

Im Kinsky Art Auctions

PRESS RELEASE

73rd Art Auction on 21. April 2009

RUBENS AND VAN DYCK IM KINSKY

In October 2004 *im Kinsky Art Auctions* offered a portrait of a Dutch merchant. For decades this painting had been regarded as a genuine Frans Hals. However, in the current catalogue by Prof. Seymour Slive it is no longer adjudged to be authentic, but a work by artists from the painter's circle. As a consequence it was described and evaluated by im Kinsky with due caution.

At auction it exceeded the reserve price of € 20,000 by a long way; in the end it cost the buyer more than € 570,000. Last year the picture came under the hammer again. Sotheby's in London auctioned it as a "genuine" Frans Hals and the hammer didn't fall until the price had reached 6.3 million pounds. A profit for the buyer of 1,091 %!

Something similar could happen at the **Old Masters auction at im Kinsky on 21 April** (4 pm). In pole position in the catalogue is an oil sketch on the world-famous monumental work "The Rape of the Sabine Women", which is only attributed to **Peter Paul Rubens**.



In recent years all the major Rubens researchers have been investigating this oil sketch. Ludwig Buchard, Michael Jaffé and Martin Davies have freely accepted the work as a sketch from Rubens' own hand. J. S. Held is the only expert who expressed any doubt about this. And this is what led the auction house to only "attribute" the work.

The reserve price - erring on the side of caution - is € 50,000. Those who are sure of its authenticity will be prepared to offer many times this sum.

im Kinsky
Kunst Auktionen GmbH

Palais Kinsky
A-1010 Wien, Freyung 4
Mo-Fr 10 am – 6 pm
Telephone +43 1 532 42 00
Telefax +43 1 532 49 00
or +43 1 532 42 00-9
office@imkinsky.com
www.imkinsky.com

Firmenbuch Nr. FN 34302 w
Handelsgericht Wien
UID Nr. ATU 37293905
Bankverbindungen:
BAWAG Wien
Nr. 00110-021-631 BLZ 14000
Hypo Vereinsbank München
Nr. 5374103 BLZ 70020270

It is also possible that the lots will include another sensation: after finishing his apprenticeship with Rubens, **Anthony van Dyck** moved to London in 1632, where he worked as the court painter and portrait painter for King Charles I. Van Dyck painted portraits of the king's wife *Henrietta Maria* several times – but are the face, hands and bust in our painting really by the master himself?



Erik Larsen, the famous van Dyck researcher is convinced this is the case. In fact, he goes even further, noting in an evaluation of this painting that this is not only the best version he is aware of, it is also the original version from which numerous copies were made later on.

There are, however, dissenting opinions. The oeuvre catalogue published by Barnes, Poorter, Millar and Vey (2004) no longer mentions the work. These experts assume that an original version never existed. Erik Larson, on the other hand, highlighted the painting by illustrating it with a colour plate in his 1988 catalogue. He explains that the work has since been cleaned and restored, and once the over-painting and yellowing varnish were removed, there could no longer be any doubt that this is the first version, painted in its entirety by the master himself.

Regardless of which account is correct – this painting of the English queen in a white satin dress is also merely attributed to Dyck and will go under the hammer at a reserve price of just € 50,000. And, providing at least two bidders believe it originates from Dyck's hand, this painting will fetch a sum several times higher.

If you would like more information or would like to order photos, I would be pleased to hear from you:
Iris J. Gradenegger, Tel. +43 1 5324200-11,
e-mail: gradenegger@imkinsky.com

PRIVATE VIEW:

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Wednesday, 15 April 2009
6 pm - 8 pm in the exhibition rooms,
on the 1st floor of Palais Kinsky, Freyung 4, 1010 Vienna
Lecture starts 6.30 pm

AUCTION:

21 April 2009

Old Masters, 4 pm
19th Century and Classic Modernism, 5 pm
Contemporary Art, 7 pm

22 April 2009

Antiques, 3 pm
Viewing 16 – 22 April 2009
Mo-Fr 10 am-6 pm, Sa 10 am-5 pm, So 11 am-4 pm

Catalogue orders: +43 1 5324200 or office@imkinsky.com
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