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ICONIC CULTURAL IMAGE HEADS SELECTION OF WORKS BY TOP SPANISH ARTISTS

SOTHEBY'S ANNUAL SPANISH PAINTINGS SALE TO INCLUDE WORKS BY
ROMERO DE TORRES, SOTOMAYOR, SOROLLA, ZULOAGA, RUSIÑOL AND MIR



Julio Romero de Torres, *Fuensanta* (Est: £400,000-600,000 - €600,000-800,000)

This autumn's annual specialist sale of late 19th and early 20th century **Spanish paintings** will take place on **Wednesday, 14 November 2007** at Sotheby's Bond Street Gallery in London, the highlight of which is Julio Romero de Torres's *Fuensanta* (Est: £400,000-600,000 - €600,000-800,000), an icon of Spanish beauty that has come to light

after decades of obscurity. The sale also has fine and representative works by artists from various regions of the country, each of which has its particular character, colour and accent. The overall estimate for this sale is between £ 3 – 4.5 million (€ 4.5 – 6.75 million).

Julio Romero de Torres (1874-1930) painted *Fuensanta* in the autumn of 1929, months before his death, a time in which he completed another two of his most important works, *La Chiquita Piconera* and *Bodegas Cruz Conde*. The sitter was Maria Teresa Lopez Gonzalez, who was born in Argentina and moved with her family to Romero de Torres's native Cordoba after World War I. Since she first sat for him aged fourteen, María Teresa became one of his favourite models and her likeness is the one most closely associated to the artist.



This iconic late portrait ranks among the artist's finest works; the image of Maria Teresa resting her arms on a copper cauldron was immediately proclaimed as a quintessential rendition of Andalusian beauty and it became imbedded in the Spanish national conscience during the 25 years it graced the face of the country's 100 Peseta note (above). Ironically, although *Fuensanta* became a popular icon, the whereabouts of the original oil remained a mystery and until recently it was only known through an old photograph. Its re-discovery, therefore, marks an exciting event for admirers of the artist as well as for the nation.

Romero de Torres's father Rafael Romero y Barros (1832-1895) is also present in this sale with *Feria de Sevilla* (*The Fair at Seville*), an astonishingly detailed painting of the immensely popular cattle market which is a principal highlight in Seville's social calendar. This painting (right), estimated at £80,000-120,000 (Approx: €120,000-180,000), dates from 1862 and provides not only a varied account of the activity at the fair with soldiers on horseback and ladies in flowing colourful dresses next to shepherds and cattle but also a fine rendition of the city in the background with many of its monumental landmarks.



There are numerous works by artists from Seville itself, among them Antonio María Esquivel (1806-1857), whose *Niña tocando el tambor* (*Girl playing a drum*) from 1837 is

estimated at £30,000-50,000 (Approx: €45,000-75,000). Another Seville painter, José Villegas (1848-1921), has several works in the sale, including *The Procession* (£8,000-12,000 / Approx: €12,000-18,000), *The Harvest* (£6,000-8,000 / Approx: €9,000-12,000) and *A Venetian Canal* (£15,000-18,000 / Approx: €22,000-27,000) and his large scale canvas *Patio de Lindaraja, Alhambra* (£70,000-90,000 / Approx: €105,000-135,000).



Moving eastwards to the coast of Valencia, José Mongrell (1870-1937) provides a romantic vision of the daily toil of the fishermen and women from his home town in *After the Catch* (left: £80,000-120,000 / Approx: €120,000-180,000). In a style all of his own, Mongrell shows his enthusiasm for recording everyday life and capturing the light and shade of the setting sun that he learned at Joaquín Sorolla's studio. The sale also includes a handful of bijoux sketches and small format oils by Sorolla (1863-1923) that capture the essence of his mastery in the use of light in his favourite seafront scenes. Among them, *Boats in a*

Harbour (£10,000-15,000 / Approx: €15,000-22,500), *On the Beach* (£25,000-35,000 / Approx: €32,500-45,500) and *Boats on the Beach* (£20,000-30,000 / Approx: €30,000-45,000).

Although Sorolla settled in Madrid to further his career prospects, he often acknowledged that he was happiest by the sea, so he chose to paint the capital from its meandering riverbank. Painted circa 1908, *A View of Madrid from the Manzanares* (right: £150,000-250,000/ Approx €220,000-370,000) is one of the very few examples of Sorolla painting the Madrid skyline.



There are also several works featuring Madrid by Eugenio Lucas Velázquez (1817-1870) and Eugenio Lucas Villamil (1858-1918), who were father and son respectively. These followers of Goya depicted the folklore, customs and costumes in their work which centred on very local themes such as bullfighting and popular street fairs. *Mariano Ceballos Mounted* and *Banderillas with Firecrackers* by Lucas Velázquez, a pair of paintings offered as a lot for £30,000-50,000 (Approx €44,000-73,500), are after two of

Goya's preparatory drawings for his print series *La Tauromaquia* (The Art of Bullfighting), published in 1816. Lucas Villamil provides two takes on crowds caught unawares by the rain in *Bullfight Suspended by the Downpour* (£20,000-30,000/ Approx €29,000-44,000) and *A Shower* (£15,000-20,000/ Approx €22,000-29,000).

From the North West region of Galicia, Fernando Alvarez de Sotomayor (1875-1960) provides one his most evocative images on the theme of religion in *Praying to the Dolorosa* (£80,000-120,000 /Approx €120,000-175,000). This work was a personal gift from the painter to the family that has put it up for auction and has not been seen in public.



The agricultural lifestyle of the Basque Country and deep rooted identity of its people has generated a genre of painting particular to this region of Spain. Valentín de Zubiaurre (1879-1963) presents his own vision of country folk in *Basque Peasants* (left: £80,000-120,000 / Approx €120,000-180,000).

Another Basque painter who captured the uniqueness of his countrymen was Ignacio de Zuloaga (1870-1945). Unlike Zubiaurre, Zuloaga ventured abroad, first to Paris in 1889, where lodged with Catalan painter Santiago Rusiñol and befriended some of most prominent artists of his time such as Edgar Degas and Auguste Rodin. Like his friend Sorolla, Zuloaga enjoyed considerable critical acclaim in his lifetime and his work was exhibited throughout the United States. The *Portrait of Señora Atucha* (£60,000-80,000 / Approx €90,000-120,000) dates from 1917 and is the first of two he painted of this South American millionaire.

This sale will also feature work by Santiago Rusiñol (1861-1931), along with a choice selection of paintings from other fellow Catalan artists. Rusiñol's *View of Girona II* (£120,000-180,000 /Approx €175,000-260,000) from 1918 is one of a handful of paintings on this theme. Two related views, centring on the octagonal tower in the grounds of Sant Pere de Galligans are in the Museu d'Art de Girona and the Museu Comarcal del Maresme, Mataró, respectively. The sale also includes one of Rusiñol's earliest works, *Washerwomen from the Barceloneta* (£100,000-150,000 / Approx €150,000-220,000) from 1889-90, realist and narrative in style, it was painted upon his return from his first visit to Paris with his friend Ramón Casas.

Around 1914, Ramón Casas (1866-1932) painted *The English Lady* (£70,000-100,000 /Approx €100,000-150,000), which is one of four canvases that together made up *Las*

Cuatro Estaciones (The Four Seasons). Casas, renowned for his portraits of the intellectual, economic and political elite of Barcelona, Paris, Madrid and beyond, chose Julia Peraire – at the time his lover and later his wife – to sit for this portrait. Other works by Casas in this sale are *The Landscape of Tamarit* (£25,000-35,000 / Approx €37,000-52,000) and *Portrait of a Girl* (£20,000-30,000 / Approx €30,000-44,000).

Along with Rusiñol, Casas was one of the stalwarts of the *Els Quatre Gats* café which brought together the leading members of the art scene in Barcelona, among them Eliseo Meifrén (1859-1940), whose *Fishing Boats at Sunset* (right) is being offered for £100,000-150,000 (Approx € 150,000-220,000). Meifrén experimented constantly with styles and techniques in his landscapes and marine scenes and became renowned for his versatility in



landscape painting. Meifrén used loose brushstrokes and subtle tonal gradations to recreate the softness of the evening sunlight, and *Fishing Boats at Sunset* is a very example of this technique so characteristic of the artist.



A View of Santa Maria, Maspujols (£150,000-250,000/ Approx € 220,000-370,000) by Joaquín Mir (1873-1940) is a fine example of his work during his time in Maspujols, where he convalesced following an accident in Majorca. Mir, who did not paint for a couple of years following his accident, returned to this subject often. In this image, the vibrant foreground bordering on the abstraction sets off the clearly defined church steeple, a

contrast that echoes the artist's quest to regain inner stability. Another renowned artist from *Els Quatre Gats* who also worked in Majorca and Catalonia and whose work will be present in this sale is Hermenegildo Anglada-Camarasa (1871-1959) with *The Harvest House* (£60,000-80,000/ Approx € 90,000-120,000).

NOTES TO EDITORS

This will be the eighth annual sale dedicated to Spanish Painting held by Sotheby's in London. Since our first such sale in June 2000, Sotheby's has consolidated itself as the only auction house to provide such a strong international sales platform. Sotheby's holds the record for works sold at auction for the following Spanish artists represented in this sale:

- Joaquín Sorolla y Bastida, *La hora del baño*, sold for £3.701.600 (€5.323.990) in 2003
- Julio Romero de Torres, *Rivalidad (Rivalry)*, sold for £556,650 (€625.170) in 2002
- José Mongrell: *Esperando la Pesca (Waiting for the catch)* sold for £142,400 (€173.970) in 2005
- Valentín de Zubiaurre *Dantzaris (Basque dancers)* sold for £120,000 (€146.600) in 2005
- Ignacio Zuloaga *Corrida de toros en Eibar (Bullfight in Eibar)* €763.000 in 1995
- Eugenio Lucas Velázquez *Maja dormida (Sleeping nude)* sold for €89,600 (€106.700) in 2003
- José Villegas *The Siesta* sold for €236.000 in 1993
- Eugenio Lucas Villamil *Mercado de la cebada, Madrid (Cebada market in Madrid)* sold for €30,000 (€39.150) in 2004
- Ramón Casas *Chula con mantón amarillo (Girl with a yellow shawl)* sold for €173,600 (€250.500) in 2004
- Santiago Rusiñol *Jardí de muntanya, sa coma, IV (Terraced gardens, sa coma)* sold for €568,000 (€819.600) in 2006

TRAVELLING EXHIBITION

A selection of the works will be exhibited in:

Bilbao: Hotel Carlton, Plaza de Federico Moyúa, 2

Wednesday, 17 October, 16:00-19:00

Barcelona: Hotel Casa Fuster, Paseo de Gracia, 132

Monday, 22 October, 16:00-19:00

Tuesday, 23 October, 11:00-19:00

Cordoba, Plaza de Capuchinos, 1

Wednesday, 24 October, 16:00-19:00

Seville, Casa Pilatos, Plaza de Pilatos, 1

Thursday, 25 October, 16:00-19:00

Friday, 26 October, 11:00-14:00

Madrid, Hotel Ritz, Plaza de la Lealtad, 5

Monday, 29 October, 12:00-19:00

Tuesday, 30 October, 11:00-19:00

Wednesday, 31 October, 11:00-14:00

EXHIBITION AT SOTHEBY'S NEW BOND STREET

All of the works in the catalogue will be exhibited on the following days preceding the sale:

Friday, 9 November: 09:00-16 :30

Sunday, 11 November: 12:00-14 :00

Monday, 12 November: 09:00-16 :30

Tuesday, 13 November: 09:00-16 :30