

Trio of Cézanne Masterpieces Head to Christie's Auction in November

By Joe Dziemianowicz Sept. 27, 2023 1:26 pm ET



Fruits et pot de gingembre
Christie's

Three Paul Cézanne paintings—two still lifes and a landscape—will highlight Christie's 20th-century evening auction on Nov. 9 in New York.

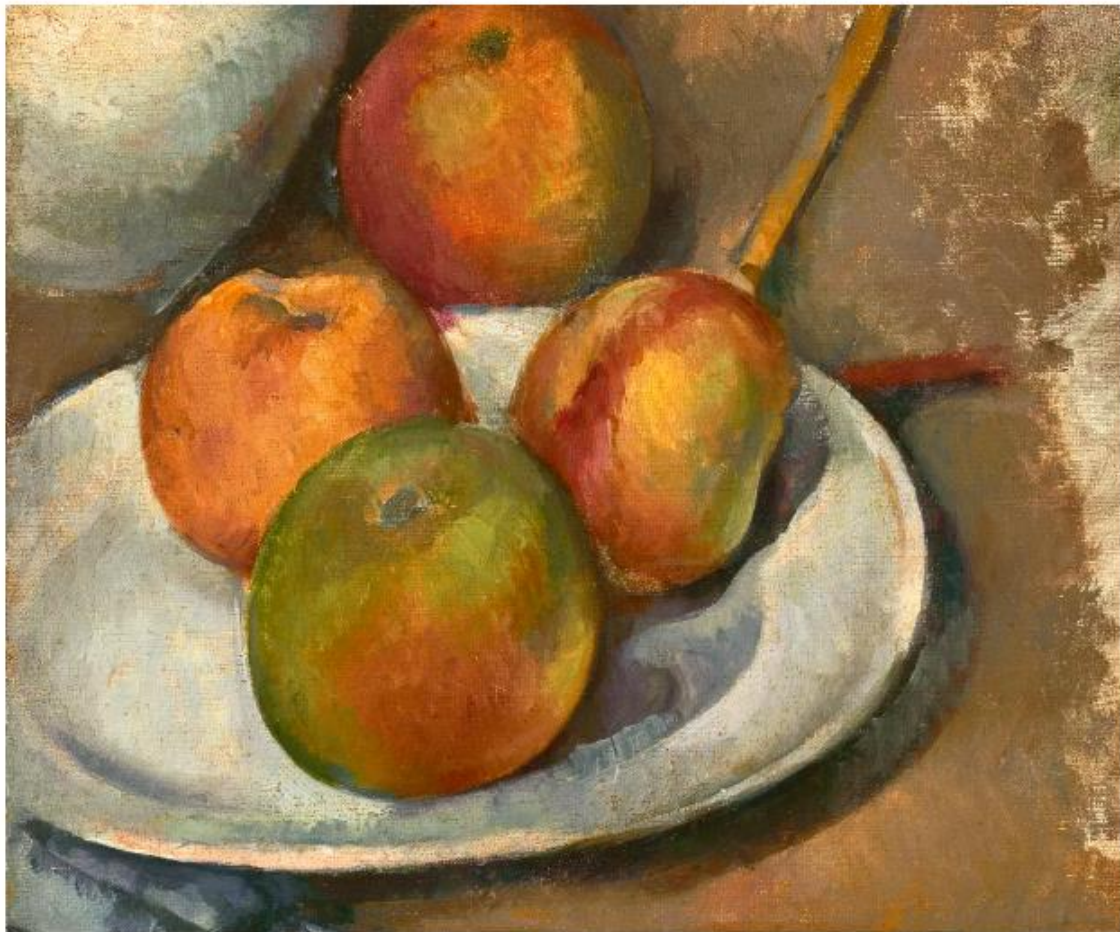
Drawn from the collection of the Museum Langmatt in Baden, Switzerland, the sale of the works is part of a drive to raise US\$45 million to secure the institution's "long-term future," according to Christie's.

"Once that mark has been reached in the auction, we'll withdraw works that have yet to be offered," says Max Carter, vice chairman of 20th- and 21st-century art. "They will be returned to the museum."

The museum could raise that amount with just one painting: the main attraction of the trio, *Fruits et pot de gingembre*, which was painted in the early 1890s. It will be the first offered and is expected to fetch between US\$35 million and US\$55 million.

“Still life was, in some respects, Cézanne’s greatest motif ... and legacy,” Carter says. “This is one of the most important Cézanne still lifes ever to come to auction.”

The second painting in the auction lineup will be *Quatre pommes et un couteau*, which the artist created in 1885. It is expected to go for between US\$7 million and US\$10 million. What makes the painting of everyday apples remarkable, Carter says, “is its amazing sense of volume and architecture.”



Quatre pommes et un couteau, 1885
Christie's

The third work expected to hit the block is *La mer à l'Estaque*, a serene landscape painted in the late 1870s. The estimated price is between US\$3 million and US\$5 million.



La mer à l'Estaque
Christie's

"Cézanne is the father of modern art," says Carter, adding many of his greatest works were last seen on the market within 30 years of his death in 1906.

None of the three paintings have come to auction before, according to Carter. Collectors Sydney and Jenny Brown acquired them privately in 1933. The Brown family home, which was bequeathed to the city of Baden, became the Langmatt Museum in 1990.

The three paintings will be on view at Christie's New York beginning Oct. 28.