

## RAISING THE BAR

### MASTERWORKS FROM THE COLLECTION OF MORTON AND BARBARA MANDEL

Single-Owner Sale To Feature In Sotheby's May Auctions of  
Impressionist & Modern and Contemporary Art

26 Works Estimated To Fetch In Excess Of \$75 Million

Proceeds To Benefit The Mandel Foundation



**NEW YORK, 13 March 2018** – Sotheby's is honored to announce the sale of 26 masterworks from the collection of Morton and Barbara Mandel in a dedicated auction on the evening of 16 May 2018 in New York.

A pioneering entrepreneur and philanthropist, Morton Mandel, together with his wife Barbara, amassed an enviable collection over several decades, which spans many of the most important artistic movements of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: from Surrealism and Abstract Expressionism; to Minimalism and Pop, with an equal emphasis on paintings, works-on-paper and sculpture.

Entitled Raising the Bar: Masterworks from the Collection of Morton and Barbara Mandel, the auction takes inspiration from one of the renowned businessman's early slogans, "Always Trying to Raise the Bar", and features outstanding examples by artists including Joan Miró, Mark Rothko, Roy Lichtenstein, David Smith and Donald Judd. A selection of highlights from the collection will travel the world this spring, including exhibitions in Hong Kong, London and Los Angeles. The full collection will be on public view in Sotheby's New York galleries in an extended and dedicated exhibition opening on 1 May.

Once described as the "epitome of the American Dream"\*<sup>1</sup>, Mr. Mandel rose from humble beginnings in Cleveland, Ohio to tremendous wealth and the forefront of business in just a few short decades. In keeping with Mr. and Mrs. Mandel's tireless commitment to charitable giving, the full proceeds of the auction, which is expected to raise in excess of \$75 million, will benefit the Mandel Foundation and the causes they have championed throughout their lives.



*Morton and Barbara Mandel commented:* "It has been a joy for us to collect this art, and then to live with this art for so many years."

*Hugh Hildesley, Vice Chairman of Sotheby's Americas remarked:* "The word passionate is sometimes overused. In the case of Morton and Barbara Mandel, there is no better adjective to describe this amazing couple's attitude to life, their approach to collecting art, and their generous philanthropy over a broad selection of vital causes."

*Lisa Dennison, Chairman of Sotheby's Americas, said:* "Guided by their superb taste and advice from the best in the field, the Mandels approached collecting with the same diligence and thoughtfulness that led them to achieve great success in business and philanthropy. The result is a superlative collection comprised of many of the key artists who have come to define the 20<sup>th</sup> century through their innovation and groundbreaking spirit. Today's market is more focused than ever on the connoisseurship and freshness that this collection engenders, as well as its unique blend of modern and contemporary art."

#### MR. AND MRS. MORTON MANDEL

The collection of Mr. and Mrs. Mandel and the charitable plans for all its proceeds are natural extensions of two lives devoted to community enrichment, faith and relentless pursuit of excellence.

Morton Mandel was born in Cleveland, Ohio, just 15 months after his mother, Rose, immigrated to the United States from Eastern Europe with her three children to join her husband. Even in the face of the Great Depression and the ill health of Mr. Mandel's father, the family made ends meet. And despite their

circumstances, Rose made a point of always setting aside money to help neighbors in need, instilling charity as a central part of the lives of her children from a very early age.

Though they came from humble means, Mr. Mandel and his brothers achieved extraordinary financial success. Morton Mandel was 13 when he began work, selling refreshments at the local Cleveland Municipal Stadium. In 1940, Mr. Mandel and his brothers, Jack and Joseph, used their savings to purchase their uncle's business, Premier Automotive Supply — an auto-parts distribution company that became rooted in providing superior customer service. By 1960, the company was renamed Premier Industrial Corporation and had grown to encompass other acquired companies. In 1964, their company was listed on the New York Stock Exchange, and in 1996, it merged with Farnell Electronics to form Premier Farnell PLC in a multi-billion dollar acquisition. Equipped with his decades-long career success and wealth of business acumen, in 2012 Mr. Mandel published his book, *"It's All About Who"* — a roadmap to Mandel's pioneering business strategy and humanitarian ethos.



Morton and Barbara Mandel at the  
Groundbreaking Ceremony at Brandeis University  
for the Mandel Humanities Building

Mr. Mandel's professional achievements are matched by his unwavering dedication to a number of important charitable causes. In 1953, Mr. Mandel and his brothers founded the Mandel Foundation, whose mission is "to contribute to the flourishing of the United States and Israel as just, inclusive and compassionate societies, and to improve the quality of life in both countries."

Countless organizations — stretching from Cleveland, to New York, Boston, Washington, and Jerusalem — have benefitted from the generosity of the Mandel Foundation. Among the beneficiaries are Case Western Reserve University, the Cleveland Museum of Art, Brandeis University — which features the Mandel Center for the Humanities — and the Israel Museum, among many others.

A steadfast philanthropist in her own right, Mrs. Mandel, in recognition of her leadership experience, was inducted into the Ohio Women's Hall of Fame in 1985.

Mrs. Mandel also served on the board of the Smithsonian's Cooper Hewitt National Design Museum for over 20 years. She joined the museum's executive committee in 1998 and later became the chair of the board of trustees. In 2014, she and Mr. Mandel gifted \$10 million to the museum. The gift supported the new Cooper Hewitt 6,000-square-foot gallery named in honor of the Mandels' generosity.

THE EVENING SALE

16 May 2018

As Mr. Mandel has said, he and his wife “collected to enrich their lives” and the result is a powerful and personal collection that has remained largely unseen by the public until now. Inspired by the legendary Leo Castelli, who encouraged the couple to focus on a core group of artists, and Arne Glimcher of Pace Gallery, the Mandels carefully assembled their collection over decades. The works have been thoughtfully installed in their homes - creating dynamic juxtapositions of Joan Miró with David Smith, and Roy Lichtenstein with Willem de Kooning - and enjoyed each and every day.

Joan Miró

**Femme, oiseau**

Painted *circa* 1969

Oil on canvas

Estimate \$10/15 million



One of the great masterpieces of Joan Miró’s late career, *Femme, oiseau* recalls the work of the abstract expressionists on whom the artist had been a great influence. Dating from *circa* 1969, the arresting oil is a poetic example of abstraction at its most daring with expressive brushwork instead of the women, stars, birds and moons that had been found in his earlier painting. Miró builds the present composition using a pictorial lexicon of signs and symbols, while still referencing recognizable objects, such as human figures. Working with thick lines and monochromatic spaces as his central compositional elements, Miró fully explored the possibilities of movement within a two dimensional field.

Barnett Newman

**Untitled**

1960

Brush and ink on paper

Estimate \$800,000/1.2 million

A dramatic *Untitled* Barnett Newman work-on-paper from 1960 is one of a limited number of drawings that would inform the artist’s momentous *The Stations of the Cross* exhibition. The work is an intimate example of the artist’s revolutionary vertical ‘zip’ that would become his central visual motif. *Untitled* has been exhibited at many of the world’s foremost institutions including The Museum of Modern Art in New York,



Tate in London, the Grand Palais and Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, among others.

Mark Rothko

**Untitled**

1969

Oil on paper mounted on canvas

Estimate \$7/10 million



Mark Rothko's 1969 *Untitled* work-on-paper is an archetypal embodiment of the artist's legendary color-field compositions and was created the year before his death. While much of Rothko's late work was characterized by a dark palette, *Untitled* boasts a ground of brilliant red emerging from serene fields of white and a warm orange. The cloud-like form of gestural white brushwork lends this example a stirring presence, testifying to the immense power of this medium for the artist who, in the twilight years of his career, focused his energies upon exploring the absolute limits of painting on paper. *Untitled* represents the exquisite culmination of Rothko's career-long pursuit of aesthetic transcendence through the conflation of pure color and light.

Willem de Kooning

**Untitled VI**

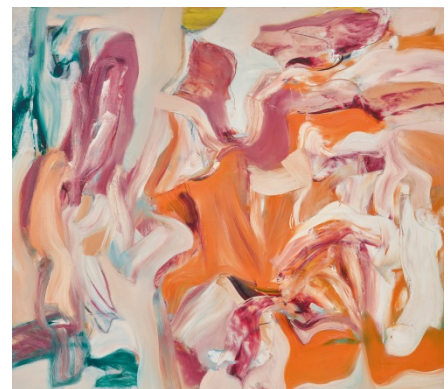
1980

Oil on canvas

\$8/12 million

*Untitled VI* dates from the watershed period when de Kooning returned to painting after a period in which he focused on sculpture. The 1980 work explodes with color executed in lush, sensuous paint strokes which denote the artist's wealth of creativity and great resurgence of confidence in his masterful manipulation of oil paint during this time.

De Kooning was one of the abstract expressionists from whom Joan Miró took inspiration for his later works such as *Femme, oiseau*. The work uses a language of signs and symbols while still referencing human figures to explore the possibilities of movement on canvas. Extraordinarily colorful, *Femme, oiseau* was completed in Miró's Palma studio and remained in his collection until his death.



Roy Lichtenstein

**Still Life with Head in Landscape**

1976

Oil and Magna on canvas

\$7/10 million



With compressed space and symbols echoing many of the movement's masters, the enduring influence of Surrealism is evident in Roy Lichtenstein's *Still Life with Head in Landscape* from 1976. The cropped comic strip speech bubble floats away from the artist's iconic blonde girl, who seduces the viewer from within a dream landscape amidst an array of important Surrealist motifs such as the pyramid, moon, starfish, apple, tree and sailboat. A paragon of the artist's celebrated Surrealist paintings, *Still Life with Head in Landscape* is one of few works from this series remaining in private hands, with many held in renowned institutional collections such as the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Denmark, among others.

Donald Judd

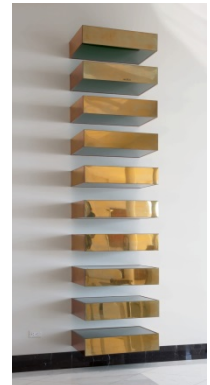
**Untitled**

1993

Brass and green Plexiglas, in ten parts

Estimate \$8/12 million

*Untitled* from 1993 is a pivotal example of Donald Judd's seminal group of works known as stacks, which he began in 1965. The work was acquired by the Mandels in the same year as its execution and as such has remained unseen by the public. Ten rectangular units of glistening polished brass and green Plexiglas exemplify this iconic format for the artist in a grand scale, with the reduced composition of forms embodying the central tenets of Judd's artistic practice.



Andy Warhol

**Flowers**

1964

Acrylic and silkscreen ink on canvas

Estimate \$2/3 million

The Mandels first saw Andy Warhol's *Flowers* hanging behind Leo Castelli's desk during a visit to his gallery. The legendary dealer at first refused to sell the work as it was from his personal collection but relented six





months later. The 1964 work is a prime example of the *Flower* series, which was a significant departure towards the abstract both aesthetically and thematically for Warhol following the *Death and Disaster* series of the early 1960s. Executed in an intensely red palette crisply rendered against a brilliant yellow background, *Flowers* is an exceptionally vibrant example from this renowned body of work.

\*This is an excerpt from a quote by Vartan Gregorian, president, Carnegie Corporation of New York. The quote appears in its entirety on the back cover of Mr. Mandel's book, *It's All About Who You Hire, How They Lead...and Other Essential Advice from a Self-Made Leader*, San Francisco, 2012.

### **Sotheby's Presents: *Fearless Now***

Throughout our marquee May auctions of Impressionist & Modern and Contemporary Art in New York, Sotheby's will celebrate brave artistic voices across time – from the pioneering Impressionists working outside of the Paris Salon in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, to groundbreaking artists, collectors and patrons who are making their own rules today. Follow us throughout the spring for video, articles and news from our original series [Fearless Now](#).

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\*Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Prices achieved include the hammer price plus buyer's premium and are net of any fees paid to the purchaser where the purchaser provided an irrevocable bid.

Images are available upon request

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