

CHRISTIE'S

PRESS RELEASE | LONDON | 8 FEBRUARY 2024

CHRISTIE'S WILL OFFER CLAUDE MONET'S *MATINÉE SUR LA SEINE, TEMPS NET* AT AUCTION FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 45 YEARS

A LEADING HIGHLIGHT OF THE
20TH / 21ST CENTURY: LONDON EVENING SALE

CELEBRATING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF IMPRESSIONISM



Claude Monet, *Matinée sur la Seine, temps net* (1897, estimate: £12,000,000-18,000,000)

London – Christie's will offer Claude Monet's *Matinée sur la Seine, temps net* (1897, estimate: £12,000,000-18,000,000) at auction for the first time in 45 years. A leading highlight of the 20th / 21st Century: London Evening Sale on 7 March, this magnificent painting captures a tranquil moment on the Seine, the morning light casting an iridescent glow across the scene. *Matinée sur la Seine, temps net* dates to an important period in Monet's practice during which time he began to serialise his motifs, a technique that would ultimately transform his art. Last seen at exhibition in 1990 when it was included in 'Monet in the '90s: The Series Paintings' (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; The Art Institute of Chicago and Royal Academy of Arts, London), *Matinée sur la Seine, temps net* will be displayed at Christie's in New York from 9 to 14 February and in Hong Kong from 21 to 23 February. The view in London will take place at King Street from 1 to 7 March.

The series to which the painting belongs, titled 'Matinées sur la Seine', conveys the landscape during the summer mornings of 1896 and 1897 as the light transforms the atmosphere. Tracing the sun as it passes over the scene, from the first rays of light at dawn, to the full brilliance of the sun at mid-morning, this extraordinary sequence of works was conceived as a connected, interrelated sequence of canvases. These would become some of the last scenes the artist would create of the Seine, a frequent subject in his *oeuvre* and one of the defining images of the Impressionist movement.

Michelle McMullan, Co-Head of 20th / 21st Century: London Evening sale, Christie's: *"We are thrilled to offer Matinée sur la Seine, temps net in London, a masterpiece by Claude Monet, in the year that marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of Impressionism. The painting is a poetic meditation on time that places equal significance on both the 'real world' of the pictorial sky and its mirror image reflected in the water. In the morning mist, these two realms meld together, focusing the viewer on the sensation of the scene unfolding before them. Following the sale of Monet's Le bassin aux nymphéas in New York in November of 2023, we look forward to presenting Matinée sur la Seine, temps net to our international clients, who we are confident will be enthralled by the mesmeric beauty of one of Monet's most cherished subjects."*

The idea of serialisation first occurred to Monet when he was painting a church in the misty sunlight. While he often painted several versions of the same scene, it was not until he completed his depictions of the Creuse valley in 1889, an example of which will also be offered in the Evening sale on 7 March, that Monet returned to the creative possibilities the serial technique offered. Time was deeply embedded in the process and presentation of the 'Matinée sur la Seine' with each painting depicting a specific instant. To capture the sun's first rays illuminating a small inlet on the Seine, Monet would set out at 3:30am, remaining on the river until the light no longer suited his purpose. Monet would work on many canvases at the same time, slotted into different grooves that lined his bateau-atelier. As the light changed during the course of the morning, he quickly switched from one canvas to the next. It is possible to track the rising sun across the canvases when seen as a group.

Monet explained, *'I am pursuing the impossible. Other painters paint a bridge, a house, a boat... I want to paint the air in which the bridge, the house, and the boat are to be found – the beauty of the air around them, and that is nothing less than the impossible'*.

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