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Dubuffet work from 1961 makes top price in London

Strong results for works by Dubuffet, Basquiat and Bacon as Post-War and Contemporary Art Evening Auction in London totals £45,179,450

Jean Dubuffet's *Cérémonie* (Ceremony), a visceral portrait of cosmopolitan life from 1961, led the Post-War and Contemporary Art Evening Auction in London, selling for

£8,718,750 / \$11,107,688 (including buyer's premium). The sale totalled £45,179,450 / \$57,558,619 — 94 per cent sold by lot and 99 per cent by value. For full results, see below.

Channelling the currents of Pop Art, Abstract Expressionism and Tachisme, the top-priced work, which stands among the largest paintings in Dubuffet's celebrated 'Paris Circus' series, captures the *joie de vivre* that swept the French capital during the early 1960s.



Jean Dubuffet (1901-1985), *Cérémonie* (Ceremony), painted in November 1961. 64% x 86% in (164.7 x 220 cm). Sold for £8,718,750 on 25 June 2019 at Christie's in London

The second and third highest prices on the night came for works by Jean-Michel Basquiat and Francis Bacon respectively.

Basquiat's *Sabado por la Noche* (Saturday Night), a vibrant and multi-layered work from 1984, realised £8,378,250. The painting comes from an important period in the artist's career. In August 1983 he had moved into a loft space owned by Andy Warhol, and the two artists made their first collaborative works

in silkscreen and paint shortly afterwards. His rise to global fame then continued with a first solo museum show in 1984, which debuted in Edinburgh before travelling to London's Institute of Contemporary Art.



Jean-Michel Basquiat (1960-1988), *Sabado por la Noche (Saturday Night)*, executed in 1984. 77 x 88 in (195.6 x 223.5 cm). Sold for £8,378,250 on 25 June 2019 at Christie's in London

'*Man at a Washbasin*' (1954) is a powerful and haunting work from Bacon's great 'blue' period, and depicts a nude male figure based on the artist's lover at the time, Peter Lacy, suspended in a void of rich, midnight blue. A picture of a complicated love — Lacy was a former fighter pilot who was prone to bouts of rage — the work sold for £5,109,450.



Francis Bacon (1909-1992), 'Man at a Washbasin', painted circa 1954. 59 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 45 $\frac{5}{8}$ in (152 x 116 cm). Sold for £5,109,450 on 25 June 2019 at Christie's in London

The auction, which saw bidding from 27 different countries, set several new artist records. Tschabalala Self's *Out of Body* (2015), which combines oil paint with swathes of patterned fabric, sold for £371,250 — more than six times its high estimate and a new world auction record for the artist.



Tschabalala Self (b. 1990), *Out of Body*, executed in 2015. 72 x 60 in (182.9 x 152.4 cm). Sold for £371,250 on 25 June 2019 at Christie's in London

A world auction record was also set by German artist Jonas Burgert's *Suchtpuls/ Addicted to Pulse* from 2011, which achieved £419,250, easily surpassing the artist's previous world auction record of £150,000.

Man Versus Look, Versus Life, Versus Time, Versus Man About by Derek Boshier fetched £237,500, a new record price for the artist. This early work was painted in 1962, the year that Boshier, alongside his friends David Hockney and Allen Jones, graduated from London's Royal College of Art and showed together at *Young Contemporaries*, a group exhibition widely recognised as the foundational moment of British Pop.



Derek Boshier (b. 1937), *Man Versus Look, Versus Life, Versus Time, Versus Man About*, painted in 1962. 72³/₈ x 72 ¹/₂ in (183 x 183 cm). Sold for £237,500 on 25 June 2019 at Christie's in London

Other notable results included Amy Sillman's *Cliff* from 2005, which soared above its high estimate before realising £323,250 after several minutes of intense bidding; Cecily Brown's *Blonde Eating Birds* (2011-2012), which sold for £1,571,250, almost doubling its low estimate; and Gerhard Richter's *Musa* from 2009, which achieved £1,031,250, a world auction record for a tapestry by the artist. Antony Gormley's *Vise*, which is part of the artist's celebrated 'Cast Blockworks' series, cruised past its high estimate before selling for £575,250.

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Four Idioms on Negro Art #4: Primitivism, a 2015 large-scale painting by Kara Walker, also breezed past its high estimate before achieving £395,250, a world record price for the artist at auction. The work, which features four black figures silhouetted against an electrifying cobalt-blue background, is part of a series of large-scale works that satirise American ideas about stereotypes, sex and violence. Walker's new site-specific work for Tate's Turbine Hall will be unveiled in October 2019.

The London season's Post-War and Contemporary Art sales conclude with the Day Auction on 26 June.

25 June 2019

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