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PRESS RELEASE

Phillips to Offer Property from the Collection of Rosa and Aaron Esman

Works from 20th Century & Contemporary, Photographs, and Editions to be Sold in Upcoming New York Auctions



Robert Rauschenberg

Bath, 1964

Estimate: \$400,000 - 600,000

To Be Offered in May 20th Century & Contemporary Evening Sale

NEW YORK – 21 MARCH 2023 – Phillips is pleased to announce *Property from the Collection of Rosa and Aaron Esman*, a collection of over 150 works from their Manhattan residence. Iconic masterworks of the 1960s by Josef Albers and Robert Rauschenberg, along with an impressive assemblage of modern works on paper, photographs, and prints representing the breadth of the collection, will be offered in upcoming New York 20th Century & Contemporary, Photographs, and Editions sales. Important works by artists such as Roy Lichtenstein, Sol LeWitt, René Magritte, Jasper Johns, Jackson Pollock, Joan Miró, and many others will be included throughout sales. Select works will be on view at the Phillips Los Angeles gallery as a part of our 20th Century & Contemporary Global Highlights Tour this April, with further details to come.

Rosa and Aaron Esman assembled an outstanding array of Modern, Post-War, and Contemporary art over the course of their seventy-year marriage. Dr. Esman, a psychoanalyst, began collecting art as a reflection of his fascination with creativity and the workings of the human mind. Those interests guided his collecting activity throughout his life. The couple's shared passion for art was evident from the early days of their courtship as they visited galleries and museums together. The collection they built over the decades, rich in Modernism, Dada, Russian Constructivism, and American Pop Art, reflects both Mrs. Esman's career as a gallerist and print publisher and Dr. Esman's voluminous writings on art, creativity, and the mind.

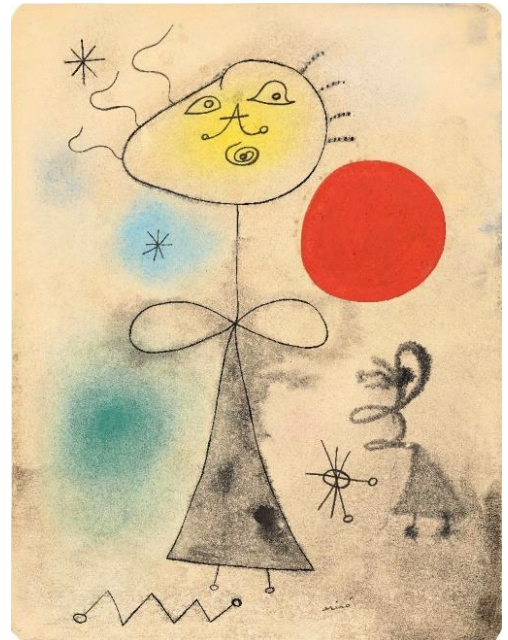


Rosa and Aaron Esman, Madrid, 1963
Image courtesy the Esman Family

Mrs. Esman was a ground-breaking print publisher who initiated portfolios of fine art prints and editions of 3- dimensional multiples with the iconic artists of the 1960s and 1970s, including Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, Donald Judd, Richard Serra, Lee Bontecou, Robert Rauschenberg, Eva Hesse, Tom Wesselmann, Sol LeWitt, Robert Motherwell, Helen Frankenthaler, and others. Major publications created under Tanglewood Press or Original Editions include *New York Ten Portfolio*, 1965 and 1969, *Ten from Leo Castelli*, 1967, *Seven Objects in a Box*, 1966, and *11 Pop Artists Volumes I, II, and III*, 1966. In addition, during the 1970s, Rosa Esman joined with art book publisher Harry Abrams to create Abrams/Original Editions, producing portfolios and individual prints by Saul Steinberg, Red Grooms, and others. Her inspired vision, which grew out of the couple's own desire to collect works by artists they could not otherwise afford, helped pioneer the field of Post-War artists' editions and multiples.

Beyond her publishing activities, Rosa Esman's eponymous gallery exhibited in Manhattan for over twenty years, and she was a founding partner of Ubu Gallery, which is still in operation today. Her career as an art dealer predated her publishing work, beginning in 1957 when she and a friend established the Tanglewood Gallery in Norman Rockwell's former art studio on Main Street in Stockbridge, MA.

As collectors, the Esmans were a familiar sight on the gallery scene beginning in the 1960s, when they spent Saturdays touring New York galleries, often meeting up with artists and other collectors at Leo Castelli Gallery in the late afternoons. As New York's art scene moved to 59th Street, SoHo/Tribeca, and Chelsea, Dr. & Mrs. Esman followed; Saturday gallery visits remained an essential part of their lives well into their 90s. The two especially appreciated Modern art and collected a wide variety of prints and multiples including a 1912 Cubist etching by Pablo Picasso, Joan Miró's livres des artistes, and works by El Lissitzky, Wassily Kandinsky, Jackson Pollock, Marcel Duchamp, and Meret Oppenheim, among others, as well as those by more contemporary artists from Warhol and Lichtenstein in the 1960s to Vik Muniz, Kiki Smith, and Allen McCollum in the 1990s – 2000s. The couple's collection also reflected their admiration of Jasper Johns' work, specifically his *Scents*, 1975-76, and *Target* from 1967, impressive images created with Tatyana Grosman at ULAE. The collection also features editions by Josef Albers, Ellsworth Kelly, Claes Oldenburg, Sol LeWitt, Gerhard Richter, and Mel Bochner, reflecting the Esmans' deep passion for and involvement in the art of their time.



Joan Miró
Femmes devant le soleil (Women in Front of the Sun), 1942
Estimate: \$200,000 - 300,000
To Be Offered in May 20th Century & Contemporary Day Sale



Jasper Johns
Target, 1967
Estimate: \$25,000 - 35,000
To Be Offered in April Editions Sale

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Jackson Pollock
Untitled (after Number 22, 1951) (O.C. & T. 1095),
 1951
 Estimate \$30,000 - 50,000
 To Be Offered in April Editions Sale

Another highlight of the collection is Robert Rauschenberg's *Bath*, 1964, to be offered in the 20th Century and Contemporary Evening Sale this upcoming May. Created in the latter part of Rauschenberg's celebrated *Combines* period, the work straddles the line between painting and sculpture, combining found objects with bright oil paint and transfers of newspaper clippings on a Plexiglass surface – a reflection of Rauschenberg's dictum that "painting relates to art and life... I try to work in the gap between the two." *Bath* captures the vibrant, playful, and culturally engaged personality of the artist that the Esmans admired, and indeed, are qualities that permeated many of the works in their collection. The couple purchased the piece at an auction to benefit the Congress of Racial Equity in 1964, the artist's participation in which reflects his commitment to the power of art to create social change.

Photography also played a large role in the Esman collection. Several of these works will be offered as a section within Phillips' April 4th Photographs auction and will include an important selection of avant-garde photographs from the 1920s and 1930s by Man Ray, Alexander Rodchenko, and Jaromír Funke, among others, along with contemporary work by Sol Lewitt, Hiroshi Sugimoto, and Vik Muniz. Further information regarding this portion of the sale can be found [here](#).



Vik Muniz
After Gerhard Richter (from Pictures of Color), 2001
 Estimate: \$25,000 - 35,000
 To Be Offered in April Photographs Sale



Jaromír Funke
Eye, from Time Persists, 1930-34
 Estimate: \$15,000 - 25,000
 To Be Offered in April Photographs Sale



Various Artists
Ten from Leo Castelli, 1967
 Estimate: \$50,000 - 70,000
 To Be Offered in April Editions Sale

Click the links below for more information on each respective auction:

[Photographs New York Auction, 4 April 2023 10am & 2pm EDT](#)

[Editions & Works on Paper New York Auction, 18 April 2023 11am EDT](#)

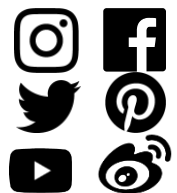
[20th Century & Contemporary Art Day Sale, Morning Session, 16 May 2023 10am EDT](#)

[20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale New York Auction, 17 May 5pm EDT](#)

ABOUT PHILLIPS

Phillips is a leading global platform for buying and selling 20th and 21st century art and design. With dedicated expertise in the areas of 20th Century and Contemporary Art, Design, Photographs, Editions, Watches, and Jewelry, Phillips offers professional services and advice on all aspects of collecting. Auctions and exhibitions are held at salerooms in New York, London, Geneva, and Hong Kong, while clients are further served through representative offices based throughout Europe, the United States and Asia. Phillips also offers an online auction platform accessible anywhere in the world. In addition to providing selling and buying opportunities through auction, Phillips brokers private sales and offers assistance with appraisals, valuations, and other financial services.

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**Estimates do not include buyer's premium; prices achieved include the hammer price plus buyer's premium.*

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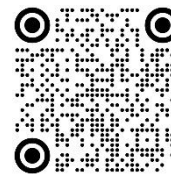
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