

MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN ART AT SOTHEBY'S LONDON

Auction: 28 March 2018
Public Exhibition: 23-27 March 2018



Sotheby's London, 12 March 2018: Formed in 2016 in response to growing market demand, Modern and Contemporary African Art is the newest specialist department at Sotheby's, championing the work of artists from the continent.

Following our inaugural sale in May last year (see the results [here](#)), the second dedicated auction will take place in London on 28 March 2018, including works by 62 artists from 16 countries across Africa, many of whom have rarely - if ever - been offered at international auction before.

Hannah O'Leary, Head of Modern and Contemporary Art at Sotheby's, said: *"The international spotlight on Modern and Contemporary African Art is growing ever stronger as museums, critics and art fairs increasingly look to profile art from the region. Artists from the continent, who were previously overlooked by the secondary market, are finally starting to receive their due recognition."*

Sotheby's first sale proved that if Modern and Contemporary African artists are given an international platform, demand from collectors is there. Participants came from nearly 30 different countries, with over half of the lots sold for prices above their high estimate.

The next edition of the sale will place a closer focus on contemporary art with recent pieces by some of the most exciting artists working today, as well as offering pieces by modern masters who were pioneers of their time."

Artists from the following countries are represented in the sale: Algeria, Morocco (North Africa), Benin, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal (West Africa), Ethiopia, Mozambique (East Africa), Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon (Central Africa), South Africa,

Swaziland and Zimbabwe (Southern Africa). The sale is also distinguished by the inclusion of 10 works from renowned collectors and philanthropists [To Live with Art: Property from the Jerome & Ellen Stern Collection](#).

Highlights from Sotheby's sale

This year's sale will be led by the Ghanaian artist **Ibrahim Mahama** (b. 1971), who first came to international attention following the Venice Biennale in 2015. He has since appeared in exhibitions including 'Artist's Rooms', K21, Dusseldorf (2015); 'Material Effects', The Broad Art Museum, Michigan (2015); Copenhagen, Tel Aviv Art Museum, and Documenta 14, Athens and Kassel (2017). He had his first London exhibition at White Cube last year, and recently completed a residency at Extra



City Kunsthal. *Chale Wote* (2014, est. £60,000-90,000) formed part of Mahama's monumental installation of coal sacks and wax panels draped over Accra's post office during *Chale Wote*, West Africa's foremost annual street art festival. This is one of only a handful of his works ever offered at auction before.



Another highlight comes from **Ben Enwonwu** (1921-1994), a pioneer in Nigeria's modern art movement and one of the first Nigerian artists to win widespread international acclaim. *Africa Dances* (1962, est. £20,000-30,000) comes from the eponymous series, which explored ideas of modern Nigerian cultural identity. Sotheby's first offered Enwonwu's work in our inaugural sale last year.

Nigerian artist **Njideka Akunyili Crosby** (b. 1983), whose works explore her hybrid identity as an African woman living in America, is also leading the sale with *À La Warhol* (2010, est. £50,000-70,000), a four part self-portrait that references the silkscreen portraits of American artist Andy Warhol. With this work, the artist illustrates herself in a pensive, self-reflexive state, in stark contrast to Warhol's way of seeing the women of America's mass-media popular culture. Akunyili Crosby's work is in the permanent collections of institutions world-wide, including Tate Modern, London, Zeitz MOCAA, Cape Town, Whitney Museum of American Art, and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



One of South Africa's leading artists, **Nicholas Hlobo** (b. 1975) is featured in the sale with the work *Unxeme* (2016, est. £40,000-60,000). Hlobo, who is renowned for his works on paper, sculptures, installations and performances using materials such as ribbon, rubber, leather and wood, has been included in numerous important collections, including the Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris, South African National Art Gallery, Cape Town, SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah, GA, and the Tate Modern, London.

Mohau Modisakeng (b.1986) presents fascinating storytelling through photography and video. His work at the South African pavilion was celebrated as one of the most critically-acclaimed exhibitions at the 2017 Venice Biennale. The imposing triptych *Untitled (Qhatha seties)* (2010, est. £20,000-30,000) is now the first work by the artist to come to auction outside South Africa. He is represented in the collections of Johannesburg Art Gallery, IZIKO South African National Gallery, Cape Town, Saatchi Gallery, London, and Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa (Zeitz MOCAA).



Also from South Africa comes *The Exile According to the Elder* (2014, est. £20,000-30,000) an intricate self-portrait in tapestry by **Athi-Patra Ruga** (b.1984) who has recently enjoyed museum exhibitions at Zeitz MOCAA in Cape Town and the Fondation Louis Vuitton in Paris. This tapestry is from his ongoing series depicting characters from a fictional country called Azania through which he comments on life in post-apartheid South Africa. Only one work by the artist has been offered at auction outside South Africa before.



TO LIVE WITH ART: Property from the Jerome & Ellen Stern Collection



Nandipha Mntambo,
Sengifikile (2009)
est. £10,000-15,000



Yinka Shonibare MBE
Culture Flower (2007),
est. £10,000-15,000



Pascale Marthine Tayou
Kids Mascarade I, II and III
(2009), est. £4,000-6,000



Claudette Schreuders
Three Sisters (1998)
est. £18,000-22,000

The New York collectors and philanthropists Jerome and Ellen Stern were true art lovers who travelled to discover new artists and follow their careers. They first visited South Africa in 1995 at the time of the first Johannesburg Biennale, and it was there that they discovered many South African artists, including Marlene Dumas, whose work they continued to collect for the next twenty years. Hannah O'Leary said: "It was a thrill to discover a Dumas hanging next to a

Picasso in their Manhattan apartment, and to find Nandipha Mntambo's bronze busts in their sculpture garden in the Hamptons."

Following Jerome's death in early 2017, Sotheby's was entrusted with the sale of an array of artworks that illustrate the diversity of media, stylistic currents and movements from the Sterns' collection, as well as the relationships that they cultivated with these artists over the years. Works from the collection have already numbered among the highlights of the market-defining November auction season in New York, including *The Hours Behind You* by British-Ghanaian artist Lynette Yiadom-Boakye, which sold for a record-breaking US\$1,575,000, and Marlene Dumas's *Magdalena (Underwear and Bedtime Stories)* which sold for US\$3,615,000.

A further 10 works from the collection will be offered in our 28th March auction: *Culture Flower* by the British-Nigerian artist **Yinka Shonibare MBE** who saw a new auction record in our 2017 sale; a selection of works by the Cape Town-based **Claudette Schreuders** (b. 1973) whose sculptures are representative of the search for an 'African' identity in post-apartheid South Africa; photography and works of art by Cameroonian artist **Pascale Marthine Tayou** (b. 1967), the artist commissioned to create an installation for the Edmond J. Safra courtyard during the 2017 1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair at Somerset House; and Swazi-born artist **Nandipha Mntambo** (b.1982), who is currently the subjects of a solo exhibition at Zeitz MOCAA, including another cast of *Sengifikile*.

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Sotheby's has been uniting collectors with world-class works of art since 1744. Sotheby's became the first international auction house when it expanded from London to New York (1955), the first to conduct sales in Hong Kong (1973), India (1992) and France (2001), and the first international fine art auction house in China (2012). Today, Sotheby's presents auctions in 10 different salesrooms, including New York, London, Hong Kong and Paris, and Sotheby's BidNow program allows visitors to view all auctions live online and place bids from anywhere in the world. Sotheby's offers collectors the resources of *Sotheby's Financial Services*, the world's only full-service art financing company, as well as the collection advisory services of its subsidiary, *Art Agency, Partners*. Sotheby's presents private sale opportunities in more than 70 categories, including S|2, the gallery arm of Sotheby's Global Fine Art Division, and two retail businesses, Sotheby's Diamonds and Sotheby's Wine. Sotheby's has a global network of 80 offices in 40 countries and is the oldest company listed on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE).

*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.

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