty (1392-1897), 18th century Estimate: \$60,000 - 80,000 Right: A celadon copperred glazed stoneware jar, Goryeo Dynasty (918-1392), 12th century Estimate: \$20,000 - 30,000

☆ Good Korea move

In 1974, Robert Moore gave up his job selling Cadillacs to devote himself to his passion for Korean art. The result is a collection that has been widely ranked as one of the most important in the United States. The Korean Aesthetic: The Collection of Robert W. Moore will form part of Bonhams' contribution to the ninth annual Asia Week New York. Among the 60 lots of important Buddhist art, ceramics and screen paintings in the sale, one highlight will be a large porcelain reticulated flower-pot stand (\$60,000-80,000) that is emblematic of the late Joseon Dynasty.

Enquiries: asian.us@bonhams.com



Fine Jewellery

London Thursday 27 April 2pm

A diamond 'Fuchsia' brooch and earring suite by Van Cleef & Arpels Estimate: £70,000 - 100,000 (\$85,000 - 120,000)

Enquiries: Emily Barber +44 (0) 20 7468 8284 emily.barber@bonhams.com bonhams.com/jewellery

News



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Cavalier display

The Russian-born designer Romain de Tirtoff, better known as Erté (1892-1990), is most famous for his Art Deco fashion designs. His delicate figures and sophisticated, glamorous illustrations are instantly recognisable, and his ideas and art remain influential on fashion in the 21st century. Erté continued working throughout his life, designing revues, ballets and operas. His last theatrical work was on the 1980 Glyndebourne production of *Der Rosenkavalier*. A special exhibition drawn from this final flowering of his talent will be on show at Bonhams New Bond Street from 22 to 28 May.

Enquiries: Thérence de Matharel +44 (0) 20 7468 8263 therence.dematharel@bonhams.com



★ Sketches of pain

The German Expressionist painter Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (1880-1938) claimed he always carried a sketchbook. A bound collection of his sketches, compiled for his friend, Dr Frédéric Bauer, will be offered in Bonhams Impressionist and Modern Art sale on 2 March at New Bond Street. The complete set of 40 watercolours and drawings are estimated at £150,000-200,000. Kirchner met Bauer after suffering a mental and physical breakdown brought on by the horrors of World War I.

Enquires: India Phillips +44 (0) 20 7468 8328 india.phillips@bonhams.com

Right: Porträt eines Mannes mit Bart by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (German, 1880-1938) Estimate: £150,000 - 200,000



\bigstar Leighton's fang club

There were few Victorian sculptors who could resist the challenge of that great Classical work, The Laocoön - and Frederic, Lord Leighton (1830-1896) was no exception. One of the most famous British artists of the Victorian Age – and the first to be ennobled – Lord Leighton was known as the pioneer of the late 19th-century movement 'New Sculpture', which re-evaluated Classical sculpture by focusing on a naturalistic depiction of the body. An important example of this style, Leighton's bronze figure of an athlete wrestling a python, will be offered in a new sale, Important Design, that will be held at Bonhams New Bond Street in April. The sale will present significant works of furniture, sculpture, paintings and tapestries, drawn from the 18th to 20th century.

Enquiries: Mark Wilkinson +44 (0) 20 7393 3855 mark.wilkinson@bonhams.com Left: Frederic, Lord Leighton's important bronze figure of an athlete wrestling a python Estimate: £50,000 - 80,000

FALEIGHTON

Impressionist & Modern Art

New York Wednesday 17 May 5pm/

Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944) Ohne titel, 1941 (detail) gouache on black paper $19\frac{1}{2} \times 12\frac{1}{2}in (49.5 \times 32cm)$ Estimate: \$30,000 - 500,000 (£250,000 - 415,000)

From the Collection of H. Lee Turner, Kansas

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Conrad Shawcross Untitled, 2016 Perspex cube, aluminium, nylon and paper £5,000

Paul Huxley Slow/Stop/Reverse, 2016 Perspex cube and wood Edition 1 of 3 £1,850

Art cubed

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Take a Perspex box 20cm³, give it to 50 of the most celebrated international artists today, light blue touchpaper – and stand well back to see what happens next... Cure³, a new art project, devised by Artwise in partnership with Bonhams and the David Ross Foundation, was ignited to raise awareness and funds for The Cure Parkinson's Trust. For this, these highly collectable artworks will be for sale at Bonhams flagship saleroom in New Bond Street from 13 to 15 March, with prices ranging from £1,000 to more than £20,000 (which will buy you Damien Hirst's Incinerate me).

Enquiries: Harvey Cammell +44 (0) 20 7468 8230 harvey.cammell@bonhams.com



Rob & Nick Carter Returning, 2016

Perspex cube, iPad and Plexiglas £6,000

Damien Hirst Incinerate me, 2016 Perspex cube and medical waste £20,000

Polly Morgan Something Like This, 2016 Perspex cube, taxidermy redpoll, polyurethane and paper £1,000

John McLean Untitled maquette for sculpture, 2016 Perspex cube, watercolour paper, foam core and gouache £1,500

Allen Jones Hello, 2016 Perspex cube, aluminium and card £12,500



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The Scottish Sale Edinburgh Wednesday 26 April 2pm

Minth

Samuel John Peploe RSA (British, 1871-1935) *The Terrace, Cassis* (detail) oil on panel *32 x 40cm (12½ x 15¾in)* Estimate: £60,000 - 80,000 (\$75,000 - 100,000)

Enquiries: Colleen Bowen +44 (0) 131 240 2292 colleen.bowen@bonhams.com bonhams.com/scottishart

News

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The icing on the cake

A work by Wayne Thiebaud (b.1920) that previously hung in the Napa Valley-based Mondavi Collection will be one of the highlights at Bonhams May sale of Post-War & Contemporary Art in New York. Thiebaud's ironic and brightly coloured depictions of everyday objects fuse influences from his work as an illustrator for Disney and his friendship with Abstract Expressionist artists such as de Kooning, Johns and Rauschenberg. With its heavily impastoed paint and pronounced shadow – a characteristic of Thiebaud's – *Camellia Cake* is a superlative example of his oeuvre. *Enquiries: Megan Murphy* +1 212 644 9020 megan.murphy@bonhams.com



Above: Wayne Thiebaud (b. 1920) Camellia Cake, 1995 oil on panel 11 x 14in (27.9 x 35.6cm) Estimate: \$500,000 - 700,000

Left: Antony Gormley (b. 1950) BODY LXV, 2014 carbon and casein on paper 77.2 x 55.8cm (30% x 21%in) Estimate: £18,000 - 25,000 Bottom left: Mona Hatoum (b. 1952) Bunker (cube bldg), 2011 mild steel tubing 90 x 120 x 80cm (35% x 47¼ x 31½in) Estimate: £50,000 - 70,000

Bottom right: Howard Hodgkin (b. 1932) Picture Frame, 2015 oil and watercolour on paper 36 x 42cm (14½ x 16%in) Estimate: £20,000 - 30,000

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Oxford collage

Trail-blazing art gallery Modern Art Oxford opened its doors 50 years ago in a former Victorian brewery. In a city better known for living in the past, the gallery forged an exciting and influential contemporary art programme that hosted artists such as Yoko Ono in its very first year. Since then, Modern Art Oxford has exhibited work by internationally renowned artists including the Chapman Brothers, Marina Abramović, Gary Hume and Tracey Emin. To celebrate 50 years of pioneering exhibitions, the gallery is holding a charity auction as part of Bonhams Post-War & Contemporary Art Sale at New Bond Street on 8 March. Bridget Riley, Mona Hatoum, Howard Hodgkin and Antony Gormley are among the contemporary artists who have donated original works for sale.

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What happened next...



Special Constable A sketch by John Constable sold for £869,000 at Bonhams Old Master Paintings in December, setting a new world record at auction for a small-scale work by the artist.



California dreaming At Bonhams California and Western Paintings & Sculpture in November, an exceptional painting of the famous Monterey Bay by California Impressionist E. Charlton Fortune sold for \$787,500.



Bronze age Paul Manship's sculpture of Diana smashed estimates at Bonhams American Art sale in November, selling for \$727,500, nearly double its low estimate.





19th Century European, Victorian & British Impressionist Art London Wednesday 1 March 2pm

Joaquin Sorolla y Bastida (Spanish, 1863-1923) Barcas y pescadoras. Playa de Valencia (detail) oil on board 22.5 x 33cm (9 x 13in) Estimate: £60,000 - 80,000 (\$75,000 - 100,000)

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An Englishman in New York

William O'Reilly explains the enduring appeal of Impressionist and Modern Art to *Lucinda Bredin*

Photograph by Alex Braun

Right William O'Reilly, Vice President and Director of Impressionist and Modern Art, US, with Matisse's *Tête de Femme*, offered in May at Bonhams New York Estimate: \$150,000 - 200,000

Below Renoir's *Les Prunes*, offered at the same auction Estimate: \$150,000 - 200,000



hen you get a call like that, you assume it is going to be a copy or a print," says William O'Reilly, Bonhams Vice President and Director of Impressionist and Modern Art, US. "To see this incredibly rare work, as bright as the day it was made, still in its 1948 exhibition frame – and untouched – was beyond thrilling."

O'Reilly is talking about the nerve-tingling moment when he first saw *Arbre de Neige* (*Snow Tree*), one of

"To see this incredibly rare work, as bright as the day it was made, was beyond thrilling"

Matisse's innovative cut-outs from 1947. "When the cut-outs were first exhibited,

nobody knew what to make of them," says O'Reilly. "But now people recognise that Matisse had invented a new art form, something that wasn't sculpture, wasn't painting, wasn't drawing, but was a combination of all three – and yet something in its own right at the same



time." These extraordinary works were initially bought by enlightened private collectors who recognised their ground-breaking qualities. Indeed works from the first group that Matisse made very rarely reappear on the market. "Perhaps only a handful have ever been at auction," says O'Reilly.

So when Bonhams offers *Arbre de Neige*, (see page 36), in May's Impressionist and Modern Sale in New York, it's bound to get the art press writing.

Last November, the undoubted star of O'Reilly's sale was Max Ernst's vibrant *Tremblement de Terre Printanier*. It had been consigned by a descendent of the artist's widow, Dorothea Tanning. This exceptional work from 1964 was a talking point at that auction because it was from a period of Ernst's work that has recently been re-evaluated. O'Reilly explains: "It's a painting that shows how Ernst, who had been so visionary during the earlier part of his career, continued to strive for artistic invention until the very end of his life."

Bringing the Ernst and the Matisse paintings to market is an example of Bonhams' modus operandi. As O'Reilly says, "We find important and interesting works that we think collectors will get excited about. I always impress upon clients that Bonhams is not a modern art supermarket... we don't have 150 lots in a sale, we have 50, but they are 50 lots that we care about." According to William, "This bespoke service is something that we offer as a matter of course to consignors when they are entrusting their works to us. We spend time researching the work before we put it into a sale, often commissioning a world authority on the subject to write an essay. We then make a video of it, tour it to our major salerooms, talk to collectors about it. Finally, I stand up as the auctioneer and, with hope, bring down the hammer achieving a wonderful result, knowing that when I do, it will make a material difference to the lives of a number of people."

The Impressionist and Modern market is thriving at the moment. "The Contemporary market has been a great engine of growth," says O'Reilly, "but if you look at the boom year of 2015, the two highest prices were for a Modigliani and a Picasso. We have found that collectors who acquire in this field are doing so as a result of love and understanding rather than hype."

O'Reilly had a scenic route into the world of Impressionist and Modern art. Or, as he puts it, "nontraditional". He grew up in Wiltshire in a family that "had inherited the usual family pictures, English furniture and good carpets. My parents weren't collectors per se, but my father – who had been in the Navy – was regional chairman for National Trust, so I was brought up going to galleries, museums and country houses. Being surrounded by nice things has always been important."

After schooldays at Eton, O'Reilly went up to Cambridge to read Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies. "I have always been passionate about Islamic Art. When I left Cambridge my first job in the art world was as an intern at Bonhams Knightsbridge with Claire Penhallurick, who was then Head of the Indian and Islamic Department. I think what attracted me towards Islamic Art in the first place was the purity and the quality



of the line and the primacy of connoisseurship. That, of course, holds true for the other fields I have worked in since."

After training at Christie's, specialising in Old Master Drawings, O'Reilly transferred to Impressionist and Modern Art. He arrived at Bonhams in 2012 and moved to the New York saleroom as Director of the department, where he is now Vice President.

O'Reilly argues that his is an area of art that repays study. "You don't walk into an Impressionist and Modern

"We don't have 150 lots in a sale, we have 50, but they are 50 lots that we care about"

Gallery and say, 'that painting matches the curtains, I'll buy it'. You look at it, you read the catalogue entry, you do research, you get drawn in...".

It is a lesson borne out by the increasing

importance of the Chinese market. "The Chinese have a long tradition of connoisseurship and collecting. It is a culture that appreciates the well-made and the beautiful, things that have history and reflect human concerns. It's no surprise to me that Chinese collectors have become connoisseurs of Western works – in the same way that they have studied Chinese art since the Cultural Revolution."

It's an approach to art that William O'Reilly would recognise himself.

Lucinda Bredin is Editor of Bonhams Magazine.



Left Max Ernst's Tremblement de Terre Printanier (1964), which achieved \$1,147,500 at Bonhams New York in November 2016 Above Les Mariés sur Fond de la Tour Eiffel (c.1982-1983) by Marc Chagall, which made \$751,500 at the same New York sale

Goodwood Members' Meeting Chichester Sunday 19 March

1pm

1961 Aston Martin DP214 Replica GT Competition Coup Chassis no. DB4/618/R Estimate: £600,000 - 700,000 (\$725,000 - 850,000)

10

Enquiries: Tim Schofield +44 (0) 20 7468 5804 tim.schofield@bonhams.com bonhams.com/motoring



Left When they were still speaking: Salvador and Ana Maria Dalí at Cadaqués in 1925

Opposite

Salvador Dalí (1904-1989) *Figura de perfil (La hermana Ana María)* signed and dated 'Salvador Dalí 1925' oil on board *74.2 x 50cm (29¼ x 19¾in)* Estimate: £800,000 - 1,200,000 (\$960,000 - 1,440,000)

Hind sight

With the early death of his mother, incestuous feelings for his sister and a lifelong obsession with the promiscuous Gala – Dalí's life was governed by women, reveals *Alastair Smart*

n the night of 31 August 1984, a fire swept through Salvador Dalí's castle in Púbol, Catalonia. The octogenarian artist, who had been fast asleep, suffered second-degree burns to his legs and groin. He was taken to Nuestra Señora del Pilar hospital in Barcelona, where he was visited by someone he hadn't seen in over 30 years. Her name was Ana Maria: his one and only sibling.

This was no teary reunion, however. As she entered, Dalí strained every sinew in his enfeebled body to rise from the bed and physically eject her, firing insults all the while. The pair never saw each other again.

What had prompted such animosity on Dalí's part – and also the three-decade silence beforehand? Brother and sister had once been remarkably close, with Ana Maria serving as Salvador's muse for numerous portraits early in his career – not least among them 1925's *Figura de perfil (Figure in Profile)*, which is offered in London at the Impressionist and Modern Art Sale in March.

Dalí and his sister were born in the Catalan town of Figueres in 1904 and 1908 respectively (neither of them met their older brother, also called Salvador, who had died as a baby in 1903). Their father was a well-respected local notary, and the family lived a comfortable bourgeois existence. They owned a summer house in the coastal village of Cadaqués which Dalí called "the most beautiful place on earth". In his autobiography, *The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí*, published in 1942, the artist portrayed his youth as one of constant rebellion – even including a tale of kicking his baby sister in the head on the night Halley's Comet passed. He was, however, so fond of inventing stories – so keen to craft an image of himself as provocateur – that it is impossible to take anything he wrote at face value. (He also claimed, wholly apocryphally, to be descended from Dalí Mamí, the 16th-century Ottoman pirate who had held Cervantes captive for five years in Algeria.)

"Dalí strained every sinew in his enfeebled body to physically eject her"

Salvador and Ana Maria were, in fact, inseparable when young – whether making transfer drawings together in Figueres or swimming in the sea together at Cadaqués. The bond deepened after their mother died of breast cancer, when Salvador was 16 and Ana Maria 13. In her memoirs, *Salvador Dalí: As Seen by his Sister*, Ana Maria adopts the tone of a substitute mother towards her brother – remembering her "concern about his grades" at school; his "boyish ecstasy" at the Louvre during a family trip to Paris; and her pride at the impression he had made on fellow students





Far left Salvador Dalí in the 1930s

Left Dalí's *Figure at the Window* – a painting of Ana Maria also from 1925, now in the Reina Sofia museum in Madrid

at Madrid's Royal Academy of Fine Arts, with his floor-length cape and gilded cane.

Dalí's best friend from his student years was the poet Federico García Lorca. Lorca declared Ana Maria to be "without doubt, the most stunning girl I've seen in my life", and he was bewitched by her cherubic face, coquettish smile and cascades of curly hair.

Her beauty wasn't lost on her brother either, who repeatedly had Ana Maria model for him. The intriguing thing about these images, though, is how little we see her face: Dalí prefered to capture his sister from behind. They include the famous *Figure at the Window*, now in Madrid's Reina Sofia museum, and the Bonhams painting, *Figura de perfil*, which featured in Dalí's first solo exhibition in 1925. Both depict Ana Maria indoors at Cadaqués, looking out of a window at the sea.

Some have interpreted the fondness for this pose in art-historical terms, saying Dalí was inspired by Ingres' paintings of women from behind, such as *The Valpinçon Bather*. The artist himself cited an apparition he'd seen at his bedroom window in childhood: of a mysterious woman with her back to him.

Might there be another explanation, though? Might, as mooted by Dalí's biographer Meredith Etherington-Smith, the relationship with Ana Maria have been incestuous? It's impossible to prove, though a poem he wrote in 1931, *Love and Memory*, does hint in that direction. In it, he reflects on highly intimate aspects of her anatomy such as "her lips of sex... ready to be touched" and, more pertinently here, "her anus red with bloody excrement". The origins of the pair's falling-out date to two years earlier. In 1929, Dalí began his lifelong relationship with the sexually voracious Gala Éluard. It was also the year the artist was kicked out of the family home indefinitely by his father, who was furious at the inscription – "sometimes I spit with pleasure on the portrait of my mother" – that Dalí had made on a recent drawing. Not surprisingly, he thought it grossly disrespectful to his late wife. Ana Maria took her father's side, and things were never the same between brother and sister again.

Ana Maria also failed to comprehend the "horribly disturbing" Surrealist imagery Salvador was now producing. It was as if her beloved brother had been lost to satanic forces – and she knew who to blame. Ana Maria loathed Gala, whom she regarded as "a nefarious influence".

"Her beloved brother had been lost to satanic forces – and she knew who to blame"

Dalí was infatuated, though. According to another of his biographers, Meryle Seacrest, Ana Maria "deeply resent[ed] the appearance of this seductive and predatory woman, who... assumed the role in her brother's life that had been hers".

During the Spanish Civil War, Ana Maria was imprisoned and tortured for 20 days by the SIM (the Republicans' secret service) on suspicion of espionage. She was entirely innocent and remained convinced for the rest of her life that Gala had denounced her.

Dalí and Gala spent most of the 1940s in the US and it seems distance, to some extent, made





his sister, Young Virgin Auto-Sodomised by the Horns of Her Own Chastity, 1954, as a piece of revenge. In this sexualised update of Figure at a Window, Ana Maria is naked, her posterior under would-be attack from flying phallic forms.

The siblings wouldn't see each other again until their curt hospital encounter in 1984. What prompted Ana Maria to visit Salvador again after all those years? Perhaps she finally saw the chance of reconciliation, Gala having died two years earlier. Perhaps, thinking her brother on his deathbed, she suddenly felt the need to say goodbye. The more cynical have suggested she (in vain) fancied a slice of his £100 million fortune.

Whatever the truth, Dalí died, childless, in January 1989, leaving his work to the Spanish state. Ana Maria, who never married, died three months later, also childless.

Figura de perfil, then, harks back to happier times. Long thought lost, it is now believed to have been given by Salvador to his sister, who then presented the work to friends in Barcelona. The painting now appears on the market for the first time. It marks an intriguing period of brotherly love in Dalí's youth, which reveals a great deal – yet conceals a great deal more – about his path towards art-world domination.

Alastair Smart is a freelance journalist and art critic.

Sale: Impressionist and Modern Art London Thursday 2 March at 5pm Enquiries: India Phillips +44 20 7468 8328 india.phillips@bonhams.com bonhams.com/impressionist

Above Dalí's vengeful portrait of his sister, Ana Maria: Young Virgin Auto-Sodomised by the Horns of Her Own Chastity, 1954

Above right Another 1925 depiction by Dalí from the Reina Sofia: *Portrait of His Sister (Ana Maria).* sibling hearts grow fonder. Salvador and Ana Maria exchanged several letters, including one in which he excitedly recounted his purchase of a Cadillac.

The publication of her memoirs in 1949, however, brought a permanent end to cordial relations. Fiercely protective of his own legend, Dalí was angry at Ana Maria's "manifest falsehoods" – the tweely charming picture she painted of their childhood was at odds with his own account in *The Secret Life*. He also fumed that she and his father had sold many of the artworks he had left at the family home 20 years earlier. "Isn't it incredible", he said, "that all the obstacles to my career come from my family?"

Dalí senior died in 1950, leaving everything he owned to his daughter. By now, Gala had long since supplanted Ana Maria as Dali's muse (he occasionally depicted her from behind too). It's hard not to see his final painting of

Men of Harlech

Hidden in remote Snowdonia, a 17th-century country retreat has housed a treasure trove of paintings, historic furniture and lost letters that shed light on one of the great romances of the Sixties. *Philippa Stockley* meets Jasset, 7th Baron Harlech to hear more

Photographs by Dan Fontanelli

t takes longer to get to Glyn Cywarch than it does to New York. At Tegwyn, a single-track station in remote north Wales, you must hail the little train to make it stop for you, much as you would a taxi. Then, after a few minutes' journey through the depths of Snowdonia National Park, you reach an early 17th-century country house: this is Glyn. On the death of his father Francis a year ago, it was inherited by 30-year-old Jasset Ormsby Gore, now the 7th Baron Harlech. And he already has big plans for the place.

With his open, appealing smile and attractive selfdeprecation – "I look like a builder," he says – Jasset is going to restore the old house, ready for a new life. With the help of his mother, Amanda, Lady Harlech, and his younger sister, model and actress Tallulah, he plans to turn it into "a sort of country guest house". Like most ancient houses, it needs work. "I'm very blessed and very lucky to have this connection to this part of the world," he says. "It's going to be a long road ahead with some tough decisions, but I'm very optimistic about the future of the estate." One of those tough decisions was to sell much of the fine 17th-century oak furniture, paintings, and other items from the house – offered at auction by Bonhams in London this March – to fund the project, which Jasset estimates will take at least a year to complete.

"The house is ravishing... the wallpaper peels dramatically, but the property has happy proportions and a lovely diffused light"

Today, the original gatehouse (with later Victorian wings) leads to clovered lawns and lichened steps up to the thick-walled, three-storey Grade II*-listed stone building, made of two conjoined houses, with an old slate roof and attractive dormered attics. Behind, the walled garden, with a bold pink climbing rose, holds pleached trees; lower down are outbuildings that include an ancient watermill and timber yard, reminders of a working estate that, according to Jasset, once had a staff of 50. Three thousand acres of now tenanted sheep pasture and farmland lie beyond.

Built by William Wynn in 1616, the house and estate passed by marriage to the Owens of Clenenney and Brogyntyn. Palladian Brogyntyn Hall in Shropshire (sold in 2001) became the main seat, while Glyn Cywarch was the agent's house. But in the 19th century, Glyn began to be used for summer visits. In 1876, the title of Baron Harlech was given to the Conservative politician John Ormsby Gore, a former groom-in-waiting of Queen Victoria. Around that time, improvements were made to the house.

Opposite & top right Glyn Cywarch and its new owner: Jasset Ormsby Gore, 7th Baron Harlech

 Right Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger (1561-1635)

 Portrait of Ellin Maurice, dated '1597'

 oil on panel

 88 x 72cm (34% x 28%in)

 Estimate: £60,000 - 80,000 (\$70,000 - 95,000)





The house is ravishing, with stone-flagged floors, glorious oak panelling, great fireplaces bearing Wynn's arms above the mantels, and deep-set windows. Yes, the wallpaper peels dramatically in the attics, but the property has happy proportions and lovely diffused light. When I visited, after the late Lord Harlech died, it was furnished with a profusion of 17th-century oak: coffers, a gigantic bulbous-footed refectory table, a great dresser in the kitchen, and a pair of rare 17th-century three-tier buffets, one used casually in the back hall. All this was tempered with fine paintings and oddities such as a shining black hairball found in the stomach of a 19th-century cow, and coats for hunting and from old uniforms draped on the backs of chairs. There was fine furniture everywhere, most of it solid and well-loved. In the kitchen, numerous bright copper pans proudly marked with the Harlech 'H' dangled gleaming from a rack, along with other kitchenalia, including cutting blocks and a pestle the size of a small knobkerrie. "My father was an amazing cook," Jasset says. "He could have been a chef. Even if you had to wait four hours for breakfast, it would be the best breakfast you ever had; and at dinner parties 16 people would sit spellbound, hanging on his tales of derring-do. He was a bon vivant and a raconteur."

Among more than 400 lots from the house, highlights include 12 carved George II mahogany side chairs in needlepoint upholstery with a William Morris feel, their fat shell-cabriole legs resting on lion paws. There are





also seven George III gilded armchairs in Adam style, upholstered with one of Aesop's fables in gros- and petitpoint – the eighth is in a museum.

Daniel Quigley's 1795 painting *The Godolphin Arabian* is compelling, both for its lack of anatomical reality – Quigley had to imagine the famous thoroughbred, brought 65 years earlier to the stables of the 2nd Earl of Godolphin – and for the tale it tells. This lightninglegged stallion arrived in 1730 via Syria and France. He was believed to have been a gift to Louis XV, who, unimpressed, used him as a carthorse. Today, the stallion's descendants still astonish racegoers.

Looking on is a magical 16th-century portrait of Ellin Maurice, wife of John Owen. This painting, with its exquisitely done farthingale, gleaming ropes of pearls and splendid ruff, has just been attributed to Marcus

"The lightning-legged stallion... was a gift to Louis XV, who, unimpressed, used him as a carthorse"

Gheeraerts the Younger and it strongly recalls his socalled 'Ditchley Portrait' of Elizabeth I from 1592.

Although he owned many beautiful things, from dressers to decoy ducks, the 6th Baron, Francis Harlech, was a hard-working peer, concerned about farming. According to his son, he was an excellent engineer too. He ran a small haulage company from Glyn, and sometimes drove his own lorries to Westminster to sit in the Lords. In the coach-house to one side of the gatehouse, under the billiard room and library, a curvaceous racing-green Lagonda Rapier 1 Sports Tourer, last driven - its tax disc hints - in 1984, mutely begs to be let rip again. Beside it gleams a 1925 black Douglas motorbike that Jasset says is "in pristine condition: you could start it and it would go". Jasset remembers the ancient boiler his father used to strip down, clean, and rebuild, which "sounded like a Rolls-Royce jet engine when it fired".

Jasset and his younger sister Tallulah were brought up in Shropshire, but they stayed at the Welsh house for Christmas and during the summer holidays. He describes the area's "intoxicating atmosphere", and talks about its romance: "Our father said that north Wales was the most beautiful place in the world, and insisted we spend our holidays there."











The new Lord Harlech says that the farmland is profitable, but that the house needs restoring. He is upbeat and clear-sighted about the changes that must be made. Before him, his father dealt with swingeing death duties at the death of his father, David Ormsby Gore, the 5th Baron Harlech, by selling some paintings. Jasset speaks of that grandfather with respect and pride, recalling his roles as a former ambassador to America, a close friend and adviser to President Kennedy. David Ormsby Gore also set up HTV (it stood for Harlech TV) and served in the Second World War. In 1939, aged 21, as a member of the Berkshire Yeomanry, he had operated behind enemy lines with the Phantom reconnaissance unit. In Glyn, the 5th Baron's leather-topped desk not only held signed Kennedy photographs, but also a heavy JFK memorial silver cigarette box, inscribed to him, and his engraved despatch box – these very special items are also to be offered by Bonhams.

Now Jasset intends to restore Glyn "for many people to enjoy; to put it back to flagstones, panelling and limewash, as it should be", and to restore the slate roof.

He has already built a successful career in film, working his way up in a production company from teaboy: "I may go back to it, but for now I'm 110 per cent focused **Opposite, above** David Ormsby Gore's desk with his despatch box and photograph of JFK

Opposite, below The corridors of Glyn Cywarch lined with portraits and historic furniture Far left, top to bottom Weapons, uniforms and an engraved cigar box given to Lord Harlech in memory of President Kennedy

Below The Lagonda Rapier 1 Sports Tourer Estimate: £20,000 - 25,000 (\$24,000 - 30,000)



on turning this into a viable business. The Bonhams sale will make this a reality."

He is in an enviable position in the sense that he can call on the help of his sister, Tallulah and his mother, Amanda, Lady Harlech. Well known as a creative consultant, Amanda Harlech has famously worked with John Galliano and Karl Lagerfeld. Jasset fondly remembers a 20-page Bruce Weber shoot with his mother for Vogue, done at the house one rainy day when he was little. He describes how he and Tallulah were allowed to be in it, and he wore one of the uniforms. As he talks of his mother and sister, his face lights up: "Mum and my sister have a wonderful aesthetic. It's so important to have the right bed linen and the right colours. It's my job to do the nuts and bolts - the roofing and so on - and to create a canvas for them. They're so excited... I have to tell them, 'Guys! You'll have your chance to make it even more beautiful.'

"It will be fantastic when it's finished. I'm optimistic and enthusiastic that we'll get it done, and I can't wait to open the door."

Philippa Stockley reviews for the Sunday Telegraph and Country Life, and writes for the Evening Standard among other publications.



First Lady's man

After the assassination of John F. Kennedy, David Ormsby Gore became Jackie's confidant – as *Felix Pryor* discovered on opening a locked despatch box

or an archivist, the next best thing to a sealed tomb in the Valley of the Kings is a locked despatch box. Two of these have just come to light during the final stages of cataloguing the contents of the Harlech house, Glyn Cywarch. The two boxes, clothed in ministerial red morocco and stamped with the royal cypher, belonged to David Ormsby Gore, later 5th Baron Harlech, and were issued to him when he was a minister in the Foreign Office. He was later British Ambassador to Kennedy's White House. He had been an intimate friend of the president for many years; indeed, during the time he spent at the White House, he became one of Kennedy's most trusted advisers. He saw him more frequently than even the President's brother Robert. Ormsby Gore and his wife Sylvia ('Sissy') were, as Robert himself put it, part of the family.

"'Yes, wonderful things' – here were the Kennedy papers that everyone knew existed but no one could find"

So what would these boxes contain? Sometimes one opens a tomb, only to find a grave robber's discarded pick-axe and some sandwich papers. Would Lord Harlech's boxes contain old school reports and correspondence with the gas board? There was no way of telling: no one could open them. As a general rule, there are more orphan keys in an old country house even than mice. But nothing worked. A locksmith was called. But he couldn't open it. The confidentiality of the minister had been well protected. The sale deadline was fast approaching, so drastic measures were called for. With Left David Ormsby Gore with Jacqueline Kennedy in 1966

Below President John F. Kennedy relied on the advice of his great friend, David Ormsby Gore



exceptional care – and, it must be said, causing minimal damage – the locksmith sliced through the hasps of each obdurate case.

"Yes, wonderful things" (as Howard Carter is said to have said on another occasion) – here indeed were the Kennedy papers that everyone knew must have existed but no one could find. First up were letters by Kennedy himself, letters such as could only have been written to a close friend: in one drolly confessing that he had committed the blunder of referring to one notorious Asian dictator as "the George Washington of his country". There were letters, too, by other members of the Kennedy circle, as well as White House passes, photographs, and even the order of service for Kennedy's funeral.

Best of all was a run of letters by Jacqueline Kennedy. The earlier of these letters are on White House stationery and testify to the depth of affection between the Kennedys and the Ormsby-Gores: one, written when Jackie was a little tipsy on Martini (or so the heading claims), discusses a yachting holiday to watch the America's Cup; another tells David that Jack was "furious" at his suggestion they send the Indian Ambassador a Peter Sellers record.

Then come the letters on black-edged paper, written after the assassination. In them we can see what was to become the legend of Camelot beginning to form. But tragedy stalked both families. In 1967, Sissy Harlech was killed in a car smash. Jacqueline wrote to her widower: "Your last letter was such a cri de coeur of loneliness – I would do anything to take that anguish from you... Sometimes I think I must sound to you like Bobby did to me a couple of winters ago – when he had gotten better & I hadn't yet." That autumn, the former First Lady **Right** The Kennedy-Harlech Papers, an archive comprising letters and papers belonging to David Ormsby Gore, 5th Lord Harlech Estimate: £100,000 - 150,000 (\$120,000 - 180,000)

was sent to Cambodia on a goodwill mission. Harlech accompanied her. And the world's press took notice, the Chicago Tribune declaring him 'The Man Most Likely to Win Jackie'. It was not to be. The devastated Harlech later wrote to her (keeping a copy of the letter in the box): "All the pathetic plans I had brought with me... including one for a secret marriage this summer – plans which I saw us eagerly discussing, calmly and with complete frankness as we did at the Cape and in Cambodia for the next wonderful ten days - all had become irrelevant trash to be thrown away within a few hours of my landing in New York". Nevertheless, the correspondence continued. After the summer that saw the murder of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy, she wrote: "I keep thinking of what Jack used to say – 'that every man can make a difference & that every man should try' – (it was Bobby who said it about what Jack believed) - and I hear it now with that terrible twist of horror... Anyway we must go down fighting - Dont laugh - but I am going to fight for the Negroes - Bobby fought for all Jack's things - but they were too big for me to fight for - But that is what he left undone - and I can do something about that in so many little ways...". The last letter of all is dated from the Onassis yacht, after her marriage: "You and I have shared so many lives and deaths and hopes and pain we will share them forever and be forever bound together by them... If ever I can find some healing and some comfort - it has to be with someone who is not a part of all my world of past and pain - I can find that now if the world will let us...".



Sale: Contents of Glyn Cywarch – the Property of Lord Harlech London Wednesday 29 March at 10.00am Enquiries: Harvey Cammell +44 (0) 20 7468 8230 harvey.cammell@bonhams.com bonhams.com/harlech

Felix Pryor is Manuscript Consultant to Bonhams Book Department, his books include The Faber Book of Letters and Elizabeth I: Her Life in Letters.



Good vibrations

The traffic-stopping bright colours of Op Art were a response to the emerging computer age of the 60s. And now these works are resonating with a new tech generation, says *Gareth Harris*

POST-WAR & CONTEMPORARY ART

Opposite Wojciech Fangor (1922-2015) *NJ15* (diptych), 1964 oil on canvas, in two parts *Overall: 243.8 x 243.8cm (96 x 96in)* Estimate: £140,000 - 180,000 (\$170,000 - 220,000)





Above Marina Apollonio (b. 1940) *Dinamica Circolare 8M*, 1966 nitro on perspex mounted on board 50 x 50cm (19% x 19%in) Estimate: £25,000 - 35,000 (\$30,000 - 40,000)

Left Wojciech Fangor (1922-2015) *M5*, 1970 oil on canvas *121.9 x 121.9cm (48 x 48 in)* Estimate: £60,000 - 80,000 (\$70,000 - 95,000)

hen Bridget Riley arrived in New York in early 1965 ahead of the epochal show *The Responsive Eye* at the Museum of Modern Art, she recalls seeing the windows of Madison Avenue shops awash with dresses and displays emblazoned with her motifs. The world had gone crazy for her geometric forms, as the mania for Op Art – the abstract art movement that rose to prominence in the 1950s – took hold.

The Responsive Eye, a vast survey of 120 paintings and installations by 99 artists hailing from 15 countries, put Op Art on the art world map. The works at MoMA were so dazzling, museum guards were apparently given permission to wear sunglasses while patrolling the galleries. Crucially, this quirky ultra-contemporary art packed in the crowds, drawing around 180,000 visitors during its three-month run.

"Museum guards were given permission to wear sunglasses while patrolling the galleries"

Guests at the private view, dressed in outfits inspired by Riley's black-and-white paintings, were keen to see her work *Current* (1964), along with eye-spinning pieces by other high-profile Op Art proponents such as Victor Vasarely, Yaacov Agam, and Richard Anuszkiewicz. Each of these artists feature in Bonhams Post-War & Contemporary Art sales in London and New York this spring, which put the focus back on Op Art. Highlights include Riley's 1976 masterpiece *Light Rose, Blue and Green Small Twisted* *Curve* and Anuszkiewicz's *Soft Yellow with Dark Blue* (1982), inspired by ancient Egyptian architecture.

Op Art became synonymous with the hedonistic spirit of the Swinging '60s. Fashion and graphic designers, admen and art editors in US and Europe embraced the art movement. Fashionistas lapped up beachwear by Rose Marie Reid inspired by the new art, while Vasarely's Vega motif was splashed across massmarket wallpapers.

Op Art foxes and fires up the eye, using geometric forms to create optical effects. Look for long enough at Vasarely's painting *Alom-2* (1967), offered in Bonhams London sale in March, and you'll soon find your eye – and mind – playing tricks on you. Bauhaus-trained Vasarely makes the forms bend and merge, giving an illusion of depth. His *Tridim-RR* (1968) is just as inviting, its diamond forms unfurled like a splayed Rubik's cube.

Both works come from the Kansas-based Turner family, which ran one of the largest agricultural estates in the Midwest. The family worked with the Madison Avenue-based Galerie Chalette and the gallery's cofounder, Madeleine Chalette, who introduced the late H. Lee Turner to Fangor's works. They were "pictures that attack the eye" in *Time*'s 1964 description of Op Art.

Not many collectors take their favourite painters and sculptors flying in a private plane, but H. Lee Turner gave Agam a new – aerial – perspective on Kansas. A major work by Agam will be offered in the London's March sale. Considered an Optical-Kinetic trailblazer,



Image transparente (1972) is a piece made from Plexiglas that flickers on the retina.

Another pivotal Op artist, Wojciech Fangor, features in the Turner collection. Fangor's 1970 solo show at the Guggenheim in New York sent *New York Times* critic John Canaday into raptures: "As a colourist, he has extended the limits... of the simplest optical laws," he wrote. The Turner family forged close links with Fangor, acquiring two of his pieces: *NJ15* (1964) and *M5* (1970). The latter shows a sublime blue pool encircled by a hazy halo.

Bonhams' experts have been instrumental in redefining and rebooting the market. Late last year, Dane Jensen, the Los Angeles-based Director of Contemporary Art, put together a curated Op Art section in the Post-War and Contemporary auction in New York. Entitled *Le Mouvement*, it was named after the milestone 1955 exhibition held at Galerie Denise René in Paris, which included works by Agam and Vasarely, as well as famous avant-garde figures such as Marcel Duchamp, Jean Tinguely and Alexander Calder. The show also brought kinetic art, Op Art's motionbased bedfellow, to a much wider public. In New York, *Le Mouvement* was a white-glove sale for Bonhams, with each of the 12 works offered having been sold. Fangor's painting of blurred rings, *M35* (1970), leapt over estimate to fetch the stratospheric price of \$319,500. "We saw intense interest in the Op Art section from collectors, particularly those who have previously acquired minimalist and colour field works," Jensen says.

During the past two years, Bonhams has seen prices rise as collectors and public institutions re-evaluate Op Art's place in art history, says Ralph Taylor, Bonhams Head of Post-War and Contemporary Art in London. "The pool of collectors and availability of wealth has grown exponentially, so there are now more international buyers, for instance in eastern Europe and South America, immersing themselves in the Op Art market."

"Op Art came to define the emerging computer age, and is a precursor to a world mediated by smartphone screens. It chimed with the emergence of abstraction in art, making us look at art and this new epoch through a different visual lens," Jensen says. Op Art was a painterly mirror to the increasingly high-tech mid-20th century



Opposite Bridget Riley (b. 1931) *Light Rose, Blue and Green Small Twisted Curve*, 1976 gouache and pencil on paper 62 x 86.4cm (24½ x 34in) Estimate: £60,000 - 80,000 (\$70,000 - 95,000)

Above François Morellet (1926-2016) 20% de Carrés Superposés, 1970 acrylic on board 80 x 80cm (31½ x 31½in) Estimate: £25,000 - 35,000 (\$30,000 - 40,000)

Right Victor Vasarely (1906-1997) *Alom-2*, 1967 tempera on canvas *200 x 200cm (78¾ x 78¾in)* Estimate: £90,000 - 120,000 (\$75,000 - 100,000)

era, when advances in computing and broadcasting made waves. But the critics were initially sniffy: the legendary essayist Clement Greenberg dismissed Op Art as a novelty.

Over the past decade, the movement has bounced back. Contemporary aesthetes such as the fashion designer Marc Jacobs have looked to Op Art: his spring 2013 collection was awash with sharp black-and-white lines and eye-zinging chequered patterns. Curators have also felt that the time is ripe to reappraise Op Art.

Last year, the critically acclaimed show *The Illusive Eye* at El Museo del Barrio in New York looked at Latin American contributions to the Op Art school by artists such as Jesús Rafael Soto and Julio Le Parc. Meanwhile, curators at the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Humlebæk, north of Copenhagen, mounted the show *Eye Attack* after observing the effects of Op Art on visitors. They had noticed that whenever works were hung in the museum's galleries and corridors, "the traffic artery became a bottleneck". The show included 100 works by 40 artists, including Riley, whose genre-defining *Current* was loaned to Louisiana by MoMA in New York.



The effect on those visitors to the gallery – who were literally stopped in their tracks – demonstrates the power of Op Art. "The way the spectator is immersed in these works is often overlooked," Jensen says. Certainly, it's hard not to fall headfirst into Marina Apollonio's mesmeric 1966 work *Dinamica Circolare 8M*, another work offered by Bonhams in March. The circular element spins from the centre, inducing a trance-like state in anyone who sees it. Our advice? Go on, dive in.

Gareth Harris is chief contributing editor at The Art Newspaper.

Sales: Post-War & Contemporary Art London Wednesday 8 March at 4pm Enquiries: Ralph Taylor +44 (0) 20 7447 7403 ralph.taylor@bonhams.com

New York Tuesday 16 May at 4pm Enquiries: Jeremy Goldsmith +1 917 206 1656 jeremy.goldsmith@bonhams.com bonhams.com/contemporary

"Whenever works were hung in the museum's corridors, 'the traffic artery became a bottleneck"



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As Jackie Collins' art, antiques and jewels come to auction, Jane Shilling reveals a connoisseur of art as well as life, while novelist Jilly Cooper fondly recalls her friend



ecky Sharp, the ambitious anti-heroine of William Thackeray's Vanity Fair, mused, "I think I could be a good woman if I had £5,000 a year." Add a handful of zeros to that figure, and it is the kind of sentiment that might have been voiced by Jackie Collins' alter ego Lucky Santangelo – except that, like Becky Sharp, Jackie's headstrong heroines knew perfectly well that it was far more fun to be bad.

In her fiction – Jackie wrote 32 books – the wages of sin have a hefty designer name attached: Valentino, Harry Winston, even Picasso and Monet. Her seductresses are rarely content with baubles, however exquisite. Along with their pavéset diamond panther brooches, studded with cabochon rubies and emeralds, they have a sharp eye for the practical trappings of grand luxe: "I

"I want a Ferrari, two mink coats, lots of diamonds, a beautiful penthouse in New York, and a villa on the Riviera!"

The World is Full of Married Men (1968)

want a Ferrari, two mink coats, lots of diamonds, a beautiful penthouse in New York, and a villa on the Riviera!" runs the wishlist of one exigent minx; another has a "gull's-egg diamond ring... which could lay a burglar out for a week and a half".

Jackie was effortlessly fluent in the stylistic argot of Hollywood aspiration, but her own

Left Keep the home fires burning; Jackie Collins' stunning Beverly Hills home, inside and out

Below left 6.04-carat diamond solitaire ring Estimate: \$100,000 - 150,000 (£85,000 - 125,000)



version of it was spiced with a twist of self-mocking wit. At her Beverly Hills home, the contents of which are offered at Bonhams Los Angeles this May, exquisite Biedermeier desks and original Art Deco pieces were displayed alongside market finds, including a jolly collection of humanoid teapots. And while she loved important jewels, including a burglar-flattening 7-carat diamondand-platinum ring, she did her own manicure: "It took ten minutes," she told one interviewer. "It would have taken an hour in the salon."

Jackie's debut novel, *The World is Full of Married Men*, caused a scandal when it was published in 1968. It was banned in Australia and South Africa; in Britain, an MP took out a newspaper advertisement to denounce it as "the most shocking book I have ever read". Meanwhile, Barbara Cartland, the British grande dame of romantic fiction, pronounced the novel "filthy and disgusting", claiming that Jackie was "responsible for all the perverts in England" – an endorsement for which the young pretender was duly grateful.

A comparatively sketchy education did nothing to discourage Jackie's early ambition to write. She was born in 1937, the middle child of theatrical agent Joseph Collins and his wife Elsa. Like many middle children, she felt herself overlooked within the family. Her elder sister, Joan, was a performer from an early age; her father had hoped that Jackie would be a son, and after her younger



Our mother

Jackie was such a unique character. She only collected art and jewellery that brought her joy, never bending to trends or relying on interior designers or stylists.

For as long as my sisters and I can remember, she was passionate about her collections. The story goes that when our parents first met in the 1960s, our father – an artist and avid art connoisseur – introduced our mother to the thrill of collecting. He took her to the flea market in Paris, and she was hooked! As children, most weekends we were bundled off to antique markets all over London, so that she could feed her addiction.

She felt a true affinity to big cats: panthers, leopards and tigers. She even named a room in our house 'The Tiger Room' She was also mesmerised by the Art Deco period and fell in love with the elegant sculptures of Lorenzl and Chiparus. She was drawn to the statues by the expressions on their faces, and would only buy those that spoke to her. Her collections were an extension of her creativity and a constant source of inspiration to her. Just as the potential of the blank page inspired her to write all of her novels in longhand, her stunning white and marble home became the backdrop to her beloved paintings and art objects, filling the space with warmth and colour.

She will always be remembered for her simple and classic personal style, which was the ideal canvas for her glamorous jewellery – bold, bright and daring. Just like her.

Jackie's youngest daughter

My friend, Jackie by Jilly Cooper

I know Jackie Collins is up in heaven now because she was such a warm and lovely person, and because she gave such huge pleasure to the world with her wonderful novels.

She was a great story-teller, who wrote about people and a subject, Hollywood, that she knew backwards. Thus her characters sprang to life and her stories made fantastic films.

I've never forgotten my daughter Emily, in her early teens, asking me for a good book to read. I suggested *Hollywood Wives*. Back at her boarding school, she was reading the book in bed when the matron snatched it away, snapping "I'm not having you read trash like that". The next day, Emily had a headache. She went into the sanatorium for an aspirin, where she found the matron glued to a book... It was *Hollywood Wives*!



brother, Bill, was born, she claimed he "never noticed me... I brought myself up ".

It is the case that middle children often turn out resourceful and observant. Jackie was both, though her powers of observation sometimes got her into trouble. As a pupil at the rather grand Francis Holland School for Girls (motto: "That our daughters may be as the polished corner **Above** Jackie regarded her home as a way of expressing her creativity

Below Art Deco diamond, black onyx and platinum bracelet Estimate: \$7,000 - 9,000 (£5,000 - 7,500)

"She hit a light switch. Her apartment was all pale beige and marble, with huge Moroccan pillows scattered across the floor, oversized coffee tables, Tiffany lamps and real art on the walls." *Dangerous Kiss* (1999)

of the Temple"), Jackie regularly played truant, and once brightly remarked to the local flasher that it was a chilly day. The remark came to the ears of the headmistress, who considered it "disgusting" and expelled her. Becky Sharp-like, she celebrated by throwing her school uniform in the Thames.

Her parents, at their wits' end, sent Jackie out to Hollywood, where Joan was living – and there she discovered her milieu. She was young, she was very pretty, and while her flirtation with an acting career proved desultory, her flirtations with actors would provide glorious material for her future bestsellers. She claimed to have rebuffed the advances of Errol Flynn and Sammy Davis Jr, but recalled a "very brief but fabulous affair" with the 29-year-old Marlon Brando. At 23, she married businessman Wallace Austin. Their daughter, Tracy, was born in 1961. Alas, the marriage ended after four years.

Jackie's second marriage, to Oscar Lerman, an art dealer and nightclub owner 18 years her senior, provided the stability and encouragement that she needed to write.

She had begun the habit of gathering material as a child, when she would eavesdrop on her parents' card parties, but they dismissed her ambition to become a journalist. At Hollywood parties, while Joan dazzled on the dancefloor, Jackie was more likely to be found in the shadows, observing the antics around her. When she met



Lerman, she told him she was a writer, and he took her at her word.

She had already begun writing novels, only to abandon them after a few chapters. But when Lerman read the opening pages of *The World is Full of Married Men*, he said, "Finish this one. You're a story-teller." Jackie did as she was told. Juggling her home and creative life with enviable stamina, she wrote seven hours a day, seven days a week, preferably by the pool – "surrounded by all those phallic cacti" – then stayed up until the small hours, watching the beautiful people misbehaving themselves in the ways that made her fiction so addictively readable. "If anything, my characters are toned down," she said. "The truth is much more bizarre."

In the avalanche of bonkbusters, bodicerippers, chick-lit novels and innumerable *Shades of Grey* that followed the publication of *The Stud*, *The Bitch*, *Hollywood Wives*, *Chances* and their fellow bestsellers, it is easy to forget the audacity of Jackie's early fiction. "When I published my


first novel, no one was writing about sex," she once claimed, with pardonable exaggeration. She cited Dickens and Mickey Spillane as literary influences, and admired Harold Robbins – though she didn't care for the fact that his women were to be found exclusively in the kitchen or the bedroom. Equally passionate about sex and food, or indeed a combination of the two – in 2014 she published *The Lucky Santangelo Cookbook* – Jackie was determined that her heroines should be strong, resilient women, who deal with men on their own terms. "My heroines kick ass," she announced. "They don't get their asses kicked."

Power and money – those great drivers of fiction since Daniel Defoe's scandalously sexy heroine, Moll Flanders, burst upon the world in 1722 – were Jackie's themes too. But in the deliciously rackety melee of her plotlines, there invariably glittered a golden thread of true love. Her own marriage to Oscar produced two more daughters – Tiffany and Rory– and lasted for 26 years, until Oscar's death in 1992. "I have a very moralistic side," she said. "He was, I presume, faithful to me and I was faithful to him, because I very much believe in that if you're married."

Nor did she entirely subscribe to the Hollywood model of conspicuous consumption. A keen art collector and trawler of markets, she modelled her Beverly Hills home on a painting she had always wanted to own – her fellow-Brit David Hockney's *A Bigger Splash* – and furnished it to her own taste, with an eclectic mix of Art Deco pieces: Tiffany lamps, elegant bronze figures of dancers, and the sleek panthers that gave their name to the fictional film studios that appeared in her novels.

Among the glorious trophies of a life of writing (always in longhand – every Collins novel contains a sweet personal message to its readers in her admirably clear schoolgirl script), alongside the pieces by Cartier and Harry Winston, the pearshaped diamond ring and platinum-and-emerald necklace, the paintings of café culture by David Richey Johnsen and François Chabrier, Jackie kept a reminder of a very different kind of café culture.



Above left An 18-carat Cartier bi-colour gold 'Panthere' collar – under the watchful gaze of one of Jackie's beloved big cats

Left A Tiffany Studios leaded and patinated bronze spider lamp 1899-1918 Estimate: \$20,000 - 30,000 (£17,000 - 25,000)

The bawdy, exuberant paintings of the British artist Beryl Cook – also collected by Whoopi Goldberg, Yoko Ono and Prince Rupert Loewenstein – conjure a world as far from Beverly Hills as can be imagined. With their plump ladies, saucy in the leopard print that Jackie relished, cheerfully stuffing themselves with tea and cake, embracing weight gain, advancing age and equally plump men with raucous enthusiasm, stone and platinum necklace Estimate: \$40,000 - 60,000 (£35,000 - 50,000) Matching white gold and platinum ear pendants Estimate: \$7,000 - 12,000 (£8,500 - 14,500)

Above A diamond, emerald,

Below A French emerald, diamond and platinum plaque clip brooch Estimate: \$20,000 - 30,000 (£17,000 - 25,000)

"Inside was a pavé diamond panther brooch studded with cabochon rubies and emeralds. It was the most exquisite piece of jewellery she had ever seen." *Lucky* (1985)

the paintings must have reminded Jackie of the very first chapter of her life, when she played truant from school to experience the vibrant London street-life of corner cafés, red doubledecker buses, and kiss-me-quick clinches on park benches, noting every detail and dreaming of becoming a writer.

Jane Shilling writes for the Daily and Sunday Telegraph, Daily Mail and Evening Standard.

Sale: Jackie Collins: A Life in Chapters Los Angeles

Tuesday 16 and Wednesday 17 May at 10am Enquiries: Katherine Miller +1 323 436 5503 katherine.miller@bonhams.com bonhams.com/jackiecollins





Cutting edge

Unable to paint after surgery, Matisse took up a pair of scissors. It led to his boldest and most revolutionary art. *Alastair Sooke* tells the story behind the masterful cut-outs

few years ago, I flew to New York City to interview the French artist Françoise Gilot, not about her former lover Picasso – with whom she had two children – but about Matisse. Following years of questions about Picasso, whom she met in a Paris restaurant during the Nazi occupation in 1943 – and against whose wishes she published *Life with Picasso* (1964), a scintillating account of their decade-long affair – she seemed delighted to change the subject.

After all, her first love, as an artist, wasn't Picasso, but that courageous colourist, Henri Matisse (1869-1954). One of her sharpest memories of her initial visit to

"Her first love wasn't Picasso, but the courageous colourist Henri Matisse"

Picasso's studio-apartment at 7 rue des Grands-Augustins was encountering Matisse's vivid Moroccan still life *Basket* of Oranges (1912), which Picasso had bought during the Second World War.

"Matisse, really, was my god," Gilot, then in her late eighties, told me. "So, I gasped and could not prevent myself saying, 'Ah, it's so magnificent.' And [Jaime] Sabartes, Picasso's secretary, said: 'Here, there is only Picasso.'" Luckily for Gilot, if he ever got wind of her faux pas, Picasso did not hold a grudge. Aware of her admiration for his great friend and rival, he offered her a present one day in March 1946, when they were both in the south of France: to take her to meet Matisse.

In those days, Matisse was renting an unremarkable villa called 'le Rêve' ('The Dream') on the outskirts of the ancient hilltown of Vence, a few miles west of Nice. Still frail following a life-threatening operation in 1941, he had moved to Vence in 1943, after an air raid struck

Cimiez, the Nice suburb where he owned a double apartment on the seventh floor of the old imperial Hôtel Régina, which had been converted into a conspicuous block of flats.

Eager to impress her 'god', Gilot put on dark green trousers and a light purple top: "I knew Matisse would like those two complementary secondary colours,"

Above Matisse at work *c*.1952 in the Hôtel Régina

Right Henri Matisse (1869-1954) *Arbre de Neige* (*Snow Tree*), 1947, signed 'H Matisse' (lower right), gouache and découpage on paper 16 x 10¹/₄in (40.5 x 26cm) Estimate: \$800,000 - 1,200,000 (£640,000 - 960,000)









she recalled, before smiling. "And so we went to see him. I was astonished."

At the door, they were met by Matisse's model, secretary and studio manager, Lydia Delectorskaya, a blonde, Siberian-born former film extra whom the artist's son Pierre once described as "the green-eyed dragon".

"She took us inside," Gilot told me, "and, to my utter surprise, everything was in darkness. There was even a large aviary full of birds, in darkness at 3pm. I was not expecting that from the painter of colour."

'Madame Lydia', as Matisse called her, led Gilot and Picasso to a smaller room where a little daylight was permitted. "And there was Matisse, with blue eyes and

"I could not believe that he was able to make something so fine using scissors so big"

pale skin, in bed," Gilot recalled. "But, even though he had been ill, he was still impressive: full and sturdy, with a distinguished expression on his face."

She paused. "He looked like a king, with a beautiful Chinese decoration behind the head of the bed that was purple and black."

In his hands, he held a large pair of scissors, like a tailor's shears: "And as he was talking – he got animated when he spoke about art, it was marvellous to listen to him – he cut out a mask from a piece of painted paper."

Her eyes narrowed. "It was one of his cut-outs. I could not believe that he was able to make something so fine using scissors so big."

Anyone who, in 2014, visited Tate Modern's magnificent exhibition, *Henri Matisse: The Cut-Outs*,

will understand Gilot's wonder and disbelief. That show chronicled the final decade and a half of the artist's life, when he left behind easel painting to concentrate instead on a new technique of cutting into painted paper, which he compared to "drawing with scissors".

Today, it is commonplace to marvel at the joyful, fluid nature of Matisse's 'late style': for most people, the paper cut-outs – which include the sublime series of four sensuous *Blue Nudes* of 1952, as well as Tate's *The Snail* (1953) – convey a freshness, exuberance and spontaneity belying the age and physical weakness of their maker.

Yet, when Gilot first beheld them, and was dazzled by the dexterity of Matisse's scissor-work, her enthusiasm was exceptional. In the 1940s and '50s, many art critics were scathing about the childlike simplicity of Matisse's new cut-paper forms, which, they believed, were the ravings of an enfeebled artist in his dotage.

When the cut-outs were exhibited for the first time in Paris, as part of a celebration of Matisse's 80th birthday at the Musée National d'Art Moderne in 1949, Christian Zervos, co-founder of the French journal *Cahiers d'Art*, attacked them: "All these paper jokes are so unworthy of Matisse that there is no point talking about them...

At most they could be used to decorate textiles or wallpaper."

Matisse was phlegmatic: "The creators of a new language are always 50 years ahead of their time," he told one of his models, Annelies Nelck, who, like Gilot, was bewitched by his masterful **Opposite** Matisse creates another of his cut-outs at Villa le Rêve, c.1946-47

Above The artist, shown beside *The Sorrows of the King*, at the Hôtel Régina, spring 1952





ability to cut out intricate paper shapes with such verve. Matisse generally kept his scissors wide open, as if 'carving' into pure colour. "I would say it's the graphic, linear equivalent of the sensation of flight," he once said.

He started making cut-outs for prosaically practical reasons: his operation for possible duodenal cancer of 1941, a two-stage colostomy in which surgeons removed 14 inches of diseased intestine, left him unable to paint.

During the 1930s, he had worked with cut paper on several occasions, but chiefly as a compositional aid to help him plot paintings or design magazine covers – indeed, his first independent cut-out was an abstract design for the cover of *Cahiers d'Art*.

Around 1943, though, when he was still so weak that he could not paint standing up, Matisse began to amuse himself by cutting into sheets of paper that 'Madame Lydia' had saturated with quick-drying gouache. One of the benefits of working in this fashion was that he could do so – as Gilot witnessed – sitting up in bed.

Some of his earliest cut-paper compositions were eventually reproduced among the 20 bright colourplates of the artist's book *Jazz*, his first important cut-out project, which was published in 1947.

Surprisingly, given its fame today, Matisse considered *Jazz* a failure. He called it a "penny plaything" and confided to a friend that the "transposition" of his original cut-outs "ruins" them and "removes their sensitivity", lending them "the character of a puzzle". "I know that these things must stay as they are, originals – very simply, gouaches," he wrote.

Around the time of Gilot's first visit to Vence, then, Matisse was realising that his paper cut-outs had special qualities: they deserved attention as stand-alone artworks.

A series of black-and-white photographs taken by Michel Sima in May 1948 documents the interior of Villa le Rêve during this period, when Matisse was increasingly excited about the possibilities of paper cut-outs.





In one, an entire wall is decorated with his inventions: sinuous, luscious forms that loop and sway, evoking leaves, floating clumps of seaweed, submarine sponges, algae, and coral. And there, clearly visible third from the right in the second row down, is *Arbre de Neige (Snow Tree)* (1947), which is to be offered in New York's Impressionist and Modern Sale in May. With its characteristically curvaceous, coral-like form, branching out, it seems to squirm against a background of blazing pink.

At the start of 1949, Matisse returned permanently to the white-marble Hôtel Régina, overlooking the Bay of Angels. Arguably, it was there, in his high-ceilinged, sunfilled old apartment, which Matisse called "the factory", that the cut-outs truly came into their own. From this point until his death, in 1954, Matisse surrounded

"Matisse kept his scissors wide open, as if 'carving' into pure colour. "It's the graphic, linear equivalent of the sensation of flight"

himself with vast cut-outs that conquered walls, corners, even entire rooms: *The Swimming Pool* (1952), for instance, a panoramic frieze of blue female swimmers frolicking in water, dominated the entire dining area.

Nor were these swimmers the only azure figures to come tumbling out of Matisse's imagination during this *annus mirabilis*: the *Blue Nudes*, acrobats, bathers and frisky monkeys all cavorted on his walls.

Matisse lived with these sprawling cut-outs for weeks and months on end, studying their visual rhythms, scrutinising tiny details, and instructing his assistants to move bits around until he was satisfied. "I have attained", he liked to say, "a form filtered to its essentials."

In a sense, the provisional, shifting appearance of his studio during these heroic years may be understood as a precursor to environmental or installation art. "One day easel painting will no longer exist because of changing customs," Matisse said in 1952. Personally, though, he was more excited by the irrepressible creative fervour that he felt the cut-outs had unleashed within him.

In 1941, he had travelled from the Côte d'Azur to Lyon for his operation, fully expecting to die. Surprised by his recovery, he always described his final years as a kind of miracle: he was experiencing, as he put it, "a second life".

It was a miraculous second life, too, in terms of his art – one in which painting, after the exquisite final flourish of the so-called *Vence Interiors* of 1947-1948, no longer played any kind of role.

"What I did before this illness, before this operation," Matisse wrote to a friend, "always had the feeling of too much effort; before this, I always lived with my belt tightened. What I created afterwards represents me myself: free and detached."

This sense of freedom – of loosening the constrictive 'belt' of self-consciousness to unleash effortless, instinctive art – is something Gilot recognised in both Picasso and Matisse. "There are other interesting 20thcentury artists, like Kandinsky," she told me. "But Matisse and Picasso are closer to instinct. That's why they are so strong: they don't refine. They serve it to you as it comes out of the furnace. They have the innate instinctive strength of a wild animal. You could say they are not civilised. They never make art to please."

Alastair Sooke is art critic and columnist for The Daily Telegraph and the author of Henri Matisse: A Second Life (*Penguin Books*).

Sale: Impressionist and Modern Art New York Wednesday 17 May at 5pm Enquiries: William O'Reilly +1 212 644 9135 william.oreilly@bonhams.com

A bigger splash

Helen Frankenthaler was overshadowed by a macho art scene. Now her work has come into its own, says *Francesca Gavin*

t is hard not to be seduced by Helen Frankenthaler's paintings. Her use of paint is notably different from that of her contemporaries – she treated oil almost like watercolour, putting her at the heart of the pioneering new wave of abstraction dubbed Colour Field painting. During a 60-year career up to her death in 2011, she was relentless as an innovator, taking on Jackson Pollock's butch painterly experiments and boldly reinventing them. Even in a mid-career work, such as the spectacular Summer Angel (1984), there is a sense of an artist still chasing new forms of the abstract. Drawn from the highly respected collection of California winemakers Robert and Margrit Mondavi, this work is to be offered by Bonhams New York as part of the Post-War & Contemporary Art sale in May.

Frankenthaler always insisted her personal life was irrelevant when it came to examining her work, but there are certain factors that can be taken into consideration. She chose to avoid addressing her gender, for instance, never considering herself a feminist: "I don't resent being a female painter," she explained. "I don't exploit it. I paint."

Right Helen Frankenthaler (1928-2011) *Summer Angel*, 1984 acrylic on canvas 91½ x 114½in (231.5 x 290.8cm) Estimate: \$700,000 - 900,000 (£580,000 - 750,000)







She had a privileged background, which certainly won her few favours among her struggling counterparts - but that privilege did mask personal tragedy: sure, her father was a judge on the New York State Supreme Court, but he had died when she was only 11. She went to elite prep school Dalton, then the liberal arts college Bennington College, where she met formidable art critic Clement Greenberg. The pair were in a relationship for five years, and he was a huge influence on the young artist introducing her to the city's art scene, including Pollock, Willem de Kooning, Lee Krasner and Hans Hofmann, with whom she studied.

It was Pollock's art that had the biggest impact on Frankenthaler, in particular his method of dumping a canvas on the floor to pour paint on to it. "It was all there," she wrote later. "I wanted to live in this land. I had to live there, and master the language." But unwilling merely to repeat what she observed, Frankenthaler pioneered adaptations to Pollock's approach. She watered down oil paint with turpentine, pouring it onto canvases in a process she called "soak stain". This technique emphasised the flatness of the canvas, and colour in its pure form, rather than building layers of rough texture as the older generation had done.



Colour is central to everything Frankenthaler created. In a 1989 catalogue she noted, "Colour can be beautiful in terms of how it moves; yet it remains in place. If colour doesn't move in space, it is only decorative." One of her best-known works Mountains and Sea now hangs in the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. This work was painted when she was only 23, after a trip to Nova Scotia in 1952.

Left Helen Frankenthaler in a colour field, 1956

Below left and right Frankenthaler's painting techinque took inspiration from Jackson Pollock



There is nothing clear in this abstract, fluid image, but there are hints of the landscape implied by the title. This was to be a theme that ran through all her work: rather than the post-war existential angst and inner turmoil of the mostly male Greenwich Village painters, Frankenthaler presented a form of abstraction that was about nature and the colours that emerged in landscape. When Kenneth Noland and Morris Louis followed suit, a new school of abstraction - Colour Field painting – was born, and famously exhibited by Greenberg at LACMA (Los Angeles County Museum of Art) when he curated the Post-Painterly Abstraction show of 1964.

Frankenthaler had, in 1958, married the equally affluent abstract painter Robert Motherwell, and they were together for 20 years. During this period, she had an important retrospective at the Whitney in 1969 and, artistically, moved from oil to acrylic, experimented with screen-printing and woodcuts, and successfully incorporated elements of drawing in her work. But even her lines



"Colour can be beautiful in terms of how it moves. If colour doesn't move in space, it is only decorative"

had a basis in colour: "A line, colour, shapes, all do one thing for and within themselves, and yet do something else, in relation to everything that is going on with the four sides [of the canvas]. A line is a line, but it is a colour...". In the 1970s, she started working steadily with squeegees, which she used to apply broad, flat layers of paint.

Later in life, Frankenthaler received numerous awards, including the National Medal of the Arts in 2001, but felt she was out of favour due to her criticism of the art of Robert Mapplethorpe and Andres Serrano in the late 1980s. At that time she was on the board of the National Endowment for the Arts just as funding for artists was being drastically cut by the government. Yet her later works have again received serious attention in recent years, following a big solo show at Gagosian Beverly Hills. Certainly, her legacy remains vital. Aside from Frankenthaler's direct influence on the Colour Field painters, she is seen as an influence on the flatness of Andy Warhol's paintings, on the meditative aspect of conceptualism – and on the approaches to painting adopted by current artists as different as Lynda Benglis, Sterling Ruby and Jenny Saville. As Frankenthaler told the *New York Times* in 2003, "There is no formula. There are no rules. Let the picture lead you where it must go."

Francesca Gavin is visual arts editor of Dazed & Confused, *and art editor of* Twin.

Post-War & Contemporary Art New York Tuesday 16 May at 4pm Enquiries: Jeremy Goldsmith +1 917 206 1656 jeremy.goldsmith@bonhams.com bonhams.com/contemporary



Top Mountains and Sea, 1952

Above Frankenthaler in her studio

Hip flasks

Not just the height of 18th-century fashion, these ceramics mark a cosmopolitan highpoint of the Chinese empire, argues *Martin Barnes Lorber*

"After overthrowing his nephew, the Emperor Yongle came to the throne... and the porcelain arts flourished"

lobalisation is nothing new. This rare pair of moonflasks, offered by Bonhams at the Fine Chinese Ceramics sale in Hong Kong in May, exemplifies the centuries-old connection between China and the Middle East.

The Silk Road had been the only land connection between these two vast areas, and in the 13th century the Mongols began their campaign of conquest along it, forging the largest empire the world had ever seen. Their Empire included the Abbasid caliphate, which they conquered in 1258, and, finally, China in 1271, where they established the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368).

The Mongol Empire now stretched from Korea in the east to the Grand Duchy of Moscow in the northwest, the Himalayas in the south and, providing maritime access to Europe, the Black Sea in the west. The Empire controlled the entire length of the Silk Road and took full advantage of it to import commercial goods, technology and Islamic artistry into China.

At that time, China was the only culture that knew how to make porcelain. One of the technological advances imported by the Mongols was a new use of cobalt, which they already employed for underglaze blue designs on ceramics, but this time for decorating porcelain.

The Jingdezhen kilns in the southern province of Jiangxi began making pottery in the 6th century and later developed proto-porcelain wares, followed by true porcelain. They rose to the position of a *jaor*, a major kiln site, in 1004. Named after the Northern Song emperor, Zhenzong, the kilns were located over a massive deposit of *petuntse* – a white, kaolin-rich clay vital to the creation of true porcelain. The Mongols, arriving with supplies of cobalt, began using Jingdezhen to make both underglaze blue and underglaze copper-red decorated porcelains.

Right A rare pair of blue and white Bajixiang moonflasks, with Qianlong seal marks and of the period Estimate on request

In 1368, the Mongols were expelled by the Chinese, who founded the Ming Dynasty. In retaliation, the Mongols shut down the part of the Silk Road that reached into China, cutting off the supply of cobalt and other commodities. The Chinese had not yet discovered any domestic cobalt, but there was sufficient Yuan cobalt in storage for the production of blue and white porcelain for the foreseeable future. And produce porcelain they did, continuing through the 30-year reign of the first Ming emperor, Hongwu (1368-1398).

After overthrowing his nephew, the Jianwen emperor (1399-1402), Yongle came to the throne and ruled as the third Ming emperor until 1435. Under him, the porcelain arts flourished. Many of the creations reflected foreign designs and shapes, as with this rare pair of moon-shaped flasks. In the Middle East, this shape was a water vessel, known in Arabic as *wudu*. It was used with a basin to wash one's own hands before prayers and the hands of guests.

The bulbous top of the neck is called a 'garlic head' in the West, a term usually applied to Qing porcelains. This was, in this case, not decorative at all, but actually had a practical purpose, as has been explained by Laurie





Barnes, Elizabeth B. McGraw Curator of Chinese Art at the Norton Museum of Art in West Palm Beach, Florida. The Prophet Muhammad gave his followers the instruction to be frugal with what they owned. Water was the most precious resource in a desert culture, and Muslim metalworkers discovered that the 'garlic head' could save water by reducing the flow of water to a trickle.

The Emperor Yongle received many visits and gifts from the states of Central and Western Asia, as well as Korea, Japan, Annam, Champa in northern Vietnam, Tibet, Borneo, Java, Sumatra and Coromandel on the west coast of India. Among the imperial gifts he would give in return were blue-and-white porcelains made from the diminishing supply of Yuan cobalt, a material that was now the property of the emperor himself. The Jingdezhen potters took the *wudu* shape and copied it almost exactly, including the 'garlic head', but added a Chinese design to the sides: in this case, the *baijixiang* or the Eight Buddhist Symbols, here represented by an eight-pointed star, together with Chinese-style running foliage. The shape was called *bianhu* in Chinese; it became one of the most prominent Chinese porcelain shapes of all time.

Gilt Buddhist bronzes that had been commissioned as gifts to the imperial spiritual advisor, the Panchen Lama in Tibet, had a six-character reign mark engraved across the front of the base. However, it was long presumed that no Yongle porcelains had sixcharacter reign marks, until recent excavations at the imperial kilns at Jingdezhen uncovered Yongle porcelains bearing a six-character seal mark that reads *Ta Ming Yongle nian zhi* ("[made during] the years [of the] reign [of the] great Ming [emperor] Yongle"). There are also imperial porcelains made under the Xuande emperor (1426-1435) that bore a six-character reign mark.

After Yongle's death in 1424, the new Xuande emperor received petitions at Court from his ministers decrying the huge cost of accommodating these vast numbers of foreign embassies, of the great sea voyages of exploration begun by Yongle and of making underglaze blue porcelains as imperial gifts. Great changes were made: the voyages were cancelled and the large junks destroyed, foreign delegations were reduced, and the production of these flasks and other imperial gifts soon drew to an end.

Succeeding emperors, however, often kept rare porcelains, paintings and other prized works of art from earlier periods in special storage buildings within the Forbidden City, a huge palace complex built by Yongle to replace the original capital at Nanjing. Paintings and some other works of art were inspected frequently and admired, with porcelain becoming a particular passion of the Qianlong emperor (1736-1795). He was a keen observer and admirer not only of all things and styles Western, but also of great ceramics of the Yuan, Song and early Ming Dynasties, many of which he had sent to the imperial Jingdezhen kilns. There they would be exactingly copied in both shape and decoration, all bearing his own reign mark, *Ta Qing Qianlong nian zhi*.

'Exacting', if anything, undersells the carefulness of their work. As one example of the precision demanded by imperial commissions, consider a unique effect produced by firing the

FINE CHINESE CERAMICS



"This pair of flasks... are pristine, making them a worthy imperial gift"

Opposite The Great Hall of the Skinner family home at Wistariahurst, with the moonflasks clearly on display either side of the fireplace, beneath portraits of William Skinner and his wife **Above** Wistariahurst, almost hidden by the shrub that gave the house its name

Right Katharine Skinner Kilborne (1873-1968), who inherited the moonflasks in 1959

foreign cobalt used during the early Ming period. This cobalt was particularly hard and, even after prolonged grinding, a few very small grains survived. After the clear glaze was applied and the piece fired, these small grains appeared either as very dark blue/ black spots under the glaze or erupted through the glaze to create splotches: such 'heaping and piling' is characteristic of these early Ming porcelains. When domestic cobalt was discovered around the mid-15th century, it was found to be softer, which meant it could be completely ground, eliminating 'heaping and piling'. When Qianlong issued an imperial order for certain early Ming porcelains to be copied, the artists had to copy the effect, using a very small brush to paint tiny dots in imitation. Such work can be seen on the moonflasks being offered at auction.

This pair of flasks not only has a long and distinguished American provenance of continuous possession by one family – philanthropic silk manufacturer William Skinner and his descendants (see right) – but also embodies the best of a ceramic tradition that has its roots in the Yuan and early Ming dynasties. Their condition is pristine, making them a worthy imperial gift.

Martin Barnes Lorber is an author and journalist for the Asian Art Newspaper.

Sale: Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art Hong Kong Monday 29 May Enquiries: Asaph Hyman +44 (0) 20 7468 5888 asaph.hyman@bonhams.com bonhams.com/asianart

Keeping it in the family

Bonhams Director of Asian Art Dessa Goddard was astonished to see this exquisite pair of moonflasks gracing a dining-room sideboard when she was invited to the home of the late Belle Skinner Kilborne last year. Kilborne was the grand-daughter of William Skinner (1824-1902), a respected Massachusetts silk manufacturer and philanthropist who had been a keen collector of Chinese art in the first quarter of the 20th century. The moonflasks held pride of place beneath family portraits in the Great Hall of the family home, Wistariahurst – as shown by photographs (see opposite) taken shortly after renovations were completed in 1928.

Two of William Skinner's children, Ruth Isabelle ('Belle') and William C., retained his interest in Chinese art, themselves travelling to Asia in 1889 and 1909. Belle, who lived at Wistariahurst for most of her life, was a noted businesswoman, humanitarian and music lover: her impressive collection of instruments, once housed at Wistariahurst, is now held by Yale University. She received the Légion d'Honneur from the French government for her generosity in funding the reconstruction of Hattonchâtel and its chateau after World War I.

The Skinner family kept a residence at Wistariahurst for more than 80 years until 1959, when William's youngest daughter, Katharine Skinner Kilborne, and her heirs bequeathed the property to the city of Holyoke. The historic house is now a museum and education centre.





Opposite Portrait of Elizabeth Barrett Browning by Sir William Charles Ross

Left Manuscript selection from Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Poems for Pictures* Estimate: \$40,000 - 60,000 (£33,000 - 50,000)

ht Banett Jassett

Dying to meter

Married against father's wishes, they became the power couple of Victorian poetry – but it was Elizabeth who was the radical Browning, writes **A.N. Wilson**

hen she died in her husband's arms in Florence, in 1861, the glossy-eyed, tiny, black-ringleted poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning was just 55-years old. There was an upsurge of grief in her adopted Tuscany. All the shops near her house, Casa Guidi, were closed as a mark of respect, and many of the Catholic or communist Florentines followed the coffin of this English poet to the Protestant cemetery. They honoured her, not only as a poet, but as a European woman who shared their idealistic vision that Italy might one day shake off the tyranny of the Austrian Empire, discard the anomaly of a papal monarchy, and recover the national identity of which Dante Alighieri had only dreamed.

"She was kept virtually a prisoner by her father in Wimpole Street"

In her native England, Barrett Browning's reputation was more chequered. Poetry-lovers and radicals admired her, but her last poems were denounced in the Tory press. She was regarded as unpatriotic for daring to ask her fellow-countrymen to dream of a Europe liberated from despotism. "I confess that I dream of a day when an English statesman shall arise with a heart too large for England". This sentence sounds strangely contemporary to us in our post-Brexit world. It is to be found in the preface to her last poems, *Poems Before Congress* – the manuscript of which is to be offered by Bonhams Fine Books and Manuscripts Sale in New York in March. Elizabeth Barrett Browning was a natural radical. Some of her earliest published poems denounced such abuses as the exploitation of children, forced into factory labour in Britain. The verses in *Poems Before Congress* confronted the struggles of the American slaves. And the whole volume breathes with the enthusiastic support of Italian nationalism, which had informed one of her most famous political poems, *Casa Guidi Windows*:

I heard last night a little child go singing 'Neath Casa Guidi windows, by the church, O bella libertà, o bella!

Her verse novel, *Aurora Leigh*, is a feminist romance. Aurora could have had a comfortable life, by marrying her rich cousin Romney Leigh, but although he is satisfyingly left-wing in his espousal of radical causes, he is unenlightened enough to make clear that, in a wife, he wants "a helpmate not a mistress". Barrett, like her creation Aurora, was not content with that. Her marriage to Robert Browning was a partnership between two writers who respected one another's work. His first, and most famous, letter to her, written when she was kept virtually a prisoner by her father in Wimpole Street, began "I love your verses with all my heart, Miss Barrett".

The love story of Robert Browning and his invalid wife Elizabeth Barrett was seen at the time as one of the great real-life romances of the 19th century. No wonder it was made into a play, and a number of films. My own favourite will always be the 1934 version of *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*, with the wonderfully sinister



"Their marriage lasted not a few weeks, as the doctors would have warned, but 16 years"

Charles Laughton playing Elizabeth's father Edward Moulton-Barrett. Laughton wants to keep his eldest daughter an invalid and a prisoner. A modern director might very well spoil things by making overt what was buried behind Mr Barrett's piety and obsessive desire to avoid his daughter's death: namely, his buried quasiincestuous sadism. He was not quite 21 when Elizabeth was born. Elizabeth, the eldest of ten children, was only 21 when her mother died, and her father regarded her not only as his favourite, and his protégée, but also as his friend and companion, a role which few daughters fully wish to play. Nevertheless, a true Cordelia (one who loved her father, but not to the exclusion of other loves), she dedicated her first *Poems* (1844) to him.

Browning himself, the thoroughly inspired author of *Dramatic Monologues*, knew as much about mixed motives and moral ambiguity as did the novelists Henry James and George Meredith, just some of those who learnt from Browning's poems. His love for Elizabeth was completely genuine, but was it also mixed with the conviction that the doctors and Mr Barrett were right – that Elizabeth was a dying, presumably consumptive, woman who might not survive the long journey to Italy?

In fact, their marriage lasted not a few weeks, as the doctors would have warned, but 16 years, producing their much-loved (if slightly absurd) son Pen Browning. It was a great literary partnership, and they both grew into it. Of the two, Elizabeth was perhaps the more deeply engaged in the current political debates engulfing Europe – and Britain. Browning, like many writers of his own and later times, was a somewhat automatic supporter of political progressivism. His poetry, however, is overwhelmingly the story of personal lives which transcend the political. Hers is the reverse. All her major works – *Aurora Leigh, Casa*

Guidi Windows and the posthumous *Poems Before Congress* – draw on specific political and social situations, and the verse is crafted out of her political commitment. She is far more radical than her husband, and it is only in our own day that she has been fully understood, in the academic study of Victorian poetry, as the original figure she was.

Her radicalism, like that of many British political figures of the left, had its roots in the Nonconformist chapel. Her earlier work was, on the surface at least, religious. One of the most fascinating items being offered at Bonhams is the manuscript of *The Seraphim*, a dramatic dialogue between two angels who were present at the Crucifixion: no one could accuse the budding poet of shying away from large themes. Equally revealing, in a different way, is the manuscript - also part of the Bonhams sale - of her version of Prometheus Bound. It is a free(ish) translation from Aeschylus. She would say (in all seriousness, for - like her father - she was a committed Christian) that the original English verses she published alongside the translation – "may be worth a little perhaps; but they have not so much goodness as to overcome the badness of the blasphemy of Aeschylus".

Like her future husband, she was an ardent student of Greek, and her invalid years in Malvern and Sidmouth (before the Barretts moved to their celebrated London address: 50 Wimpole Street) were spent reading the New Testament, the Fathers of the Greek Church, as well as the great Athenian dramatists.

The manuscripts offered at auction reveal how profoundly Barrett Browning was steeped in the work of her predecessors. She copied out lines from Shakespeare and the Greeks that impressed her. And she was a fierce critic of her own work. These precious leaves – in her crabbed, scratchy hand – reveal many a crossing-out, many a rethought and reconsidered line.

Nothing brings home to us a poet's life so vividly as the working drafts of their work. In seeing them struggle to perfect their original thoughts and visions, we watch them putting on immortality. Elizabeth Barrett Browning, from the time that she became an invalid at Sidmouth, in her very early 20s, was confronted by the spectre of her own early death. She faced it with calm courage, but also with defiance. The end was inevitable, whenever it would come. Two things, however, she could hold up against its destructive advance: her work and her experience of love. She felt

a mystic Shape did move Behind me, and drew me backward by the hair, And a voice said in mastery while I strove, ... Guess now who holds thee?' 'Death', I said, But there The silver answer rang... 'Not Death, but Love'.

A.N. Wilson, author of 50 books, is working on a biography of Darwin.

Sale: Fine Books and Manuscripts New York Thursday 9 March at 10.30am Enquiries: Tom Lamb +1 917 206 1640 tom.lamb@bonhams.com bonhams.com/finebooks

Right Manuscript of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's translation of Aeschylus' Prometheus Bound Estimate: \$200,000 - 300,000 (£167,000 - 250,000)

Opposite

The 1934 version of The Barretts of Wimpole Street, featuring the "wonderfully sinister" Charles Laughton

think 1 Rometers horne . & Scralet Barrett Jarrett Persons of a Dume metery To Jacqueter of machines Oceand hongth - toga Hermes & phartur hours of Ocean aymphs -are shingth a donce thephestus a Prometeras, it to rachs. Shingh be nech to atmost limit of the certifi The sythigh track, to describ entited men = the now hepharties then must needs pulpel The mendate of an fater, and, ust links hapolette of idemantine chaine, Laster quince this sealing heapice This pilly god ' theare he plated rang here our high florer, the glory of plastic fore and sites mostate with it - such a sun I son before to expeate to the godsthis lam for service to the sale of Early this and the service to the sale of Early and the service min. Hydreiting (Shert a tace - pr son, on less's





Ichiro Akuto, the founder of Chichibu Distillery, tells *Matthew Wilcox* how he took his family's whisky business off the rocks

n August 2015, a full 54-bottle set of Ichiro's Card Series of Japanese whisky sold for US\$489,978 at Bonhams sale of Fine and Rare Whisky in Hong Kong. It was a record price for a lot in a whisky auction.

"It was astonishing," says Ichiro Akuto, the malt maestro behind Ichiro's Card Series. We are standing in the warehouse of his tiny new distillery, Chichibu, deep in the mountains north of Tokyo – an area that was, until recently, most famous for the quality of its udon noodles. Akuto still appears to be shocked about the historic auction and, indeed, the recent meteoric rise of Japanese whisky – two years ago, the renowned spirits writer, Jim Murray, named the Yamazaki Sherry Cask Single Malt 2013 the best in the world in his *Whisky Bible*.

It was not always thus. In fact, the early history of Japanese whisky was not one of distinction. As an American officer on shore leave in Hakodate in 1918 recorded: "All the cheap bars have 'Scotch whisky' Made in Japan. If you come across any, don't touch it. It's called Queen George, and it's more bitched up than its name... I never saw so many men get so drunk so fast."

"When they scaled-up, they changed the way they made whisky"

Akuto's family have been making spirits since 1941. During the post-war era, the company, Hanyu, steadily built a reputation for the quality of their malt but, following the collapse of the Japanese economic bubble in the 1990s, the Akuto family fortunes were very much on the rocks. In 2004, Akuto's father was forced to sell the family's distillery.

"The new owner was not interested in whisky," says Akuto. "They would have discarded the remaining casks, but some were nearly 20 years old and very precious. They were like our children. So I saved the whisky and set up a new company."

In those early years, Akuto trudged from bar to bar in Tokyo to sell his bottling from the old 400-litre casks of Hanyu stock he had saved. "It was the spring of 2005, I wanted to release four single casks from the closed distillery, and

suddenly I hit on the idea of four suits of playing cards. At that time I wasn't thinking beyond those four bottles, so I used iconic cards: the Ace of Spades, King of Diamonds, Queen of Hearts and Jack of Clubs."

Akuto must have played his cards right: the following year his King of Diamonds won the Editor's Choice award from *Whisky Magazine*. In 2008, confident and armed with the profits from the Playing Card

Opposite Ichiro Akuto, founder of Chichibu Distillery

Right Flushed with success. In August 2015, a full 54-bottle set of Ichiro's Card Series of Japanese whisky sold at Bonhams for US\$489,978 – a world record series, he bet the farm and opened Chichibu with one task, to "take whisky back to the past".

Whisky, says Akuto, is not what it was. Describing a 1966 Bowmore as one of the three whiskies that have most influenced him, he says, "You can't find that taste in Scotch whisky nowadays." The root of the problem, the whisky whizz suggests, lies in the success of Scotch as a global drink: "When they scaled-up, they changed the way they made whisky."

Rather like Olympic endeavour, it seems, the key to great malt is the accumulation of marginal differences. "Each little thing might contribute only a very small percentage to the overall profile, but gradually each step has changed, from floor malting to mashing, how they ferment the wash, to the distillation process and the way they deal with the casks."

That's why Akuto is reasserting control over every single step in the process, becoming the only Japanese distiller to grow rather than import his barley.

An example of this attention to detail was demonstrated when he bought his own cooperage. Not only did this allow him to construct barrels using *mizunara*, the rare Japanese oak, with its whiff of high-end temple incense, but in turn opened up more areas for exploration. "It grows up north and we have to go to auctions to get hold of it. Recently, we visited the forest it grows in as well."

Where will it all end? "I would like to go back to the old variety of barley that was used in the 1960s," he tells me, like a whispered confession.

Akuto's curiosity may be inexhaustible, but he hasn't forgotten what whisky is for. "I was very happy with the sale," he says. "But, on the other hand, I find myself wondering, 'will anyone drink it?"

Matthew Wilcox is Deputy Editor of Bonhams Magazine.

Sale: Fine & Rare Wine, Cognac and Whisky Hong Kong Monday 19 May at 6pm Enquiries: Daniel Lam +852 3607 0004 daniel.lam@bonhams.com bonhams.com/whisky



The days of Hemingway and Revolution are fading like a puff of Cuban cigar smoke. Christopher P. Baker visits the new Havana



efore the revolution, Havana was a place of intrigue and tawdry romance. Walking Havana's streets you sense you're living inside a romantic thriller, with all the sharp edges and sinister shadows that made Ernest Hemingway want "to stay here forever". It's easy to imagine the novelist strolling down Calle Obispo on his way for a 'papa doble' (double shot of rum, no sugar) at La Floridita – his favourite bar. "*Mi mojito en El Bodeguita, mi daiquiri in La Floridita*" the novelist had scrawled on the sky-blue walls of El Bodeguita del Medio, a watering hole half a block from Havana's cathedral. Errol Flynn thought it "a great place to get drunk". Both of them are still there, in black and white on a wall, squinting at the camera through a haze of rum and cigar smoke.

But things are changing. Last June I was strolling along a cobbled street in Habana Vieja when my pal Ernesto Guevara, son of Che (yes, the revolutionary icon), bounded out of a bar. Like his dad, Ernesto 'Jr' is a motorcycle enthusiast. When we first met five years ago he was riding a jade-coloured 1948 Harley-Davidson Flathead. Now, after dining together at a newly opened bar-restaurant – Chacón 162 – in the rapidly gentrifying Cinco Esquinas, Ernesto rides off on a 2015 Electra Glide Ultra Classic. Every third building in this once-sclerotic quarter is in the throes of a remake as a boutique B&B, art gallery, Miami chic restaurant, or – what's this? – a gourmet *heladería* selling homemade ice-cream.

Still, Cuba's beguiling capital offers more enduring fare. Housed in the grandiose erstwhile presidential palace just steps from Cinco Esquinas, the Museo de la Revolución offers a sombre homage (think blood-stained uniforms) to the 1959 Revolution that brought Castro to power. Next door, the Museo de Bellas Artes – housed in a handsome 1950s Modernist structure – has three storeys of airy galleries displaying the best Cuban art through five centuries. English-speaking guides give a surprisingly honest account of the repressive post-Revolution period.

"In Havana's streets you sense you're living inside a romantic thriller, with all the sharp edges and sinister shadows"

Havana is a mere 45-minute flight from Miami. The proximity is made surreal by billboards still featuring socialist slogans and images of Che and Fidel. The whiff of cigar smoke and sea mist wafts over the Malecón seafront boulevard as the sun sets and the city succumbs to nights of sexy showgirls and sizzling salsa. Ah... the music! Everywhere the music is hot enough to cook the pork. Caribbean communism? Socialism and sensuality? Havana is the capital of the double-take.

TRAVEL



Clockwise from bottom left Mural in Havana depicting

a triumvirate Revolutionary heroes: Che Guevara, Camilo Cienfuegos and Julio Antonio Mella; Eisenhower-era cars still cruise the city; Hemingway's favourite bar, La Floridta; The baroque façade of Havana cathedral; Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes



Habana Vieja – the city's Spanish colonial core – overflows with castles, convents and cobbled plazas. Don't miss the superb Museo de Navegación (Naval Museum), displaying recovered treasures of the Americas plus an interactive scale-model galleon. It's in the New World's oldest castle – Castillo de la Real Fuerza – on Plaza de Armas, from which Spanish governors ruled Cuba for 400 years. But, for me, the most magical of the colonial quarter's four major squares is Plaza Vieja. Its quirky attractions include the Museo de Naipes (Playing Cards Museum) and the rooftop Cámara Oscura projecting a real-time 360° view over the ramshackle rooftops.

Now in its third decade of restoration, much of Habana Vieja gleams afresh, while the streets of onceglamorous 'modern' Havana – principally the Vedado district – are lined with astonishing Beaux Arts and Art Deco buildings (many corroded to the point of dilapidation), plus Modernist skyscrapers of the pre-Revolutionary mobster era.

Hollywood couldn't have dreamed up a more atmospheric stage set. Calle Neptuno, for example, is adorned with faded adverts for Woolworth's and Singer, soldered by tropical heat onto weathered storefront façades. Cars from the Eisenhower era are everywhere: your first move should be to hire a 1950s convertible with fins sharp enough to draw blood (they're found outside every hotel) and head to Fábrica H. Uppmann for a cigarfactory tour. Few Cuba experiences beat smoking the world's finest cigars, fresh from the factory, as you rumble down the highway in a chrome-laden Cadillac to the rhythm of rumba on the radio.

Christopher P. Baker (www.christopherpbaker.com) has written and photographed six books on Cuba, including Mi Moto Fidel.



When in Havana...

Where to stay

With glam styling behind a retrofitted colonial façade, *Hotel Saratoga* (Prado 603 corner Dragones, Habana Vieja, +53 7868-1000) is considered the city's top boutique hotel. Cavernous, highceilinged rooms are fitted to 21stcentury standards, while a rooftop pool and sundeck give postcardperfect views.

The landmark *Hotel Nacional* (Calle 21 & O, Vedado, +53 7836-3564) is a Havana grande-dame that has hosted everyone from Winston Churchill to Al Capone. It's a bit timeworn, but the setting is unbeatable, the architecture stunning, and the patio bar a great place to savour a cigar and mojito.

For a homestay, try *Casa Concordia* (Concordia 151 corner San Nicolás, Centro Habana, +53 5360-5300, casaconcordia.com), which is atop a rather knockedabout Beaux Arts building in tumbledown central Havana. The three-bedroom apartment on the fifth floor is beautifully furnished with antiques and chic retro pieces. Roof-to-ceiling windows offer awesome views, and maid service is provided.

Where to dine & dance

Although frequented by tour groups, *Atelier* (Calle 5ta 511 altos, between Paseo & 2, Vedado, +53 7836-2025) is a choice *paladar* (private restaurant) in a centenary mansion, where contemporary art adorns the walls. Try to grab a seat on the rooftop patio. The owner offers experimental fare, but stick to such Cuban dishes as the ropa vieja or lobster enchilada.

The world-renowned *La Guarida* (Calle Concordia 418, Centro Habana, +53 7866-9047, laguarida. com; pictured above) – setting for the Oscar-nominated movie *Fresa y* *Chocolate* – is Havana's don't-miss *paladar*, with its operatic setting, eclectic décor, and superb Cuban fusion fare, not least the signature honey-mustard chicken.

A spiral staircase drilling up through a red-brick chimney spills you into the chic gourmet restaurant *El Cocinero* (Calle 26 corner 11, Vedado, +53 7832-2355), situated in a former cooking-oil factory. Havana's *farandula* (bohemian incrowd) frequents the rooftop tapas lounge-bar, before migrating to the adjoining Fábrica de Arte, an avantgarde cultural venue where the night might range from an acrobatic dance performance to experimental electronic raves.

The classy, high-octane, Miamistyle neon-lit nightclub *Sarao* (Calle 17 corner E, Vedado, +53 5263-8037) is the hotspot for discerning party animals, not least visiting VIPs such as Katy Perry and Usher, but stiletto-heeled hedonism still rules at *Tropicana* (Calle 72 4504 corner Linea, Marianao, +53 7267-1717). It is Havana's largest Las Vegasstyle *espectáculo* (cabaret). It'll burn a hole in your wallet, but a cigar and a bottle of rum (plus cola) are thrown in to ensure your enjoyment. **C.P.B.**



South African Art

London Wednesday 22 March 2pm

Anton van Wouw (South African, 1862-1945) *The Hammer Worker* Estimate: £80,000 - 120,000 (\$100,000 - 150,000)

Enquiries: Giles Peppiatt +44 (0) 20 7468 8355 giles.peppiatt@bonhams.com bonhams.com/southafrica







Noël Coward (1899-1973) is best known for his work as a playwright, musician and actor. One of his less well-known passions, however, was painting. Despite being untrained as an artist, Coward was quick to criticise better-known painters. In his diary, for example, he wrote, "Compared with the pretentious muck in some London galleries... my amateur efforts appear brilliant." Even the Old Masters were not safe from his acid tongue: as he once remarked, "Mona Lisa looks as if she has just been sick, or is about to be." One of his soi-disant 'efforts' will be offered at the Knightsbridge sale of Modern British and Irish Art in March. For Coward, painting was primarily a way to relax, but the finished works would often be given as presents to his celebrity friends - Elizabeth Taylor, David Niven and Ivor Novello among them to mark first nights and birthdays.

Image: Village store in Jamaica by Noël Coward Estimate: £7,000 - 9,000 Sale: Modern British and Irish Art, Knightsbridge, 28 March Enquiries: Emma Corke +44 (0) 20 7393 3949 emma.corke@bonhams.com





The importance of motorbikes during the Great War is all too often overlooked. The machines were first introduced to the British military after the Ministry of Defence made a deal with Douglas Motorcycles to produce what the directors thought was a total of 300 bikes for the army. What the contract actually proposed was for the company to make 300 bikes *every month* for the duration of the war. A fine example of this popular model,

a 1917 Douglas military motorcycle, will be offered at Bonhams Stafford Sale in April.

Image: c.1917 Douglas 2 3/4hp Estimate: £7,000 - 10,000 Sale: The Spring Stafford Sale, Stafford, 23 April Enquiries: Ben Walker +44 (0) 20 8963 2819 ben.walker@bonhams.com

Fine & Rare Wine, Cognac & Whisky Hong Kong Friday 19 May 6pm

Karuizawa 1980 One of 212 bottles Cask no. 4376, Sherry Butt In presentation case Estimate: HK\$60,000 - 80,000

Enquiries: Daniel Lam +852 3607 0004 daniel.lam@bonhams.com bonhams.com/whisky





Although fans had been used in Japan for centuries, it was during the Edo period (1615-1868) that they began to be seen everywhere – ample evidence can be found by their appearance in the popular prints of the era. Fans were both fashion accessories and functional items for everyday use, and they were often decorated with colourful images. As fans were sold only during the hot season, the images on them are often associated with summer.

A very rare example of an uncut fan print by the master printmaker Katsushika Hokusai – world-famous for *The Great Wave* – will be offered at the New York sale of fine Japanese art in March. Print fans of this nature are particularly sought after because so few of them survive – they were designed simply to be used and then discarded.

Although the heyday of the fan has long since passed, they are still used in a number of different contexts in Japan, including dance performances, as an accessory carried by referees during sumo matches, and even being wafted by sushi chefs to cool hot rice.

Image: Uncut fan print of a hawk in flight by Hokusai Estimate: \$12,000 - 18,000 Sale: Japanese Works of Art, New York, 15 March Enquiries: Jeff Olson +1 212 461 6516 ieff.olson@bonhams.com





Kieran O'Boyle has become Bonhams' new representative in Ireland. O'Boyle – who spent the past 14 years at Irish auctioneers Adam's, where he was an Associate Director – will be based at Bonhams' Dublin Office on Molesworth Street. O'Boyle said, "I am excited to be joining such a prestigious international company. Bonhams is an established name in Ireland and my ambition is to broaden its appeal still further."

Enquiries: Kieran O'Boyle +353 1602 0990 kieran.oboyle@bonhams.com





Though he was born and achieved renown as a painter in Los Angeles, Ron Davis (born 1937) spent his formative years in Cheyenne, Wyoming, before making his way back to L.A.'s vibrant art scene in the 1960s. A work by the Taos-based artist, *Corner Shower*, will be offered in April's Made in California sale in Los Angeles.

Image: Corner Shower, 1969, by Ronald Davis Estimate: \$25,000 - 35,000 Sale: Made in California: Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, 26 April Enquiries: Alexis Chompaisal +1 323 436 5469 alexis.chompaisal@bonhams.com





Los Angeles Without pier

E. Charlton Fortune's exhibition at the Schussler Galleries in San Francisco in autumn 1914 was rapturously received. "You have, of course, seen heaps of Monterey Bay pictures, and pier pictures galore," enthused critic Michael Williams, "but you've rarely seen such fresh, strong, simple interpretations of the romantic charm and deep colour of Monterey Bay as these." That summer, as the First World War broke out in Europe, Effie Fortune had returned from the Continent and relocated to Monterey Bay, just south of San Francisco in her native California. She began to paint in a frenzy. The results of this burst of creativity, such as the work offered at Bonhams sale of California and Western Paintings in Los Angeles in April, have seen Fortune widely hailed as one of the greatest of the California Impressionists.

Image: Untitled (Wharf, Monterey), by E. Charlton Fortune, circa 1915 Estimate: \$200,000 - 300,000 Sale: California and Western Paintings and Sculpture, Los Angeles, 11 April Enquiries: Scot Levitt +1 323 436 5425 scot.levitt@bonhams.com





Edinburgh Where there's a will

So popular were the works of Fife-born artist Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841) that, in 1822, the Royal Academy took the unprecedented step of erecting barriers around the gallery to control the crowds. A minister's son, David Wilkie studied painting in Edinburgh, despite his parents' misgivings about the occupation. His ambition led him to London, where he entered the Royal Academy schools. In 1806, he made his name as a modern genre-painter, beginning a career celebrated for its deft depictions of everyday scenes. The preparatory sketch for one of the artist's most-famous works, Reading the Will, a commission from the King of Bavaria that is now in Munich's Neue Pinakothek, will be offered at the Bonhams sale of Scottish art in April.

Image: Reading the Will: Finished Sketch by Sir David Wilkie, RA Estimate: £25,000 - 35,000 Sale: The Scottish Sale: Pictures, Edinburgh, 26 April Enquiries: Chris Brickley +44 (0) 131 240 2297 chris.brickley@bonhams.com

The Marine Sale

London Wednesday 12 April 2pm

Montague Dawson (British, 1890-1973) *The Endeavour racing*, 1934 (detail) Estimate: £70,000 - 100,000 (\$85,000 - 120,000)

Enquiries: Rhyanon Demery +44 (0) 20 7393 3865 rhyanon.demery@bonhams.com bonhams.com/marine

- Station

JKA

London

New Bond Street

MARCH

Wed 1 March 2pm 19th-century European, Victorian and British Impressionist Art

Thur 2 March 5pm Impressionist and Modern Art Wed 26 April 10.30am

Middle Eastern Art

Thur 27 April 2pm

Wed 10 May 2pm

The Julius and Arlette

Katchen Collection of

Thur 11 May 10.30am

Thur 11 May 10.30am

The Jongen-Schleiper

Thur 11 May 11am

Fine Japanese Art

Wed 24 May 10am

Thur 25 May 10.30am

Fine and Rare Wines

South Asian Art

Collection of Fine Thangkas

Modern and Contemporary

Fine Chinese Art

Fine Netsuke: Part II

Fine Jewellery

MAY

Modern and Contemporary

Wed 8 March 4pm Post-War & Contemporary Art

Wed 15 March 11am The Oak Interior

Wed 22 March 2pm South African Art

Wed 29 March 10am The Contents of Glyn Cywarch - The Property of Lord Harlech

APRIL

Tue 4 April 1pm Prints and Multiples

Wed 5 April 2pm Important Design

Thur 6 April 10.30am Fine and Rare Wines

Mon 10 April 2pm Greek Sale

Tue 25 April 11am Islamic and Indian Art Knightsbridge

MARCH

Wed 1 March 1pm Fine Books

Fri 10 March 10am Watches & Wristwatches, Collection of a European Nobleman (online only)

Tue 14 March 10am HOME & Interiors

Wed 15 March 11am Jewellery

Tue 21 March 1pm British and European Art

Wed 22 March 10.30am Medals, Bonds, Banknotes and Coins

Wed 22 March 1pm Prints and Multiples

Tue 28 March 2pm Modern British and Irish Art

APRIL

Tue 4 April 1pm Science & Technology

Thur 6 April 10.30am Old Master Paintings

Tue 11 April 11am Jewellery

Wed 12 April 2pm The Marine Sale Tue 25 April 10am HOME & Interiors

Wed 26 April 10am HOME & Interiors

MAY

Mon 8 May 10.30am Asian Art

Wed 10 May 1pm Antique Arms and Armour

Thur 11 May 2pm Modern Sporting Guns

Tue 16 May 1pm Watches and Wristwatches

Wed 17 May 10.30am British and European Ceramics and Glass

Tue 23 May 10am HOME & Interiors

Wed 24 May 10am HOME & Interiors







Important Design London Wednesday 5 April 2pm

Demétre Chiparus (1886 -1947) *The Starfish Dancer* Bronze and ivory model Estimate: £100,000 - 150,000 (\$120,000 - 180,000)

Enquiries: Mark Wilkinson +44 (0) 20 7393 3855 mark.wilkinson@bonhams.com bonhams.com/importantdesign



Regions

MARCH

Wed 1 March 11am Whisky Edinburgh

Sun 19 March 1pm Goodwood Members' Meeting Chichester, Goodwood

Wed 22 March 11am Asian Art Edinburgh

APRIL

Sun 23 April 11am The Spring Stafford Sale: Pioneer, Vintage & Collectors' Motorcycles Stafford, Staffordshire County Showground Wed 26 April 2pm The Scottish Sale Edinburgh

Thur 27 April 11am The Scottish Sale Edinburgh

MAY

Sat 13 May 10.30am The Aston Martin Works Sale Newport Pagnell, Aston Martin Works Service

Tue 23 May 11am The Sporting Sale Edinburgh

Wed 24 May 11am Jewellery Edinburgh

Europe, Hong Kong & Australia

MARCH

Tue 7 March 2pm Jewels & Jadeite Hong Kong

MAY

Wed 3 May 6.30pm Asian Art Sydney

Fri 19 May 6pm Fine & Rare Wine, Cognac and Whisky Hong Kong

Mon 22 May 3pm Modern and Contemporary Art Hong Kong

Mon 22 May 5pm Prints, Photographs and Works on Paper Hong Kong

Mon 29 May 10am Fine Chinese Paintings and Southeast Asian Art Hong Kong Mon 29 May 10am Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art Hong Kong

Tue 30 May 4pm Fine Watches and Wristwatches Hong Kong

Wed 31 May 3pm Rare Jewels & Jadeite Hong Kong

JUNE

Tue 6 June 6.30pm Australian Art and Aboriginal Art Sydney











Important Design London Wednesday 5 April 2pm

A pair of Italian mid-18th century giltwood 'Portego' sofas circa 1740 Estimate: £40,000 - 60,000 (\$50,000 - 75,000)

Enquiries: Mark Wilkinson +44 (0) 20 7393 3855 mark.wilkinson@bonhams.com bonhams.com/importantdesign

North America

MARCH

Thur 9 March 10.30am Fine Books and Manuscripts New York

Thur 9 March 11am The Amelia Island Auction Fernandina Beach Golf Club

Mon 13 March 10am Fine Chinese Snuff Bottles New York

Mon 13 March 12pm Chinese Works of Art New York

Mon 13 March 3pm Indian, Himalayan & Southeast Asian Art New York

Tue 14 March 10am Antique Arms & Armor and Modern Sporting Guns San Francisco

Tue 14 March 6.30pm Portraits of the Masters: 108 Bronze Sculptures of the Tibetan Buddhist Lineages New York

Wed 15 March 10am The Zuiun Collection New York Wed 15 March 1pm Japanese Works of Art New York

Wed 15 March 3pm The Korean Aesthetic: The Collection of Robert W. Moore New York

Fri 17 March 10am Fine & Rare Wines San Francisco

Tue 21 March 10am California Jewels Los Angeles

Tue 21 March 10am Asian Decorative Works of Art San Francisco

Mon 27 March 10am TCM Presents... Rock and Roll New York

Wed 29 March 10am Golf Sale Los Angeles

APRIL

Mon 10 April 2pm Watches Los Angeles

Tue 11 April 6pm California and Western Paintings and Sculpture Los Angeles and San Francisco

Tue 18 April 10am Prints and Multiples Los Angeles

Mon 24 April 3pm Fine Jewelry New York

Tue 25 April 1pm Photographs New York

Wed 26 April 10am Made in California Los Angeles

Wed 26 April 1pm The Modern House Los Angeles

MAY

Wed 3 May 2pm 19th Century European Paintings New York

Tue 9 May 10am Lapidary Works of Art, Gemstones, Minerals and Natural History Los Angeles

Wed 10 May 10am The World of Opals, The Splendor of Gold Los Angeles

Wed 10 May 10am African, Oceanic and Pre-Columbian Art Los Angeles

Tue 16 May 10am The Jackie Collins Sale Los Angeles

Tue 16 May 4pm Post-War & Contemporary Art New York

Wed 17 May 5pm Impressionist & Modern Art New York

Wed 24 May 2pm American Art New York

Fri 26 May 10am Fine & Rare Wines San Francisco









The Jongen-Schleiper Collection of Fine Thangkas London Thursday 11 May 10.30am

CAR. A

A thangka triptych of the Panchen Lamas of Tashilhunpo Tibet, dated by inscription to A.D.1835 Distemper on cloth (detail) $251 \times 160cm (98\% \times 63in)$ Estimate: £200,000 - 300,000 (\$240,000 - 360,000)

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Post-War & Contemporary Art New York

New York Tuesday 16 May 4pm

Property from the Estate of Margrit Mondavi

Wayne Thiebaud (born 1920) *Camellia Cake,* 1995 oil on panel *11 x 14in (27.9 x 35.6cm)* Estimate: \$500,000 - 700,000 (£415,000 - 575,000)

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My Favourite Room

Artist *Conrad Shawcross* was amazed by the 2,000year-old building he stumbled on in Rome one day





went to the Pantheon in Rome for the first time about five years ago. I was wandering down a side street on my own when I stumbled across this incredible room. The building has a formal, north-facing façade – the only remnants of Marcus Agrippa's original temple, built during the reign of Augustus. If you approach the building from any other angle, you could easily mistake the 21ft-thick concrete walls of the drum for an old warehouse. The exterior walls are dilapidated, exposed, and raw. You expect the inside to be crumbling as much as the outside, but within that industrial exterior is a hidden gem, a pristine 135ft-wide dome made possible by a feat of engineering.

That this room is roughly 2,000 years old, completed (as we see it today) by Emperor Hadrian around AD 120, is astonishing. A great deal of complex engineering would have been required to

"The exterior is dilapidated, exposed, raw – but within is a hidden gem" achieve what is a deceptively simple rotunda. Just as extraordinary as the design is what that design conveys: some of the philosophical issues that the space raises are the same as those we grapple with in art today. It's a place that leads you along complex paths of

enquiry, just like a contemporary art installation should.

When I visit the Pantheon, I watch the circle of sunlight which shines through the oculus (the 30ft opening at the dome's apex that acts as the room's light source). I try to perceive the progress of that circle across the grid of squares (coffers) set into the dome. But the speed of my cognition can't keep up with the movement of the sun.

I wonder how life would be if we could slow down time sufficiently to be able to experience the moments between the seconds. That's what much of my work is connected with – the human perception of time. I can't think of a room that more powerfully interacts with that subject matter.

I have stood in the Pantheon in the quiet of early morning, before the tourists descend, but it's when it is full of people that it comes alive, with the visitors becoming part of the orchestra of light. When I made *Timepiece*, I engaged the audience as gnomons: the piece had a light clock above a central spike, which formed the principal gnomon, and the people below became their own gnomons, their shadows a personalised projection of time.

I'm working with light projection again for a piece that will be shown at the Barbican. It's a huge exhibition, with a sci-fi theme, and I've been given The Pit theatre all to myself. I'm grappling with creating a Stonehenge-like space, with a robotic arm at its centre, casting light around the room. The whole thing is very much connected with my experience of the Pantheon.

Conrad Shawcross has created a piece for Cure³, an exhibition of 50 artists' work – each contained in a 20cm³ Perspex box – at Bonhams, 101 New Bond Street, London W1 from 13 to 15 March; bonhams.com/cure3

Pantheon, Piazza della Rotonda, Rome; turismoroma.it

Chinese Works of Art and Paintings

New York Monday 13 March 12pm

An Imperial gilt-bronze ritual 'Huangzhong' bell, Bianzhong Qianlong mark and of the period, dated Qianlong 8th year, corresponding to 1743 Estimate: \$600,000 - 1,000,000 (£500,000 - 850,000)

An Imperial gilt-bronze ritual 'Ruibin' bell, Bianzhong Qianlong mark and of the period, dated Qianlong 8th year, corresponding to 1743 Estimate: \$600,000 - 1,000,000 (£500,000 - 850,000)

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