

It was not only paintings from the early 20th century that were to achieve record prices. On February 24th was the sale of Old Masters and 19th Century Paintings and Drawings, at which six more World Records were broken. The *Portrait of Alfred and Elisabeth Dedreux* by Théodore Géricault (1791–1824), a surprisingly intense, almost alienated, portrait of the young brother and sister, painted circa 1818, sold for €9 million (US\$11.6 million), setting a new World Record for the artist at auction. Only a short while earlier, another painting had shattered the World Record for a work by the artist Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780–1867). This was the exquisite *Portrait de la comtesse de la Rue*, possibly the first female portrait painted by Ingres, in 1804, which sold for €2 million (US\$2.6 million).

The sales of February 24th continued with Silver, Miniatures and Objects of Vertu. These items had been displayed in long cases in a darkened area of the view, with the only lights trained on the objects themselves. The effect, as one visitor put it, was like entering an imperial treasure room. The fiercest bidding in this section of the sale, which was 100 per cent sold, was for the collection of Hanover cups, which eventually totalled €6.1 million (US\$7.89 million). These magnificent cups, some of which are engraved with dedicatory inscriptions indicating they were sent as homage to the reigning dukes of Brunswick-Lüneberg, would originally have been displayed on a buffet, a display that was mirrored by their placement in the apartments of Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Bergé. Several important works in this sale, including the extremely rare German silver-gilt quadruple Osterode cup made by Christoph Uder in 1649, were bought by Galerie J. Kugel, while the Musée du Louvre bought the important Louis XIV rose-cut diamond and enamelled gold-mounted presentation miniature portrait by Jean Petitot (1607–1691), circa 1680.

Another section of the sale that had been particularly eagerly anticipated was 20th Century Decorative Art and Design, held on February 25th, and it lived up to all expectations, achieving numerous World Records. Yves Saint Laurent and Pierre Bergé had put together a stunning selection of Art Deco pieces, which reflected one of the most celebrated periods of Parisian cultural life. In the event, the evening was dominated by the late Eileen Gray (1878–1976), a diminutive Irishwoman who worked in Paris. As the Christie's catalogue says: "The name of Eileen Gray has acquired a legendary status in the annals of the applied arts of the early 20th century." The two top lots in the sale were pieces from amongst those designed by Gray for the apartment of Suzanne Talbot (Mrs Mathieu-Lévy) circa 1920–1921. Both of these pieces have relationships with Asian art. The "dragons" armchair, circa 1917–1919, which was bought by Robert and Cheska Vallois for €21.9



Lot 153 (left), German parcel-gilt heart-shaped cup (Herzpokal), maker's mark of Tobias Wolff, Nuremberg, 1609–1623, height 29.5 cm. €61,000

Lot 155 (centre), German silver-gilt cup and cover, maker's mark of Leonhard Vorchhamer, Nuremberg, circa 1630, height 54 cm. €115,000

Lot 154 (right), German parcel-gilt heart-shaped cup (Herzpokal), maker's mark of Jobst Planckh, Nuremberg, 1611–1629, height 38 cm. €75,400



Lot 292, Jean Dunand (1877–1942), two monumental baluster vases, 1925, geometric decoration in red lacquer, gold and silver on black lacquer ground, heights 100 cm. €3,089,000

million (US\$28.3 million) appears to reflect the Chinese view of the dragon as benevolent protector. The sale of this chair established a new World Auction Record for the artist, and a new World Auction Record for any 20th decorative art and design work. The bold enfilade (circa 1915–1917), which had been in the music room in Saint Laurent's rue de Babylone apartment, was made by Gray in collaboration with the Japanese lacquer craftsman Seijo Sugawara, and indeed the enfilade bears three Japanese inscriptions, probably by Sugawara, which are instructions for its assembly. The enfilade was sold for €3.9 million (US\$5.1 million). Another item in this sale by Gray showed a completely different aspect of her work. This was the so-called "satellite" hanging light, which was made later in her career, circa 1925, and was sold for €2.97 million (US\$3.85 million).

The sale of Sculpture and Works of Art on February 25th, which lasted for a record six hours, also saw a number of World Records broken. One of the highlights of this sale was the bronze head of Janus, dating to the third quarter of the 16th century, which set a new World Record for a French 16th century bronze when it sold to Galerie J. Kugel for €2 million (US\$2.6 million). This sculpture was not only beautiful and impressive in its size, it was also unusual in that the two addorsed heads were both female, while Janus is more commonly shown as male. Another World Record was set by an exceptional South German turned ivory cup and cover dating to the 17th century, which sold for €457,000 (US\$591,312). This ivory cup, which bears some relation to the Hanover cups sold in the Silver, Miniatures and Objects of Vertu sale, discussed above, is impressive not least for the fact that it displays a monumentality of the cup itself and an extraordinary delicacy in the carving of the floral finial.

The final sale on February 25th was Asian Art, Ceramics, Furniture, Islamic Art and Antiques, which contained the relatively few Chinese items in the collection. The serene Chinese seated Buddha in gilt lacquered wood, dating to the 16th century, had been displayed in the apartment at the end of a *cabinet de curiosité* flanked by small lit display cases, and this display was recreated in the Grand Palais. The Buddha was sold for €313,000 (US\$404,997). The sale of two bronze heads of a rat and a rabbit, which had originally been designed and made by European Jesuit missionaries for the Manchu Emperor Qianlong's clepsydra at the Yuanning yuan, had been contested, but the French court refused to grant a claim that the sale should not go ahead and they were sold for €15.7 million (US\$20.3 million) each. Also in this session was the imposing and much admired 1st–2nd century AD Roman marble Minotaur, discussed above, which sold for €913,000 (US\$1.6 million).

Jonathan Rendell, Christie's Deputy Chairman and one of the major guiding