

RESULTS

Wealthy 20th century

The speciality of the week was 20th century decorative arts, and in three sales at Sotheby's, Christie's and Artcurial, they totalled €10,582,222. In Art Deco, Émile-Jacques Ruhlmann was the big winner because in six equally distributed lots in the top ten of the two Anglo-Saxon auction houses, he collected €1,913,250, with €520,000 at the top of the chart for a large fluted chest of drawers with redans (Christie's) and €340,000 for the 'Spider' table (Sotheby's). At Artcurial, it was Gaston Suisse who ran the show with the €100,000 achieved by the three nest of tables reproduced. Decorative arts from the beginning of the previous century attracted attention with two world records registered at Sotheby's for Antoni Gaudi (€320,000) and Archibald Knox (€95,000). The post-war period was distinguished



€625,000 Jacques-Émile Ruhlmann (1879-1933), "grande cannelée à redents", a makassar ebony, ivory and silvered bronze commode, circa 1923. Paris, 9 avenue Matignon, 27 May, Christie's auction house.

with €322,930 for the furniture created by Maria Pergay in 1972 for the Baron and Baroness of Gourgaud's residence in Corsica, a free form table by Charlotte Perriand published by Steph Simon obtaining €180,000 (Christie's). The Lalanne's creations stood out in the three sales, the peak reached at €360,000 for a 'Gold carp' by François-Xavier Lalanne (Christie's). The decision by Sotheby's to make Paris the European destination of sales for 20th century decorative arts was reinforced by the €4,746,950 including fees (77.4% in lots - 85% in value) fetched by this session on 25 May. Two world records were obtained, the first reached €320,000, double the estimate, for Antoni Gaudi thanks to a bench with two seats around 1898-1917 from the Santa Colonna Cervello church near Barcelona. It was bought by a European collector. It features a wrought iron structure in black patina and a seat and backrest in olive wood. The latter forms a desk with two spaces in accolade on the back, separated by a circular edged arc carved by diamond points. Since 1996, no work by Gaudi of this calibre has appeared in public sales. The other world record corresponded to €95,000 Archibald Knox with a 'Cymric' mirror from 1901 published by Liberty & Co, and was purchased by a French collector. It is in a silver frame (34 x 36.5 cm) with a slightly overlapping base, and a rounded off mirror made in light accolade highlighted by blue enamelled arts and crafts ornamentation with chalcedony and lapis lazuli tailpieces. Two detached vertical rods finished by a stylised floral motif enclose a lapis lazuli drop, the wooden core made out of mahogany with a folding leg in enamelled silver. This sale on 27 May at Christie's closed the speciality of the week, 20th century decorative arts, by totalling €3,757,775 in only 52 proposed numbers (84% in lots -



€124,500 Gaston Suisse (1896-1988), series of three nest of tables, around 1936, black lacquer, red oxblood and gold, 46.5 x 40 x 41 cm. Paris, Hôtel Marcel-Dassault, 25 May. Artcurial - Briest - Poulain - F. Tajan auction house. Mr. Marclhac.

97% in value). Eight bids at six figures resonated. Like at Galerie Charpentier, Emile-Jacques Ruhlmann confirmed his status of king of the Art Deco with €1,179,000 including fees collected in three lots. At €520,000, the estimate was respected for a large fluted chest of drawers with redans around 1923 in Makassar ebony on the top in loose setback divided by the lines of ivory blocks in three rectangles, its perimeter is inlaid with a frieze of ivory denticles, material found on the hooves of the feet before angled tapering, the handles

of two large drawers flanked by four smaller ones are in silvered bronze (l. 1190 cm). It was acquired by an Asian collector. At €310,000, the estimate was quadrupled thanks to a European gallery for a coffee table with double columns in European walnut veneer, the ivory also in denticles highlighting the edge of the top (diam. 80 cm), whilst a line of blocks draw a circle, the base of six pairs of squared columns are also highlighted with ivory. These two furniture come from a private collection in Paris.

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