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MODERN
MASTERS 現代藝術巨匠展

**SOTHEBY'S TO PRESENT
COROT TO MONET- FRENCH LANDSCAPE PAINTING IN
THE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES**

**A Selling Exhibition To Mark The Opening Of
Sotheby's New Gallery Space In Hong Kong
19 To 31 May, 2012**



Claude Monet's *La Route de Vétheuil*, 1880, Oil on canvas

**The Exhibition Will Also Travel To Taipei And Beijing
Taipei ▪ 11 to 13 May | Beijing ▪ 22 to 25 June**

Hong Kong, 9 May 2012 Building on the success of the inaugural selling exhibition of *Modern Masters: Impressionism and Early 20th Century Art* in 2010, Sotheby's Hong Kong is pleased to present the second edition of the *Modern Masters* series - ***Corot to Monet - French Landscape Painting in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*** from 19 to 31 May 2012 at Sotheby's brand-new Hong Kong Gallery on the 5th Floor of One Pacific Place, Admiralty. The exhibition is part of a series of events celebrating the opening of this unique art space, which marks a significant

expansion of Sotheby's business in Asia beyond its traditional twice-annual series of auctions in April and October. The exhibition of masterpieces from the late 19th to the early 20th century focuses on the importance of landscape painting for the pioneers of modernism. Works by masters such as Gustave Courbet, Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, Camille Pissarro and Claude Monet highlight the progression from the Barbizon school to Impressionism through their definitive subject – *landscape*. **Twenty works will be included in this exhibition, all of which are available for private sale with asking prices ranging from US\$300,000 to in excess of US\$8 million / HK\$2.3 million to in excess of HK\$62.4 million.** In addition to the exhibition in Hong Kong, the works will also be exhibited in Taipei from 11 to 13 May and in Beijing from 22 to 25 June.

Patti Wong, Chairman of Sotheby's Asia, commented: "The success of the first Modern Masters selling exhibition in 2010 is a testament to the increasing sophistication of buyers within Asia, especially from within Greater China, for high quality works by important artists from the Impressionist and Modern period. In response to the huge amount of interest generated among collectors for this important field, we selected carefully from Europe and America an outstanding group of French landscape paintings from the late 19th to the early 20th century to be presented at our brand-new state-of-the-art gallery space in Hong Kong. It offers a unique and exclusive opportunity to acquire masterpieces outside of our auction calendar. Our experts look forward to offering our clients a new and exciting dimension to the Sotheby's experience in Asia while sharing their passion and expertise in this field."

"Over the years, Sotheby's has identified increasing demand for both Barbizon and Impressionist paintings which hold particular appeal to our audience in Asia. To cater to their collecting interest, we meticulously selected a collection of important landscape paintings – a popular subject matter in the mid-19th century – by major artists of this genre for the second edition of the *Modern Masters* series," said **David Norman, Co-Chairman of Sotheby's Impressionist and Modern Art Department Worldwide**. "This selling exhibition uniquely features works of leading Realist painters Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot and Gustave Courbet from the late 19th century, together with later works by the great generation of Impressionist painters such as Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro, Pierre-Auguste Renoir and Alfred Sisley. The exhibition charts the evolution of French landscape painting in the late 19th century and reveals the influence of Barbizon School on the later *plein-air* style of painting of the Impressionists."

FRENCH LANDSCAPE PAINTING

Beginning in the mid-19th century, landscape painting was the subject that defined French Art. Prior to this time, landscape was only a secondary element in the painting, simply a setting or a stage upon which historical, political, religious or mythological subjects were presented. French artists, beginning around 1830, chose landscape as the main subject matter, and often depicted the simple, sparsely populated areas just outside of Paris in a more natural and highly poetic manner. Artistic leaders of this Realist movement were Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot and Gustave Courbet.

By the early 1860s, the style now known as Impressionist first arose. The leading artists, who focused predominantly on landscape as their subject, were Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro, Pierre-Auguste Renoir and Alfred Sisley. They painted either urban views of a rapidly modernising Paris or the nearby countryside, and focused their sights both on scenes of simple peasant and agrarian life, as well as the leisure activities of the rising middle classes venturing out of from the city. The Impressionists formulated a revolutionary style of painting – an art of vivid colour, fast and loose brushstrokes, and an observation of the effects of light, season and weather played on the landscapes. Theirs was an art of "modern life" which reflected the changing tastes and break from traditions that arose at the beginning of a new century.

EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS



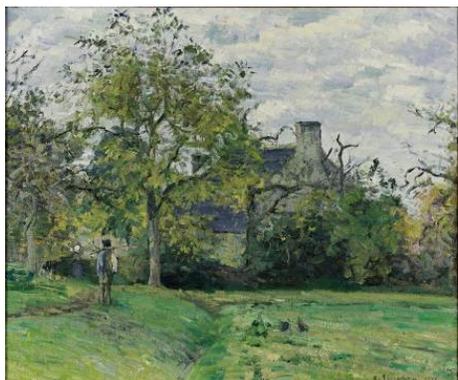
During the spring and summer of 1880, **Claude Monet** (1840 – 1926) painted nearly 30 views of the area in and around Vétheuil, a village on the Seine. Four depict views along the Chantemesle - La Roche-Guyon road, the thoroughfare where Monet's house was located. The most beautiful of the group is the present work - ***La Route de Vétheuil*** (also pictured on p1). It is the largest of the four, and is the most significant in terms of style, paint handling, and composition. Here, the sweeping curve of the road is typical of the inherently strong, relatively simple shapes that began to appear in Monet's work in the early 1880s. In composition it foreshadows many of the views of the coast of Normandy that he painted during the 1880s and 1890s, as well as the Poplar series of 1891.



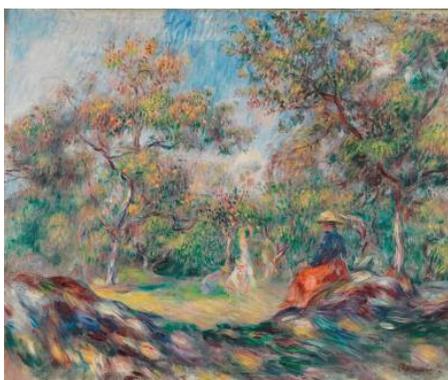
Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot (1796 – 1875)
Mornex (Haute-Savoie) - Au Fond, Le Môle
Oil on canvas
Painted circa 1842



Alfred Sisley (1839 – 1899)
La route de Verrières
Oil on canvas
Painted in 1872



Camille Pissarro (1830-1903)
La Maison de piette à Montfoucault
Oil on canvas
Painted in 1874



Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841 – 1919)
Femmes dans un paysage
Oil on canvas
Painted in 1890s

- Images available upon request -
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NOTES TO EDITORS

A) COROT TO MONET – FRENCH LANDSCAPE PAINTING IN THE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES EXHIBITION SCHEDULE

Location	Date/Time	Venue
Taipei	11 & 13 May 11am to 7pm; 12 May 11am to 6pm	Grand Hyatt Taipei 2, Song Shou Road
Hong Kong	19 – 31 May 10am to 6 pm	Sotheby's Hong Kong Gallery 5/F, One Pacific Place 88 Queensway, Admiralty
Beijing	22 – 25 June 10am to 6pm	Park Hyatt Beijing 2 Jianguomenwai Street Chaoyang District

B) SOTHEBY'S HONG KONG GALLERY OPENING EVENTS

Event	Event Date
SELLING EXHIBITIONS	
Modern Masters: Corot to Monet – French Landscape Painting in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries	19 to 31 May
YAYOI KUSAMA – Hong Kong Blooms in My Mind	19 to 31 May
AUCTION PREVIEW	
Impressionist & Modern and Contemporary Art (19-20 & 26-27 June, Sotheby's London)	19 to 25 May
<i>Emperor's Style – The Henry Graves Family Collection of Watches</i> (14 June, Sotheby's New York)	19 to 20 May and 24 to 27 May
OPENING	
SOTHEBY'S DIAMONDS Hong Kong Salon	-

C) MAJOR SELLING EXHIBITIONS BY SOTHEBY'S

Sotheby's established the tradition of presenting major selling exhibitions at Sotheby's worldwide including the *Modern Masters* exhibition that was held in Hong Kong and Beijing in the autumn of 2010, as well as the annual monumental sculpture exhibition, *Beyond Limits*, at Chatsworth House in Derbyshire, U.K. and Isleworth Country Club in Orlando, Florida, U.S.A. as well as several recent exhibitions conducted at the bespoke gallery space "S2" in Sotheby's New York headquarters.