

Sotheby's

Press release: Paris

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COLLECTION OF ERIK LE CARUYER DE BEAUVAIS



– Collection of French decorative art works and Asian art assembled by a refined collector and antiques dealer –

Paris, March 2017 — On 31 March, Sotheby's France will offer at auction a fine collection of furniture, sculptures and works of art from Europe and Asia, from the estate of Erik Le Caruyer de Beauvais. This self-made antiques dealer and collector opened a gallery on Boulevard de Courcelles in Paris, which soon became known as a place of cultural exchanges. He was famous as a reliable authority in the art market, providing sound advice to leading dealers and collectors. While his

culture was extensive, his particular passion was 18th and 19th century French decorative arts, and Asian art. This collection reflects his keen eye. Erik Le Caruyer de Beauvais designated Sotheby's to sell his favourite works that had accompanied him throughout his life, and which he kept in his apartment in Neuilly.

The outstanding lots in this catalogue include a pair of gilt bronze occasional tables with porphyry tops once belonging to Baron Alphonse de Rothschild, two drop-leaf writing desks forming a pair in Japanese lacquer from the Lucien Guiraud collection sold in Paris in 1956, and a group of Old Master paintings. There is also an exceptionally large gilt bronze statue of Guanyin from the Ming dynasty (16th/17th century).



The pair of gilt-bronze mounted porphyry centre tables, Restoration period, c. 1820-1830 (estimate: €200,000-300,000) comes from the collection of Mayer Alphonse de Rothschild (1827-1905), eldest son of the man who founded the French branch of the famous bank. He was also well-known for the role he played in politics and economics, as well as for his major collections and his patronage. After his marriage in 1857, he went to live in Talleyrand's former mansion in Rue Saint-Florentin in Paris, which he altered extensively to house his collections. When his father died, Alphonse inherited the splendid Château de Ferrières: a magnificent place for these collections. This model is fairly similar to the pair now in London's Wallace Collection.

Two gilt-bronze mounted ebony, Japanese lacquer and Parisian lacquer cabinet-on-stand forming a pair (see picture on page one), attributed to Adam Weisweiler and his workshop, early 19th century (estimate: €1500,00 -2500,00). These are particularly rare pieces. Introduced under Louis XIV, furniture embellished with lacquer panels from the Far East remained popular during the 18th century. After 1785, Japanese lacquers became highly sought-after, and their quality demanded the finest bronzes and cabinetmaking. A gap then developed between the leading cabinetmakers who had access to these lacquers and received commissions from wealthy patrons, and intermediate cabinetmakers. This was the case with Adam Weisweiler. The illustrious craftsman developed his own aesthetic using a range of recurrent materials, including lacquer panels surrounded with Japanese or Parisian lacquer and ebony veneering – materials found in this pair of writing desks.

With *Scène d'intérieur d'église* (estimate: €50,000-80,000), the Antwerp artist **Bartholomeus van Bassen** painted one of his greatest pictures, where a delicate play of light and shade gives a range of warm tones, creating a peaceful atmosphere. Here he has dreamed up an extravagant late Gothic architecture, in which a number of figures walk under majestic ogive vaults.



This gilt-bronze figure of Guanyin is impressive for its large size and crisp casting. According to the Lotus Sutra, Avalokitesvara can take any form necessary to save sentient beings. Thirty-three manifestations of Avalokitesvara are mentioned and are known to have been very popular in Chinese Buddhism as early as the Sui and Tang Dynasties. The present lot depicts the bodhisattva in the manifestation known as Bhaiṣajyarāja Avalokitesvara, known as the 'Willowleaf' Guanyin in Chinese (estimate: €250,000-350,000)

Auction : Friday 31 March at 2:30 p.m.

Exhibition: 25 to 30 March from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m (except Sunday 26 March)

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