

# Bonhams

MAGAZINE | WINTER 2020 ISSUE 65

Ruth Orkin

The photographer who seized  
the moment

Vignali's David and Goliath

Right between the eyes

The Rothberger Collection

Philippe Sands on pre-war Vienna  
and a porcelain elephant

and

The Dunrobin Castle

Attic Sale











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New York Jewels  
Monday December 7  
10am

A Superb Kashmir Sapphire and Diamond Brooch,  
Circa 1910  
Estimate: \$500,000 - 800,000  
(£380,00 - 600,000)

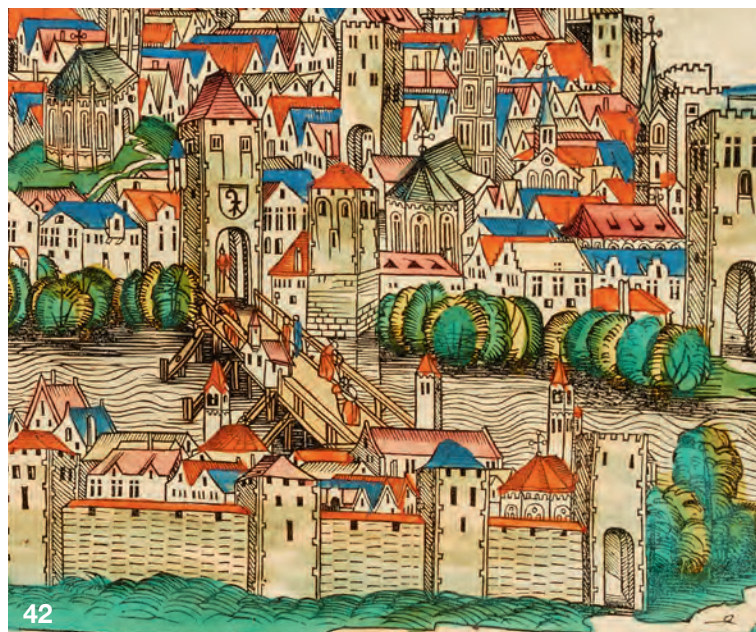
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Ruth Orkin (1921-1985)  
*American Tourists in MG by the Arno*,  
Florence, Italy, 1951  
See page 18



# Editor's letter



One of the issues of editing a quarterly magazine is there are astonishing lots one can't cover due to pesky timing. In last month's Impressionist & Modern Art Sale in New York, for example, two magnificent works came up for auction. One was Kandinsky's *Einige Spitzen*, which achieved more than \$3m. But even more beguiling for me was a stage

curtain designed and painted by Marc Chagall for the Metropolitan Opera's 1967 production of *The Magic Flute*. Surplus to requirements, the company had sold it to the late Gerard Cafesjian, who had bought it as a centrepiece for his Armenian foundation, before his estate offered it at Bonhams. After fierce bidding, it made \$1m and doubtlessly will be a focal point at a new location.

This result made me think about what happens when a collection is rationalised. Or, in the case of Dunrobin Castle, having to deal with the surplus-to-requirements contents housed in the attics. Dunrobin in Sutherland is *the* great Scottish palace. It's now a tourist magnet, but 150 years ago it was one of the epicentres of the shooting season, with the British aristocracy – and royalty – descending on the heather each August. It goes without saying

that the braise-lined rooms of silver for the dining table, mounds of tartanware, gilt frames for paintings, lead sugar moulds for the scullery – and then there are the chamber pots – are unlikely to be needed in such quantity again. However, these glorious items will inevitably find new homes where they are needed when they are offered at Bonhams Edinburgh in February.

There are other families featured in this issue that, like the Earls of Sutherland, accumulated acquisitions. The Rothbergers in Vienna, for instance, created a fabled collection of porcelain, a selection of which is being offered by the niece of Heinrich Rothberger. The story of how the pieces survived the Second World War – and were returned to the Rothbergers – is almost as astonishing as the artistry of the works themselves. For the whole story, turn to page 50 to read Philippe Sands' article.

Finally, the family of Ruth Orkin are bringing a selection of their mother's photographs to auction in New York. A woman who carved a path through Europe – and a man's world – Ruth Orkin's name should be as familiar as her images. Enjoy the issue.

*Lucinda Bredin*

## Contributors



### Nicholas Coleridge

Nicholas Coleridge is Chairman of the Victoria and Albert Museum. For 30 years he was successively Editorial Director, Managing Director, President and Chairman of Condé Nast. He is the author of 15 books, including his recent memoir *The Glossy Years: Magazines, Museums and Selective Memories*. On page 72, he reveals his favourite room.



### Susan Moore

Susan Moore is the art market correspondent and associate editor of *Apollo* magazine, and a regular contributor to the *Financial Times*. She founded the non-profit Slow Art Workshop in 2017, and is writing a biography of Baron Hans Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza. On page 38, Susan writes about Jacopo Vignali's tour-de-force depiction of David and Goliath.



### Mary Miers

Formerly Architectural Writer and Fine Arts and Books Editor at *Country Life*, Mary Miers is one of the foremost experts on historic Scottish houses. Her most recent book is *Highland Retreats: The Architecture and Interiors of Scotland's Romantic North*. On page 24, she writes about Dunrobin Castle, the most romantic building of them all.



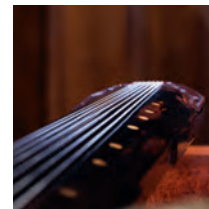
### Philippe Sands

Philippe Sands QC is Professor of Law at University College London and a practising barrister at Matrix Chambers. He appears as counsel before international courts and tribunals, and sits as an international arbitrator. His new book, *The Ratline: Love, Lies and Justice on the Trail of a Nazi Fugitive*, is also available as a BBC podcast.



### Frances Wood

Frances Wood was Curator of the Chinese collections in the British Library from 1977 to 2013. Her publications include *Great Books of China* (2017) and, with Andrew Lo, Wang Tz'u-cheng and Song Jiayu, *Export Paintings in the British Library* (2011). On page 56, Frances writes about how music is represented in Chinese art.



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Antiquities  
London  
Tuesday 1 December  
11am

A Roman marble torso of Venus  
Circa 1st-2nd Century A.D.  
*34cm high (13½in)*  
Estimate: £35,000 - 45,000  
(\$47,000 - 60,000)

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# News

*In and out of  
Bonhams' salerooms*



## ★ Perfect ten

Bonhams returns to Arizona on 21 January 2021 to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Scottsdale Auction, following a decade of successful sales staged on the lawns of the Westin Kierland Resort. Over the past ten years, the sale has offered rare, valuable and collectible motor cars of the highest calibre, achieving numerous world auction records, notably for a 1963 Jaguar E-Type Lightweight Competition, the tenth of the dozen Lightweights built, which sold in 2017 for \$7,370,000, becoming both the most valuable

E-Type and most valuable post-1960 Jaguar to ever cross the block. Early consignments to the 'live and online' 2021 sale include a rare 'nuts-and-bolts' restored 1958 Porsche 356A1600 T2 (*pictured above*) estimate: \$475,000-500,000, and a well-preserved 1992 Lancia Delta HF Integrale Evoluzione 1, in the desirable Martini 6 livery (estimate: \$160,000-190,000).

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## ★ A fruitful journey

Instantly recognisable by their riot of colour, Cartier Tutti Frutti bracelets are both glamorous and exotic, making them some of the most sought after designs in the world. In 1911, Jacques Cartier went to India to find clients, but returned with an array of emeralds and other gems, some purchased from the Maharajas of Patiala and Kapurthala. Back home in Paris, they inspired Louis Cartier and designer Charles Jacqueau to create what has become known as the Tutti Frutti. Registered in the Cartier books as "foliage", this confection of emeralds, rubies, and sapphires perfectly captured the exuberance of the 1920s. Admirers of the style included Daisy Fellowes – the Singer sewing machine heiress famous for living off 'grouse, cocaine and other women's husbands'. The Tutti Frutti bracelet (estimate: HK\$1,950,000-2,800,000) offered by Bonhams in the Hong Kong Jewels and Jadeite Sale on 28 November 2020 exemplifies the best

Cartier traditions, with its central carved foliate emerald and diamond and sapphire frame making a sly reference to Cartier's famous peacock necklaces. The extraordinary graduated band of carved rubies, emeralds, and sapphires – both leaves and fluted balls – places this among Cartier's finest Tutti Frutti designs.

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## Modern & Contemporary Art

London

Wednesday 9 December

4pm

Banksy (b.1975)

*London, New York, Bristol (Heavy Weaponry)*,

2000

tagged Banksy (centre);

dated and numbered 10/10 2000

(on the overlap)

spray paint and emulsion on canvas

57 x 54cm (22½ x 21¼in)

Estimate: £250,000 - 350,000

(\$330,000 - 460,000)

Enquires: Cassi Young

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[bonhams.com/contemporary](http://bonhams.com/contemporary)





### ★ Moving images

How do you capture movement on the page? In 1941, when Henri Matisse was near bedridden with cancer, he started creating a work that found inspirational answers to that enduring artistic conundrum. His ground-breaking artist's book, *Jazz* – which contained 20 plates of his signature bold, expressive, and vibrant cut-outs, alongside poetic text – seemed to capture a dance, and left a trail of colour across the blank space. Published in 1947 and limited to just 250 copies (there were an additional 20 *hors commerce* copies in Roman numerals), the book was an unprecedented success – and its popularity

and influence endure to this day. Originally entitled *Cirque*, the book's improvised themes and compositional variations prompted the printer Tériade to suggest *Jazz* as an appropriate alternative title. But certainly Matisse's book offers all the fun of the circus. Number 73 from the edition of 250 comes to Bonhams Prints & Multiples sale in London on 15 December, with an estimate of £240,000-300,000.

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### ★ The fast and the fabulous

A Bentley Continental will glide into Bond Street on 16 December for the motor car department's finale to the year: the Bond Street Sale. The rare Continental – only 2,008 of them were ever built – is considered by many the pinnacle of post-war Bentleys, with the aerodynamic fastback form, created by coachbuilders H.J. Mulliner for the offered 1953 Sports Saloon (estimate: £550,000-700,000), its definitive styling. Beloved by James Bond creator Ian Fleming, the Continental was the fastest – and the most expensive – motor car of its day, dubbed “a modern magic carpet” by *Autocar* magazine. With a 120mph top speed and effortless

cruising at 100mph, its performance rivalled that of contemporary sports cars. This particular Continental was subsequently upgraded with the more powerful 4.9-litre engine and air-conditioning. One of the first 25 built on a Mark IV chassis, the motor car was delivered new to Geneva, before spending much of its life in the USA. Bought by a UK collector in 2003, the Continental has completed two trouble-free tours to continental Europe.

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### ★ Perfect timing

A stunning American million-dollar single-owner collection of 85 timepieces, featuring an array of complex, historic pocket watches, will be the centrepiece of the Bonhams Art of Time Sale in New York on 3 December 2020. Solutions to such technical challenges as perpetual calendars, the tourbillon and dual time zones, familiar in today's luxury watches, were actually introduced for the first generation of watch-owners by a small number of virtuoso watchmakers of the 19th century. A standout lot is a c.1894 fine 18K gold minute repeating watch with chronograph, perpetual calendar and moon phase by Haas Neveux & Co. of Geneva (estimate \$20,000-40,000), which retains its original timing certificate, the Geneva Observatory 1st Class Bulletin de Marche. Its modern counterpart, also offered from the collection, is an Audemars Piguet Limited Edition 18K Rose Gold Royal Oak Perpetual Calendar Automatic Bracelet Watch made in 1995 (pictured; estimate: \$40,000-60,000). In addition, the collection features rare timepieces by Albert Potter and Charles Fasoldt, pre-eminent late 19th-century American craftsmen.

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## Fine Decorative Arts, 1200-1900

London

Friday 18 December

2pm

A rare 14th century German bronze Aquamanile  
in the form of a lion

Lübeck or Nuremberg, circa 1350

Estimate: £100,000 - 120,000

(\$130,000 - 160,000)

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### Poster boys

Getting away from it all has been a struggle for many this year, but there can be few more elegant reminders of what we're missing than the evocative vintage posters from the Golden Age of Travel to be offered at Knightsbridge this December. From the 1930s, there are *L'hiver à Monte-Carlo* by the French painter Jean-Gabriel Domergue – famous for his portraits of Parisian women – and *Winter in Switzerland* by Erich Hérnes, a German-born artist indelibly linked with winter pursuits and alpine views. While anyone pining for the sun will find solace in Roger Broder's posters promoting Antibes and Marseille.

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### ★ Worcester source

Established in 1751, Royal Worcester is considered the oldest remaining English porcelain brand, with those wares produced in the company's first few years of operation, known simply as 'Worcester porcelain', most prized by collectors. The physician John Wall and apothecary William Davis had attempted to change their city's fortunes by opening the Warmstry House factory on the River Severn. Then, in 1754, artist Robert Hancock joined the company, becoming the first man to apply prints to porcelain. The unique decorative idiom that developed blossomed only fleetingly in the early 1750s, but has enraptured collectors ever since, not least Ralph Kenbar and John Alchin,

whose collections are offered at Bonhams in Knightsbridge on 15 December 2020. Ralph began collecting Worcester porcelain as a retirement hobby, while John's love of these ceramics was founded on a baffling Christmas present in 1980 – a present that initiated 40 years' browsing of antique stalls on Portobello Road and Kensington Church Street, and countless visits to Royal Worcester. Alchin says, "I am hoping these pieces give as much joy to subsequent collectors as they have to me."

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### ★ Wilde time

This year is the 120th anniversary of the death in a rundown Paris hotel of Oscar Wilde. The poet, playwright and society gadfly was reviled towards the end of his life – and for many decades afterwards – as a symbol of moral depravity, but is today lauded as a gay icon. Wilde's towering physical presence, relentless self-promotion and brilliant repartee made him difficult to ignore (even his tomb in Père Lachaise shouts 'look at me'). Yet Wilde's persona masked his immense capacity for application and his craftsmanship, which secured success for his work in his lifetime and has ensured its continued global appeal. Jeremy Mason, a bibliophile and former dealer in oriental antiques, has been searching out Wilde memorabilia for the last 55 years. Highlights of his vast collection – which consists of more than 500 books, files and boxes – will form a special exhibition in New Bond Street next February. Jeremy's first purchase was actor Ernest



Thesiger's first edition of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, and the collection grew from there. There are books, letters – some unpublished – and manuscripts from each period of Wilde's life, and Jeremy has made a point of hunting down evocative items of ephemera that add to the vividness of Wilde's already colourful story. It promises to be a once-in-a-lifetime exhibition, which will be accompanied by a special catalogue to create a permanent record of this extraordinary collection.

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Western Art  
Los Angeles  
Saturday 26 February 2021  
1pm

William Herbert Dunton (1878-1936)  
*Blackfeet Indians moving to the Buffalo Range* (detail)  
oil on canvas  
16 x 20in (40 x 50.8)  
Estimate: \$60,000 - 80,000  
(£45,000 - 60,000)

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### ★ Rearguard auction

The 1964 film *Zulu*, starring Michael Caine and Stanley Baker, is a classic of British cinema. It tells the story of the defence in January 1879 of Rorke's Drift in Natal, South Africa,

by 150 British soldiers against 3,000 Zulu warriors. The man who organised the stand was Lieutenant John Chard of the Royal Engineers, played in the film by Baker. For his

bravery, Chard was awarded the Victoria Cross, one of 11 men so honoured for their part in the action. At the personal request of Queen Victoria, Chard wrote an account of the battle, a handwritten full draft of which, extensively amended in different coloured inks, is offered at the Fine Books and Manuscript Sale in London in December. Chard's riveting, no-nonsense testimony has great immediacy – all the more impressive when you consider that he lost most of his notes and wrote it from memory. Attitudes towards the Empire today are rightly very different from those of earlier generations, but there can be little disagreement about the exceptional courage and heroism shown by Chard and the men under his command.

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What happened next...



### Result!

The original version of the FA Cup (awarded from 1896 to 1910) hit the back of the net when it scored £759,062 in the Sporting Trophies Sale in September.



### A hard rock classic

Weighing 14 metric tonnes and standing 5 metres tall and 2.5 metres wide, this vividly coloured geode is the largest amethyst ever to be offered at auction. With violet amethyst colour and the presence of very rare yellow hemispherical calcite crystals, it is a specimen without peer. Originating in Uruguay, the amethyst radiates various hues of lilac, rose and blue, depending on the light being shone upon it. The lustre of the crystals is exceptional for a specimen of this size and there is scintillation of light – a sparkling like a thousand stars – deep within the geode cavity. It is offered at Bonhams Natural History Sale in Los Angeles on 3 December 2020, with an estimate of \$300,000-400,000.

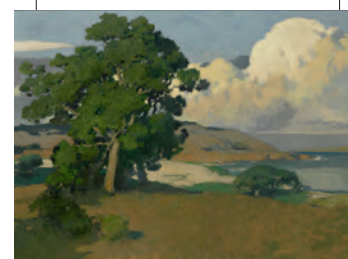
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### Keeping cool

From Beatlemania to Bowie, from Bacon to Banksy – Britain knows how to do cool. For a relatively small country, it has had a disproportionate cultural impact on the world, whether through post-war art or post-punk music. In February 2021, as the country enters a new phase in its international history, Bonhams will present 'British. Cool.' – a sale looking back at what really gives Britain the right to the prefix 'Great'. Featuring a cross-departmental selection of contemporary art, prints, photographs, entertainment memorabilia and motor cars, the sale will showcase a diverse range of British and émigré talent from the last hundred years. The popularity of cutting-edge British works at Pop x Culture – Bonhams' first thematic sale, which took place in October 2020 – makes 'British. Cool.' a sale not to be missed, but it also marks the beginning of Bonhams new season of conceptual sales, including 'The Mind's Eye: Surrealist Sale' in March 2021.

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### California gold

Arthur Mathews' glorious landscape, *Monterey*, achieved \$500,075 in the 40th Anniversary Auction of California and Western Art in Los Angeles in October

### King of the road

The 1959 BMW 507 Series II once belonging to the former King of Greece, Constantine II sold at The Zoute Sale for €2,070,000 in October





# Old Master Paintings

London

Thursday 17 December

2pm

Netherlandish School, 16th Century  
*The Madonna and Child enthroned  
flanked by angels (detail)*

oil on panel

55.3 x 39.1cm (21¾ x 15¼in)

unframed

Estimate: £50,000 - 70,000

(\$66,000 - 93,000)

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# Design for living

It seems like destiny to return to Bonhams, Marcus McDonald tells **Andrew Currie**

## Right

Chair man: Marcus McDonald, Director of Bonhams Modern Decorative Art + Design

## Below

Side table by Carlo Bugatti, circa 1900, that sold for £30,000 in London's Design Sale in October

**M**arcus McDonald is the Director of the Design Department at Bonhams in London. He has just held Bonhams' inaugural Design Sale that focuses on Modern and Contemporary Design.

## Tell us something about your background

I was born in Bristol and went to school in Shropshire. We have family businesses on the Wharfage in Ironbridge – the 'Birthplace of the Industrial Revolution' – so I could marvel at the world's first iron bridge, a wonderful structure. Shropshire also has great museums, castles, stately homes, and churches, which I would often visit. My best friend's father was a stained-glass artist and restorer. His workshop was part of a Tudor house near Lilleshall Abbey and was always a fantastic place to be. So, growing up, I was surrounded by design of all different kinds. I then attended Middlesex University, where I studied History of Art.

## What inspired you to go into the art world?

I became fascinated by the way that design and art can enhance an environment, especially when they are juxtaposed and create a dialogue. I believe, as William Morris famously said, that you should "have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful". For me, it is really important to surround yourself with design that talks to you personally. When you live with objects of quality, intrigue, and beauty, every room becomes a performance – chairs, tables, lighting, sculpture and paintings seem to communicate, harmonising and enhancing your



surroundings. I'm with John Ruskin, too, in his 1866 lecture 'The Crown of Wild Olive': "Taste is the only morality. Tell me what you like, and I'll tell you what you are!"

## What was your first job?

I actually started my career in the 20th Century British Art

Department at Bonhams, so this does feel very much like coming home. After that, I was with the Phillips Design Department for many years, initially cataloguing and researching – an invaluable way of gaining a real knowledge of Pre- and Post-War design. Latterly, as an International Specialist at Phillips, I worked in London, New York, and started Design in Hong Kong. I have also worked on important projects here with the Design Museum, Architectural Association, London Design Festival, and the V&A.

## What are some of the highlights of your career so far?

Well, I orchestrated the first Phillips online-only Design sale in New York. I also enjoyed selling







**Left**  
Jean Dunand's 'Les Biches' folding screen, circa 1926  
Sold for £ 94,000 in October

**Above**  
An irresistible Stilnovo ceiling light, circa 1950s. Achieved £18,800 in October's sale

part of the Fina Gomez Collection – a collection of ceramics, including great work by Lucie Rie and Hans Coper – and there was the sell-out single-owner auction in New York of 23 works by R.W. Martin & Brothers. But the thing I'm most proud of is having helped to develop the international market for Nordic Design: I sold a unique dining table by Peder Moos, which was designed for the Villa Aubertin at Røsnæs on Denmark's Nakslov Fjord, for an auction record of £602,500.

#### **What has changed in your area of expertise since you started in the business?**

Design has always been a global community that appreciates the discussion of ideas, solutions, aesthetics and production methods. The 20th century saw a proliferation of world fairs, expositions, triennials – all of which show off the greatest and most-revered architectural and design talents, in myriad styles, from around the world. There is an ever-growing international presence of and appreciation for design, but – this is the big change, I think – there has been a particular increase in interest from Asia in acquiring exquisite design works.

#### **What are your strengths as a specialist?**

I've worked in departments and for auctions in London, New York and Hong Kong, so my knowledge of design is unusually broad, covering British, French, German, Italian, Nordic, Japanese and Contemporary. That's a real asset. I like to think I have an inspirational approach to the presentation and contextualisation of design, too, which I hope people will find engaging. Personal relationships are very important to me, and acquiring an in-depth understanding of my clients' sensibilities so that I can help them refine and build their collections is a key part of my job.

#### **Which work of art or design changed your life?**

That's a tough question, because there are many candidates, but – if I have to choose – I'd select the Laputa bed by renowned Japanese designer Shiro Kuramata. It's like no other bed you'll have ever seen – for one thing, it's four metres long. It was Kuramata's final furniture design, created in response to a brief to create a bedroom at the group exhibition *Il Dolce Stil Novo della Casa* (A Proposal for a New Life) for Pitti Immagine at the Palazzo Strozzi, Florence, in 1991. His bed is named after the flying island in *Gulliver's Travels*, which has a base made from the mythical material adamantine and hovers above the island of Balnibarri. Wrapped in 'Star Piece' satin and with a high metallic surface finish, the Laputa bed has an extra-terrestrial appearance. As the artist intended, the elongated form creates a dream-like sense of levitation. It sums up Kuramata's work and practice perfectly.

#### **What's next?**

I'm still drawing breath after my October sale. This was our first-ever Design sale and the results showed a real appetite for modern and contemporary design. We had some wonderful examples of international design – Scandinavian, Nordic, Italian and American too. There were pieces by well-known designers and architects, such as Gio Ponti, Finn Juhl, Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret, and Émile-Jacques Ruhlmann. The star of the show was *Les Biches*, a folding screen made around 1926 by the French art deco design-master Jean Dunand, which sold for £93,813. Dunand was in great demand from private and commercial clients alike, with his work represented in museums and galleries throughout the world, so this was a very special piece. I'm now busily consigning for my next sale in April 2021.

*Andrew Currie is Deputy Director of the Press Office.*



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# Seize the moment

American photographer, Ruth Orkin, travelled through Europe – and cut a swathe through a man's world. *Sasha Thomas* describes Orkin's incredible journey

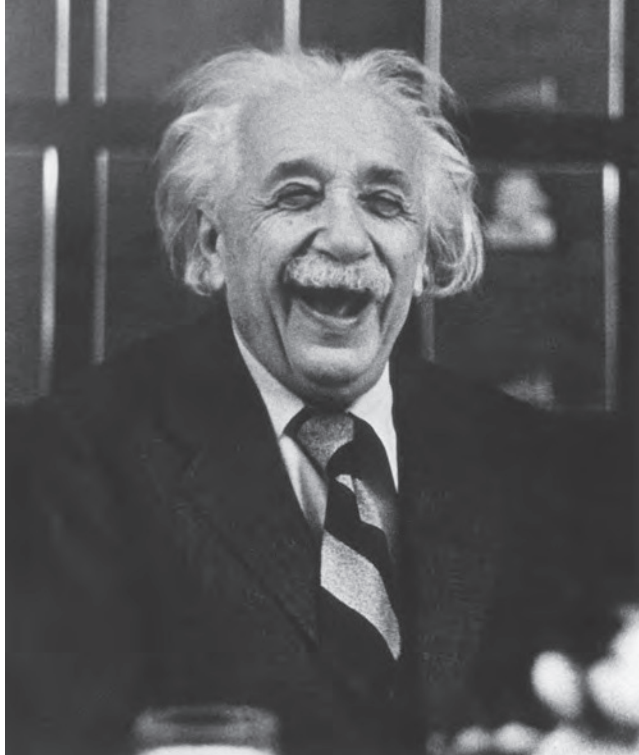
Ruth Orkin  
American Tourists in MG by the Arno,  
Florence, Italy, 1951  
gelatin silver print











**Top left**  
Ruth Orkin  
*Albert Einstein at a Princeton Luncheon*  
New Jersey, 1955  
gelatin silver print

**Left**  
Ruth Orkin  
*Orson Welles at Count Beistiqui Ball*  
Venice, Italy, 1951  
gelatin silver print

**Above**  
Ruth Orkin  
*Brothers*  
Hyde Park, London, England, 1951  
gelatin silver print

**Right**  
Ruth Orkin  
*American Girl in Italy*  
Florence, 1951  
gelatin silver print

You probably know the image. It adorns the walls of Italian restaurants all over the world. A beautiful young girl, clutching a shawl draped over her shoulder, walks past a group of men, who are all staring at her. You may not know the photographer, Ruth Orkin, who – then only 29 years old – took the image after a chance encounter with a 6ft tall, 23-year-old American woman.

Recalling the meeting, Orkin said, “I had met Jinx Allen, like me travelling alone through Europe, at our hotel in Florence in 1951, and asked her to do a scene. The first time she walked through that gang of men loitering on the street corner, she clutched at herself and looked terribly frightened. I told her to walk by a second time ‘as if it’s killing you but you’re going to make it’. That’s all I needed, two exposures. It was a year before anybody published it – it was probably too risqué at the time.”

The photograph, *American Girl in Italy*, became Orkin’s most famous image. It was part of a series that Orkin called *Don’t Be Afraid to Travel Alone*, and was first published in *Cosmopolitan* – alongside an article titled, ‘When you travel alone... tips on money, men and morals’.

The image was then used in an advertisement for Kodak, encouraging young photographers. It was from that poster, blown up on a huge board in Grand Central Station, that Jinx (who, by then, went by Ninalee Craig) first saw herself as the ‘American Girl in Italy’. “It horrified my father,” she remarked, “He had no idea I was walking around Italy in that way.”

The controversy of the image remains, and is perhaps more relevant than ever: does it depict a woman being admired or harassed – or even both? Craig later said that she saw herself as “Beatrice walking through the street of Florence. I felt that any moment I might be discovered by Dante himself.”

What is certain is that the image would define Ruth Orkin’s career in more ways than one (even if it is still often mistaken for a work by the legendary French photographer Robert Doisneau). By the time she had shot *American Girl in Italy*, Orkin had already established herself as a pioneering female photographer and filmmaker, in a world that was dominated by men. Now, in celebration of the centennial year of her birth, a selection of works from Orkin’s





impressive career will be offered in an online sale at [bonhams.com](https://www.bonhams.com) from 22 January 2021.

Born in Boston, Massachusetts, Ruth Orkin grew up in Hollywood during its Golden Age. Her mother had a career there as a silent-film actress, but her father was manufacturer of toy boats. She received her first camera aged 10. By the time she was 14, she was making portraits of her classmates for \$1 apiece, and at 17 cycled across the United States, from Los Angeles to New York City, to see the 1939 World's Fair – taking little more than her camera.

**“It horrified my father.  
He had no idea I was walking  
around Italy in that way”**

After briefly studying photojournalism at Los Angeles City College, in 1940 Orkin became the first messenger girl at MGM Studios. She had hopes of becoming a cinematographer, yet, on telling the head of the cinematographers' union of her ambitions,

he laughed: “Before we ever let a woman in the union, we'll let in Marlene Dietrich.” The star had been taking 16mm pictures of her children at the time. Undeterred, Orkin joined the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps in a second attempt to gain training as a filmmaker – an opportunity promoted in the recruitment campaigns. However, her hopes were unfulfilled. “That's when I decided to become a photojournalist,” Orkin commented. “There wasn't any union to keep out women.”

In 1943, Orkin moved to New York. By night, she worked as a nightclub photographer, and by day she shot baby pictures, all while saving for her first professional camera. The 1940s saw Orkin work for all the major US publications. She photographed many notable names, including some of the greatest musician of the era – Leonard Bernstein, Isaac Stern, Aaron Copland, Jascha Heifetz, and Serge Koussevitzky – as well as other significant cultural figures, not least Orson Welles and Alfred Hitchcock. In 1951, *LIFE* magazine sent her to Israel with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. From there, she travelled alone across Europe, taking many of her most-famous images, including *American Girl in Italy*.





**Left**  
Ruth Orkin  
*Mother and daughter at Penn Station. New York circa 1947-1948*  
gelatin silver print

**Below**  
Ruth Orkin  
*Jewish Refugees, Israel, 1951*  
gelatin silver print

**Right**  
Ruth Orkin, *Boy jumping into the Hudson River. New York, 1948*  
gelatin silver print



On her return to New York, she married fellow photographer and filmmaker Morris Engel. It was alongside Engel that she finally got to live her ambition of being a filmmaker. Together they produced two feature films: *Little Fugitive* and *Lovers and Lollipops*. The former, which starred a young boy alone in Coney Island, was nominated for an Oscar in 1953. It also won Orkin a Lion of San Marco at the Venice Film Festival in the same year – making her the first American woman to receive it. The great French *nouvelle vague* director François Truffaut was even quoted as saying that “The French New Wave would never have come into being if it hadn’t been for *Little Fugitive*.”

Orkin would live out her later years photographing marathons, parades, concerts, demonstrations, and the changing seasons, all from the window of the New York apartment, overlooking Central Park, that she shared with Engel. The images were the subject of her widely acclaimed book *A World Through My Window*, published in 1978.

Orkin’s career, and especially the image *American Girl in Italy*, gained a new lease of life in the 1970s, when Orkin was the subject of retrospectives and the feminist movement was gaining traction. “I’ve always done what I wanted to do” was Orkin’s reaction. Indeed, she was never

a woman to take no for an answer. Her works are often a balanced mix of intimacy, warmth and boldness, with a real sense of fun. She was, of course, much more than the photographer behind that one image, yet it defined all the qualities of her work, and was in itself a metaphor for her life – a woman making her own path through a man’s world, head held high.

**“I’ve always done what I wanted to do’ was Orkin’s reaction”**

What became of the American Girl in Italy? “I wouldn’t say the picture changed my life,” Craig said, “but I’ve had so much amusement from it over the years... And more free meals at Italian restaurants that you’ll ever know”.

*Sasha Thomas is Press Officer at Bonhams.*

Sale: The Photographs of Ruth Orkin (1921-1985):  
A Centennial Celebration  
Online sale at [bonhams.com](https://bonhams.com)  
from Monday 22 January to 6 February, 2021  
Enquiries: Laura Paterson +1 (0) 20 7468 8360  
[laura.paterson@bonhams.com](mailto:laura.paterson@bonhams.com)  
[bonhams.com/photographs](https://bonhams.com/photographs)









# Highland fling

In its heyday, Dunrobin Castle held elaborate shooting parties for the Victorian nobility, including the Queen herself. Now the decision to declutter the attics has brought all sorts of treasures to light. *Mary Miers* reports



**D**unrobin Castle is unquestionably the most magnificent building in the north of Scotland. A fairytale vision of spired tourelles riding high above trees against the bare shoulder of Ben Bhraggie, it owes its Renaissance-château appearance to a Victorian remodelling, although, unlike so many 19th-century ‘castles’, its gleaming ashlar walls encase a medieval keep. The 13th-century seat of the Earls of Sutherland grew piecemeal through the 17th and 18th centuries to form the southern part of the palatial buildings we see today, elevated dramatically above the Moray Firth.

The public rooms are the result of a 1919 rebuilding of the Victorian ranges following a dramatic fire. Designed by Scottish Arts and Crafts architect Sir Robert Lorimer, they are regarded as among his most beautiful interiors and provide an outstanding setting for the famous collection of family portraits by artists such as Sir Thomas Lawrence, George Romney, Sir Joshua Reynolds and Allan Ramsay, as well as 18th-century furniture and Mortlake tapestries, marble busts, paintings by Tintoretto, Sir David Wilkie and Michael Wright, and many other treasures.

These rooms have been open to the public since 1973, but a new layer of Dunrobin’s history has recently been

“Unlike so many 19th-century ‘castles’, Dunrobin’s gleaming walls encase a genuine medieval keep”

uncovered with the decision to declutter attics and cellars that had lain undisturbed for decades. Rare objects on public display, such as two of the earliest vacuum cleaners and a bell-pull system with miles of brass wiring still in perfect condition, touch on this *Upstairs, Downstairs* aspect of country-house life.

However, the picture has now been greatly enriched by the discovery of countless other household artefacts, many of which will be offered in the Dunrobin Attic Sale at Bonhams’ Edinburgh saleroom on 24 February. They represent a fascinating time capsule of domestic operations on a *Downton Abbey* scale. Maids’ bedrooms tucked into the eaves of the earlier ranges had been reconfigured to become porcelain stores, with rows of footbaths, floral jugs and washbasins, chamber pots and piles of crested dinner services, all jostling for space with meat domes, tiered oyster holders and untold numbers of copper vessels and glass carafes.

#### Left

Dunrobin Castle in Sutherland, the most-magnificent building in the north of Scotland

#### Right

*Elizabeth, Countess of Sutherland*, by Sir Joshua Reynolds Her 1785 marriage to George Granville Leveson-Gower transformed an ancient Scottish earldom into one of Victorian Britain’s richest dynasties



The maids' rooms on the attic floors, where many treasures were found



© Laura Morrison/Sutherland Dunrobin Trust





© Laura Morrison/Sutherland Dunrobin Trust



© Laura Morrison/Sutherland Dunrobin Trust



## “Queen Victoria was met by the 3rd Duke driving his own engine, dressed in ‘a curious get up’”

In the Victorian wing, rooms that had served as boys’ dormitories when the castle was a public school in the 1960s had been appropriated for extra storage: one housed stacks of gilt picture frames; another, paintings, including a portrait of Millicent, the Duchess of Sutherland’s pet dog, with a box containing sugar moulds and other lead objects whose purpose has long been forgotten. In the cellars, where huge pipes carry water from the river to combat fire, one room had shelves lined with green baize that was piled high with silver; another had luggage. There was also a room filled with Scottish arms and armour, including a pair of Scottish 18th century flintlock belt pistols made by Alexander Campbell of Doune - and one with a large collection of tartan ware. Most thrilling of all was the discovery of several rooms that even the castle manager had never entered. There, among the cobwebs, a row of marble and plaster busts on display in the castle peered through the darkness, among them Queen Victoria.

Dunrobin’s lavish remodelling in the 1840s, to a design based on the Château de Chenonceau, trumpeted the fantastic wealth of the Leveson-Gowers, whose territorial empire combined virtually the entire county of





**Opposite far left**  
2nd Duke of Sutherland,  
the creator of Dunrobin,  
a ducal palace in the wilds

**Left**  
1st Duke  
of Sutherland, 'the  
Leviathan of Wealth'

**Opposite left**  
*Duchess Harriet, wife  
of the 2nd Duke of  
Sutherland, by Franz  
Winterhalter*

**Left & below**  
Treasures in Bonhams'  
Attic Sale



Sutherland with more than 30,000 acres of England. The transformation of an ancient Scottish earldom into one of Victorian Britain's richest dynasties was the result of the marriage in 1785 of Elizabeth, Countess of Sutherland, to George Granville Leveson-Gower (from 1803, the 2nd Marquess of Stafford), whose soubriquet 'the Leviathan of Wealth' reflected that fact that he was heir to three estates in England and one of the greatest fortunes of the Industrial Revolution – most lucratively the growing profits of the Bridgewater Canal, inherited from his uncle.

Although somewhat overshadowed by his vivacious, artistic wife, the 2nd Marquess of Stafford was nonetheless a great art collector and agricultural improver, whose support of Catholic Emancipation and the Reform Bill accorded with his Liberal views; in 1833, the year he died, he was elevated to a Dukedom.

Francis Chantrey's statue of the 1st Duke of Sutherland rises from a monumental plinth above Dunrobin. However, the creation of a ducal palace in the wilds was the initiative of the 2nd Duke (1786-1861), who inherited shares in the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, in addition to the Sutherland fortune, and was addicted to building. He had already engaged Sir Charles Barry

to build Trentham Hall in Staffordshire and to complete his magnificent London residence Stafford House, and would later employ him at Cliveden.

At Dunrobin, Barry was largely responsible for the scheme that tripled the size of the castle between 1845 and 1851. With the Aberdeen architect William Leslie, Barry also designed the Italianate garden, a richly patterned carpet of formal parterres spread out below the castle in glorious counterpoint to the rugged hills beyond.

By now, the Highland Season was already in fashion. This was the annual summer migration of the leisured classes, who flocked north with their guns, rods, sketchbooks and copies of Walter Scott to enjoy a sporting paradise in a sublime landscape as potato blight, typhoid and starvation stalked the glens. A major incentive for the Duke's extravagant expenditure was the prospect of a visit to Dunrobin by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, who were yet to establish their own Highland holiday retreat in Upper Deeside. A lower wing linking the grand new public rooms to the earlier ranges was furnished as the royal suite, with an oriel window, flanked by pepperpot turrets, providing wonderful sea views from the Queen's bedroom. She would later





describe the “beautiful bed with white and gold flowers and doves at each corner”, which can still be seen in the castle. The room had walls of “pale blue and white panels; blue satin spangled with yellow leaves”, with “furniture and carpet to match”.

In the event, the Queen never made it to Dunrobin with Prince Albert; it was not until September 1872 that she came to stay for the first time, as guest of the 3rd Duke and his wife Anne, Mistress of the Robes and Victoria’s close friend and companion. She travelled north by train with Princess Beatrice, to be met by the Duke driving his own engine, dressed in “a curious get up”. He was mad about mechanical engineering and had financed the building of the Highland Railway. At Golspie Station, they were greeted by the Duke of Sutherland Volunteers, “very handsome in red jackets and Sutherland tartan kilts”. The village was decked out with heather and flowers, and “everywhere... the loyalty and enthusiasm was very great,” the Queen enthused in her journal.

This was the heyday of Dunrobin, when, as well as being the administrative centre of a vast landholding that stretched 1,300,000 acres as far as the North and West Coasts, the castle served – as it would until well into the 20th century – as a grand shooting lodge, a summer residence for sport and socialising. Tartan proliferated in dress and upholstery, stag heads peered down from billiard-room walls, guests were serenaded by pipers, and entertainments included Highland Games and balls.

During the day, the ladies would sally forth on walking and sketching expeditions, while the men went stalking with a retinue of head stalkers, head keeper, under stalker, and pony and kennel boys.

Before the family arrived, additional servants would be sent ahead from their English houses to prepare the castle for the season. In the later 19th century, WCs and bathrooms were installed at Dunrobin – the latter created in turrets by removing spiral staircases – and, soon after, gas fires were introduced to some of the rooms, but, until then, scores of housemaids were required to carry coal and water to the bedrooms.

The survival of so many objects relating to this now vanished way of life is remarkable. The forthcoming Dunrobin Attic Sale offers an opportunity to own some of these glorious objects – tangible reminders of an astonishing château in the wilds that encapsulates stirring history, unbridled wealth and the romanticism of the Highlands.

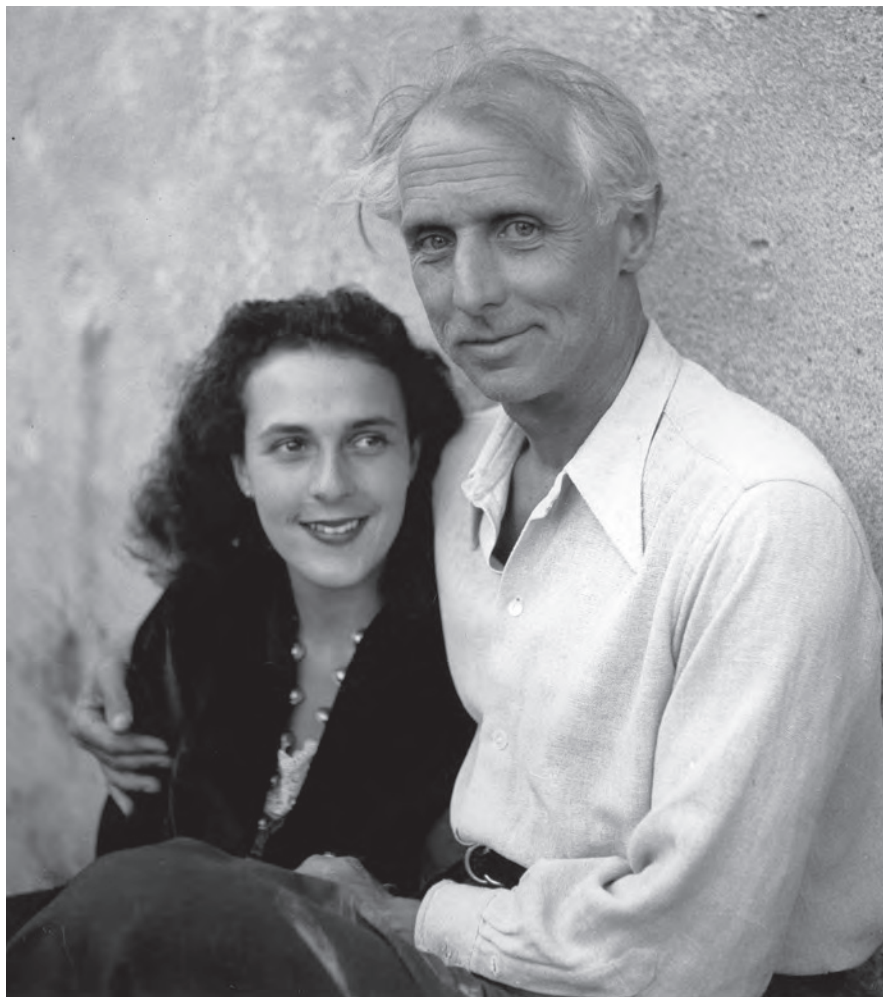
Mary Miers is the author of *Highland Retreats: The Architecture and Interiors of Scotland's Romantic North*.

Sale: The Dunrobin Attic Sale  
Edinburgh  
Wednesday 24 February at 10.30am  
Enquiries: Charlie Thomas +44 (0) 20 7468 8358  
charlie.thomas@bonhams.com  
bonhams.com/dunrobin









#### Left

Modern lovers: Leonora Carrington with fellow Surrealist Max Ernst

#### Opposite

Leonora Carrington (1917-2011)  
*Operation Wednesday*, 1969  
 signed and dated 'Leonora Carrington March 1969' (lower left) and extensively inscribed (to the foreground); signed, inscribed and dated 'Operation Wednesday Dr Fernando Ortiz Monasterio. Leonora Carrington March 1969.' (on the reverse)  
 oil and tempera on board  
 60.9 x 44.8cm (24 x 17in)  
 Estimate: £300,000 - 500,000  
 (\$400,000 - 660,000)

# Imagine that

She travelled far from home – but never so far as she travelled through art.

**Claire Wrathall** describes Leonora Carrington's loves and her lovers

There is an air of deep disquiet about Leonora Carrington's 1969 painting *Operation Wednesday*, which is offered in The Mind's Eye sale at Bonhams in February. Two ghostly veiled figures, dressed in white and so thinly painted as to appear transparent, flank a third, draped in black and also see-through – the medium is tempera on board – with a lurid crimson socket, reminiscent of a small pomegranate, where one eye might have been. Above them, a culture hovers, while a second avian harbinger of death looks on. A skeleton writes with a quill dipped in the blood of a dead pigeon. There's a butterfly too, with eyes in its wings. And a chimerical, doleful creature seems to have emerged from the central figure's skirt. The floor is a grid on which symbols, formulae and mirror-written words are inscribed.

It's a sinister scene. Are they alchemists? Or torturers? Or surgeons, as implied by the painting's dedicatee, Dr Fernando Ortiz Monasterio? The evidence points to the latter. At the bottom is an inscription in Spanish. Translating as "October 2, 1968... don't forget Tlatelolco... the three cultures", it refers to the Tlatelolco Massacre on the Plaza de las Tres Culturas in Mexico City, where, ten days before the start of the 1968 Olympic Games, which the city was hosting, the Mexican Armed Forces opened fire on students protesting against human rights violations and government abuses. Hundreds were slaughtered,

thousands injured. Dr Monasterio was not just an orator, but an outstanding cranio-facial surgeon, who ministered to the maimed. Morbid though the imagery is, the painting is less a requiem for the dead, than a tribute to the living.

By then, Carrington had been resident in the city for more than 25 years. Her sons were activists. Horrified by what had happened and aware they were all under surveillance, they left for the US. She painted *Operation Wednesday* the following year – a work that reflects many aspects of an extraordinary life.

## "Carrington's reaction to almost everything was to rebel"

The daughter of a wealthy textile magnate and his Irish wife, Carrington was born in 1917, near Chorley, Lancashire, in the north of England. As her biographer Dawn Adès has written, it was "a social world of arcane rituals, subtle hierarchies, animal sacrifice [there was a lot of fox hunting] and festering tradition".

As a child, she revelled in the Celtic myths and legends her mother and Irish nanny used to tell her, but her reaction to almost everything else was to rebel. Her governesses found her ungovernable and several schools expelled her, though, at 17, she was unwillingly presented









**Far left**  
Leonora Carrington,  
*Eluhim*, 1960

**Left**  
Leonora Carrington,  
*The Temptation of St Anthony*, 1947

**Below**  
Leonora Carrington,  
*Virginia's Fish*, 1957



to George V at Buckingham Palace. (An accomplished writer of prose every bit as hallucinatory as her painting, she subsequently published a short story entitled 'The Debutante'.) Art was her calling, though, and eventually her parents let her study, first in Florence (where the works of Arcimboldo and Uccello made a particular impression), then at the Chelsea School of Art and with the Cubist painter Amédée Ozenfant.

The defining moment of her youth came, however, one evening in 1937, when a fellow student, Ursula Blackwell, wife of the architect Ernő Goldfinger, invited her to dinner with German Surrealist artist Max Ernst. The bottle of beer that Carrington had just opened overflowed with foam, and Ernst reached to staunch it with his thumb. She already knew and revered his work. "You know when something really touches you, it feels like burning," she wrote. It was a coup de foudre. She was not quite 20; he was 46 and already on his second, of four, marriages, but off she went to Cornwall with him, to a house party that included Eileen Agar, Paul Éluard, Lee Miller and Man Ray. And when he finally returned to Paris, she followed him and "stayed and stayed" at his apartment on the rue Jacob, not far from Picasso's house, where they mixed with the likes of Jean Arp, André Breton and Yves Tanguy.

As a couple "they looked exactly like Nell and her grandfather in *The Old Curiosity Shop*", recalled Peggy Guggenheim in her 1946 autobiography *Out of This Century*. She had gone to buy a painting of Ernst's but came away instead with one of Carrington's, *The Horses of Lord Candlestick*, the name Carrington gave her father, who became so incensed by her relationship with Ernst that he tried to have him arrested on grounds of exhibiting pornography. And later she bought – and, crucially, kept –

*Oink (They Shall Behold Thine Eyes)* (1959), which remains in her collection in Venice to this day.

Struck both by her talent and her beauty, Guggenheim wrote that Carrington was "very good and full of imagination. Her skin was like alabaster, and her hair was rich in its black waviness. She had enormous, mad, dark eyes, with thick black brows and a tip-tilted nose. Her figure was lovely, but she always dressed badly on purpose" – an affectation, she noted with hindsight, "connected with her madness". For in 1940, Carrington had been incarcerated on grounds of "incurable insanity".

**"Her father was so incensed that he tried to have Ernst arrested for exhibiting pornography"**

When World War II broke out, Ernst and Carrington were living in a cottage in the Ardèche, the better to distance themselves from his wife. Ernst was imprisoned, first as an enemy alien by the French, then by the Nazis for painting degenerate art. Carrington fled to Spain, where the "anguish that accumulated in me" overcame her. She records, in her harrowing memoir *Down Below*, the experience of her mind "drifting into fiction".

Admitted to a sanatorium in Santander, she was strapped to a bed and treated with pentylenetetrazol, which induced terrifying seizures. But, by 1941, she had recovered sufficiently to make her way to Lisbon, accompanied by her nanny, who had been sent to rescue her, crossing the Bay of Biscay, improbably, by submarine, with instructions to put her on a ship to South Africa.





**Left**  
Leonora Carrington,  
*The Giantess of the Egg*, c. 1947

**Above**  
A world of her own:  
Leonora Carrington in her studio

Meanwhile Guggenheim had secured Ernst's release, and they too arrived in Lisbon, awaiting a Pan Am Clipper flight to New York. "I felt a dagger go through my heart," Guggenheim wrote, when Ernst told her he had run into Carrington by chance. But – as another of her biographers, Joanna Moorhead, puts it – their affair "was not reignited". Instead, Ernst married Guggenheim, who later admitted that even Breton "confirmed my opinion that [Leonora] was the only woman Max had ever loved".

Carrington had no plans to go to Africa, preferring the sound of America. A Mexican diplomat, the poet Renato Leduc, to whom Picasso had introduced her in Paris, had been posted to Portugal, so she presented herself at the Mexican embassy. And there, reader, she married him. They sailed to New York and, in 1943, drove to Mexico.

That summer Guggenheim's New York gallery, Art of This Century, included a Carrington painting in the legendary *Exhibition by 31 Women*, a show suggested by Marcel Duchamp and co-curated by Ernst and Breton, featuring female Surrealists such as Leonor Fini, Meret Oppenheim and Dorothea Tanning, as well as Frida Kahlo and, more surprisingly, Gypsy Rose Lee. Carrington, she said, was already painting in "the best Surrealist manner", full of "animals and birds rather resembling Bosch's".

But Mexico opened Carrington's eyes to another world entirely. Everything was "exciting and utterly strange, even the trees", she recalled. She was fascinated by "the character of the people, their contact with the dead, the variety of food, plants, animals and landscape". Its mythology intrigued her, too: hence perhaps the most important painting she made in Mexico, *The Magical World of the Maya* (1964), 4.5m long and fantastical even by her own standards. Commissioned by the National

Museum of Anthropology and History for its opening, it was evidence of her importance to her adopted country. She was less entranced by her husband, and having fallen in with a group of artists, left him for Emeric Weisz ('Chiki'), a Hungarian photographer who had managed Robert Capa's darkroom in the Spanish Civil War. Though she continued to have affairs, not least with the Nobel laureate Octavio Paz, their marriage lasted till his death, aged 97, in 2007. She outlived him by four years.

Among this circle was the female Spanish Surrealist painter Remedios Varo, with whom Carrington used to visit the Mercado de Sonora or 'witchcraft market' – the occult was another enduring theme in her work. As Margaret Hooks, author of *Surreal Lovers: Eight Women Integral to the Life of Max Ernst*, wrote, "Natural healers and savants introduced them to alchemical experiments that they later practised in their kitchens", an activity that surely has some bearing on *Operation Wednesday*.

But those who knew Carrington learnt never to ask her to decipher her work (nor to ask about her lovers). "Nothing to explain," she'd bark. Rather her paintings – which Luis Buñuel praised for their ability to "liberate us from the miserable reality of our days" – were challenges to the imagination. In the end, her alchemy was less about preparing potions in her kitchen than in playing with perceptions of the world.

*Claire Wrathall writes for the Telegraph and the Financial Times.*

Sale: The Mind's Eye  
London  
Wednesday 10 March 2021 at 4pm  
Enquiries: Ruth Woodbridge +44 (0) 20 7468 5816  
ruth.woodbridge@bonhams.com  
bonhams.com/mindseye



# Licensed to thrill

Pay attention, 007. This Mercury Cougar XR7 will get you out of a lot of tight spots. The skis are included.

*Simon de Burton* has all the specs

A Silver Birch Aston Martin DB5 might be the car most readily linked with the cinematic James Bond, but the 26 films released so far (plus the pending *No Time to Die*) have created a vast firmament of lesser-known automotive stars, ranging from a seemingly indestructible Citroën 2CV to a T-55 battle tank, and from a Lotus Esprit submersible to an AMC Matador that miraculously transforms into an aircraft.

But of the 15-plus different car marques, dozens of different models and hundreds of individual vehicles that have played a part in helping or thwarting Bond in his quest to save the world, only a small percentage of verified examples have survived. One that has is an

action-ready Mercury Cougar XR7, which 007 fans will recognise from 1969's *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*, and which is offered at London's Bond Street Sale on 16 December.

The only Bond film in which Australian actor George Lazenby played the starring role, *OHMSS* centred around a plot hatched by cat-stroking SPECTRE boss Ernst Stavro Blofeld (Telly Savalas) to brainwash patients at his Swiss allergy-research institute in order to send them around the world on germ-warfare missions.

The film opens with Bond saving Contessa Teresa 'Tracy' di Vincenzo (Diana Rigg) from committing suicide by walking into a choppy sea off Portugal – and ends with the couple being briefly married before (spoiler







alert) she is murdered by Blofeld and his 'henchwoman' Irma Bunt.

Along the way, there's a slippery car chase through the snow-covered Swiss village of Lauterbrunnen, in which the pair gatecrash an ice race in the Contessa's Cougar before being forced to take shelter from a blizzard by driving into a remote barn. It is here Bond makes his uncharacteristic marriage proposal, with the parked Cougar being the only witness.

The barn scene was shot at Pinewood Studios in the UK. But what happened to the car immediately after the film wrapped in the spring of 1969 is unknown – other than it went through several different owners, each of whom perpetuated the rumour of its link with 007.

Its glamorous history was only fully corroborated when, in 1990, the Cougar came into the possession of a Bristol-based Ford Mustang enthusiast.

"I originally bought it as a scrap car for £2,500, purely because I wanted the rare, high-performance Cobra Jet engine to use in my Mustang," says the owner, who prefers to remain anonymous.

"But, once I got it running, I became interested in it and managed to track down its original invoice and build sheets through a former employee of Ford's legal department called Lois Eminger."

Ms Eminger is famous in the American car world for saving thousands of copy invoices for Ford-group cars built during and after the 1960s, following the company's

## "Bond makes his uncharacteristic marriage proposal, with the parked Cougar being the only witness"

decision routinely to destroy them after ten years.

Her paperwork confirmed that the Cougar was ordered on 30 January 1969 for 'Bond movie,' cost \$4,792.90, left the factory six days ahead of schedule on 6 February, and was registered in the UK on 13 February.

"The speed with which it went from the production



### Top

Bond in a Mercury Cougar arrives in a sleepy Swiss village. What could possibly go wrong...

### Left

The Contessa Teresa 'Tracy' di Vincenzo 'On Her Majesty's Secret Service'  
1969 Mercury Cougar  
Convertible XR7  
Estimate £100,000 - 150,000  
(€110,000 - 170,000)





**Top**  
The late Sean Connery with the 1962 Aston Martin DB5 used in the film *Goldfinger*.

**Above**  
“The most selfish car in England” – 1937 Bentley 4¼-litre Drophead



**Top right**  
Crime pays: Bahamas-based terrorist Alex Dimitrios's Aston Martin DB5 from *Casino Royale*



**Right**  
More is Moore: Roger Moore's Aston Martin DBS from *The Persuaders!*



## Bond at Bonhams

(00)7 auction lots from the past

line in Dearborn, Michigan, to being registered in the UK means it must have been flown in for the film,” explains the owner, who subsequently set about a meticulous, 30-year restoration of the car that has returned it to the exact condition in which it arrived at the Pinewood movie set.

During the rebuild, he discovered the remains of two of its build sheets beneath the carpets, revealing it to be an ultra-rare car in its own right. Of the 100,085 Cougars built in 1969, it was one of just 127 convertible examples to be fitted with the 428ci/7-litre Cobra Jet engine (a \$336.80 option), one of 16 to have been painted Candy Apple red, one of eight trimmed in dark red leather, one of just three with an electric roof – and, wait for it, the only one in such specification to leave the factory with “hood pins”.

During three decades of ownership, the Cougar's owner stripped the car back to its bare bones and had the body and chassis sand-blasted and acid-dipped to remove any corrosion, before carefully reassembling everything, using as many original parts as possible – indeed, he travelled to the United States on no fewer than seven occasions in search of particularly elusive Cougar components.

As a final touch, he even recreated the correct red-coloured ‘French visitor’ licence plates, and added a period ski rack and some of the very same vintage Kneissl White Star skis seen on the Cougar (and a clone car) throughout the chase scenes and inside the barn.

As a result, it's now ready for a new mission in the 21st century. Q will just run you through the specs...

• “Bond had the most selfish car in England,” wrote Ian Fleming in the 1961 novel, *Thunderball*. “It was a **MKII Continental Bentley** that some rich idiot had married to a telegraph pole on the Great West Road.” In 1983's *Never Say Never Again*, however, the late Sean Connery's Bond drove a 1937 Bentley 4¼-litre Drophead (above) that subsequently crossed the block at Bonhams in September 2004 for £188,500.

**“The car featured in a suitably improbable opening-scene chase alongside a Ferrari F355 driven by Xenia Onatopp”**

• A **1962 Aston Martin DB4** that originally belonged to press baron Lord Beaverbrook changed hands the following year when it was bought by a special effects designer working on the Bond movie *Goldfinger*. In his ownership, the car served as a ‘test mule’ to help decide which gadgets would be fitted to the actual car to be used in the film – the celebrated Silver Birch DB5. The DB4 sold at Bonhams in May 2010 for £84,000.

• The ‘big crown’ **Rolex Submariner Reference 6538** (below) is known among collectors as the ‘James Bond Sub’ following its appearance on the wrist of Sean Connery in *Dr No*, *Goldfinger* and





**Left**  
Fancy a ride? Pierce Brosnan with the Aston Martin DB5 from the film *GoldenEye*

**Top**  
1968 Aston Martin DBS Vantage Sports Saloon

**Above**  
There goes 007's no-claims bonus: 2011 Land Rover Defender featured in *Spectre*

*From Russia with Love*. This example sold at Bonhams New York in 2014 for \$23,750 – and could be worth more than ten times as much today.

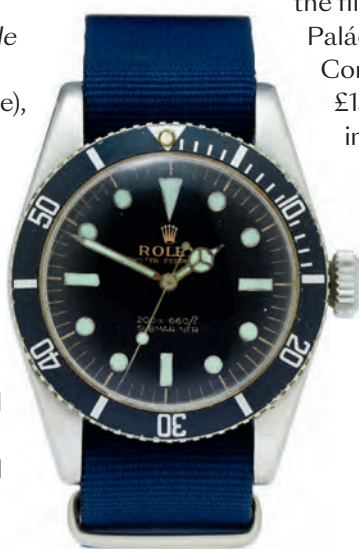
- Prior to becoming the star of no fewer than seven Bond films, starting with *Live and Let Die* in 1973, the late Sir Roger Moore played the part of aristocrat special investigator Lord Brett Sinclair in television's *The Persuaders!* He went about his adventures in a Bahama Yellow **Aston Martin DBS** (opposite, right), a six-cylinder car dressed up with the badges and wheels of the yet-to-be launched V8. It sold at Bonhams in 2014 for a record £535,500.

- When Daniel Craig made his debut as Bond in the 2006 version of *Casino Royale* (the book was first brought to the silver screen in 1967, with David Niven in the role), he is portrayed as winning the famous **Aston Martin DB5** (opposite top) from Bahamas-based terrorist Alex Dimitrios. As a result, the car wore Nassau licence plates – one of which sold for £4,250 at the Bonhams Aston Martin sale in 2017.

- After a gap of six years, an **Aston Martin DB5** (above) once again appeared in a Bond film – this time, *GoldenEye* starring Pierce Brosnan. The car featured in a suitably improbable opening-scene chase alongside a Ferrari F355 driven

by Xenia Onatopp, ending in a handbrake turn that brings the DB5 to a dramatic halt on the Corniche above Monaco – at which point Bond removes a chilled bottle of Bollinger from the centre console in order to toast his terrified passenger, MI6 psychologist 'Caroline'. Sold complete with the chiller, prop bottle and flutes used in the film, the car realised £1.9m at Bonhams Goodwood Festival of Speed sale in 2018.

- The perfect companion to the Mercury Cougar on offer in December, a **1968 Aston Martin DBS** was restored by Aston Works Service to serve as a close replica of the olive-green car driven by George Lazenby in *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*. In the opening of the film, Bond sweeps in front of Estoril's Hotel Palácio, where he pulls in and parks beside Contessa Teresa's Cougar. The DBS sold for £135,700 at Bonhams Goodwood Revival sale in 2019.



*Simon de Burton is author of Classic Cars: A Century of Masterpieces. He writes about cars, motorcycles and luxury for publications including the Financial Times, Vanity Fair and GQ.*

Sale: The Bond Street Sale  
London  
Wednesday 16 December  
Enquiries: Tim Schofield +44 (0) 20 7468 5804  
tim.schofield@bonhams.com  
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**Opposite**

Jacopo Vignali (1592-1664)  
*David with the Head of Goliath*  
oil on canvas  
113.5 x 87.5cm (44 x 34in)  
Estimate: £150,000 - 200,000  
(\$200,000 - 250,000)

# Head boy

David was no mere Bible story to Florentines in the Renaissance, writes **Susan Moore**. He was the very model of a modern prince

**T**here is no mistaking the influence of Caravaggio on this recently identified *David with the Head of Goliath* by the Florentine painter Jacopo Vignali (1592-1664). Its stark top-lighting, which forces the figure to emerge partially and dramatically from the darkest of backgrounds, and the confined pictorial space which lends the action its immediacy, characterise the revolutionary art of the most imitated and influential painter of his day in Europe. More specifically, Vignali's canvas suggests a familiarity with Caravaggio's earlier painting of the subject (now in Rome's Borghese Gallery) – and we know the Florentine artist travelled to the Eternal City in 1625. Vignali's David adopts the same stance, albeit viewed from a different position, with the hair of Goliath's severed head held in one hand

and the hilt of his sword in the other. Yet it is immediately clear that Vignali is a very different kind of artist, and the differences between the two works are telling.

First of all, this Biblical David is not presented as a humble shepherd boy. Instead of being half-nude and wearing simple Classical drapery, Vignali's David is sumptuously dressed in the fashionable costume of the day. Moreover, he is no boy but a young man. Instead of being centred in the image and facing us, gazing down to Goliath's head, he is shown from behind. He turns towards us and engages our gaze. In the Caravaggio, Goliath's terrible decapitated head records the agony suffered at the moment of death, and the gory reality of cut arteries as blood gushes from his severed neck. David's thoughtful expression is not one of triumph but of sadness mingled







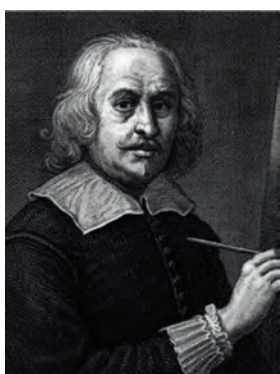




**Above**  
Jacopo Vignali, *Abraham and the Three Angels*, early 1600s

**Right** Portrait of Jacopo Vignali

**Far right**  
Jacopo Vignali (1592-1664)  
*David with the Head of Goliath*  
oil on canvas  
113.5 x 87.5cm (44 x 34in)  
Estimate: £150,000 - 200,000  
(\$200,000 - 250,000)



with compassion. The expression of Vignali's Goliath is not disfigured by pain; in fact, it is discreetly hidden from us in the gloom, with just a few trickles of blood at his brow. This David is neither jubilant nor compassionate. His expression suggests a distasteful job that had to be done. By this single courageous, brutal act, David saved Israel.

The account of David and Goliath in the Book of Samuel describes how King Saul and the Israelites were facing the Philistines in the Valley of Elah. Twice a day for 40 days, the giant Goliath, the champion of the Philistines, challenges the Israelites to send out a champion of their own to decide the outcome of the war in a single combat. Saul and his soldiers are afraid, but David – a young shepherd boy – accepts the challenge. Refusing Saul's armour, he takes only his sling, selecting five smooth stones from a creek bed. The Philistine "cursed David by his gods", and David replies: "This day the Lord will deliver you into my hand, and... all this assembly may know that God saves not with sword and spear." He hurls a stone from his sling, which hits Goliath in the centre of his forehead. When the giant man falls to the ground, David uses his enemy's sword to cut off his adversary's head. The story demonstrates the power of faith, the triumph of goodness over evil, and Saul's unfitness to rule. It was the story of the courageous and ultimately victorious underdog, however, that made David a particularly admired civic as well as spiritual hero in Florence.

Vignali could hardly have not been familiar with the great early Renaissance images of David in his native city – celebrated sculptures by Donatello, Verrocchio

and Michelangelo, and Ghirlandaio's frescoed sculptural figure in Santa Trinita. They were all symbols of the pride of the Republic of Florence, then surrounded by more mighty powers. By the time Vignali was born in 1592, the Medici family had risen to become Dukes of Florence and Grand Dukes of Tuscany, and the David narrative was more nuanced. As the successor to Saul, he was exulted not only as a warrior-king and empire-builder but also as a politically astute and just ruler, capable moreover of repenting his sins – including his seduction of Bathsheba and responsibility for the death of her husband Uriah by sending him into the front line of battle. With his "handsome features", reputed skills in composing psalms

**“David, a politically astute and just ruler, was capable of repenting his sins”**

and playing the harp, he was, in short, a possessor of all the virtues required of a modern prince.

It is tempting to see Vignali representing or at least emphasising this temporal aspect of David here, dressed in the kind of finery that the artist's contemporaries would have recognised and admired. The carefully balanced colours of the silks are glorious – the rolled up, slashed sleeves of his rich gold damask lined with pink, a colour picked up in the stripes of the complementary green sash. The unusual drawstring pouch on his shoulder, surely a reference to the pouch in which the Biblical David would have stored his stones, is of costly fur whose mottled





**Above**  
Caravaggio's *David Holding the Head of Goliath* from the Borghese Gallery in Rome



**Above right**  
Michelangelo's *David*, 1501-4



**Right**  
Jacopo Vignali, *Youth and Death*, c.1640-50

softness Vignali has used to demonstrate his talent in depicting a variety of textures and tones. Crowning this composition of glowing golden hues is the head of copper-coloured curls, belonging to a model the artist frequently used for his paintings.

This model was also used for another, quite different *David with the Head of Goliath*. A more sober (and oval) image, this simply dressed David, with drapery of the same fur this time, rests after the event, holding his sling and his staff. In keeping with the spirit of the Catholic Counter-Reformation, he is meditative rather than victorious, the David who prefigured the Messiah and whose victory symbolises Christ's triumph over Satan.

Unlike the oval version and Caravaggio's treatment, this monumental *David with the Head of Goliath* – offered by Bonhams at the Old Master Paintings sale in London in December – is essentially elegant, refined, carefully balanced and, although theatrical in its pose, emotionally restrained. These characteristics typified Florentine painting of the period. Already there is sense of the shift towards the return to a more idealised, Classical naturalism advocated by the Carracci – Agostino, Annibale and Ludovico – in Bologna. By the time the biographer Giovan Pietro Bellori wrote *Le vite dei pittori, scultori et architetti moderni* in 1672, Caravaggio and his followers across Europe, the Caravaggisti, could be denigrated for their forms “which were vulgar and lacking in beauty”. There is no vulgarity or lack of beauty here.

While Caravaggio blatantly flouted conventional artistic practice by forgoing preliminary preparatory

drawings and painting directly from nature, Vignali remained true to his traditional artistic education, as numerous surviving figure studies, particularly in black and red chalk, bear witness. He had entered the studio of Matteo Rosselli in Florence at a very early age, enrolling at the Accademia del Disegno in 1616, and becoming an academician in 1622. This was the decade in which he began to find his own voice as an artist, although he continued to be responsive to the work of other painters. His artistic legacy is embedded in the very fabric of his native city, with fresco cycles decorating the Casa Buonarroti, the Casino Mediceo di San Marco and the Villa del Poggio Imperiale, as well as churches across Florence, for which he also painted altarpieces. For his Medici patrons, Vignali even designed tapestries for the Palazzo Medici Riccardi.

This canvas, which first came to light in California when exhibited as a work by Cristofano Allori in 1976, has been hailed by Professor Francesca Baldessari as a “masterpiece by Jacopo Vignali datable to around 1624”. An argument could be made that it was painted a little later, after that fateful trip to Rome.

*Susan Moore is associate editor of Apollo.*

Sale: Old Master Paintings  
London, Knightsbridge  
Thursday 17 December at 1pm  
Enquiries: Andrew McKenzie  
+44 (0) 20 7468 8307  
andrew.mckenzie@bonhams.com





**Left**  
Hartmann Schedel (1440-1514)  
*Liber Chronicarum*, Nuremberg:  
Anton Koberger for Sebald Schreyer  
and Sebastian Kammermeister,  
12 July 1493  
Estimate: \$200,000 - 300,000  
(£150,000 - 230,000)

**Below**  
A closed book: the fine detailing  
of the front cover

**Opposite**  
An ornately decorated page of  
the *Chronicle* featuring noblemen  
and religious leaders



# Book of wonders

The *Nuremberg Chronicle* was a wonder of its age – an encyclopedia that tells us everything about the city that made it, says **Gina Thomas**

Few people chomping on Nuremberg sausages in a Franconian inn would guess that this modest local fare holds some of the keys to the commercial success that established Nuremberg as one of the most flourishing economic and cultural centres north of the Alps. This was the independent city from which not only Albrecht Dürer emerged but also the *Nuremberg Chronicle*, the most remarkable printed book of the incunabular age, a hand-coloured version of which will be offered at Bonhams Fine Books & Manuscripts Sale in New York.

Although the river Pegnitz, which flows through the city, was not navigable, Nuremberg was able to exploit its nodal position on major overland trade routes running north-south and east-west. The *Nuremberg Chronicle* echoes many contemporary writers, who marvelled at the city's "abundant wealth and great reputation in Germany" and suggested that the infertile land surrounding the city had forced its citizens to be industrious craftsmen. The *Chronicle* states that they "are either ingenious workmen, inventors, and masters of various wonderful and subtle arts and crafts, useful and ornamental, or are enterprising merchants and manufacturers."

In its heyday, the free imperial city owed much of its standing to its special status as an unofficial capital of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation. It hosted imperial diets and, from 1424 until 1796, the repository of the imperial regalia. But the burghers enjoyed political autonomy and their city council pursued a far-sighted economic policy that stimulated wealth, learning, cultural

**"The *Nuremberg Chronicle* is the most remarkable printed book of its age"**

interchange and a strong sense of municipal identity. Boosted by trade privileges and bilateral agreements, Nuremberg forged commercial links throughout Europe. Close ties with Venice, the leading entrepôt between West and East, made the city dominant in the trade with oriental goods, especially spices.

Which brings us back to the 'Nürnberger Bratwürste'. The origins of these finger-sized pork sausages can be



Sexta etas mundi

¶ Cum pius Eneas fama super ether a notus

¶ Eneas pius papa ¶ Frideric' terci' romanoꝝ iꝑeratoꝝ



¶ Arcere prostratis scit nobilis ira Leonis  
Tu quoqꝫ fac simile quisquis regnabis in orbe





**Above**  
Herbipolis – the modern-day German town of Würzburg

**Above right**  
Natural blessings: one of the many intricate hand-coloured drawings

**Right**  
The city of Nuremberg, as depicted in the *Chronicle*

**Opposite, left**  
The *Chronicle* mixed opulent illustrations with depictions of the everyday

**Opposite, top right**  
A woodcut of Prague

**Opposite, bottom right**  
Internal city: the distinguishing features of Rome



traced back at least as far as the early 14th century. Their seasoning with mace, pepper, nutmeg and marjoram embodies the city's historical connections with the spice trade. And the rules regulating production to this day are a relic of the strict quality controls imposed by the city government. Pork butchers had to present their daily produce to an official known as a 'Würstlein' ('little sausage'), just as today's manufacturers have to comply with criteria enshrined in EU law stipulating size, weight and fat content and protecting the trademark.

Having disempowered the guilds, whose restrictive practices were seen as an impediment to free trade, the late medieval city council assumed control of product inspection. It was the meticulous supervision of all trades that gave Nuremberg produce a special seal of quality. The city was renowned for superior craftsmanship and technical innovation generated by the symbiotic relationship between manufacturing, trade and artistry. Meanwhile, new wealth gave rise to an aspiring merchant class, eager to engage with the new humanist ideas.

Out of this was born, in 1493, the most copiously illustrated printed book of the 15th century. Nothing as ambitious had been tried since Gutenberg's Bible was run off the press in Mainz 40 years or so earlier. The *Liber Chronicarum*, known in the English-speaking world as the *Nuremberg Chronicle*, is a window into an intellectual world straddling the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

The project was a kind of *Wikipedia* of its day. It set out to describe the history of the world from its biblical beginnings to the year of publication in more than 2,000 individual articles. Bible stories, mythology, miracles, ancient history, philosophy, contemporary events,

science, natural phenomena and descriptions of cities and landscapes jostle for space with potted biographies of saints, rulers and scholars.

The text was largely extracted from various known sources. It was arranged in the tradition of medieval chronicles, according to the Christian Ages of the World from the Creation to the Last Judgement. Spread over 326 double-sided sheets in the Latin edition and just under 300 sheets in the vernacular version, the print was interspersed with more than 1,800 woodcut illustrations

**“Cities and landscapes jostle for space with potted biographies of saints, rulers and scholars”**

from the workshop of Michael Wolgemut and his stepson Wilhelm Pleydenwurff, the painters and printmakers to whom the young Albrecht Dürer was apprenticed from 1486 to 1489. The images were taken from around 640 woodblocks, which meant that many motifs were recycled multiple times for different subjects: only about 50 woodblocks of city scapes were cut to illustrate more than a hundred different places, and 96 different woodblocks served to represent 593 different people.

The *Chronicle* was published in a larger-than-A3-sized Latin edition, followed five months later by a slightly abbreviated German translation prepared by Georg Alt, a scribe in the city treasury. In the Latin edition, some pages were left blank for readers to bring their copy up to date. The estimated total print-run of 2,500 copies was





produced in three editions, targeted at different budgets. The unbound uncoloured edition was offered at around 3 guilders, the bound uncoloured edition at 5 guilders, and a bound and hand-coloured edition at around 8 guilders; at the time, a physician earned about 100 guilders a year. According to a contemporary advertising leaflet, the chronicle would “increase and heighten the delight of men of learning and of everyone who has any education at all”.

The *Nuremberg Chronicle* was a venture backed by businessmen, compiled by a humanist physician, illustrated by leading artists and craftsmen, and produced by the famous printer, publisher and bookseller Anton Koberger, whose agents used the city’s trade networks across Europe to promote his goods. The collaborative nature of the project reflected the tightly knit society of merchants and artisans who lived in the same neighbourhood and were connected by profession, friendship or family relationship. Koberger was Dürer’s godfather; Sebald Schreyer, one of the financiers of the *Chronicle*, was a client of Dürer’s goldsmith father and a member of the humanist circle to which Hartmann Schedel, the physician and book collector who compiled the *Chronicle*, belonged. Schedel’s extensive library of books and manuscripts, much of which is preserved in the Bavarian State Library, gives a wonderful insight into the resources buttressing his scholarship. Though his name is discreetly hidden in the printed pages, the *Nuremberg Chronicle* is known in the German-speaking world as *Die Schedelsche Weltchronik*, ‘Schedel’s Chronicle of the World’. Schedel was related to Dürer by marriage, and the artist may have been involved in distributing the *Chronicle* in Venice. He would certainly have learnt from this

monumental endeavour how to market his own woodcuts.

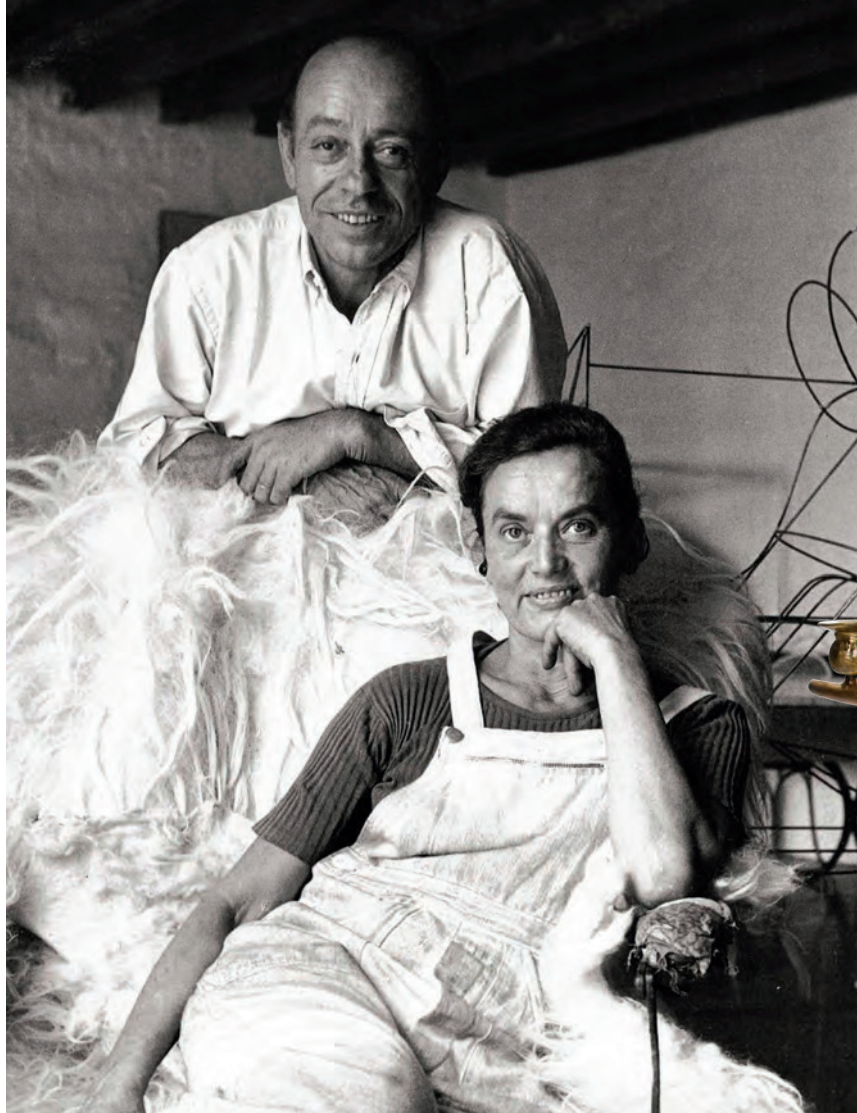
In his blurb for the *Nuremberg Chronicle*, Koberger proudly announced that it had been “printed at the expense of rich citizens of Nuremberg”. His city prided itself on its location at the centre of Europe, a sentiment made explicit by positioning a splendid double-page spread with the image of the city at the heart of the book. But the *Chronicle* is more than an expression of civic humanism. Schedel, who had immersed himself in the works of the Italian humanist writers during his studies in Padua, complained that “ancient writers were stingy with words when it came to German affairs, as if this race lay outside the world.”

The *Nuremberg Chronicle* offered a corrective, a patriotic vision of German art and culture which the Romantic movement would sentimentalise as a yearning for a lost Germanness that was later corrupted by nationalism. Hans Sachs, the famous cobbler and poet whom Wagner made the hero of *The Mastersingers of Nuremberg*, owned a copy of the *Chronicle*. In the opera, he calls it to mind while reflecting on the folly of the world – before his rousing tribute to “holy German art”, which causes modern audiences such discomfort.

*Gina Thomas is based in London as the UK Cultural Correspondent of Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung.*

Sale: Fine Books & Manuscripts  
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# Big fish

Les Lalanne made sheep furniture and sculpted cabbages with legs. No wonder they were a fashion-world sensation, says **Adrian Dannatt**

As artists, ‘Les Lalanne’ managed to be both very famous and utterly unknown, a carefully guarded and clandestine cult. For their names operated as codeword granting access to a certain international high society, an heady mélange of the most-celebrated fashion designers and wealthiest private families, playboys, debutantes and heiresses, the ultimate crust of *le gratin*, the final fumes of the jet set. In this rarefied milieu, if someone failed to recognise the name of Les Lalanne, you just moved on to the next guest or next villa – you were certainly not sharing the secret or explaining who they were.

François-Xavier Lalanne (1927-2008) and his wife Claude (1924-2019) were sculptors whose wide and generous oeuvre included furniture, jewellery, fashion accessories, tableware, public monuments and even actual architecture. The sheer range of their work caused confusion, while many a highbrow wrinkled at their aesthetic adaptability. Surely Les Lalanne were mere ‘designers’ and ‘decorators’ rather than real artists – a charge they faced the length of their long careers.

They also had a name that was grammatically incorrect – technically it should be ‘Les Lalannes’, in the plural – and difficult for English speakers to pronounce without fear of getting it wrong.

This name was at the heart of a longstanding confusion, too, the assumption that François-Xavier (or ‘FX’ as he was known) and Claude operated as a

**“In this rarefied milieu, if someone failed to recognise the name of Les Lalanne, you just moved on”**

collaborative team producing work together. In fact, their practices were separate and distinct, and easily distinguishable, with FX’s work usually being larger and simpler of shape, while Claude’s work was more intricate, organic and intimate. They both loved animals – Claude’s own tastes ranged from frisky *lapins* to slightly sinister



**Opposite top**

François-Xavier and  
Claude Lalanne in Ury in 1969.  
Photograph by Jean-Philippe Lalanne

**Opposite bottom**

Claude Lalanne's *Structure Végétale  
Candelabra* (1999), made of bronze  
with an applied patina, sold for \$81,250  
at Bonhams

**Above**

François-Xavier Lalanne (1927-2008) *Carpe  
(Très Grande)*, conceived and cast in 2000  
monumental, gilt-bronze, of an edition of  
eight, with foundry mark for bocquel fd,  
engraved with monogram 'fxl' and  
numbered '1/8'  
52in (132.1cm) high, 98¾in (250.8cm) long,  
23in (58.4cm) deep  
Estimate \$650,000 - 850,000

crocodiles – and were probably last exemplars of the great 'animalier' artists, a tradition that begins with the very first works of art, 40,000 years ago in caves around the world.

François-Xavier Lalanne was born in 1927 in Agen, to a family that owed its fortune to the importation of cow bones as fertiliser, a neat precedent of his own use of animal architecture. His father collected sports cars, which provided an inherited love of the idealised curves and fetish finish of such sculptural yet practical objects.

A precocious art student, Lalanne was just 21 when he won first prize at the prestigious Académie Julian for his portrait of Chopin, and it was at the first exhibition of his paintings in 1953 that he met Claude, who soon moved into his studio at the Impasse Ronsin.

This cul-de-sac in Montparnasse had been filled with artists since the 1870s and was famous for housing the studios of Constantin Brâncuși. The great Brâncuși was not only the direct neighbour of the Lalanne, but also their friend and patron. Much older and already world-famous, he was perhaps their central influence,

not least as a unique example of a high-modernist, 20th-century animalier sculptor. For, despite their minimal forms, Brâncuși's sculptures were often derived from, and titled after, animals. Indeed, a clear comparison could be made between Lalanne's *Carpe (Très Grande)* – to be offered at Bonhams in New York's Modern Decorative Art + Design sale in December – and Brâncuși's own 'fish' sculptures, which the artist created between 1922 and 1930, such as the *Poisson* at Tate, and a marble version at MoMA.

At Impasse Ronsin, a swirl of other artists, with whom the Lalanne cooked, drank, gossiped and worked, circulated around Brâncuși, an impressive international roster that included Max Ernst and Duchamp, William Copley, Yves Klein, Larry Rivers, and another now-celebrated artistic couple, Niki de Saint Phalle and Jean Tinguely.

The first major breakthrough for FX came at the Salon de la Jeune Peinture of 1966, where he set grazing the first flock of his *moutons de laine*, sheep which also served as seating, whose success was instantaneous and





**Above**  
François-Xavier Lalanne's  
*Coquetier Poule* (c.1990),  
a set of six small porcelain  
figures



**Above right**  
*Mouton Transhumant*  
(c.2000), a limited edition  
by François-Xavier Lalanne,  
sold for \$225,075 (£170,887)



**Right**  
François-Xavier Lalanne's  
*Tortue Topiaire*



remains unstoppable to this day. These sheep became synonymous with Lalanne, filling the magazine pages and houses of all the chicest collectors, not least those of the powerful Italian dynasty, the Agnellis, who enjoyed the pun on their own name. The first time these sheep were shown, it was under the title *Pour Polyphème*, from the myth of Odysseus, FX being a Jesuit scholar of ancient Greek. However, such Classical associations were soon lost in the sheer appeal of these shaggy stools, to the extent that their bastard knock-off descendants can now be seen in every high street. At the same time, the original Lalanne sheep grow more expensive by the day, and the earlier the rarer: a full *troupeau* of them making £3,149,500 back in 2012, a relative bargain considering a single solitary one sold for a record £390,000.

Such sculptural furniture of animals, life-size or larger, became FX's trademark, whether a turtle sprouting topiary – the top lot in Bonhams' Modern Decorative Art + Design Sale in 2019 – a giant rhinoceros console, a hippopotamus bath in shocking blue, canine andirons, a bed in the shape of a bird, a free-standing baboon stove, an ape safe, and a memorable toilet in the form of a fly.

After the Impasse Ronsin, Les Lalanne moved to a beautiful farm with fabled gardens in the humble village

of Ury, outside Fontainebleau, where they maintained adjacent studios and a hectic social life, a mondaine merry-go-round spinning on a Rothschild axis with a blur of other dizzying names, such as De Noailles, Schlumberger, De Ganay, Gunzburg, De Ribes, Pozzo di Borgo, the Queen of Greece. Even the Duke of Edinburgh ended up with a giant FX grasshopper, which is still chirping in the Royal Collection.

**“They maintained adjacent studios and a hectic social life, a merry-go-round spinning on a Rothschild axis”**

Everyone who was anyone came to Ury, not least that now mythic Parisian fashion set of the early 1970s, from Karl Lagerfeld to Pierre Bergé, and especially Claude's lifelong friend and sometime collaborator Yves Saint Laurent, who dressed her, commissioned her to create body-castings for his 1969 catwalk, and asked her to decorate his famous apartment with her giant foliage mirrors.





© Frederic Reglain / Getty Images



**Far left**  
Claude's many-armed  
Unique Structure Vegetal aux  
Papillons Chandelier, 1998

**Left**  
Claude's Escargot

**Top**  
Pastoral scene: FX, Claude,  
chateau and sheep

For though they may have been snobs, in the best way, Les Lalanne were never snobbish about their work, unlike those truly snooty arbiters of contemporary art. They had begun very much as artisans and, like their master Brâncuși, were happy to consider themselves working craftsmen as much as artists, with practical, physical skills and a healthy regard for the laborious making of objects regardless of function.

Among their earliest works were set designs and props for ballet directors like Maurice Béjart, and Claude went on to craft cutlery for Salvador Dalí, as well as armour for Wim Wenders' film *Wings of Desire*. They never worried such commissions might make them look in any way less serious and, like one of their owl sculptures, they gave not a hoot for what officially constituted 'art'. After all, they had begun by making window decorations and sets for Christian Dior, at that time the most famous couturier in the world. With magical continuity, Claude was asked to create jewellery for Maria Grazia Chiuri's debut Dior show in 2017, 60 years after her first collaboration with that illustrious house.

And the fashion business has stayed loyally in love with Les Lalanne, including such devotees as

Valentino, Carla Fendi, Tom Ford and Marc Jacobs – who contributed the preface to my last book about the pair.

François-Xavier died aged 81 in 2008, while Claude carried on for a full and fruitful decade after that, working harder than ever, becoming more famous than ever, a very grand *grande dame* indeed, as the most-expensive living French artist after Pierre Soulages. By the time Claude died in Ury in 2019, at the age of 93, she had seen their artistic reputation entirely vindicated – by the oh-so-solemn contemporary art world, as well as the design and fashion mafia, leaving her to ponder such vagaries of taste and fate. As she said, "It is strange, we never changed ourselves, we are still doing exactly what we always were."

*Adrian Dannatt is curator of the exhibition Impasse Ronsin at Museum Tinguely, Basel. He is also the author of François-Xavier and Claude Lalanne: In the Domain of Dreams (2018).*

Sale: Modern Decorative Art + Design  
New York  
Friday 18 December  
Enquiries: Benjamin Walker +1 212 710 1306  
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bonhams.com/mds





All photographs courtesy of the family of Mrs Bertha Gutmann

# The lost world

A rare porcelain elephant, stolen by the Nazis in pre-war Vienna, travelled the Atlantic to be reunited with its family. *Philippe Sands* tells the story

I have spent years delving into the lives and personal papers of the Viennese couple Otto and Charlotte Wächter for my book, *The Ratline*. Towards the end of the writing, unexpectedly, a china dinner service entered that story.

The service was acquired by the Wächters in the summer of 1938, after the Anschluss, when they were handed the Villa Mendl, a fine property with a park of its own, whose Jewish owner Bettina Mendl fled, ending up in Australia. Otto, a lawyer and rising SS star, became State Secretary in the new government, charged with removing Jews from public office. He would go on to serve as Nazi governor of Krakow and then Lemberg, and be indicted for mass murder. His wife Charlotte, a designer of fabrics who studied at the Wiener Frauenakademie und Schule für Freie und Angewandte Kunst, had an eye for fine objects: the china service was one. After her death, it went to their son Horst, who I had come to know, and he wanted to return it to the heirs of the original owners, in Brisbane, Australia, but couldn't pay the costs.

**Above**  
Heinrich Rothberger (1868-1953)  
reading to his niece, Bertha, who  
inherited part of the collection



This was the extent of my connection with looted porcelain, as the glorious Rothberger collection came into view. Three of the four Rothberger brothers – Moritz, Heinrich and Alfred – ran the renowned department store of their name on the Stephansplatz, opposite the cathedral. The fourth, Carl Julius, was a famed professor of pathology at the University of Vienna.

Heinrich began to collect objects at an early age, and by the turn of the century, in his mid-thirties, he owned one of the finest collections of 18th-century porcelain in the city. Photographs taken in his apartment, above the family business, showed objects neatly arranged in elegant vitrines. By 1938, the collection included some 200 objects.

On 12 March, German troops occupied Vienna, welcomed by rapturous crowds. They brought with



**Left**

A Vienna model of an elephant,  
c.1750  
23cm high x 49.5cm  
Estimate: £10,000 - 15,000  
(\$15,000 - 20,000)

them the Nuremberg race laws, which introduced anti-Semitism into the laws of former Austria. Within weeks, the Rothbergers – assimilated Jews – were in the sights of the Nazis and Governor Arthur Seyss-Inquart, who was Otto Wächter’s friend and Horst’s godfather. By the end of the year, the collection had

**“The museum held on to 20 items, as a ‘donation’ by way of thanks for their safekeeping during the war”**

been appropriated, with 49 items ending up in the city’s Staatliche Kunstgewerbemuseum.

Heinrich somehow survived, and after the war, from Canada, managed to recover some of the items from the Museum Angewandte Kunst (MAK, or Museum of Applied Arts). Nevertheless, it held on to 20 items, as a ‘donation’ by way of thanks for their safekeeping during the times of horror. Heinrich died in 1953, and half a century

would pass before the items were returned to his descendants. It is a number of these pieces that are now being offered by Bonhams in December’s Fine Porcelain Sale in London.

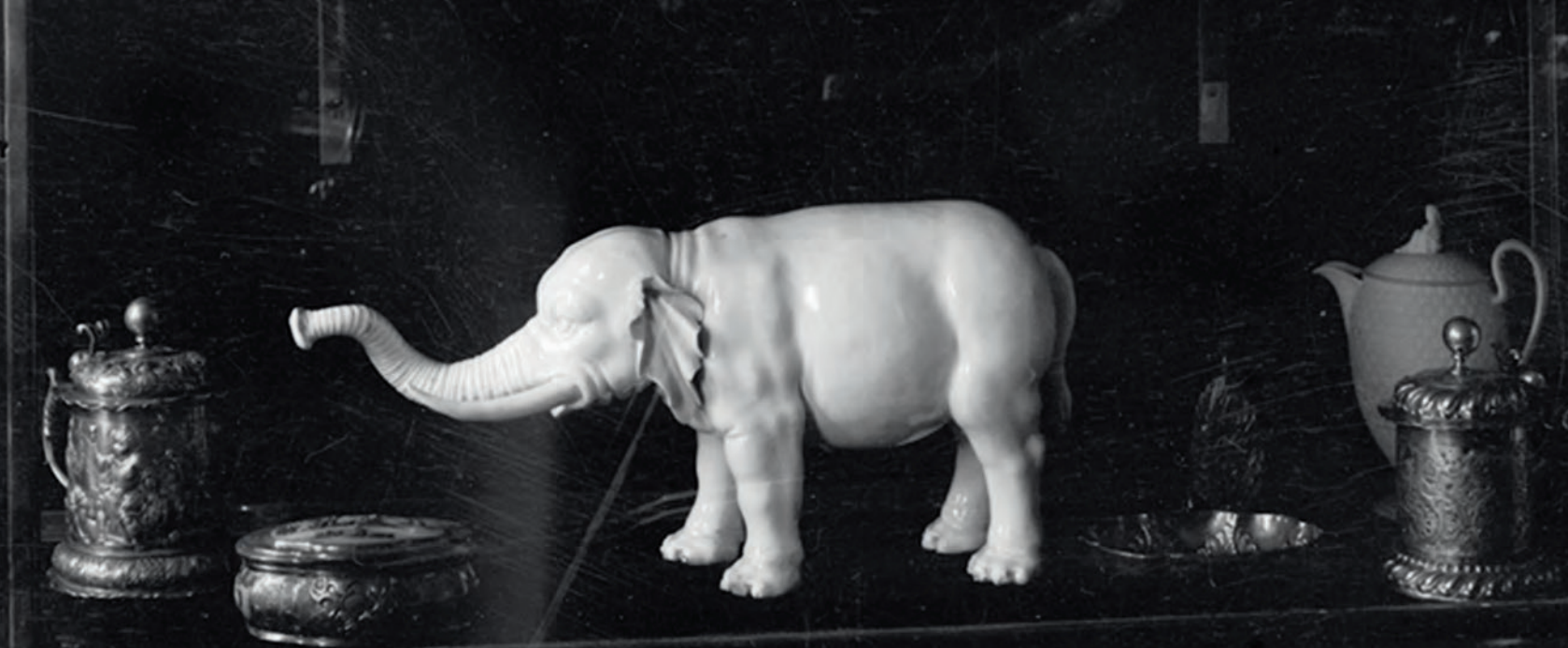
I parse the catalogue, two dozen lots of 18th-century snuffboxes and figurines and other such items. Several catch my eye. A food warmer, with figures in Polish-style costume. A *bourdaloue* – a fine lady’s pisspot – decorated with putti, monkeys and oriental flowers. A boxed coffee service. A chocolate drinking cup. A cup and saucer, with a Napoleonic scene and 1809 decree (I’ll take my law wherever I can get it).

One item jumps out, however, in a lumbering sort of way: a tusked white porcelain elephant, trunk extended, ears low, rippling with muscles. How content he seems, this ancient pachyderm!

He was born around 1750, in Vienna, but where or how is not known. Nor is it clear if it is African or Asian, but if the latter, as it appears, he is male, as only they have the ivories.

He seems rather short, just 23cm high. Sebastian Kuhn of Bonhams informs me, however, that this is







**Opposite**  
On display - the elephant  
in one of Heinrich's vitrines

**Below**  
Du Paquier two-handled  
ecuelle, cover and stand,  
c.1735-40  
Estimate:  
£100,000 - 150,000  
(\$130,000 - 200,000)

**Right**  
The Rothberger  
department store on the  
Stephansplatz, Vienna

**Below right**  
A Du Paquier armorial  
vase, c.1730-35  
Estimate:  
£60,000 - 80,000  
(\$80,000 - 105,000)



huge for a porcelain figure of this time, a feat of human ingenuity that is beyond the extraordinary.

The circumstances of his making, by hand, first a model in clay or wood from which a mould is made, in various pieces – a leg, a body, a head, a trunk... – with each fired individually and then somehow, almost magically and invisibly, brought together, the sum so much more alive than the parts. The technical difficulties are immense, I am told.

**“The elephant is huge for a porcelain figure of this time, a feat that is beyond the extraordinary”**

Nothing is known of the first century and a half of his life, although it is rumoured that royalty may be involved, a commission for an Esterházy prince, perhaps. By 1902, he resides with Heinrich on the Stephansplatz, on the ground floor of a vitrine, nestled between silver tankards and other porcelain objects.

From March to May 1904, he takes a short holiday at the k.k. Österreichisches Museum für Kunst und

Gewerbe, on the Stubenring, just ten minutes away. He is part of a fabulous exhibit, the Ausstellung von Alt-Wiener Porzellan, bringing glory to Austria's porcelain manufacturers.

In November 1938, the door to the vitrine is sealed. His Jewish owner may look but not touch or move him.

On 15 May 1939, he is Aryanised, sold to a new owner, the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe. He fetches 1,000 Reichmarks, about £90, more than nothing but still a gross undervaluation.

Eight miserable years later, after the war, Heinrich is persuaded to 'donate' the White Elephant to the Museum. The elephant is put on public display, and is inventoried as Ke 7523.28975.

The White Elephant will spend 56 years on public display in Vienna, no doubt offering moments of light relief to children who find themselves less excited by saucers, ecuelles and pisspots. Eventually, Heinrich's descendants are able to offer the elephant a new home – a beneficiary, it might be said, of the publicity and ownership struggles centred on Gustav Klimt's *Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer I*. The museums of Austria start to delve more deeply into matters of provenance, and the MAK's Advisory Board does the right thing.





#### Below

A pair of Frankenthal figures of dancers, c.1766  
Estimate: £3,000 - 5,000  
(\$4,000 - 7,000)

#### Left

The same figures on display in Heinrich's apartment

#### Right

Three Rothberger brothers, Alfred, Heinrich and Carl Julius, at Heinrich's apartment in Vienna in 1901

In 2003, White Elephant travels across the Atlantic. He moves in with Bertha Gutmann, Heinrich's niece, in New Jersey. Here he will remain until she dies, and he is sent back to London, for a short stay at Bonhams, to be sold by the family into a new home.

What else is there to know about White Elephant? He has a birthmark – a shield in underglaze blue, painted with red – on his belly. One of his toes is badly chipped, and minor chips intrude on his other toes, and even his left ear. Over a long life, these are minor ailments. Having lived through six Archdukes and Archduchesses of the Holy Roman Empire, four Austrian Emperors, twenty-five Austrian Chancellors and three American Presidents, he remains perfect.

**“He is a survivor – only three Viennese porcelain elephants remain from that time”**

He is a survivor. In fact, there remain only three Viennese porcelain elephants from that period. Compared to the other two, it might be said that he cuts a somewhat solitary figure, without clothing or decoration. One of his remaining contemporaries resides in New York at the Frick, doubling up as a dispenser of Tokay wine. The other, its sibling (both are products of the predecessor of Vienna's Imperial Porcelain Manufactory), lives in St Petersburg at the State Hermitage Museum, a colourful character, ridden by a figure of Bacchus and sharing his home with eight dancing figures.

On and on they will go, one hopes. In the meantime, as a result of an interview I gave about *The Ratline* in Sydney, a generous Australian TV company has offered to meet the exorbitant cost of sending the Villa Mendl



china service from Horst's home to the descendants of the Mendl family in New South Wales. And, in application of the Six Degrees of Separation thesis, I discover that it was none other than Otto Wächter who, in April 1938, removed Heinrich's brother Carl Julius from his academic position at the University of Vienna.

White elephant, small world.

*Philippe Sands is author of The Ratline (2020).*

Sale: Fine European Ceramics  
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# Sound art

In the mountains and the paddy fields,  
the temples and the court – music  
runs through Chinese culture, says

*Frances Wood*







Look at Chinese landscape paintings produced since the Song dynasty (960-1279) and the overwhelming impression is of quietness. Long ribbon-like waterfalls hang between the rocks of towering, cloud-wreathed peaks, a perfect balance of movement and stillness. Yet look closer and you notice that these quiet paintings are, in fact, full of sound: not just the sounds of nature – the cascading water and the sighing of the wind – but of music.

In the picture you might notice, trudging up a steep mountain path, a gentleman in a long robe, whose young servant carries a large bundle, wrapped in cloth. What is inside? It is a *guqin*, a type of zither – fine examples of which are offered by Bonhams in the Eternal Resonance sale in Hong Kong. Just as a harassed American executive might toss his National guitar in the back of the car for a restorative weekend playing bluegrass in the Catskills, this robed bureaucrat has cast aside the cap and gown of his Confucian official garb to explore

the 6th century, or the 3rd-century Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove were popular themes for paintings. The Eighteen Scholars were respected government advisors and the Seven Sages reclusive eccentrics who avoided Confucian orthodoxy, yet their pastimes are practically identical. In a painting of the Seven Sages dated 1616, the Ming artist Li Shida shows one practising calligraphy on a smooth rock-face, others admiring a painting. A small boy carries a bag of books and one sage is plucking a stringed instrument, albeit a round *pipa* (lute) rather than the omnipresent *guqin*.

While poetry also plangently describes the gentlemen scholar taking to the mountain, there is an interesting corrective. The retreat of a Confucian official to his rustic cottage is described by Meng Haoran (c.691-740):

“Look closer and these quiet paintings are full of sound: not just of nature... but of music”

his Taoist side amongst the wonders of nature. That he should travel with his *guqin* is no surprise, for music was one of the traditional Confucian accomplishments of the superior gentleman.

When you start to look, music is ever-present in these landscapes. The central section of another painting might show a small mountain hut, open-fronted so as better to enjoy the majestic view. On that open verandah a man sits alone, playing his *guqin*.

Such depictions underline how mastery of the *guqin* was an essential part of the scholar's repertoire. In paintings of domestic settings, gentlemen play *weiqi* (better known in the West by its Japanese name Go), paint fans and admire calligraphy to the melancholy strains of the *guqin*. These activities – calligraphy, painting, *weiqi*, music – were ‘the four accomplishments’ and they appear in a variety of forms from painting to carving and textiles.

We might take another example: the Eighteen Scholars, who advised the Tang emperor Taizong in

#### Opposite

Rare and large archaic bronze *yongzhong* (ritual bell), early Western Zhou  
47.1cm (18½in) high  
Estimate: HK\$400,000 - 600,000  
(\$50,000 - 80,000)

#### Above

Zhou Fang, *Court Ladies Tuning the Lute*

#### Right

‘Taigu Yuanyin’: important and rare Confucius-style huanghuali and zitan inlaid hundred-patch *guqin*, Ming Dynasty  
117cm (46in) long x 18cm (7in) wide  
Estimate: HK\$1,500,000 - 2,000,000  
(\$200,000 - 250,000)





#### Right

Very rare inscribed *kunqu* opera bamboo *dizi* (flute), signed Zhao Gaozi, Jiaping, dated Guichou year (1553)  
72.2cm (28<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>in) long  
Estimate:  
HK\$200,000 - 300,000  
(\$30,000 - 40,000)

#### Far right

Pu Ru (1896-1963)  
*Sage Playing Qin*  
ink and colour on paper,  
inscribed by the artist with  
a poem, signed Xinyu  
132.5cm x 33.5cm  
(52in x 13<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>in)  
Estimate:  
HK\$420,000 - 480,000  
(\$50,000 - 60,000)

#### Below

The 3,000-year-old Guqin has a special position in Chinese cultural history. It was the earliest instrument to have music written down and passed on for it



*Going home to Southern Mountain at the  
end of the year  
I will not submit any more memorials at the  
gate of the Northern Palace  
I'm going home to my poor cottage on  
Southern Mountain...  
The moon in the pines by my empty window.*

But his solitude is relative, for in another poem by Meng Haoran we discover that the 'small people' of the Confucian social order work the mountain's lower slopes:

*The woodcutters will soon be home  
In the mist the birds have perched in the trees...  
Alone with my guqin I wait by the path  
covered in creepers...*

As well as solitariness being a matter of perspective, it would be wrong to assume music was the province only of the gentleman scholar. Towards the bottom of many landscape paintings, fields and rivers are shown. There peasants wearing straw raincoats and hats work the fields, and fishermen sit motionless in low, narrow

**“Small boys accompany buffalo to the paddy fields... playing flute astride semi-submerged beasts”**

boats. As day turns to evening, small boys accompany water buffalo to wallow in the paddy fields after their long hours pulling the plough. And often those boys are shown playing the flute astride a semi-submerged beast.

Mao Zedong was dismissive of this artistic convention, using playing flute to a buffalo as a metaphor for empty rhetoric, but the Buddhists saw things rather differently. One charming tale illustrates the power of such music. A boy has charge of a wild black buffalo. He gradually gains control of the plunging beast – an allegory for the power of the will, which must be tamed in order to achieve Buddhahood. As he does so, the buffalo's coat slowly changes colour. Finally, the child is able to sit on its now-white back and play his flute. Popular editions of the tale, delightfully illustrated, appeared during the Ming.

In reality, music was heard in many times and places other than on mountain retreats. The depiction on a brush-pot – also offered by Bonhams – of ladies







**Left**  
Rare celadon-glazed 'figure' xun (whistle), Song Dynasty or earlier  
7cm (2¾in) long  
Estimate: HK\$70,000 - 100,000 (\$10,000 - 15,000)

**Above**  
Meditative music. The Guqin was an instrument of scholars, painters and poets, and even today it is still regarded as an instrument of intellectuals.

**Below**  
Rare Lushan phosphatic-splashed brown-glazed stoneware drum, Tang Dynasty  
58.5cm (23in) long  
Estimate: HK\$250,000 - 350,000 (\$30,000 - 50,000)

dancing to the accompaniment of flute, clappers, drum and gong recalls the entertainments enjoyed on the Guangzhou river, as described by Shen Fu in his early 19th-century *Six Records of a Floating Life*. "A bright round moon hung over a broad expanse of sky and water, and randomly scattered, like floating leaves, were the wine boats, their lanterns twinkling like stars scattered across the sky. Smaller boats plied to and fro with sounds of music and song." Such scenes of pleasure were widely depicted in the 19th-century views of the Pearl River that were painted for sale to foreign visitors.

And, far from the solitary enjoyment of the *guqin* and the sociable appreciation of dancing and singing girls, there was the music associated with state and religious ritual. Illustrations of events in the Confucian temple in Qufu, such as those in Linqing's *Tracks of a Wild Goose in the Snow* (1847-50), show how music and dance accompanied – to some extent, formed – ritual. Linqing (1791-1846), a government official of considerable achievement, watched the autumn ceremony of worship in honour of Confucius, "performed by the last descendant of Confucius and other officials and followers". Dressed in official uniforms, they bowed and turned and waved long pheasant feathers in a slow and solemn dance as music was played on ancient jade chimes, bronze bells and flat sounding boards.

Great wooden frames carrying sets of 16 jade L-shaped 'sonorous stones' and 16 bronze bells graded in size were set up in temples of all sorts to accompany rituals. In Buddhist temples, the interminable chanting of the assembled monks would be brought to a temporary end by bells. Imperial rituals involved music, as can be seen in long handscrolls produced in the

imperial palace to advise future directors of protocol. The painting *The Yongzheng Emperor Offering Sacrifices at the Altar of the God of Agriculture* (1723-35) shows yellow silk tents set up on the altar platform to shelter the pure white animals that have been readied for sacrifice. Beneath the steps are two wooden frames: on the left, bearing jade chimes; on the right, hung with gilt-bronze bells.

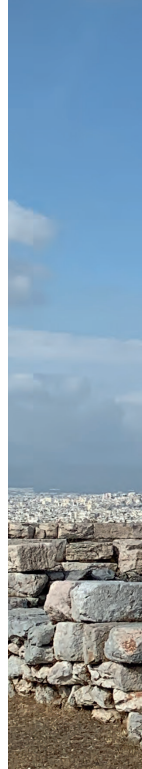
And though such performances might seem very much of the distant past, as recently as 1940, during the war, Chiang Kai-shek ordered the creation of a new Department of Rites and Music within the Department of Education. He wanted to 'restore proper rites and music', though his deference to Confucian tradition had its limit. This new department was to be led by a woman.

*Frances Wood's Great Books of China was published in 2017.*

Sale: Eternal Resonance: Music in Chinese Art  
Hong Kong  
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Enquiries: Xibo Wang +852 3607 0010  
xibo.wang@bonhams.com  
bonhams.com/chineseart







**From left to right**  
Summer 2020: Ferrara's main square with its cathedral; the Spanish Steps in Rome; the deserted Acropolis with the Erechtheion; Gallery of Maps in the Vatican Museum  
**Below right** The Raphael Gallery; distanced seating at St Maria in Trastevere

# Good to get out

Imagine Italy without the throngs of tourists. Even better, says *Lucinda Bredin*, go there to experience it

One Christmas, I was given an inspired present. It was a stereoscope – a wooden box allowing the viewer to see images in three dimensions. It wasn't the science behind it that thrilled me. Rather, it was the content of the pictures themselves. Consisting of negatives on glass, they recorded foreign trips taken by a member of the extremely leisured classes in the first half of the 20th century. One of my favourite images was of three women wearing long skirts, constricting white blouses and extravagant hats, which must have been a nuisance, being winched up the Great Pyramid of Cheops, backwards by way of straps round their waists. But the real revelation is the emptiness of the surrounding desert. Not a souvenir-seller in sight.

We all know the story of how travel to far-flung parts became accessible – and, on balance, it's wonderful for world peace. But sometimes – just occasionally – I longed to be transported to my stereoscopic world to experience the world's monuments alone, without being jostled, importuned and, worst of all, unable to see anything through the milling crowds.

And then came summer 2020...

News began to filter back that historic centres throughout Europe were deserted. One statistic was especially remarkable: the Vatican Museum, which usually had a daily throng of 20,000, was now issuing only 1,000 tickets per day – and there was little take-up for those. The Acropolis in Athens, with its notoriously snaking queues in 40°C summer heat, was, reportedly, empty as if an invading army had swept through, leaving nothing

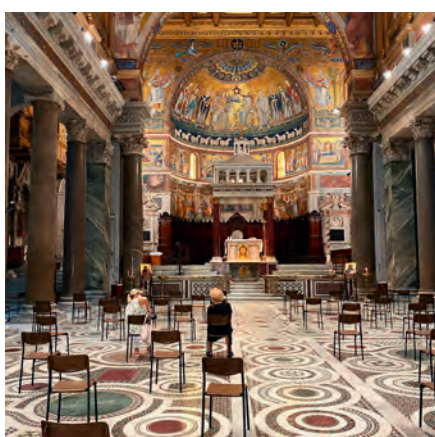
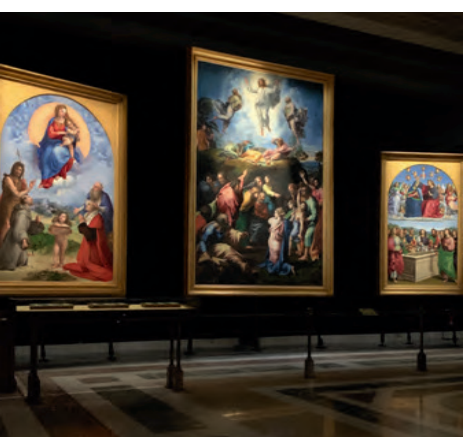
but rubble. As soon as it was permitted, we got on a plane. The first stop was Rome.

The first thing I noticed was that Rome was full of Romans, which was a novel feeling. With its huge influx of visitors, one is more likely to hear American, German or Korean on the streets, but this July the only language to be heard was the distinctive Roman dialect. In restaurants, our friend Ivano, from Parma, was celebrated by the waiters as if he were the first swallow in spring making the long journey south. The Spanish Steps were empty, the Pantheon and Piazza Navona looked as unpeopled and doom-laden as a Piranesi print – as did the surrounds of the Trevi Fountain, which hadn't been so deserted since that wonderful clip in *La Dolce Vita* with Anita Ekberg wading through it magnificently in her ballgown.

Moreover, the reports about deserted landmarks were all true. And then some. Our first stop was the Vatican. When I went last, it was like wading against the tide of humanity at Notting Hill Carnival. This time, we could hear our footsteps echoing down the corridors. It isn't often that one is alone with a Leonardo, but for the first time – and, I suspect, the last – I was able to stand in front of the artist's unfinished *St Jerome in the Wilderness* with time not just to see it, but to think about it and realise the autobiographical elements imbued in the work. The greatest hits – the Laocoön, Raphael's papal rooms, the statue of Augustus in Braccio Nuovo, the Gallery of Maps and the Sistine Chapel – were all laid out on display for a private audience of two.

Once we got a taste for this, there was no stopping us.





Having spent lockdown reading Giorgio Bassani's five-part *Novel of Ferrara* (of which *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis* is the most-famous volume), it seemed now was the moment to go to the walled city. Ferrara's heyday was in the late 15th century, when it was ruled by the d'Este family. Their promulgation of a secular city state led to an enlightened humanism that allowed other faiths to co-exist without persecution – in particular, the Jewish community. Bassani's books are set in the 1930s, when both the city and its levels of tolerance were in tragic decline. The Jews had been herded into a ghetto of three streets in 1627, when the city had become part of the Papal States, and walking through the narrow cobbled streets, particularly as there were so few people about, one couldn't escape the feeling of desolation.

To reignite the educated optimism of the 15th-century court, one has to visit Ferrara's Renaissance palaces. These remain hymns to secularisation. One of them, Palazzo Costabili, which houses a magnificent collection of Classical sculpture and Greek vases, has an exquisite music-cum-banqueting room with frescoes heavily inspired by Mantegna's *Camera degli Sposi* in nearby Mantua. But the apogee of the d'Este court is to be found in the glorious Salone dei Mesi in Palazzo Schifanoia, now (ironically) reopened after a hefty refurbishment.

I did receive one reality check, though. While posting on Instagram, waxing on about a street in Ferrara looking like a de Chirico painting, a museum curator commented: "But Lucinda, it always looks like this..."

*Lucinda Bredin is Editor of Bonhams Magazine.*



## When travelling in lockdown...

### Where to stay:

At a time when hotels – if they are even open – are slashing rates and giving come-hither deals, it is not the moment to go for the affordable option. Seize the opportunity to stay in the most-iconic, best-appointed, lap of luxury you can find. When in Rome, that's the **Hotel de Russie**. Set just off the Piazza del Popolo, the Russie took advantage of lockdown to unearth and restore the "secret garden" [below right] on the Pincian Hill; it was designed by Giuseppe Valadier, also responsible for improving the Piazza del Popolo in the 19th century. Other hotels that are a treat to stay in, but usually rather punchily priced, are the **Hotel d'Inghilterra** and the **Hassler**, with its glorious terrace. While booking accommodation during these uncertain times, it is always worth ringing, rather than booking via the website. Cancellation policies have to be flexible and it's worth finding out what the limits are.

### Where to eat:

Very few of the multi-Michelin-starred restaurants are currently open (at time of writing), but when it comes to Rome, they were never the point anyway. Instead, there are a plethora of local establishments serving versions of *cucina povera*, usually with wine lists you can only dream of elsewhere. This is the reason to go to **La Matricianella**, on a side street between Augustus's tomb and the Italian parliament. Popular with politicians and other power brokers, it possesses one of the greatest

value wine lists in Rome, with superb Amarones, Barolos and Barbarescos below wholesale prices. Given how narrow the outside terrace is, there were Perspex 'sneeze screens' shielding surrounding diners, but you soon managed to mentally dismiss them. There is also the superb **Da Armando al Pantheon**, a tiny restaurant on a side street adjoining the Pantheon. This serves the essence of Roman cuisine – gutsy, offal-based dishes such as *panino con coratella d'abbacchio* (heart, liver and lungs of lamb on a bed of spinach), *faraona ai funghi porcini* (luscious guinea fowl with porcini, pine nuts and Sicilian spices). The prices were ridiculously cheap.

**Bruce Palling**





# Fine European Ceramics, including the Heinrich Rothberger Collection

London

Thursday 3 December

2pm

A very rare Meissen underglaze-blue-ground  
beaker and saucer  
circa 1722-23  
Estimate: £30,000 - 50,000  
(\$40,000 - 66,000)

Enquires: Nette Megens  
+44 (0) 20 7468 8348  
nette.megens@bonhams.com  
bonhams.com/ceramics







# Bring it on!

**Margaret Rand** on the cardinal rules of what to drink at Christmas

**C**hoosing wines to go with the big Christmas feast is not difficult – believe me, it’s a doddle. What’s tricky is matching the wine to the people.

You know what happens. You’ve got an assortment of family and friends for Christmas lunch. One says, “Oh. Champagne. Have you got something that’s not sparkling?” Someone else says, “Could I just have a glass of red?” Three people say they won’t, thanks, because they’re driving. And you haven’t even sat down at table yet.

There are times when it seems that you’re opening your best bottles just for yourself. It’s more than faintly annoying to be pouring Château Latour 1982 for someone who says, “What did you say this was? Is that, like, Bordeaux?”

Unless you’re sure of your audience, don’t bother with your very oldest and rarest. Young to youngish wines are best for Christmas Day, and they need to be delicious, ripe, juicy and crowd-pleasing.

Champagne as an aperitif, certainly, but perhaps go a little way off the beaten track and serve Billecart-Salmon or Philipponat or Jacques Peters. Or English sparkling? Try Breaky Bottom. Traditional doesn’t have to be predictable.

But now lunch has been announced. What will go with turkey, what with goose and what with beef?

Turkey with all the trimmings is really easy. All those flavours on the plate mean that as long as the wine is red

and fruity with good acidity, it’ll be fine. Cru Beaujolais is a good bet, perhaps, like Domaine André Colonge’s silky, layered Fleurie. Or a Margaret River red from Australia: Cullen’s Mangan Vineyard Red Moon, an unusual blend of Malbec, Merlot and Petit Verdot, is cherryish and crunchy, Swinney Syrah/Mourvedre/Grenache spicy, deep and aromatic. If you want to offer a white as well, go for a Chardonnay with subtle oak – the sort of oak that gives weight

**“What’s tricky is matching the wine to the people”**

and savouriness rather than vanilla flavours. Olivier Merlin’s Pouilly-Fuissé or Mâcon is always a winner, as is Mâcon from Les Héritiers du Comte Lafon.

With goose and, I assume, red cabbage, white would be my first choice, though there is a good argument for red. For white, Alsace is your friend. The thing to beware of here is sweetness levels, because the producers, and indeed the merchants who will sell it to you, are not always good at making it clear what is dry and what is not; and you want something just off-dry, not out-and-out sweet. But not bone dry: red cabbage has sweetness and so, probably, does the stuffing in the bird. Try Meyer-Fonné’s Pinot Gris Reserve, or Paul Blanck’s Pinot Gris Furstentum

Grand Cru. For red, go for Pinot Noir. A village-level Burgundy will keep everybody happy; but if you want to look outside Burgundy, By Farr in Geelong, Australia, has its glorious Farrside Pinot, deep and energetic. From Chile, Outer Limits from Montes is spicy and juicy.

If you’re serving a magnificent chunk of roast beef – rib, perhaps, or sirloin – remember that rib has more flavour than sirloin or fillet. When wines are described as ‘beefy’ it can be a misnomer: roast beef doesn’t need beefy wine. Go for something more delicate. The traditionalists around the table will expect Burgundy with beef, and it is an absolutely safe match, but you could also go Italian. Barolo, Barbaresco or Brunello di Montalcino get the Roman vote for Christmas lamb.

Christmas is when the French get out the Sauternes or, in Alsace, the Sélection des Grains Nobles. It’s wonderful with cheese, whether you choose Roquefort or Stilton; but it can be a little too much for a British Christmas pudding. I prefer to copy Italian Christmas habits, and serve Moscato d’Asti: light, frothy, fun and, crucially, reviving. Araldica’s version will do the job nicely.

*Margaret Rand is author of 101 Wines to Try Before You Die (2018)*

Sale: Fine and Rare Wines  
London

Thursday 18th February 2021  
Enquiries: Richard Harvey M.W.  
+44 (0) 20 7468 5811  
richard.harvey@bonhams.com





## Modern & Contemporary Art

Hong Kong

Friday 4 December

4pm

Kilshio Suga (Japanese, Born 1944)

*Protrusion Series - Gap in Surroundings*

1990

signed and dated 1990 on the reverse

plywood, acrylic, lacquer

113 x 189 x 12.5cm (44½ x 74½ x 5in)

Estimate: HK\$500,000 - 800,000

(£50,000 - 80,000)

Enquires: Dorothy Lin

+852 3607 0034

[dorothy.lin@bonhams.com](mailto:dorothy.lin@bonhams.com)

[bonhams.com/MCA-HK](http://bonhams.com/MCA-HK)





## Los Angeles *You're so vane*

Equestrian champion Luann Beach's passion for horses did not stop at riding. Although she did compete successfully in a variety of English and Western disciplines – having been trained by several legendary horse champions – her interest would take a more academic turn whenever she was out of the saddle. Fascinated by the iconography of horses and their representation throughout history, Beach amassed an impressive collection of horse memorabilia. This included a large collection of horse-themed weathervanes, which will be offered in Bonhams' Home & Interiors sale in L.A. in January. For centuries, weathervanes served as a simple means of detecting windspeed and direction, but by the 19th and 20th centuries they had taken on more of a decorative function, and have since become a symbol of Americana collecting. Acquired over the past 20 years, Beach's collection demonstrates not only the talent of the American folk artisans, but the vital role of the horse in 19th-century American life.

**Image:** Copper and zinc racehorse and jockey

**Estimate:** \$3,000 - 5,000

**Sale:** Home & Interiors: featuring Fine American Furniture and Decorative Arts  
Los Angeles, 26 January

**Enquiries:** Anna Hicks

+1 323 436 5463

anna.hicks@bonhams.com



# Around the Globe

*Andrew Currie* highlights a selection  
of Bonhams sales worldwide



## Hong Kong *A deity to remember*

Guhyasamaja, represented by the union of the male and female deities, is one of the earliest and most-important tantric deities in Vajrayana Buddhism. The worship of Guhyasamaja extends back to 8th-century India. It is believed that practitioners who follow Guhyasamaja will be able transform their consciousness to achieve Buddhahood. This large and complex gilded sculpture of the deity – to be offered in Images of Devotion sale – originates from 15th- or 16th-century Tibet, a period during which cultural exchange with the Ming Court inspired greater refinement in the sculptural depiction of silk garments and regalia. Artworks depicting Guhyasamaja are much rarer than those of similar deities, such as Chakrasamvara.

**Image:** Gilt copper alloy figure  
of Guhyasamaja

**Estimate:**

HK\$3,500,000 - 4,500,000

**Sale:** Images of Devotion  
Hong Kong, 2 December

**Enquiries:** Edward Wilkinson

+852 2918 4321

edward.wilkinson@bonhams.com







## Bicester Best of British

An example of the Rolls-Royce of motorcycles, a 1936 Brough Superior 982C SS100, leads an all-British collection offered from the National Motorcycle Museum, Birmingham, at the Bonhams Winter Sale at Bicester Heritage in December. The superbike of the pre-war 'golden era' for two-wheelers, the SS100's reputation for high performance, engineering excellence and quality of finish went beyond the motorcycling fraternity. Not only was the model the final holder of the speed record at the Brooklands circuit, but every single motorcycle sold was accompanied by a written guarantee that confirmed it had been timed at more than 100mph for a quarter of a mile – a staggering achievement when few road vehicles of any sort were capable even of reaching the magical 'ton'. The National Motorcycle Museum acquired this example, bearing the earliest engine number in a production model, in 1979 and carefully

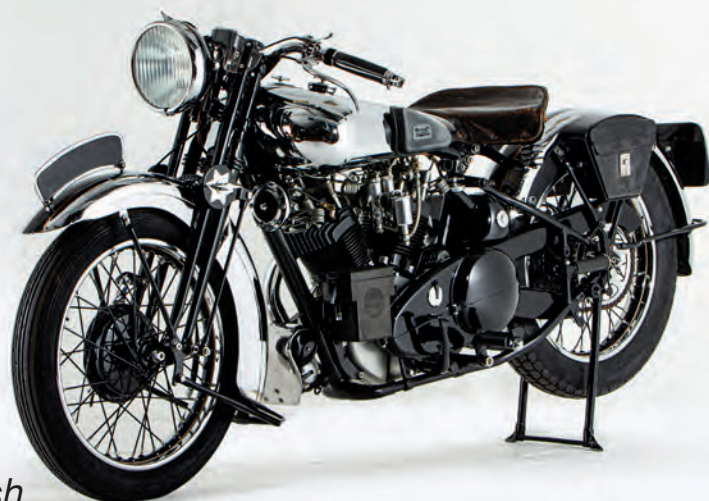
restored it to 'show condition'. The Brough is one of more than 50 motorcycles that will be offered from the museum's Reserve Collection, effectively a showcase of the most-evocative names of British motorcycling, from Ariel to Vincent via Norton and Royal Enfield. Other jewels include a rare Norton F1, a trio of Triumph Valmoto racing motorcycles from the 2003 season, and an exclusive 1982 Hesketh Vampire luxury super-tourer, which was the brainchild of Lord Hesketh, founder of the eponymous and flamboyant 1970s Formula One racing team.

**Image:** 1936 Brough Superior 982C SS100

**Estimate:** £240,000 - 280,000

**Sale:** The Winter Sale Bicester, 11-12 December

**Enquiries:** Ben Walker  
+44 (0) 20 7468 5858  
ben.walker@bonhams.com



## Los Angeles Beating the Rush

When Neil Peart died on 7 January 2020, the world's greatest drummers laid down their sticks for a day of quiet reflection. Stewart Copeland (The Police), Dave Grohl (Nirvana and Foo Fighters) and Lars Ulrich (Metallica) were among the many musicians, who – alongside legions of music lovers – gave testimony to the influence of Peart, considered one of the greatest drummers of all time. Frequently mentioned in the same breath as John Bonham of Led Zeppelin or even jazz luminaries like Buddy Rich, Peart found fame in the Canadian prog-rock band Rush. With Rush, he made 19 albums, which cumulatively sold 40 million copies worldwide, making them the fifth highest-selling rock band in the United States, behind only the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, Kiss and Aerosmith. As both drummer and lyricist, Peart was at the heart of this success. The drums that will be offered on 8 December as part of the Rock & Roll Sale in Los Angeles were the first kit Peart took on tour with Rush between 1974 and 1977; he was famous for augmenting his setup with various additional percussive elements, such as wind chimes, tubular bells, gongs and timbales, all of which feature on this particular kit.

**Image:** Neil Peart's Drum Kit

**Estimate:** \$80,000 - 100,000

**Sale:** Music Memorabilia

Los Angeles, until 9 December at bonhams.com

**Enquiries:** Catherine Williamson  
+1 323 436 5442

catherine.williamson@bonhams.com



## Canada Kristin Kearney



Kristin Kearney has been appointed the new Director of Bonhams' operation in Canada. She will be based in Toronto. Kristin joined Bonhams as Business Manager for Canadian art sales in 2007, and has worked on sales in New York, San Francisco and Hong Kong. Since 2013, she has been the Jewellery Specialist and Director of Business Development in Canada. Kristin holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Queens University, Kingston Ontario, and a Masters of Art Business from Sotheby's Institute of Art in London. She also possesses a Graduate Gemologist degree from the Gemological Institute of America.

**Enquiries:** Kristin Kearney  
+1 416 462 9004  
kristin.kearney@bonhams.com





# Les Grandes Marques du Monde à Paris

Paris

Thursday 4 February 2021

Inviting selected consignments through  
to Friday 30 December 2020

1960 Aston Martin DB4 Series II

Estimate: €450,000 - 600,000

(£400,000 - 530,000)

Enquires: Bonhams Paris Office

+33 1 42 61 10 11

[eurocars@bonhams.com](mailto:eurocars@bonhams.com)







*Rojo y Negro* Carmen Herrera, 1993



## New York *The simple life*

At the age of 105, Carmen Herrera is probably the oldest working painter in the world; she is certainly one of the most determined. Her long battle for recognition is not only an inspiring testament to her unwavering self-belief, but also a damning reflection on the obstacles facing women artists for much of the 20th century. Born in Cuba, Herrera trained in Havana in the 1930s as an architect when, as she herself says, she first appreciated the boundless possibilities of the straight line. She moved to New York in the 1940s and, apart from a few spells in Paris, has lived and worked there ever since. Under the radar for many years, Herrera finally won international recognition in the early 2000s. Admired for its simplicity, her work is never simplistic, as can be seen in her 1993 screenprint *Rojo y Negro* (Red and Black), which comes to the Geometric Abstraction sale in New York in February. The work at first appears straightforward but, as with so many great minimalists, opens itself to endless interpretations the longer you live with it. And who wouldn't want a Herrera in their life?

**Image:** *Rojo y Negro* (Red and Black), 1993

**Estimate:** \$3,000 - 5,000

**Sale:** Geometric Abstractions  
New York, 11 February

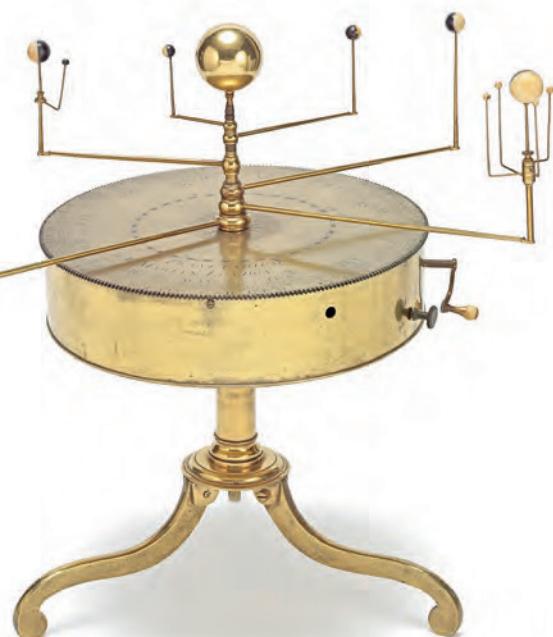
**Enquiries:** Deborah Ripley  
+1 917 618 3985

deborah.ripley@bonhams.com



## London *Seeing stars*

Since the beginning of time, humans have gazed into the night sky and wondered how our universe works. Knowledge of this, beyond folklore and myth, was usually reserved for those of noble birth, who had the time to ponder the existential. Although planetariums can be traced back to Roman times and were on the market in the early 18th century, Benjamin Martin wanted to create a model which was inexpensive and accessible to the common person. And so, the boldly entitled 'New Planetarium' was created. It comes to Bonhams Instruments of Science and Technology Sale in Knightsbridge on 2 December. Benjamin Martin was a successful businessman of his time known for his hard marketing techniques. The aggressive advertising of his products was an unknown tactic in the 18th century, and regarded as suspicious by his contemporaries. He started making Planetariums, or Orreries, when he settled in Fleet Street in 1756. However, it wasn't until a fire devastated Harvard in 1764, destroying various scientific instruments, that Martin received his first commissions to



replace them. This prompted an expansion into wholesale and retail and, realising his passion, Martin started to produce Orreries for the masses.

**Image:** An impressive and rare Benjamin Martin Tellarium / Planetarium English, circa 1765-70

**Estimate:** £40,000 - 60,000

**Sale:** Instruments of Science  
Knightsbridge 3 December

**Enquiries:** Jon Baddeley  
+44 (0) 20 7393 3872  
jon.baddeley@bonhams.com



## Los Angeles *A mother's love*

When the Ancient Greeks wanted a word to describe the wildernesses of the far north, they came up with 'Thule'. Over succeeding centuries, the term has been applied to Orkney, the Shetlands and Norway – and, in the phrase 'ultima Thule', to anywhere beyond the known world. Today, Thule is very firmly associated with Greenland and, in particular, the area settled by the proto-Inuit/Eskimo people who migrated there from Alaska in the 13th century. The term can be applied more generally, too, to Inuit culture, which has produced some exceptional works of art, including the beautiful maternity figure carved from walrus tusk to be offered in Los Angeles in December. This miniature masterpiece – it is just under 5cm tall – can be dated to 200-1200 AD. The carving is evocative of figurative works by such modern masters as Brâncuși and Henry Moore, who was known to be an admirer of Inuit art, especially that of the contemporary Inuit artist John Tiktak. The piece offered by Bonhams belonged to Jay C. Leff, an early collector who did much to preserve and promote tribal art around the world.

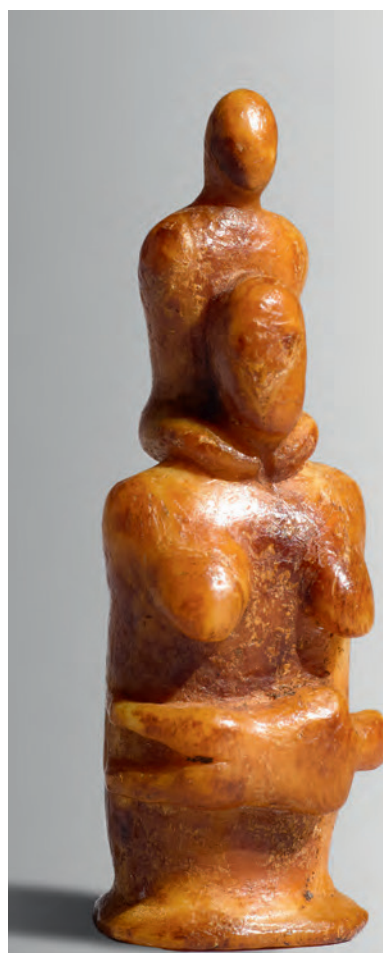
**Image:** *Thule Maternity Figure*

**Estimate:** \$10,000 - 15,000

**Sale:** Modern & Historic Native American Art  
Los Angeles, 8 December

**Enquiries:** Ingmars Lindbergs  
+1 415 503 3393

ingmars.lindbergs@bonhams.com







# Hong Kong Watches

Hong Kong  
Wednesday 2 December  
2pm

Audemars Piguet Ref.25770ST  
HK\$100,000 - 180,000  
(£10,000 - 18,000)

Graff "Leaf"  
HK\$280,000 - 400,000  
(£28,000 - 40,000)  
No Reserve

Enquiries: Sharon Chan  
+852 2918 4321  
sharon.chan@bonhams.com  
bonhams.com/watches





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My  
Favourite  
Room



Photo: © Mike Trow



© Victoria and Albert Museum, London

## Nicholas Coleridge on an extraordinary collection of Victorian casts – and site of illicit liaisons

In choosing only one room to visit, over and over again, for the rest of my life, it's a close-run thing. The Assyrian sculpture gallery at the British Museum (Room 6a) with its human-headed lions from the Palace of King Ashurbanipal at Nimrud is right up there, so is the National Gallery's Canaletto room (Room 39). But for sheer joy, variety and awe, I am nominating the V&A's Cast Courts (Room 46). If I ever have half an hour to kill, that's where I head – and they never disappoint. No other museum in the world has anything that comes close to these brilliant Victorian plaster reproductions of the greatest sculptures: Trajan's Column from the Roman Forum, Michelangelo's *David* from Florence, Donatello's *David*, the elaborate pulpit from Pisa Cathedral, the entrance to the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, and then the Celtic crosses – so many Celtic crosses – and the Norman and medieval tombs, arranged in rows like a prep school dormitory; at every turn something you haven't spotted before, something remarkable.

Opened in 1873, they were originally named the Architectural Courts. The notion of copies of great works and façades still strikes some visitors as an odd idea: a collection of fakes, Victorian 3D printing, all jumbled together like an elephants' graveyard. But they provide something you see nowhere else, a sense of relative scale, the ability to compare the size and dimensions of so many different statues and sculptures side by side. They

were conceived at a time when overseas travel was more difficult, so doubly relevant in post-lockdown Britain.

I have always wanted to host a seated dinner between the casts, though the spaces are tight and the pieces too delicate. I also love the small door at the foot of Trajan's Column, behind which for decades were stored the brooms and floor polishers of the cleaners, and which was sometimes used for illicit liaisons by staff. Recently, it has been opened as a sitting area for visitors to gaze up inside the hollow centre of the column. It would be a gloriously romantic and spooky place to spend the night, on a futon.

**“I love the small door in Trajan's Column, behind which were stored the brooms and floor polishers”**

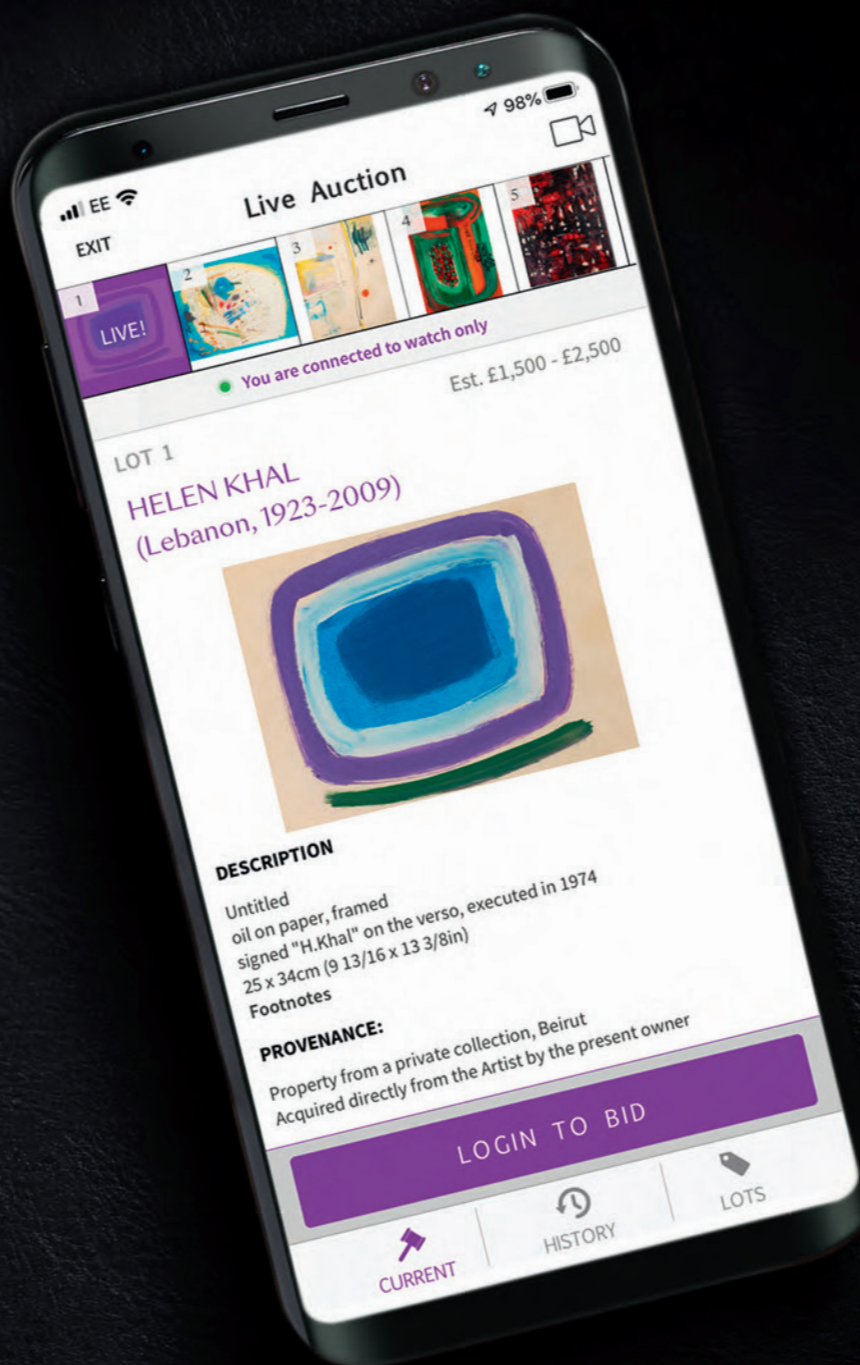
An irony – or triumph – of the Cast Courts (recently renovated thanks to the generosity of the Ruddock, Weston and Sethia families) is that the plaster casts are now often in better condition than the originals, eroded by pollution. And, in the case of the 15th-century Lübeck relief of Christ washing the feet of the Apostles, the original has been destroyed, with the cast as the unique record of a lost work.

*Nicholas Coleridge is Chairman of the Victoria and Albert Museum.*



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