

Sotheby's to Present Edward Hopper's Autobiographical Masterwork **Two Comedians**

A Self-Portrait of Hopper and His Wife Jo
Is Estimated to Sell for \$12/18 Million

Formerly in the Collection of Frank & Barbara Sinatra

To Lead Sotheby's
American Art Auction in New York on 16 November
Now On Public View



NEW YORK, 7 November 2018 – Sotheby's is pleased to announce that Edward Hopper's **Two Comedians** will lead our American Art Auction in New York on 16 November 2018 (estimate \$12/18 million). Painted in 1966, *Two Comedians* ranks among the most poignant and personal works in Hopper's celebrated *oeuvre*. Evocative of many of the most important themes in Hopper's body of

work, this seminal painting is distinguished further by its notable provenance: it was acquired by Frank and Barbara Sinatra in 1972, and remained in their collection until it was purchased by the current owner in 1995.

Two Comedians is now on public view in Sotheby's New York galleries, as part of our exhibitions of American, Contemporary, and Impressionist & Modern Art.

The present work represents the culmination of Hopper's career, presenting a self-portrait of the artist and his wife, Jo, on stage, taking a final bow before turning to walk into the unknown. Jo served as Hopper's primary model and muse throughout his *oeuvre*, yet she was typically portrayed as an anonymous character in an enigmatic scene. In *Two Comedians*, Hopper depicts his wife explicitly as the two figures hold hands and gesture tenderly toward one another, a positioning that symbolizes their close bond and the significant role Jo played in the artist's life and art.

Two Comedians manifests a number of leitmotifs that recur throughout Hopper's career. His choice of a stage for the setting of the present work speaks to his lifelong interest in theater and film, as well as his voyeuristic approach to his art and his interest in watching his subjects interact with their environments. Hopper also depicts himself and Jo as 17th century Italian performers, known as Pierrots. He crops the work to eliminate the audience, a decision that speaks to his affinity for performers and his consideration of them as fellow outsiders, who shared the same sense of detachment he often felt during his life. The empty spaces and voids found throughout Hopper's work are connected to the theme of death, which is emotionally manifested in the darkly nebulous background of *Two Comedians*.

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Images are available upon request

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