

STONE

Including Property from the Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Collection

Sotheby's to present its first ever auction dedicated to decorative hardstone and marble



LONDON, November 2019 –This December, Sotheby's will present its first ever dedicated sale of objects and furniture made of, or incorporating, marble and hardstones. Taking place on 4 December, STONE will explore the incredibly rich use of such materials in a variety of Decorative Arts, through some of the finest examples of Russian hardstone, Roman marble, and Italian *pietre dure* works.

Leading the sale will be property from The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Collection, one of the world's most prestigious collections of decorative arts, currently on loan to the V&A in London. Featuring 18 carefully selected lots of micromosaics and *pietre dure*, all proceeds will exclusively be used towards new acquisitions for the Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Collection.

Born in London in 1913 as Abraham Bernstein, the son of Jewish migrants, Sir Arthur Gilbert (1913-2001) met his future wife, Rosalinde, in 1930. Together they began a successful career in fashion, with Rosalinde designing her own self-titled label of evening dresses, and Arthur focusing on the promotion and marketing. Following their move to Los Angeles in 1949, the couture business became so successful that the couple retired at 36, after only 15 years in the fashion industry.

The Gilberts approached collecting with the same ambition and scope they applied to their business ventures. With considerable devotion to their chosen fields, the couple went on to create one of the most comprehensive 20th century collections of micromosaics, snuffboxes, miniatures, silver, gold and hardstone objects. With an extraordinary variety of forms and subjects represented, the collection comprises more than 1,000 objects.

Having started to build the collection in the 1960s, by 1975 its core was on permanent display at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA). In 1995, Sir Arthur Gilbert moved the collection from Los Angeles to London. It has been on loan to the V&A since 2008 with dedicated galleries for gold, silver and mosaics.

The works offered from the Gilbert Collection include an intricate George III *pietre dure* mounted mahogany cabinet, inlaid with vivid floral and ornithological panels (est. £30,000-50,000), two monumental Italian micromosaic panels with views of Roman monuments by Luigi Gallandt, as well as a micromosaic table top attributed to the Barberi Workshop (est. £50,000-80,000).

João Magalhães, Sotheby's Senior Specialist, Continental Furniture commented: "Sotheby's is honoured to have been chosen by the Gilbert Collection to offer these pieces for sale, and especially in the context of this new themed sale. The collecting market for *pietre dure*, hardstones and marble works of art is very active and we are excited not only with having a focused platform for this type of objects but also with the selection we are presenting, incredibly varied and with some truly outstanding pieces".

Other highlights from the sale include fine examples of the Russian hardstones, a French specimen marble collection, and a Spanish neoclassical portico from the Royal manufacture of hardstones of Madrid (est £20,000-25,000). Italy, with its great tradition of use of marbles going back to Antiquity, is very well represented, with several works made of imperial porphyry, such as the 18th century *Bust of Faustina* (est. £50,000-80,000), and the impressive Compton-Devonshire Atheniënne, (est. £80,000-100,000) carved of white Carrara marble, possibly acquired by the 6th Duke of Devonshire in Rome, to be offered.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ROSALINDE AND ARTHUR GILBERT COLLECTION

A George III *pietre dure* mounted mahogany cabinet-on-stand

The *pietre dure* panels, Florence, mid-17th century, the cabinet-on-stand circa 1765
Estimate £30,000-50,000

Incorporating 17th-century Florentine panels, this cabinet is an homage to the output of the Grand Ducal workshops and provides an insight into the appetite for *pietre dure* works among the collecting elite of the 18th century. The vivid floral and ornithological panels were almost certainly collected by a wealthy patron on The Grand Tour, and the cabinet would have functioned as a *Wunderkammer* in the German tradition, the drawers and secret compartments filled with precious objects.



An Italian micromosaic, lapis lazuli and black marble table top

Rome, circa 1875, attributed to the Barberi Workshop
Estimate £50,000-80,000

Incorporating micromosaic inlays consisting of five circular scenes portraying classical figures with attributes of the seasons, the quality and originality of this table can only be compared to the technical virtuosity of the Roman mosaicist of the 19th century, Michelangelo Barberi (1787-1876) and his workshop. Barberi

was the premier artist during the peak of the art form in 19th-century Europe, and this table top shares a similar composition to Barberi's design 'Bacile del Cinquecento', one of his most important pieces, made for the Duke of Bracciano in 1842.

A large scale Italian micromosaic panel of the Roman Forum

Luigi A. Gallandt, Rome, circa 1850-75
Estimate £120,000-180,000

The monumental scale and quality of this panel, achieved by one of the leading Italian mosaicists of the 19th century, illustrates the fascination to memorialize Antique monuments imbued with the grandeur of Rome.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE STONE



A pair of Russian red and green Korgon porphyry tazze

Circa 1860, by the Kolyvan Imperial Lapidary Works
Estimate £15,000-20,000

These tazze, of impressive scale, are made in two colours of Korgon porphyry, first found in 1786, in the Kolyvan-Voskresenk region.

Bust of Faustina the younger (circa 130 - 175/176 C.E.)

Italian, Rome, 18th century, after the Antique
Estimate £50,000-80,000

This elegant portrait of the Empress Faustina exemplifies the taste for combining expensive and rare coloured marbles which reached its zenith in Rome with the masterful busts and figures executed circa 1600 by the French-born sculptor Nicolas Cordier (1567-1612).





A Italian carved white Carrara marble Athenienne

Late 18th century
Estimate £ 80,000-100,000

This splendid carved athenienne is after an existing Antique example in the Galleria dei Candelabri in the Museo Pio Clementino at the Vatican. In response to the growing popularity of the restoration and sale of classical antiquities to European aristocrats on their Grand Tour during the late 18th/early 19th century, fine replicas of some of the most interesting Antique works of art in the Papal collections were made by sculptors such as Piranesi and Cavaceppi.

This athenienne most probably entered the Devonshire Collections through the voracious collecting of William, the 6th Duke, who visited Rome in 1819. Fascinated by, and knowledgeable of, stones, he was the greatest collector of Italian sculpture of its time in England and acquired works by the best Neoclassical sculptors then working in Rome – Canova, Bartolini, Rinaldi, Thorvaldsen.

A matched pair of Neapolitan *pietre dure* and marble tops

Late 17th century, on early Louis XV style carved giltwood console tables
Estimate £200,000-400,000

By the early 17th century, the popularity of polychrome inlaid-marble decoration had spread from Florence and Rome to Naples, the largest and most important city in South Italy. These impressive table tops transpose this same striking language to a secular function and are one of the best examples of their kind.



A pair of large scale Italian carved red Egyptian porphyry oval vases

Rome, 18th century
Estimate £100,000-150,000

These spectacular vases are rare survivals not only for their impressive scale but also for being a pair. The sheer size of these pieces reveals the scale of the columns from which they were carved and the herculean effort that would have been involved in transporting those from Egypt in Roman times.

A German carved white Carrara marble centre table

Attributed to K.F. Schinkel, circa 1830
Estimated £80,000-120,000

The aspirations of the leading German architect and designer to the Prussian Court, Karl Friedrich Schinkel (1781-1841) are evident in the design of this table. By reviving the historic forms and techniques of Antiquity, Schinkel proves how instrumental he was in the development of Classicism in Germany.



Works from STONE will be exhibited at Sotheby’s New Bond Street, London from 29 November – 3 December 2019 ahead of the auction on 4 December.

About Sotheby’s

Sotheby’s has been uniting collectors with world-class works of art since 1744. Sotheby’s became the first international auction house when it expanded from London to New York (1955), the first to conduct sales in Hong Kong (1973), India (1992) and France (2001), and the first international fine art auction house in China (2012). Today, Sotheby’s has a global network of 80 offices in 40 countries and presents auctions in 10 different salesrooms, including New York, London, Hong Kong and Paris. Sotheby’s offers collectors the resources of *Sotheby’s Financial Services*, the world’s only full-service art financing company, as well as the collection, artist, estate & foundation advisory services of its subsidiary, *Art Agency, Partners*. Sotheby’s also presents private sale opportunities in more than 70 categories, including S|2, the gallery arm of Sotheby’s Global Fine Art Division, and three retail businesses: Sotheby’s Wine, Sotheby’s Diamonds, and Sotheby’s Home, the online marketplace for interior design.

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