

Manet £40m sale beats artist's record



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A portrait of a Parisian actress by Edouard Manet has set a new auction record for the French impressionist.

Spring sold at Christie's in New York for \$65 million (£40.6m), almost doubling the previous record of \$33.2 million (£20.7m) for a work by Manet.

The oil painting, which has been owned by the same family for more than 100 years, depicts actress Jeanne Demarsy in a floral dress and bonnet.

The 1881 masterpiece had been estimated to sell for up to \$35 million (£21.9m).

The allegorical painting has been on loan to Washington's National Gallery of Art for the past 20 years.

It was intended to be one of a series of four paintings, but Manet only completed Spring and Autumn before his death in 1883, aged 51.

The Christie's auction of modern and impressionist art fetched more than \$165 million compared with a \$422 million sale at rival Sotheby's earlier this week.

Brooke Lampley, head of Impressionist and modern art at Christie's said the sale was "well-priced and tailored to today's tastes".

But the second most expensive lot in Wednesday's sale failed to sell. *Les constructeurs avec arbre*, by French cubist painter Fernand Leger, had been valued up to \$22 million (£13.7m) but failed to raise significant interest in the auction room.

Among other highlights in the sale were Alberto Giacometti's *Stele III* sculpture, which fetched \$9.9 million (£6.1m) and Joan Miro's *Tuileries a Mont-roig*, which sold for \$8.7 million (£5.4m).

Christie's Sale Boosted By \$65.1 Million Manet

Auction House Sells 35 of 39 Lots, Bringing in a Total of \$165.6 million

It may be autumn, but Christie's got a dose of "Spring" when it sold Édouard Manet's wispy view of a woman sporting a bonnet and parasol for \$65.1 million in New York on Wednesday—nearly doubling its high estimate and breaking the artist's auction record.

Manet unveiled the 1881 work to great acclaim at Paris's taste-making Salon in 1882. He intended the work to form part of a four-part series on the seasons, but the artist died two years later, before he could finish "Autumn." He was 51 years old.

Stories often help sell paintings, and "Spring" enjoyed a colorful afterlife, bought in 1909 by Col. Oliver Payne, an Ohio oil magnate who famously owned a 300-foot-long steam yacht named Aphrodite. The colonel's heirs sold the Manet on Wednesday; the buyer, a young man with a faux-hawk hairdo and a red necktie, works for Otto Naumann, an old-masters dealer in New York. The gallery was bidding on behalf of an anonymous client.

Elsewhere in Christie's sale, a dealer bidding by telephone paid \$9.9 million for an Alberto Giacometti view of his brother's head on a plinth, "Stele III," that was estimated to sell for up to \$6.5 million. That work fetched \$308,000 when it was last auctioned in 1983.

An early Joan Miró, "Tileworks at Mont-roig" from 1918, sold for \$8.7 million. A cubist work by Gino Severini, "Study for Self-Portrait in a Summer Hat," reset the artist's auction record when it sold for \$4.7 million, well over its \$1.4 million high estimate.