

Phillips Announces Further Highlights Ahead of the London Design Auction

Sale on 30 June to Feature Important Works of Italian Mid-Century Design Including a Rare Illuminated Headboard Designed by Gio Ponti and Piero Fornasetti for the Casa Lucano Apartment in Milan



Gio Ponti and Piero Fornasetti
Rare illuminated headboard, circa 1952
Estimate £45,000 - 65,000

LONDON – 22 JUNE 2021 – Phillips is pleased to present further highlights ahead of the London Design auction on 30 June. Leading highlights include incredibly rare Mid-Century and Post-War Italian Design from Piero Fornasetti, Gio Ponti, Carlo Scarpa, Studio BBPR, Pietro Chiesa, and Fontana Arte, among others, as well as important pieces of Art Deco and Contemporary design. Comprising 170 lots, included in this sale are two major highlights which were announced earlier this year; [Jean Dunand's 'Les Palmiers' Smoking Room](#), and a [never-before-seen group of Jean Royère works from a Private Family Collection](#). The full catalogue for the auction is now [online](#) and the exhibition will go on view on 23 June at Phillips London galleries on Berkeley Square and will remain open for viewing until the auction on 30 June at 2pm.

Domenico Raimondo, Senior Director, Head of Department, Europe and Senior International Specialist, said “This June we are delighted to present a truly remarkable selection of works. From the imaginative and nostalgic artistry of Gio Ponti and Piero Fornasetti’s rare illuminated headboard, through to Gio Ponti’s own armchair, an extremely rare pair of Carlo Scarpa Vitrines and Studio BBPR’s utilitarian and beautifully functional cabinets, this sale celebrates exquisite craftsmanship in its many varied forms. We look forward to opening our doors on 23 June at Berkeley Square and to welcoming visitors to visit the preview exhibition in person and online ahead of our Design auction on 30 June”

Leading the Italian highlights in this sale is a unique [rare illuminated headboard](#) designed by Gio Ponti and Piero Fornasetti for Casa Lucano in the early 1950s. Following the success of the white glove Casa di Fantasia auction in March 2019, Phillips is pleased to offer at auction once more an incredibly rare piece of this important and pivotal collaboration between Ponti and Fornasetti from the same interior. The present headboard combines Ponti's concept of the parete attrezzata (an organised and vertical multi-functional wall) with illustrations of the zodiac constellations designed by Fornasetti. The headboard is not only beautiful but also practical, containing bookshelves, light fixtures, a built-in radio, cigarette lighters, cigar holder and ashtrays, all of which convey nostalgia, recalling a long-forgotten glamorous Post-War past when socializing, art, reading, smoking and indulgence were celebrated and ritualized.



Gio Ponti and Piero Fornasetti
Prototype dining table, early 1950s
Estimate £60,000 - 80,000

Gio Ponti and Piero Fornasetti
Set of six prototype dining chairs, early 1950s
Estimate £60,000 - 80,000

Further highlights of the sale include Gio Ponti and Piero Fornasetti's [prototype dining table](#) and set of [six prototype dining chairs](#), created for a seminal exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum in 1950 titled 'Italy At Work: Her Renaissance in Design Today'. Further examples were then produced but these were smaller 4-seat tables and neither the chairs nor tables that went to production thereafter were hand painted. Strikingly identifiable as the work of Ponti and Fornasetti, the concave six-seat table and accompanying chairs are one-of-a-kind in size and because they were hand painted and designed specifically for the exhibition.

The present '[Distex](#)' armchair was designed by Gio Ponti in 1953 and has something special which distinguishes this example from other armchairs designed by the architect during that period. It is precisely the armchair that Ponti selected for his own apartment in Milan. An iconic piece, Ponti was regularly photographed in this armchair for publications such as Domus. The armchair, which comes to auction directly from the Ponti family, has also been exhibited in museums such as the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris.



Gio Ponti
Rare 'Distex' armchair, circa 1953
Estimate £30,000 - 50,000



An additional highlight of the sale is a [pair of vitrines](#) which were commissioned by Dino Gavina for the opening of the Gavina store in Bologna in 1963. Designed by Carlo Scarpa, the vitrines were later given by Gavina to one of his employees who until recently has kept them in his care. Scarpa originally conceived the design of the vitrines to display small figurative sculptures to be exhibited in the extension of the Gipsoteca Canoviana in Possagno which was commissioned to commemorate the bicentenary of the Italian neoclassical sculptor Antonio Canova's birth. These particular vitrines are the only known examples produced during Scarpa's lifetime to have come to the market.

Carlo Scarpa

Pair of vitrines, designed 1957, executed circa 1963
Estimate £150,000 - 200,000

Further Gio Ponti highlights to feature in the Design auction include a [rare dining table with drawers](#), the ['Triennale' armchair](#) and a unique [pair of armchairs](#). The 'Triennale' armchair is an important design in the context of Ponti's career, combining various stylistic forms which were characteristic of his work such as the suspended seat. Also visible in the design of the chair are influences which were formative to Ponti's style such as the pared back organic structure of the chair



Gio Ponti

'Triennale' armchair, circa 1953
Estimate £25,000 - 35,000

Gio Ponti

Unique pair of armchairs, early 1930s
Estimate £65,000 - 85,000

which was probably inspired by the Danish architect Finn Juhl who had exhibited his 'Chieftain' armchair at the IX Milan Triennale in 1951. The unique pair of armchairs were a private commission in the early 1930s for an aristocratic family in Lombardy. Designed by Ponti and produced by famous cabinet maker Angelo Magnoni, this suite is made of walnut and labeled with small brass plaques with Ponti's signature.



In 1950 the Italian painter Duilio (Dubé) Barnabé began working with Fontana Arte, collaborating on a series of works for which the artist employed the technique of verre églomisé, applying both a design and gilding onto the rear face of glass. [The present work](#) is a unique dining table, remarkable not only for the illustrated foliage on the glass tabletop but also for the glass struts which, though not structurally necessary, denote craftsmanship of the highest luxury.

Duilio (Dubé) Barnabé

Unique dining table, 1950
Estimate £25,000 - 35,000

Additional Carlo Scarpa highlights to feature in this sale include [two vases](#) made of a very high quality glass and produced by Cappelin, a [vase made by Venini](#) which was exhibited at the Venice Biennale in 1942, and a very rare [prototype vase](#) which is notable in terms of both shape and colour. Produced by Venini in circa 1940, there is no record of this style of design in any of Venini's official catalogues, including the Blue, Red or Black, except for some models with identical shape which had already been produced in different materials.



PROPERTY FROM AN IMPORTANT
EUROPEAN COLLECTION

Carlo Scarpa

Rare vase, model no. 1277, 1929-1930
Estimate £18,000 - 24,000



Carlo Scarpa

Rare vase, model no. 4561, circa 1942
Estimate £18,000 - 24,000



Carlo Scarpa

Rare prototype vase, circa 1940
Estimate £40,000 - 60,000



Also featuring in this sale are [two cabinets](#) designed by Studio BBPR as part of a commission for a Milanese apartment in the late 1930s. The vibrant blue lacquered doors are punctuated by holes that were originally designed for ventilation but which also serve an aesthetic function. Published in Domus in August 1938, the present cabinets are distinctive of Studio BBPR, both for their design and for the characteristic Studio BBPR marriage of functionality and style demonstrated through the decorative cabinet fronts.

Studio B.B.P.R.

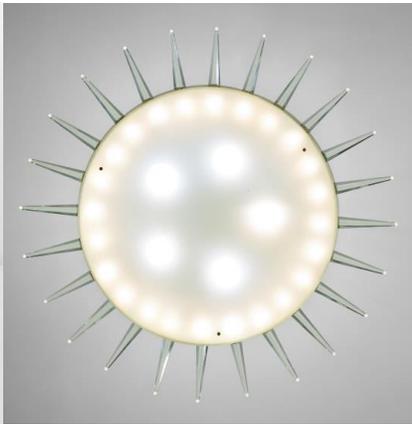
Two cabinets, circa 1938
Estimate £30,000 - 50,000

Further highlights of the Design sale include rare ceiling lights designed by [Max Ingrand](#) and [Gino Sarfatti](#) as well as sofas designed by [Ron Arad](#) and [Shiro Kuramata](#).



Ron Arad

Prototype 'D-Sofa', 1993
Estimate £80,000 - 120,000



Max Ingrand

Ceiling light, circa 1956
Estimate £25,000 - 35,000



Shiro Kuramata

'How High the Moon' two-seater sofa, designed 1986
Estimate £20,000 - 30,000

Auction: 30 June 2021

Auction viewing: 23 – 30 June 2021

Location: 30 Berkeley Square, London

Click here for more information: <https://www.phillips.com/auctions/auction/UK050121>

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