

# PHILLIPS

PRESS RELEASE

## Phillips Announces Highlights from the December Design Auctions

**Works by Jean-Michel Frank, Wendell Castle, Alberto Giacometti,  
Carlo Mollino, Donald Judd, Gio Ponti and Jean Royère  
to Lead the Evening and Day Sales on 13 December in New York**



From left: R.W. Martin & Brothers, *Sir Edward George Clarke QC caricatured as a tall distinguished fantastical bird jar and cover*  
Eugene Schoen, *Important table from the Radio-Keith-Orpheum (RKO) Roxy Theatre at Rockefeller Center, New York*  
Tiffany Studios, *"Wisteria" table lamp*

NEW YORK – 27 NOVEMBER 2018 – Phillips is pleased to announce highlights from the December Evening and Day Sales of Design. Taking place on 13 December in New York, the Evening Sale will immediately follow the Day session. With the Evening Sale offering 29 lots and the Day Sale offering 114 lots, the auctions will feature works by Jean-Michel Frank, Wendell Castle, Alberto Giacometti, Carlo Mollino, Donald Judd, Gio Ponti and Jean Royère, among others.

“Our December Evening and Day Sales of Design bring together a breadth of material of the highest quality, spanning the late nineteenth through twenty-first centuries,” said Cordelia Lembo, Phillips’ Head of Design, New York. “The market for design across collecting categories has proven strong in recent seasons and, with examples of French Art Deco, American Modernism, French and Italian post-war design, contemporary design, ceramics, and more, these auctions provide incredible opportunities for collectors.”

## The Evening Sale

The Evening Sale, beginning at 5pm EST, will feature three works by Wendell Castle, with his iconic *“Environment for Contemplation”* leading the group. The piece was created in 1970 as a response to a prompt from New York’s Museum of Contemporary Crafts (now known as the Museum of Arts and Design) for their exhibition, *Contemplation Environments*, which included sixteen artist-designed spaces. Ticketing was limited, in order to ensure that each visitor could experience the exhibition “in relative isolation and quiet.” Castle’s *Environment* was among the highlights of the show, offering the viewer a chance to sit inside and stretch out on the black shag carpeted interior. The work was created in Castle’s signature stack-laminate technique, featuring a skylight and a pressure sensor that turns on an external light to let others know that the environment is occupied. Additional works by Wendell Castle to be included in the December Evening Sale are his *Unique “Chaise Rocker”* and *Unique “In God We Trust” chair*.



Wendell Castle,  
Unique and important “Environment for Contemplation,” 1970  
Estimate: \$250,000-350,000



R.W. Martin & Brothers, Four Works to be Offered  
Separately Estimates ranging from \$30,000-350,000

Four works of Martinware from a private collection will also be included in the auction. Offered separately, the collection includes pieces spanning from 1878-1898 – a colossal grinning crab, a jar and cover depicting Sir Edward George Clarke QC caricatured as a tall distinguished fantastical bird, a massive aquatic bird jar and cover, and a monumental mantel clock case. The group of potters was led largely by Robert Wallace Martin (1843-1924), the eldest of the four brothers, the founder of the pottery, and an artistic talent who many have claimed to rival any other Victorian sculptor. The four works being offered in December perfectly exemplify the studio’s creative output, offering collectors the opportunity to acquire an impressive selection of this highly collectible genre.

Also on offer is an important table by Eugene Schoen from the Radio-Keith-Orpheum (RKO) Roxy Theatre at Rockefeller Center, New York. Now considered one of the most important developments in New York City’s history, Rockefeller Center was planned shortly before the 1929 stock market crash as an arts and entertainment destination. John D. Rockefeller Jr. joined forces with RCA to develop a performance complex that would include two theaters: the International Music Hall for vaudeville performances, and the RKO Roxy Theatre at Rockefeller Center, a smaller venue for film. While Donald Deskey won the competition to design both interiors, he subsequently contracted Eugene Schoen for the interior of the RKO Roxy Theatre due to the size of the project. The present table was created for the ladies’ powder room on the second mezzanine of the theater. Unparalleled in design and construction, it was unmistakably the room’s centerpiece and features



Eugene Schoen  
Important table from the Radio-Keith-Orpheum  
(RKO) Roxy Theatre at Rockefeller Center, circa  
1932  
Estimate: \$60,000-80,000



Tiffany Studios  
"Wisteria" table lamp, circa 1905  
Estimate: \$450,000-650,000

prominently in the period photographs by Fay S. Lincoln. While the RKO Roxy Theatre was sadly the only building in the original Rockefeller Center to be demolished, luckily it is survived by this table so wholly representative of its time and place.

Leading the sale is an exquisite "Wisteria" table lamp by Tiffany Studios. While the wisteria flower is deeply associated with Louis Comfort Tiffany, the "Wisteria" lampshade design is in fact one of his lead designer Clara Driscoll's most noted artistic and commercial accomplishments. Produced from 1901 to 1910, it was the most popular and expensive of the four lamps with irregular edges that were intended to pair with tree bases. The "Wisteria" lamp design has been interpreted in a myriad of color schemes, with the present example displaying a highly naturalistic glass selection reflecting the true colors of the wisteria flower.

European collection, perfectly capturing the designer's aesthetic of understated luxury. Frank favored austere, simple shapes in a variety of unexpected materials that he selected for their various textures and colors. A rock crystal example leads the group. The mica-covered "Block" lamp being offered continues the theme of Frank's fascination for materials coupled with austerity of form. For this work the designer covered a simple rectangular block in a regular grid of mica



Line Vautrin  
Unique "Satellite Orange" mirror,  
circa 1962  
Estimate: \$50,000-70,000

Three important table lamps by Jean-Michel Frank hail from a private

leads the group. The mica-covered "Block" lamp being offered continues the theme of Frank's fascination for materials coupled with austerity of form. For this work the designer covered a simple rectangular block in a regular grid of mica sheets. Mica has a natural metallic luster and, just like the rock crystal lamps, lent captivating texture and sparkle to his interiors. Terracotta was perhaps the most subversive in Jean-Michel Frank's repertoire of provocative materials. Frank introduced terracotta into his interiors in its raw, unglazed state, which created a startling effect in his highly refined interiors.



Jean-Michel Frank  
Table lamp, circa 1925  
Estimate: \$120,000-180,000

Two Line Vautrin mirrors from the collection of Raf Simons will also be on offer - a unique "Satellite Orange" mirror and an extremely rare "Sequins" mirror. Line Vautrin's whimsical mirrors continue to be highly sought-after by collectors. This offering presents an exciting opportunity for collectors to acquire particularly special examples with exceptional provenance.

A Monumental “Sonambient” sounding sculpture by Harry Bertoia will also be offered among the Evening Sale highlights. During the early 1960s, Harry Bertoia moved away from furniture design and began focusing on more sculptural works. His exploration into sound sculpture, a process he called “Sonambient,” added a new dimension to his fluency in materials. These bold and dynamic sculptures, ranging from a few inches to twenty feet tall, incorporate a flat drilled metal base fitted with metal rods made from bronze, beryllium copper, aluminum, Monel, or in the present example, Inconel and brass. The musicality of the sculpture is embedded within the dexterity of the materials when they are moved together. Each sculpture has a unique reverberating tonal quality.



Harry Bertoia  
Monumental “Sonambient”  
sounding sculpture, circa 1977  
Estimate: \$100,000-150,000



Alberto Giacometti  
“Vase Ovale,” circa 1939  
Estimate: \$80,000-120,000

An important Alberto Giacometti vase with a storied provenance will also be offered. The work was created for the mansion of Jorge Born, the heir to one of the greatest Argentine fortunes. Born had met Frank at his atelier in Paris in 1938 following the advice of a friend and chose Frank to design the interiors of his new modernist villa which sat on a golf course in the hills of Buenos Aires. This commission was one of Jean-Michel Frank’s last and most important projects. The furnishings and parchment-covered wall panels were completed in Paris and exhibited at the Porte de Versailles in early 1939 before being shipped to Argentina for installation. The present vase originally belonged to a pair that flanked the large bronze doors in the villa’s sitting room, each resting on an ivory-trimmed ebony semainier.

## The Day Sale

The Day Sale will begin at 2pm on 13 December, offering 114 exceptional lots across a variety of price points. Contemporary American design figures prominently, with two Judy Kensley McKie pieces among the highlights – a Unique “Lizard Cabinet” and an “Arizona #2” table. The sale closes with fourteen lots from an interior by Muriel Brandolini, a designer renowned for her sophisticated and eclectic interiors that incorporate a highly decorative historicism with cutting edge contemporary design.

The auction will also offer works of Italian lighting, with lots by Venini, Angelo Lelii, Flavio Poli, and Stilnovo, among others. A selection of French design is led by Pierre Jeanneret’s Set of eight “Committee” armchairs, model no. PJ-SI-30-A, which will be offered alongside works by Jean Prouvé and Jean Royère. The Day Sale will also offer a strong group of contemporary ceramics, including pieces by Taizo Kuroda and Sueharu Fukami.



Judy Kensley McKie  
Unique “Lizard Cabinet,” circa 1939  
Estimate: \$20,000-30,000

**Auction:** Thursday, 13 December 2018 | Evening Sale at 5pm EST, Day Sale at 2pm EST

**Auction viewing:** 9-13 December

**Location:** 450 Park Avenue, New York

[Click here for more information.](#)

###

#### 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. Visit [www.phillips.com](http://www.phillips.com) for further information.

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

PRESS CONTACT: Jaime Israni, *Senior Public Relations Specialist*

[jisrani@phillips.com](mailto:jisrani@phillips.com)

+1 212 940 1398

PHILLIPS NEW YORK - 450 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10022

PHILLIPS LONDON - 30 Berkeley Square, London, W1J 6EX

PHILLIPS HONG KONG - 14/F St. George's Building, 2 Ice House Street, Central Hong Kong

VISIT US AT: [www.phillips.com](http://www.phillips.com)

FOLLOW US ON: [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Vimeo](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Pinterest](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [WeChat](#) (use QR Code to right)

