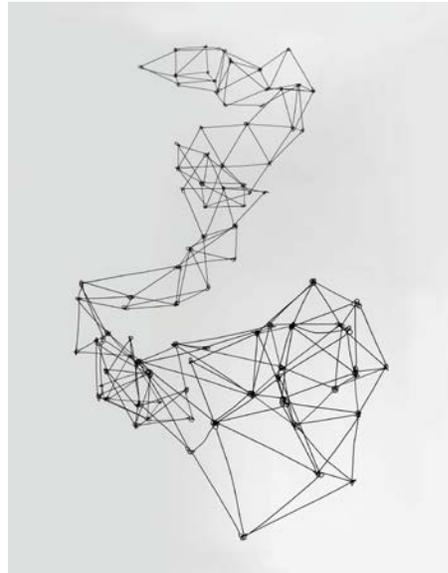


Sotheby's Unveils Highlights from the Evening Sales of Modern & Contemporary Latin American Art



Rufino Tamayo
The Bird Charmer (Encantador De Pájaros)
Signed and dated 0-45
oil on canvas
60 1/4 by 50 1/4 in.
Estimate \$3/5 million



Gego
Columna Reticulárea
Executed in 1969
enameled iron wire
96 5/8 by 16 1/2 by 10 1/4 in.
Estimate \$1/1.5 million

Inaugural Online Sales of Latin America: Modern Art &
Latin America: Contemporary Art Open Now
Through 26 May

On View from 20-25 May 2017
AUCTION 25 MAY

NEW YORK, 17 May 2017 – Sotheby’s is delighted to announce our Evening Sales of [Latin America: Modern Art](#) and [Latin America: Contemporary Art](#) on 25 May in New York. Leading the Modern Art auction are Rufino Tamayo’s iconic **The Bird Charmer (Encantador de pájaros)** (estimate \$3/5 million) and Diego Rivera’s arresting masterpiece, **Retrato de la Actriz Matilde Palou** (estimate \$2/3 million). Both works appear in the market during a time of renewed interest in Mexican Modernism, with recent exhibitions at both the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Dallas Museum of Art in the US, the Grand Palais in Paris, and at the Palacio de Bellas Artes in Mexico City.

Further highlights include an outstanding Surrealist sequence, topped by Remedios Varo’s **The Troubadour (El Trovador)** (estimate \$1/1.5 million), Wifredo Lam’s **Portrait de Madame Nena Azpiazu** (estimate \$400/600,000) and Leonora Carrington’s **Untitled (The White Goddess)** (estimate \$700/900,000). Exceptional modern sculptures on offer this May include Agustín Cárdenas’s **Dogon** (estimate \$125/175,000) and several works by Fernando Botero, including the monumental **Donna Seduta** (estimate \$700/900,000).

Masterworks of 20th century abstraction lead the Evening Sale of Latin American Contemporary Art, with Gego’s 1969 masterpiece **Columna Reticulárea** (estimate \$1/1.5 million), Joaquín Torres-García’s elegant and recently re-discovered **Sin Título** (estimate \$200/250,000), and Jesús Rafael Soto’s **Construcción en Blanco** (estimate \$500/700,000) rounding out the sale’s compelling narrative of kinetic works. Additionally, in a sign of the growing prominence of Latin American artists on the global stage, Sotheby’s marquee Contemporary Art Evening Sale includes works by Brazilian artists Sergio Camargo and Mira Schendel.

Sotheby’s inaugural online sales of [Latin America: Modern Art](#) and [Latin America: Contemporary Art](#), open now, will be exhibited in our York Avenue galleries, alongside works from both Evening Sales, beginning on 20 May.



A champion of modernism, Rufino Tamayo’s fervent apolitical approach to his work is among the artist’s defining attributes. Unlike his contemporaries, Tamayo shirked political activism and moved to New York at the peak of the Mexican Muralist Movement, knowing that his unpopular opinion would stifle his artistic progression in his homeland.

New York afforded Tamayo the artistic freedom to create some of his most iconic works, including *The Bird Charmer* (1945). The painting was exhibited during the artist's fourth individual show at the famed Valentine Gallery in 1946, where it was acquired by distinguished collectors, John and Dominique de Menil. The title suggests Tamayo's optimism following the War years, which is magnified by the subject joyfully playing an instrument, as birds fly in undefined infinity above.

In stark contrast to Tamayo's apolitical work, Diego Rivera's *Retrato de la Actriz Matilde Palou* is an emblematic representation of the artist's steadfast "Mexicanidad". Regarded as a one of Rivera's finest portraits to have appeared at auction, the monumental work depicts the Mexican Golden Age film star in a relaxed pose, dressed in an elaborate costume flush with unmistakable Mexican symbolism. The portrait last appeared at auction in 1988 at Sotheby's, and was exhibited for the first time in nearly 30 years this March at Sotheby's Los Angeles. *Separate release available.*



The sale's Surrealist sequence is led by *The Troubadour (El Trovador)*, a canonical example of Remedios Varo's complex visual lexicon. Executed in 1959, the work is a poetic display of Varo's remarkable creativity and the matrix of influences that serve as the foundation and iconography for her paintings, such as medieval history, Greek mythology, scientific reason, music and nature. In the present work, Varo situates a troubadour within a siren-esque boat surrounded by a striking dense forest and swarming birds—echoing the epic length of the Orinoco River, one of the largest river systems in the world, and its rich wildlife.

The work, filled with the awe and mysteries of the natural world, comes to Sotheby's from The Estate of Henry Willard Lende, Jr. As an engineer, philanthropist and land steward, Mr. Lende found endless fascination in the natural world — a life-long passion made manifest in his enduring legacy: the 644-acre natural habitat laboratory known as the Cibolo Preserve.

Located just east of Boerne in Kendall County, Texas, the Cibolo Preserve is a unique cross-section of history and nature dedicated to research and education. Celebrated for its extraordinary natural beauty, among various other traits, the Preserve is an active area of study for scientists from the

University of Texas at San Antonio, along with other respected institutions. The sale of *The Troubadour* serves to ensure the continuity of the Cibolo Preserve and maintain Mr. Lende's promise to this remarkable landscape.

Painted in 1941, Wifredo Lam's *Portrait de Madame Nena Azpiazu* emerged as the artist returned to his native Cuba, after 18 years abroad. His homecoming would mark one of the most prodigious turning points in his career as he rediscovered and reclaimed his Afro-Cuban identity and roots. The sale comes just months after the critically acclaimed exhibition of Lam's work at Tate Modern.



Maria Luisa (Nena) Azpiazu, who frequented social circles of cultural giants such as Picasso, Igor Stravinsky, and Ernest Hemingway, commissioned the work from Lam in 1941, after which it remained in her collection for 50 years.



Leonora Carrington's *Untitled (The White Goddess)* is an exemplary work showcasing the complexity of the artist's unique visual vocabulary informed by her Celtic heritage. Executed circa 1958 in Mexico, the painting is situated within a pivotal period of productivity for Carrington and depicts a white spiritual figure wading in a spring, surrounded by a troupe of animals within a forest setting. Carrington's polytheistic worldview is fully conceived in this magical realm, exploring the morphing of reality with centuries-old fairytales and folklore. In true Surrealist fashion, Carrington denies the viewer vital clues on the work's meaning, instead leaving subtle suggestions and hints.

Seraphim (White, Yellow, and Green), Claudio Bravo's exquisite oil on canvas, unveils the artist's life-long devotion to mundane materials capable of transforming their shapes through human manipulation. Painted in 1999, the present work exemplifies Bravo's technical mastery of *trompe-l'oeil* effects and exudes a marvelous virtuosity unmatched in twentieth-century Latin American paintings.





The Evening Sale of Latin America: Contemporary Art is led by Gego's *Columna Reticulárea*—the most seminal work by the artist to have ever been offered at auction. Gego's *Reticulárea* series remains one of the greatest exercises of aesthetic freedom and experimentation in 20th century art. Executed in 1969, the exquisitely commanding work is an outstanding preview to the artist's iconic *Reticulárea* series.

The hand-crafted, hanging installation supports an artisanal aesthetic that counters the principles of her Constructivist background. The present work encapsulates Gego's most defiant visual gestures: the erasure of any trace of geometricized parallel lines and her shattering of the modernist grid, proclaiming her avant-garde originality.

Jesús Rafael Soto's *Construcción en Blanco*, created in 1974, is a captivating and monumental example of the artist's highly sought-after kinetic works. Measuring over 2 meters both in height and length, the large-scale installation, comprised of painted wood with entangled nylon cord and metal wires, explores the Venezuelan artist's exploration of space and movement.



Newly discovered and never-before seen until this May, Joaquín Torres-García's *Sin Título* from 1931 boasts distinguished provenance, having once been in the collection of Max Pellequer, the financial advisor to Picasso. Regarded as the founder of Universal Constructivism, Torres-García began experimenting with Constructivism during the latter half of the 1920s while living in Paris, after a serendipitous meeting with Piet Mondrian that would enable the artist to establish his new visual language. The newly discovered picture depicts a symbolic iconography emblematic to Torres-García's visual vocabulary. An elegant earth-colored palette inspired by the tonalities of pre-Hispanic ceramics, including hints of yellow, blue, red and even a suggestion of pink, highlight the work's modernist character.

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