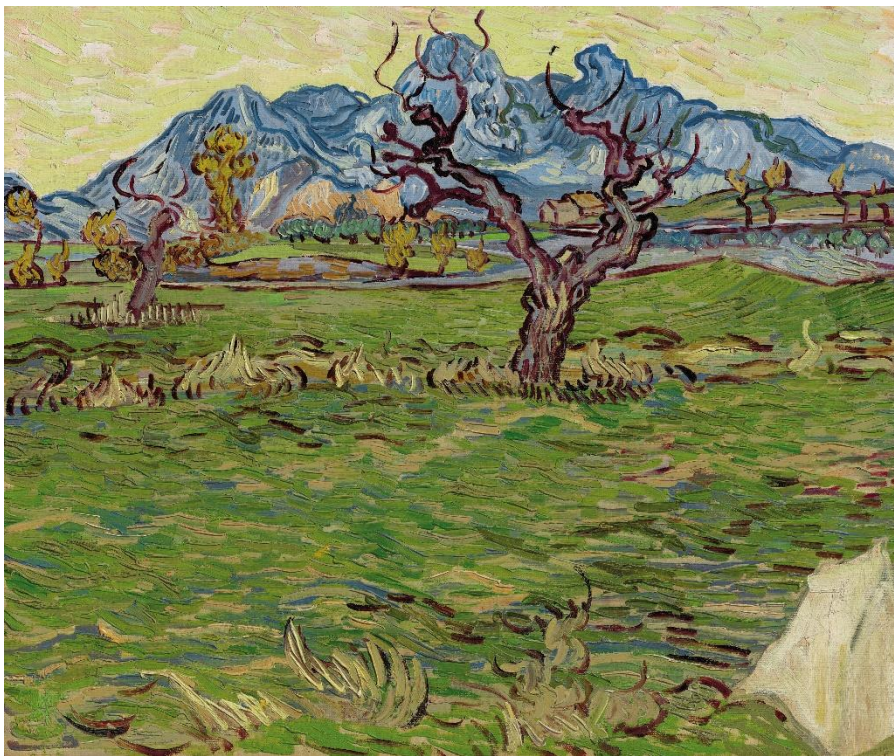


# CHRISTIE'S

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## VAN GOGH MASTERPIECE *CHAMPS PRÈS DES ALPILLES* TO LEAD CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY EVENING SALE



*Champs près des Alpilles*  
oil on canvas  
17.3/4 x 21.5/8 in. (45 x 55 cm.)  
Painted in November 1889  
Estimate on request

**New York** – Christie's is pleased to announce Vincent van Gogh's *Champs près des Alpilles*, 1889 (estimate on request; region of \$45,000,000) as a leading highlight of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Art Evening Sale taking place this May at Rockefeller Center in New York City. This rare work was one of two canvases sent from the artist while living in an asylum in Saint-Rémy to his close friend Joseph Roulin in Marseille at the beginning of 1890. A closely related view, painted from the same field, is now held in the Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo.

**Vanessa Fusco, Co-Head of Christie's New York 20<sup>th</sup> Century Evening Sale**, remarked: "With its gestural, expressive handling and bold, vibrant color, *Champs près des Alpilles* exemplifies the key characteristics of Van Gogh's trademark style – a style which is beloved and admired all over the world. Painted during the artist's storied sojourn in an asylum in Saint-Rémy, and subsequently belonging to his friend Joseph Roulin, whose own image captured by Vincent now hang in museums across the world, *Champs près des Alpilles* is inextricably linked to Vincent's own tragic biography. It is a delight to bring this masterpiece by the artist to auction for the first time."

Van Gogh and Roulin initially developed a friendship in Arles. Today, Roulin is known to be one of the most important models of the artist's career. Over the course of a few months in 1888, Van Gogh painted some of his best known portraits of the postman and his family. Not solely a model, Roulin was also a close friend and key support to Van Gogh during the time he spent in the hospital in Arles following his first major breakdown. Roulin continued to ardently support the artist from afar when Van Gogh was living in Saint-Rémy through regular correspondence. The letters between Roulin and Van Gogh reveal a strong bond between the two men; Roulin understood the master deeply as both as a person and as an artist. *Champs près des Alpilles* stands as a true testament to the friendship between them, embodying the importance of Roulin to Van Gogh's artistic practice, as well as his life.

Depicting an expansive vista spanning a vivid green wheatfield with a majestic tree framed by the monumental peaks of the Alpilles in the background, all pictured beneath a citron-color sky, this landscape comprises the signature subjects Van Gogh is known for during this all important year. It was during his stay in Saint-Rémy that Van Gogh's mature style truly emerged. He transformed the world around him into dazzling visions of often heightened color conveyed with evermore animated brushstrokes, both of which serve to imbue these canvases with a powerful—and highly influential—expressive charge. At this time, painting and nature itself took on a central importance to the artist.

*Champs près des Alpilles* will be on view along with selected highlights from the 20<sup>th</sup> Century / 21<sup>st</sup> Century Evening Sales in London from 23 February – 1 March, and subsequently tour to Taipei and Hong Kong before returning to New York, where it will be on exhibition at Christie's New York ahead of the sale in May.

**PRESS CONTACT:** Jessica Stanley | 212 636 2680 | [jstanley@christies.com](mailto:jstanley@christies.com)

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*Images available on request*

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