

# PHILLIPS

PRESS RELEASE

## Piero Crommelynck, Master Printer A Collection of Modern and Post-War Gravures

**Over 100 Works to be Included in the Editions Auction on 18 April in New York  
Following an International Tour to London and Paris**



**Pablo Picasso, 1881-1973**  
*Le cocu magnifique portfolio, 1968*  
Estimate: \$70,000 - 90,000

NEW YORK - 22 FEBRUARY 2017 - On 18 April in New York, Phillips will host an auction comprised of over 100 etchings and aquatints from the collection of master printer and engraver Piero Crommelynck. While most frequently remembered as Picasso's favorite printer of his late intaglios, or the "Prince of the printers," as film director Jean-Michel Meurice would call him, in his over forty-year career, Piero famously worked alongside his brother Aldo to bring to life graphic works of art. They developed technical processes for numerous artists who have come to define the visual culture of the 20th century - from modernist *peintre-graveur* Joan Miró, Pablo Picasso, Georges Braque, and Le Corbusier to post-war David Hockney, Jim Dine, Jasper Johns and Richard Hamilton, all included in this sale. In the 1990s, Piero opened his own studio and began publishing under his own name, collaborating with a great number of celebrated contemporary European artists, such as Sam Szafran, Pierre Alechinsky and Not Vital. This auction marks the first time these works have been publicly exhibited. Before the auction in New York, highlights will tour to London from 15-19 March and to Paris from 22-25 March.

From the 1960s until Picasso's death in 1973, the Commelynck brothers served as the artist's printers, Piero establishing a singular bond with Picasso, likely seeing in him a mirror-image of his own father. Very few people can claim a real close and strong working relationship with Picasso. The harmony between these two men was intense and fruitful. In 1963 the family moved to Mougins to be close to Picasso and assist with his printmaking demands. Piero is one of the most recurring male figures in Picasso's work of this last period – appearing in more than 150 images, as Werner Spies documented, and as Picasso noted, "Ah, yes, I engraved my engraver and his entire family!"



*Portrait of Piero Commelynck [holding a portrait of himself by Pablo Picasso], 1966*

Photo by Jacqueline Roque Picasso

A complete set of Picasso's *Le cocu magnifique*, 1968, lead the collection (illustrated page 1; estimate \$70,000-90,000). This portfolio of twelve etchings and the additional signed and numbered suite illustrate the Belgian play of the same name, which was written in 1921 by their father, Fernand Crommelynck. Three years before Picasso created these portfolios, the play was adapted into an Italian film, which led to a resurgence of public interest in the subject.



**After Pablo Picasso, 1881-1973**

*Le Californie (Intérieur rouge)*, 1959-60

Aquatint, signed in multi-color pencil, a proof aside from the edition of 300

Estimate: \$6,000-8,000

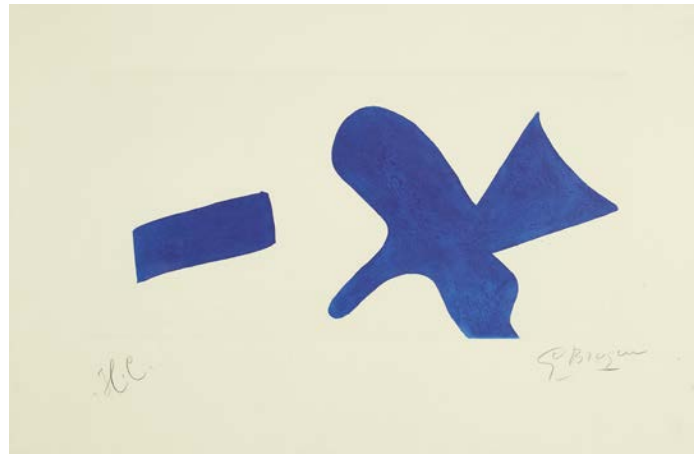
Also included in the collection are six colorful aquatints based on important Picasso paintings or *gravures d'interprétation*, executed with stunning virtuosity. Among these vibrant and iconic works are *Le Californie (Intérieur rouge)*, 1959-60 (illustrated left; estimate: \$6,000-8,000) and *Verre d'absinthe*, 1972 (estimate: \$9,000-12,000). Ernst Beyeler has recalled of Picasso's aquatint technique, "You know, it is not easy, it's much more complicated than fitting Versailles into a matchbox."

An impressive selection of works by Joan Miró from his earlier years of producing *gravures*, 1958-1960, will also be offered in the April auction. Twenty-five lots, including working proofs, many beautifully enhanced with hand-coloring by Miró, *bon à tirers* ("good to print"), signed proofs, *hors commerce* ("outside the edition") impressions, and unique uneditioned/unrecorded proofs will all be available, as well as three drawings relating to editioned prints. Rare state proofs from Richard Hamilton's *Picasso's meninas*, 1973 (illustrated page 4; estimate: \$40,000-60,000), and Braque's uneditioned *L'oiseau bleu*, circa 1960 (illustrated page 3; estimate: \$3,000-5,000), will also be included in the auction.

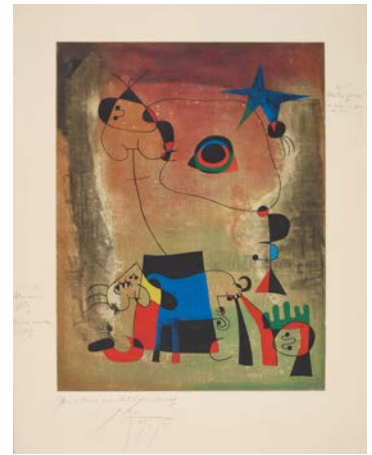




**Jasper Johns, b. 1930**  
*Periscope*, 1981  
 Etching and aquatint, signed and annotated BAT  
 Estimate: \$15,000-25,000



**Georges Braque, 1882-1963**  
*L'Oiseau bleu*, circa 1960  
 Aquatint, one of a few proofs.  
 Estimate: \$3,000-5,000



**After Joan Miró, 1893- 1983**  
*Le Chien bleu (The Blue Dog)*, 1958  
 Aquatint, signed and annotated 'Bon à tirer pour 325 exemplaires'  
 Estimate: \$10,000-15,000



**Joan Miró, 1893-1983**  
*Les Philosophes II (The Philosophers)*, 1958  
 Two aquatints: a rare working proof with hand-coloring and printing notes by the artist, and the signed and annotated 'Bon à tirer pour cent épreuves' impression  
 Estimate: \$8,000-12,000



**Jim Dine, b. 1935**  
*The Heart Called Paris Spring*, 1982  
 Etching with drypoint, a signed proof.  
 Estimate: \$5,000-7,000



**Le Corbusier, 1887-1965**  
*Unité, planche 14*, 1963  
 Etching and aquatint, signed and annotated 'bon à tirer' (one of seven plates from this series being offered)  
 Estimate: \$2,000 - 4,000



**Richard Hamilton, 1922-2011**

*Picasso's meninas*: three rare state proofs, 1973

Three etchings with aquatint, roulette, drypoint and burnishing, all signed and annotated 'State I', 'State III' and 'State V' (the 6<sup>th</sup> and final state was printed in an edition of 90 for the portfolio *Hommage à Picasso*), there were only two of each state proof printed  
Estimate: \$40,000-60,000

**Auction:** Tuesday, 18 April 2017

**Auction viewing:** 10-18 April 2017 | Monday to Saturday 10am-6pm, Sunday 12pm-6pm

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

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