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PRESS RELEASE

Brice Marden's *Star (for Patti Smith)* to Lead Phillips' Evening Sale of 20th Century & Contemporary Art

Portrait of the "Punk Poet Laureate" Estimated at \$5-7 Million



Brice Marden
Star (for Patti Smith), 1972-74
Estimate: \$5,000,000-7,000,000

NEW YORK - 7 APRIL 2016 - Phillips is pleased to announce that Brice Marden's *Star (for Patti Smith)* will lead the May evening sale of 20th Century & Contemporary Art in New York. Since its completion in 1974, *Star (for Patti Smith)* has been exhibited in several renowned institutions, including the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, Boston's Museum of Fine Arts, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. The triptych remained part of Marden's own collection for many years until it was acquired by the present owner from the Matthew Marks Gallery. Estimated at \$5,000,000-7,000,000, *Star (for Patti Smith)* is one of the few portraits by the artist to be offered at auction.

Jean-Paul Engelen, Phillips' Worldwide Head of Contemporary Art, said, "Spanning more than fifty years, Brice Marden's career is among the most revered of any contemporary artist still working today. Over the last decade, since his

retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art, he has solidified his status as one of the most successful abstract painters of the 20th century. His portraits, which so wonderfully capture the culture of Manhattan in the 1960s and 1970s, are among his most acclaimed works, with examples residing at Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art and San Francisco's Museum of Modern Art. Works from this series are extremely rare to the market and Phillips is delighted to have such a fine example lead the May evening sale.”

Star (for Patti Smith) honors the musician and writer whose musical and poetic creativity drew on the influences of the Velvet Underground and The Doors, along with French symbolist and Beat strains of introspective and sensual poetry. Marden first met Smith in the early 1970s, before her debut album *Horses* was recorded and she became an international rock star. At the time, she was a poet and journalist, writing critical pieces for Rolling Stone and Creem Magazine, and would frequent his studio to use his typewriter.

Taking two years to complete, *Star (for Patti Smith)* is executed in oil and beeswax on canvas, resulting in a dynamic encaustic surface. The work is comprised of three separate panels, with each precisely measuring Smith's height and shoulder-width, encapsulating the cool reticence and the convention-breaking energy of her personality and artistry. Seeking to distill the stark and direct style of Smith as the soon-to-be reigning “punk poet laureate,” Marden created a composition of vertical stripes of matte midnight black framing a reserved, chilly gray “figure.” According to Marden, his adherence to minimalist forms veils a deep subjective response to Smith's star-quality and her immediate human presence. His goal is for the viewer to have an emotional, rather than intellectual, reaction to the work.

Auction: Sunday, 8 May 2016, 7pm

Auction viewing: 30 April-8 May | Monday to Saturday 10am-6pm, Sunday 12pm-6pm

Location: 450 Park Avenue, New York

Link to more information: <https://www.phillips.com/auctions/auction/NY010316>

Additional highlights from Phillips' May sales of 20th Century and Contemporary Art, which have been announced, can be found [here](#).

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Phillips is a leading global platform for buying and selling 20th and 21st century art and design. With dedicated expertise in the areas of 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.

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

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