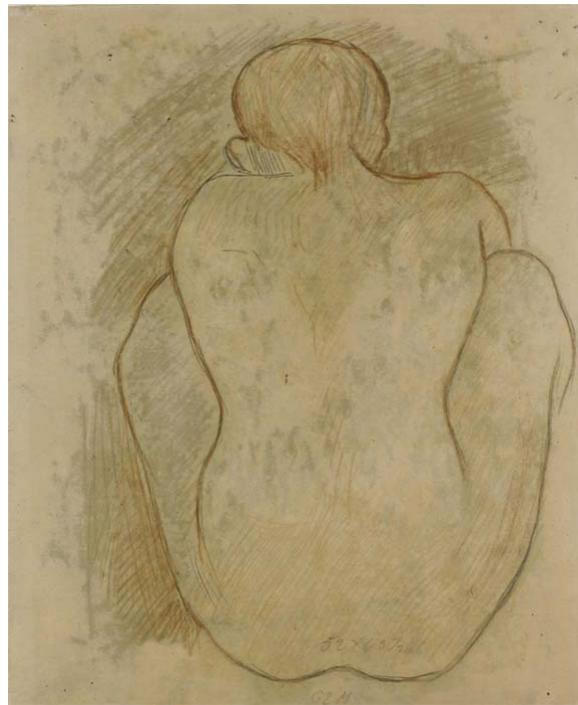


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Sotheby's To Sell Rare Prints By Paul Gauguin From The Collection Of Stanley J. Seeger



Crouching Tahitian Woman, Traced monotype print, 1901-1902, estimate £180,000-220,000*

LONDON, WEDNESDAY, 19 JANUARY, 2011 --- On **Wednesday, 30 March, 2011**, Sotheby's London will present for sale a magnificent collection of works on paper by Paul Gauguin that incorporates the artist's three most significant categories of print-making activity. Executed in France and Tahiti between 1894 and 1902, the works are among the finest within Gauguin's printed oeuvre, and together they serve to represent the most important collection of Gauguin prints to be offered at auction for over a generation. From the Collection of Stanley J. Seeger, the ten works have a well-recorded provenance that can be traced back in most cases directly to the artist. The group will lead Sotheby's sale of *Old Master, Modern and Contemporary Prints*, and is estimated at £430,000-574,000.

Monotypes, traced monotypes and woodcuts were developed by Gauguin to a level of artistic innovation unseen among his contemporaries. When he arrived in Tahiti without any form of printing press, Gauguin explored and developed his printmaking techniques to produce the traced monotype, or 'printed drawing' as the artist also called the method which allowed him to print clear linear compositions with coloured backgrounds. *Crouching Tahitian Woman*, 1901-02, estimated at £180,000-220,000, is a superb realisation of this process (pictured on previous page). Printed in sanguine and black, and with tracing in red crayon and pencil on the reverse, the work demonstrates Gauguin's pioneering experimentation in this medium.



By combining the monotype with the woodcut, Gauguin was able to produce the most stunning atmospheric works. *Oviri (Sauvage)* (estimated at £60,000-80,000, pictured left) incorporates the image of the subject printed from the woodblock with a unique atmosphere, achieved by manipulating the ink and printing as a monotype. *Oviri* means 'wild' or 'savage' in Tahitian and this mysterious creature – embedded in the primitive mythology of the island – manifested itself in a variety of Gauguin's works, encompassing woodcuts (around seventeen uniquely printed impressions), one drawing, two monotypes, one related woodcut, two oils and a stoneware ceramic (arguably his greatest work in that discipline, dating to 1894 and in the Musée d'Orsay, Paris).

Gauguin called himself a savage, and, with his various representations of the subject, he illustrates his desire to reconnect with primitive society and to turn his back on Western civilisation. In a letter dated 1900 he even asked G.-D. de Monfreid, one of his first biographers, to send the ceramic sculpture to Tahiti to be placed over his tomb. In this graphic version created in 1894, the subject is modelled with watercolour and the background is also hand-painted in pale blue, yellow and green. The interplay between monotype, hand-colouring and woodcut creates a stunning effect in which the figure of *Oviri* seems to arise from a primordial earthy blackness.

Gauguin esteemed his wood engravings, as evidenced in a letter written in 1901 to Monfreid, “I am sure that in time my wood engravings, that are so different from all the other engravings that are being done, will have some value.” A further combination of techniques led the artist to make colour woodcuts, incorporating the texture and tone of the paper into the image itself. Several examples in the Sotheby’s sale include *Idole Tahitienne*, circa 1894-95, estimated at £30,000-50,000 (pictured right) and *Soyes Amoureuses, Vous Serez Heureuses*, 1898, estimated at £15,000-20,000.



The remaining prints in the collection are *Le Pêcheur Buvant auprès de sa Pirogue* (woodcut printed in colours highlighted with touches of red crayon, 1894, est. £80,000-120,000, pictured left), *Femmes Animaux et Feuillage* (woodcut printed in black, 1898, est. £12,000-15,000), *Le Porteur de Fei* (woodcut printed in black, 1898-99, est. £8,000-12,000), *Ta Atua (Les Dieux)* (woodcut printed in black, 1899, est. £18,000-22,000), *Changement de Résidence* (woodcut printed in ochre and black, 1899, est. £15,000-20,000) and *Titre pour Le Sourire* (woodcut printed in black, 1899, est. £12,000-15,000).

Among the notable figures who previously owned these works are the artists Aristide Maillol and Gustave Feyer; G.-D. de Monfreid; biographers Richard Field and John Rewald; Spanish sculptor and friend of the artist, Paco Durrio (with whom Gauguin left many of his prints upon his departure for Tahiti); and friend and English artist Robert Bevan (whom Gauguin met during his stay in Brittany in the early 1890s).

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*Estimates do not include buyer’s premium

Notes to Editors

On 29 June, 2010, Sotheby’s Paris sold a monotype by Gauguin, entitled *Trois Têtes Tahitiennes*, for €312,750 against a pre-sale estimate of €100,000-150,000, in the sale *Treasures from the Vollard Safe*.