

20/21

Shanghai to London

MASTERPIECES BY THREE ART ICONS TO LEAD THE SHANGHAI EVENING SALE ON 1 MARCH 2022

- Jean-Michel Basquiat's *Il Duce* to be the top lot of the sale
- Pablo Picasso's Seminal Portrait - *Dormeuse (Marie-Thérèse Walter)*, created in the 1930s, to debut at auction in Shanghai
- Zao Wou-Ki's Rare Blue Palette - *Le soir à l'Hôtel du Palais (Palace Hotel by Night)* Explores Poetic Beauty

SHANGHAI AND LONDON -- Following the announcement of the 20/21 Marquee Sale Weeks and the inaugural 20/21 Shanghai to London sale series, Christie's unveils the top highlights of the Shanghai Evening Sale to be offered on 1 March, led by masterworks created by Jean-Michel Basquiat, Pablo Picasso and Zao Wou-ki — a trio of legendary artists whose works transcend time and geography. The Evening Sale will coincide with the opening of Christie's new gallery at Shanghai's Bund One, and will be complemented with a series of events including a grand opening ceremony for the new gallery space, art forums, specialist walkthroughs, live-streamed activities, and more.



JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT (1960-1988) *Il Duce* (1982, estimate: RMB80,000,000-120,000,000 / US\$12,000,000-18,000,000)

Building upon the success of **【Radiance: the Basquiat Show】** in Shanghai last November, Christie's is pleased to offer ***Il Duce***, another monumental work created by Basquiat at the zenith of his artistic *oeuvre*, in the Shanghai Evening Sale on 1 March. The sale of this masterpiece also marks the auction debut for this most-sought after Western contemporary artist in Mainland China.

Painted in 1982, *Il Duce* is a significant work inspired by Basquiat's legendary trip to Modena, Italy. Against a gleaming golden backdrop the artist depicts one of his iconic "heads", a powerful figure executed in Basquiat's signature graphic style. His dramatic and energetic mark-making imbues this enigmatic character with a raw and visceral sense of energy. Its complex arrangements of painted layers helped reinvigorate the genre of portraiture, making it relevant to a new generation of contemporary artists. *Il Duce* established a new level of pictorial sophistication, solidifying Basquiat's reputation as the most exciting artist of his generation.

Basquiat became fascinated by the reflective nature of gold paint when he first used it to depict his signature three-pointed crown, and *Il Duce* is one of a select group of paintings in which he employs the visual qualities of gold paint to a much greater degree. By combining its lustrous surface with his unique graphic style, Basquiat demonstrates the confidence and maturity which is characteristic of this important period in his career when he produced some of his most celebrated and sought-after masterpieces.



PABLO PICASSO (1881-1973) *Dormeuse (Marie-Thérèse Walter)*
(1937, estimate: RMB26,000,000-33,000,000 / US\$ 3,900,000-4,950,000)

Featuring arguably the artist's most iconic muse of all time, Picasso's *Dormeuse (Marie-Thérèse Walter)* from 1937 is a deeply tender and intimate portrait of the artist's lover, painted exactly a decade to the day after the couple had first met outside Galeries Lafayette on 8 January 1927. This now-legendary meeting marked a relationship that would come to define Picasso's life and art of the following years, inciting an unprecedented creative outpouring in his work and a near ecstatic rebirth in every area of Picasso's artistic production. With her head resting on her hand, her closed eyes rendered with a single curving line, her head rendered as a crescent moon, luminous and radiant, which in turn, echoes the shape of her arms, Picasso captures the beauty of his model, lost in the reverie of dream.

Created in what was also the same seminal year as Picasso's tour de force *Guernica* (Reina Sofia Museum, Madrid), *Dormeuse (Marie-Thérèse Walter)* remained in Picasso's personal collection for the rest of his life and is appearing at auction for the very first time, carrying a distinguished

and unparalleled provenance of belonging in the Private Collection of his granddaughter, Marina Picasso.



ZAO WOU-KI (1920-2013) *Le soir à l'Hôtel du Palais (Palace Hotel by Night)*
(2004, estimate: RMB11,000,000-18,000,000 / US\$1,650,000-2,700,000)

Inspired by the Atlantic coast in the southwest of France, *Le soir à l'Hôtel du Palais* conveys Zao Wou-Ki's emotional connection with the sea during his travels in the summer of 2004, the same year when he completed the work. In this work, Zao projected his feelings into the piece in hopes of seeking spiritual peace within his landscape and to move beyond realistic representation.

When confronted with the work, a surge of deep, gentle, rhythmic energy greets the viewer, along with a subtle layering of different tones that brings richness and variety to the visual experience of the painting. The blue palette adopted by Zao radiates dreaminess, soft beauty, with colours shifting gradually from deep sea-blue at the bottom to brighter and more lively shades of sapphire and azure blue higher up; then to a light, soft sky blue at the top of work. The calm yet powerful energy the work exudes represents the wisdom that comes with age, as Ernest Hemingway once said in "The Old Man and the Sea" – 'the love of the sea is too deep, and time is too shallow'. *Le soir à l'Hôtel du Palais* is not only a visual manifestation of the artist's contentment, but also a beautiful portrayal of a lifetime of memories.

Evelyn Lin and Cristian Albu, Co-Heads of the 20th and 21st Century Art Department, Christie's Asia Pacific, commented, "Following our highest ever auction total achieved for 20th and 21st Century Art at Christie's Asia last autumn, we feel thrilled to kick off this new year by adding a highly-curated sale in March in Shanghai, a thriving market that we have been cultivating prior to the pandemic. By working closely with our London colleagues, Christie's will provide a truly international platform with exceptional offerings featured by both iconic artists and fresh contemporary names. This joint auction also marks the first sale at our new Shanghai gallery, which is an extraordinary start for Christie's and we hope to continue to share the vibrant creativity as we deepen our connections with collectors in China."

Grace Zhuang, Head of Sale, 20th / 21st Century: Shanghai Evening Sale, added, "The Shanghai to London series, carefully curated by Christie's international specialist teams, will offer a plethora of the finest Eastern and Western art for collectors and art lovers alike. We are particularly honoured to present Basquiat's monumental canvas and Picasso's masterpiece

Painted in the 1930s, both of which are debuting at auction in Mainland China. Alongside a variety of striking works by leading modern and contemporary artists, the sale will undoubtedly meet the appetite and demand of both seasoned and younger millennial collectors.”

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