

Sotheby's

Press release Paris

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African and Oceanic Arts Sale achieves nearly €6 million (\$6,6m) at Sotheby's Paris



A REMARKABLE FANG RELIQUARY HEAD
Sold for €2.6 million (\$3m)
joins the trio of the highest-priced Fang heads,
all sold at Sotheby's

MAMBILA MASK, CAMEROON
World auction record for a Cameroon mask
€405,000 (\$477,000)

Paris, 13 June 2018 – With a total of nearly €6 million (\$6,6m), the African and Oceanic Art sale achieves several world auction records and some strong prices for major works, including a remarkable Fang head.

Alexis Maggiar, European head of the African and Oceanic Arts Department : "Apart from the extraordinary price obtained by the Fang head, we are also delighted by the success of the Mambila and Grebo masks. These two pieces by anonymous masters, which we have been privileged to bring out of the shadows, were completely unseen at auction. The market's recognition of their true value today makes these both magnificent discoveries a real triumph."

With **€2.6 million (\$3m)**, the **Fang reliquary head**, from the former Paul Guillaume collection, joins the top three highest prices ever fetched for Fang heads, all sold recently at Sotheby's. Bidders competed over a work remarkable for several reasons: not only for its extreme rarity and extraordinary sculptural quality, but also for its provenance, linking it with the truly outstanding African art collection assembled by famous art collector and dealer Paul Guillaume (1891-1934) (lot 33).

The sale also did justice to the Department's expertise as a **genuine discoverer of new pieces**. Two unknown works appeared on the market for the first time, and took up their rightful position in the history of African art.

The first soared to top place in a group of highly sought-after works: a **Mambila mask** (lot 66) from a Spanish collection garnered **the world auction record for a Cameroon mask**. This belongs to a corpus of singular masks whose bold, expressionistic features make them astoundingly modern. With its concave carved face and protruding tubular eyes, it quadrupled its low estimate, fetching **€405,000 (\$477,126)**.

The second, a **Grebo mask from Ivory Coast**, discovered in a Swedish collection, illustrates the minimalist art characteristic of this style to perfection. Collectors responded to the rarity and unique character of this very old example, driving the bidding up to **€279,000 (\$328,687)** (lot 26).

The sale also featured some outstanding works of Oceanic art. A **head from the Tabar Islands, New Ireland**, once part of the Jacques Kerchache collection, fetched **€309,000 (\$364,030)** (lot 52). A **Sepik statue from Papua New Guinea**, from the former collection of the leading New York dealer Allan Stone, sold for **€309,000** (lot 13). And lastly, an **akatara pole-club from the Cook Islands**, knocked down for **€106,250 (\$364,030)** (lot 48), followed in the wake of the world record achieved by a similar club at Sotheby's New York in May.

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**Estimates do not include the buyer's premium, and prices consist of the hammer price and the buyer's premium*