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**Joan Miró's 1927 Masterpiece *Peinture (Étoile Bleue)*  
Sells for £23.5m / \$36.9m / €29.3m  
Setting a World Record at Auction for the Artist**

**Sotheby's London Sale of Impressionist & Modern Art  
Totals £75m / \$117.7m / €93m**

**--- Fifteen Works Sell for More Than £1 Million ---**



**LONDON, TUESDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2012** - Tonight in a dramatic bidding battle at Sotheby's London saleroom, a new benchmark was set when Joan Miró's 1927 modern masterpiece *Peinture (Étoile Bleue)* sold for £23,561,250 / \$36,946,396 / €29,260,764, exceeding the pre-sale estimate of £15-20 m / US\$ 23.7 - 31.6 m / € 18.4 -24.5 m and shattering the previous record for the artist at auction. The hammer fell after a tense stand-off among four bidders, with offers jumping in large increments before the work was finally won by a telephone buyer. The sum paid was the highest price for a work of art sold in London thus far this year. Miró's painting was the top lot in a sale which realised £75,046,850 / \$117,680,965 / € 93,200,835 (est. £73- £102.6m / \$114.4 -160.9m / € 90.5-127.3m). This brings the combined total for Sotheby's Impressionist and Modern Art sales worldwide this year to £435m / \$692.6 m / €504.2, an increase of 12.4 % on the same period last year.

Helena Newman, Chairman of Sotheby's Impressionist and Modern Art Department, Europe, said: "We are thrilled to have been able to offer Miró's *Peinture (Étoile Bleue)* in tonight's auction. At a time of unprecedented demand for the best examples of 20<sup>th</sup>-Century art, this masterpiece by Miró not only shattered the previous record for the artist (set only four months ago at £16.8 million), but also made more than three times the price it achieved five years ago."

Further Statistics:

- The average lot value of the works sold this evening was £2,275,843.
- 33% of the works sold realised prices above high estimate.
- 23 works sold for over \$1 million
- 15 works sold for over £1 million.

### **Joan Miró's *Peinture (Étoile Bleue)***

Identified by the artist as a work that was key to his oeuvre, *Peinture (Étoile Bleue)*, executed in 1927, belongs to the seminal 'dream paintings' cycle - in which Miró pioneered a uniquely poetic form of abstraction - examples of which can be found in major international museums such as the Musée National d'Art Moderne in Paris, the Tate Gallery, London and The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. This landmark work was formerly in the collection of André Lefevre, a leading collector and connoisseur of early 20<sup>th</sup> century art. The price achieved at Sotheby's this evening is three times the sum (£ 8.35 m / €11,586,520 / \$16,673,650) achieved when the painting sold at auction in 2007. Demand for works by Miro is at an all-time high following a major international retrospective of the artist's work in London, Washington and Barcelona.

### **Further highlights from this Evening's Sale**

- Five bidders competed for *Mother and Child with Apple*, one of the most elegant and compelling of **Henry Moore's** interpretations of the theme, sold for £3,737,250 / \$5,860,382 / €4,641,298 (est: £ 1.8 – 2.8 million / US\$ 2.9-4.4 million / € 2.2-3.4 million), a record for an indoor sculpture by Moore, to bidder on the telephone. The work was owned by the same family since 1957, who bought it for £650.

- **Pablo Picasso's** monumental late portrait *Homme assis*, executed in 1972, a year before his death, realised £6,201,250/ \$9,724,180/ €7,701,345 (est: £ 6-9 million / US\$ 9.50-14.2 million / € 7.4-11 million).
- A remarkable and rare group of watercolours by **Wassily Kandinsky** from a Distinguished Private Collection made a combined total of £4,832,750 / \$7,578,235 / €6,001,802 against a combined pre-sale estimate of £3.85 - 4.95 million. Perfectly exemplifying their respective periods, the works act as a survey of the artist's entire career.
- **Pierre Bonnard's** *Nu Debout*, a 1930 masterpiece from the collection of Mr and Mrs John D. Rockefeller 3<sup>rd</sup> sold for £4,521,250 /\$7,089,772 /€5,614,950, a record for a nude by the artist ( est. £ 4.5-5.5 million / US\$ 7.1-8.7 million / € 5.5-6.8 million). Interest in Bonnard's nudes has been particularly strong in recent months following the landmark exhibition at the Fondation Beyeler.

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