CYPRIA EST. 2006

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The Greek Sale, 24 May 2016

PRESS RELEASE

VIEWING

CYPRIA, Nicosia: 18th to 24th of May

The forthcoming Greek Sale includes a variety of the finest and rarest works by Greek and Cypriot artists from the 19th century to date. The auction will be held on the evening of May 24th at Cypria, Nicosia. The lots will be exhibited at Cypria from the 18th to the 23rd of May.

Two Figures, is one of Georgios Bouzianis' (1885-1959) finest works and leads Cypria's Greek Sale.

Other highlights include *Untitled*, by Gaitis (1923-1984) a rare example from the artist's abstract expressionism and gesture art period. *Το Μαριάκι* (little Mary), an early portrait by Polykleitos Regos (1903-1984), who was one of the best Greek artists that largely focused on landscape and portraiture. *Couple* is a fine watercolour and pencil drawing by Nicolaos Lytras (1883-1927), who is considered one of Greece's first revolutionary painters. His work's progression was influenced by expressionism and early European modernism and he is seen as representing Greek art's moment of transcendence from the academicism of The Munich School.

Alexander Palma di Cesnola

A rare copy of Alexander Palma di Cesnola's *Collection of Cypriot Antiquities*, published in 1881, signed by Palma di Cesnola (1839-1904) himself is one of the rarest and most valuable objects in this sale. The book is titled Lawrence Cesnola's Collection, Cyprus Antiquities, excavated by Major Alexander Palma di Cesnola, 1876-1879. The book contains 38 letterpress leaves, the majority with printed English text. 34 of these leaves have handwritten Italian translations, believed to be by Palma di Cesnola himself, making this copy unique. The book also contains 63 albumen photographs, 62 photographs of objects in the collection and a photograph of a map of Cyprus.

Following his military career in Europe and the American Civil War, Palma di Cesnola was appointed American consul in Cyprus in 1865. Whilst in Cyprus, he amassed an unrivalled collection of some 6,000 Cypriot antiquities, which he gathered through extensive excavations and through purchase. Eventually he sold his collection to The Metropolitan Museum of Art. In 1879 he became the Museum's first director, a position that he held until his death in 1904.

The Cesnola Collection was the earliest acquisition of Mediterranean antiquities by The Metropolitan Art Museum in New York and constituted its primary display of archaeological material. The collection is the richest and most varied representation, outside Cyprus, of Cypriot antiquities. It contains antiquities representing every major medium worked in antiquity—stone, copper-based metal, clay, faience, glass, gold and silver, ivory, and semiprecious stones. These pieces testify to the quintessentially Cypriot amalgam of indigenous traditions and elements assimilated from the ancient Assyrians, Egyptians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans who, one after the other, ruled the island.

AUCTION HIGHLIGHTS

Georgios Bouzianis *Two Figures*

Two Figures is a prime example of the fluidity and passion with which Georgios Bouzianis approached the human figure. One of Greece's pre-eminent expressionists, Geogrios Bouzianis (1885-1959) handled the human figure with artistic intelligence projecting to it human passions expressed through voluptuous forms, vitality and a strong sense of rhythm. Bouzianis transcended the academic tenets of the Munich School with an art of emotional and physical immediacy seeking like the German expressionists of the interwar European avant-garde period to restore humanity's primal ties with nature.

Yannis Gaitis *Untitled*

Untitled's ferocious and expressive brush work and lush paint make it a fine example of Yannis Gaitis' (1923-1984) early Paris years when the artist experimented with abstract expressionism and gesture art. Throughout his oeurvre, Gaitis passionately experimented with different artistic movements. His works of different periods carry influences from cubism, surrealism, figurative art, abstraction, and abstract expressionism. Gaitis moved to Paris in 1954 and his work during the early Paris years carries the influence of art informel. *Untitled* is a prime example of the eruptive expressionist works of Gaiti's early Paris period and a rarest work of its kind by the artist.

Polykleitos Regos, *Το Μαριάκι* (little Mary)

Το Μαριάκι (little Mary) is one of the early works of Greek painter Polykleitos Regos (1903-1984). The Naxos-born prominent landscaper and expressive portraitist studied at The Athens School of Fine Arts under expressionist Nicolaos Lytras, one of the revolutionary artists of his time who countered the academic realism of The Munich School that was prevalent in Greek Art in late 19th – early 20th century. *Το Μαριάκι* echoes a subtle spirituality and a sweet melancholy that are characteristic of the Byzantine Art influence in the progression of the artist's works and the human compassion with which Regos approached portrait painting.

Nicolaos Lytras, *Couple*

Couple is a fine sketch by Greek revolutionary artist Nicolaos Lytras (1883-1927) whose work mainly consisted of landscapes, portraits and still life. Son of Nikiforos Lytras, founding father of Greek Art and a student of The Munich School, Nicolaos Lytras countered the rigidity of academic realism finding new means of expression. He did this through the impetuous and vibrant brush strokes of expressionism and through the meticulous use of colour and light in the creation of forms that is characteristic of early European modernism. Lytras was also an excellent sketcher and had done a series of illustrations for Penelope Delta's Novel Without a Name.

CYPRIA LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE

Cypria has redesigned its website introducing navigation, functionality and image viewing features providing a user-friendlier experience. The website can be viewed and navigated on computer, tablet and mobile. The new features also include a "registration/log in" feature which users can use to store their details. A "place a bid" feature has also been introduced enabling submitting a written bid online, as well as an "online initial valuation" feature allowing users to send details and images of items that they wish to enter for auction.

NOTE FOR EDITORS

Cypria is a private auction house, founded in 2006. In the year of its launch, Cypria successfully held the island's first major sale of 19th and 20th century Greek and Cypriot art. It achieved great success and started a wave of Greek sale auctions in Cyprus which continue to date, changing the landscape of the art market in Cyprus. Cypria is a pioneer in showcasing significant Greek art and is also committed to including the finest Cypriot art. Our success to date includes the attainment of record prices. With art now being increasingly considered an advisable and profitable investment, Cypria remains devoted to upholding its level of success by dealing with selected works of high artistic value, as well as offering unparalleled service and expertise.

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