

The Art Market Collecting**Rancher's collection spurs series of sales**

White Cube launches secondary market project; southern hemisphere platform kicks off; Jewish émigré artists at Bonhams



Richard Diebenkorn's 7ft 'Ocean Park No. 40' (1971) © Sotheby's

Melanie Gerlis FEBRUARY 25 2021

Private art collections are perking up the market in difficult times. The latest trove, valued at about \$150m, comes from the Texan heiress and rancher Anne Marion, who died last year. The owner of four ranches, including the legendary Four Sixes, and in charge of the family's oil business, Marion also co-founded the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum in Santa Fe and was an avid art collector. Her widower and fourth husband John Marion was an auctioneer and chairman at Sotheby's.

The consignment was competitive but Sotheby's won through and will offer the collection through a series of sales starting in May. Marion's items span Old Master paintings of birds to a Gerhard Richter abstract and include some striking pieces of jewellery. But the bulk of the value lies in postwar American works, notably Andy Warhol's "Double Elvis" (1963, est \$20m-\$30m), which shows the singer as a gunslinging cowboy, Richard Diebenkorn's 7ft "Ocean Park No. 40" (1971, est \$20m-\$30m) and Clyfford Still's "Painting No. 1 (PH-125)" from 1948 (est \$25m-\$35m).

Also, Sotheby's Paris on February 17-18 sold all 373 items from the private collection of the artist-duo Christo and Jeanne-Claude for €9.2m, including fees. The top price was for one of Christo's own works. "The Umbrellas (Joint project for Japan and USA)", a record of the 1,760 yellow umbrellas in California that opened simultaneously with 1,340 blue ones in Ibaraki in 1991, sold far ahead of its €200,000-€300,000 estimate for €1.4m (€1.7m with fees).



Jay Jopling, left, and Antony Gormley stand over Gormley's 'Lost Subject' at White Cube Duke Street, 1994 © Courtesy White Cube

White Cube gallery is to start a month-long highlight of just one work by an artist that the gallery doesn't necessarily represent but can sell on the secondary market. The "Salon" initiative will show each work virtually, with background materials, at [whitecube.com](https://www.whitecube.com). The work will also hang in real life in one of its galleries worldwide. First up is the artist [Carmen Herrera](#) with a work that will be in White Cube's Paris office but remains under wraps until Salon opens on March 1.

"We're known for representing some of the most urgent artistic voices of our times within our primary market exhibition programme, but White Cube's Salon is a manifestation of the growth of our secondary market activities," the gallery's founder and chief executive Jay Jopling said in a statement.

White Cube is no stranger to the secondary market, which tends to be more profitable than that for new work. In 2011, Jopling opened the Modern Collections gallery in London. This was run for two years by Inigo Philbrick, who then set up on his own and was [arrested on a Pacific island](#) last year on charges of defrauding investors and lenders.

The gallery says that Salon harks back to its much earlier days in 1993 when its first gallery opened on London's Duke Street. The space was tiny — just under five metres squared — so by necessity tended to focus on just one artist. Other galleries have found that limiting viewing to a single work pays off, particularly online, a strategy also employed by the [virtual Tefaf art fair](#) last year.



Sungi Mlengeya's 'Ascend' (2020) © Courtesy of Afriart Gallery Kampala

It is still early days, but the experimental and ambitious South South platform, devised by Liza Essers of Goodman Gallery to support overlooked southern hemisphere artists, has some impressive galleries on board, and has launched just when they need it. On Tuesday, a livestreamed auction of 22 mostly new works by in-demand artists kicked off the first “Veza” (the Zulu word to describe a happening), half of which sold publicly for a total \$464,000.

The high point of the opening event came near the start, when an online shopper battled with a Johannesburg telephone bidder for “Ascend” (2020), a minimal, figurative painting by the Tanzania-born Sungi Mlengeya, who until recently worked as a banker. The online bidder won out at \$50,000 (estimate \$10,000-\$15,000, Afriart gallery). Like all the buyers in this portion of Veza, they will not have to pay an additional premium. South South takes 10 per cent of the hammered total and channels a further 20 per cent to three non-profit partners in Africa, the Philippines and Brazil.

The auction was perhaps not as much of a roaring success as some would have hoped, but Essers says that a number of offers and sales came through afterwards, and that she was pleased with the international participation in the live and separate timed events.

Goodman Gallery covered its artists well, selling works by Pamela Phatsimo Sunstrum from Botswana and Cassi Namoda (Mozambique), as well as its South African stalwarts William Kentridge and David Goldblatt. South South's 56 gallery participants continue to show on its viewing room, which — together with a film and talks programme — runs until March 7 at south-south.art.



Jules Pascin's 'La Figurante du Palace' (1927)

Bonhams has a collection of 77 works by 54 Jewish artists from the École de Paris (1905-1939), a hub in Montmartre that attracted émigré creatives, many of whom were Jewish and escaping from persecution in Russia and eastern Europe. Its best-known artists were Chaïm Soutine and Marc Chagall. The collection comes from the two-generation art-dealing family office Nieszawer & Princ.

The collection comprises lesser-known, but still successful artists, notably Jules Pascin, who moved to Paris from Bulgaria, and Moïse Kisling, from Poland. Kisling's "Nature morte au pichet blanc" (1917) carries the highest estimate in the sale (£30,000-£35,000) and was bought for \$40,625 in 2019. There are two works by Pascin, including "La Figurante du Palace" (1927, est £18,000-£22,000).

In 2015, Nieszawer & Princ published a book about the Jewish artists of the École de Paris, some of whom met with terrible fates. By 1940, when France was occupied by the Nazis, Jewish artists were banned from exhibiting, and Ukrainian-born Samuel Granowsky was one of about 20 École de Paris artists murdered at a death camp. His "Self-portrait" (c1920) is offered for between £2,500 and £3,000. The auction is at Bonhams on March 3 with a total estimate of £350,000-£450,000.

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