

# CHRISTIE'S

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Christie's and HomeArt Proudly Present

## FRANÇOISE GILOT: A CELEBRATION

### Marking the Magnificent Life of the Artist on Her 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday

26 November – 1 December | Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre



*Étude bleue*  
oil on panel  
147 x 115.2 cm. (57 7/8 x 45 3/8 in.)  
Painted in 1953



Françoise Gilot in her Manhattan atelier, 2011.  
Photo: © Piotr Redlinski.

**Hong Kong** – Christie's and HomeArt proudly present **【Françoise Gilot: A Celebration】** - an exhibition showcasing some of the most important works from throughout Gilot's career, to celebrate the extraordinary life of the artist on her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Already was one of the most respected members of her generation by age 21, Françoise Gilot witnessed and helped define one of the last great periods in European Modern Art, alongside masters including Braque, Chagall, Cocteau, Matisse, as well as Picasso, with whom she had a decade-long relationship. One of the most gifted creative minds of her generation in Europe, she has devoted her entire life to the continuous exploration of multiple creative disciplines between painting, print-making, and writing, as well as experimenting with creative tensions between abstraction and figuration. Her creations have been exhibited in major museums around the world.

Gilot's extensive contribution as a visionary, enduring, and independent artist will be featured in this exhibition, presenting a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for audiences in Asia to appreciate her most significant works, from the 1940s to the 2010s. As a celebration of Gilot's extraordinary life and work, Christie's honours the artist by opening the exhibition on 26 November, the day of her centenary at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre.

**Françoise Gilot** commented, "Ever since I first started painting, I have never been content with the known. For decades, my inner compass, passion and curiosity have led me to explore all kinds of

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variations and possibilities to realise my initial intuition and imagination to its full potential. Every single work of mine showcased in this exhibition with Christie's, documents the crystallisation of my lifelong experimentations on figures, objects, relationships, and nature. I fondly anticipate sharing my passion and pursuit of art with audiences in Asia this autumn."

**Elaine Holt, Deputy Chairman and International Director, Christie's Asia Pacific**, commented, "Françoise Gilot is undoubtedly one of the most respected and celebrated female artists of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Not only does her distinctive artistic vision, individuality, and authenticity inspire many, her independent yet loving persona captivates the hearts of art enthusiasts around the world. Many of her works have been showcased by world-class museums including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and we are very honoured to spotlight the artist in Asia through this exhibition, which will display some of her most representative works from throughout her extensive and extraordinary career. We look forward to celebrating her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on 26 November with this monumental exhibition in collaboration with HomeArt."

**About Françoise Gilot**– Already a rising star in the art world at age 21, Gilot belonged to the post-War milieu of artists redefining the European artistic landscape. Following her first important exhibition in Paris in 1943, Gilot signed a contract with the legendary art dealer Daniel-Henri Kahnweiler, becoming one of only two female artists to ever be signed by him. Her first exhibit with Kahnweiler's famed Galerie Louise Leiris took place in 1952 in Paris, a critical moment in her life and career.

In her early career in France, Gilot was influenced by her peers such as Picasso, Braque, Chagall, Matisse, and Cocteau, and emerged as a member of the younger Post-War generation that evolved out of the Modern era. Gilot flourished in her practice, and increasingly spent time in America during the 1960s, commencing a new chapter and pursuing new directions in her work and life.

Gilot's artistry further evolved upon her move to the United States in 1970, as she began exploring multiple creative disciplines between painting, print-making, and writing, and examining creative tensions between abstraction and figuration. In 1970, her work was exhibited at the Southampton Museum of Art, New York, the first of many museum exhibitions to follow. Gilot would receive the honour of *Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur* from the French Ministry of Culture in 1990, followed by the *Officier de la Legion d'Honneur*, bestowed by the French government in 2009. Gilot's work is found in important museum collections globally, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Tel Aviv Museum of Art, and the Musée d'art moderne de la ville de Paris.

## Exhibition Highlights



### *Étude bleue*

oil on panel

147 x 115.2 cm. (57 7/8 x 45 3/8 in.)

Painted in 1953

- Following her landmark exhibition at Galerie Louise Leiris in 1952, Gilot painted *Étude bleue*, a striking self-portrait which boldly and magnificently expresses her own sense of self at this time.
- The painterly style reflects significant developments she had been progressing since the early 1940s, prior to her meeting with Picasso, with bold colouration and contrasted line.
- A magnificently vibrant, resonant and articulate work, *Étude bleue* projects a strong self-image of Gilot on the brink of a significant and bold change in her life both as an artist and as a woman.

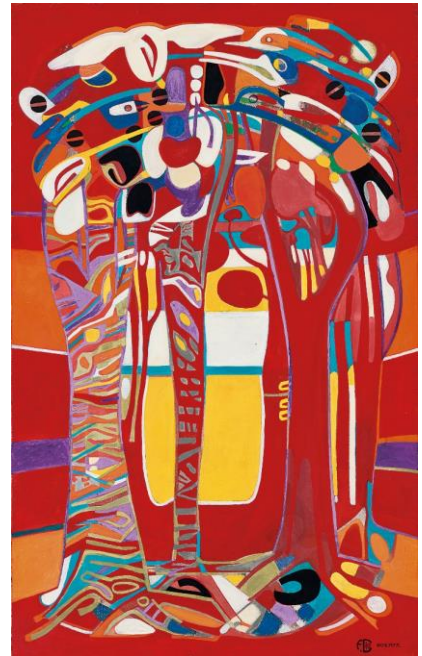
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## ***Living Forest***

oil on canvas  
130 x 80.7 cm. (51 1/5 x 31 3/5 in.)  
Painted in 1977

**Estimate: HK\$3,000,000-5,000,000/ US\$390,000-650,000**  
**To be offered in Evening Sale in Hong Kong on 1 Dec 2021.**

- 1976, Gilot would travel to India for the first time with her husband Dr. Salk, whom she married in 1970, staying for about one month. The intense burst of colour and luscious complexity of the ancient, towering, abundant trees in *Living Forest* reflects the brilliantly saturated hues and the unique light of these surroundings. In this work, Gilot creates a magnificent imaginary and thriving forest, inspired by the sensory memory of this unique and fascinating place.
- As witnessed in *Living Forest*, Gilot's canvases frequently hover between abstraction and figuration, infused with bold and emotive colour that captivates and conveys with great fortitude and brilliance her intensely personal artistic vision.



## ***Les Peintres***

oil on panel  
163.5 x 131 cm. (64 3/8 x 51 5/8 in.)  
Painted in 1952

- Gilot painted the monumental *Les Peintres* in 1952, depicting Picasso and herself, alongside the painters Pierre Gastaud and Édouard Pignon featuring Picasso's depiction of Gilot as the dove of peace.
- At that time “dove” could be seen on Picasso's posters across Paris in support of the World Peace Congress. Subsequent works by Picasso would begin to feature the dove infused with the profile of Gilot, her elegant visage crowned by the dove in flight. By return, Gilot painted this work.

## ***Nature morte au sécateur***

oil on panel  
45.8 x 54.8 cm. (18 x 21 5/8 in.)  
Painted in 1952

- Gilot would encounter still-life subjects with renewed vigour in the early 1950s, notably through her Kitchen Series from 1951.
- *Nature morte au sécateurs* represents both a growing, abundant sense of life, as embodied in the plants growing, extending throughout the upper half of the composition. The secateurs in the lower half of the composition signify severance, the ability to shear the growth and at the same time, an ability to cut free or prune in order to retain health.
- Depicting everyday objects that held personal symbolic resonances for the artist, this work may be perceived of as semi-autobiographical in the context of this period in Gilot's life.



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**White cloud**  
oil and charcoal on canvas  
100 x 81.5 cm. (39.3/8 x 32 in.)  
Painted in 2014

- The figure of the bird remained a constant in Gilot's work. Gilot's own daughter, Paloma, translates to "dove" in Spanish.
- In *White Cloud*, from 2014, Gilot reprises the theme of the dove, depicting two birds at the centre of an abstract vortex of clouds, swirling in circular motions, recalling the cyclical harmony and complexity of nature.
- The wings of the two birds overlap, carving through space with an abundance of movement and energy in a pure expression of life.

## Notes to Editor

### Public Preview:

**Hong Kong** | 26 November – 1 December | Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, No.1 Harbour Road, Wanchai

Click [here](#) to download press video and images.

### Press Contact:

Gigi Ho | +852 2978 6719 | [gigiho@christies.com](mailto:gigiho@christies.com)

### About Christie's

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*\*Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and are reported net of applicable fees.*

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