

Monumental Jean Dubuffet Work from *Théâtres de mémoire* Series to Star in Phillips' 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale

La féconde journée to be offered in London on 15 April



Jean Dubuffet

La féconde journée, 16 May 1976
acrylic on paper collaged on canvas
204.5 x 210.5 cm (80 1/2 x 82 7/8 in.)
Estimate: £1,500,000-2,000,000

LONDON – 2 MARCH 2021 – Phillips is pleased to announce Jean Dubuffet's [*La féconde journée*](#), executed in 1976, as a star lot of London's 20th Century & Contemporary Art Evening Sale on 15 April. *La féconde journée* hails from Dubuffet's seminal *Théâtres de mémoire* series and has featured in the major centenary retrospective at the Centre Pompidou, Paris in 2001. *La féconde journée* will be virtually on view from 7 to 11 April before a public viewing at Phillips Berkeley Square from 12 to 15 April.

Olivia Thornton, Head of 20th Century & Contemporary Art, Europe, said, "*La féconde journée* is an incredibly radiant and visually immersive work that represents a significant milestone in Dubuffet's career – his *Théâtres de mémoire* series. It is a particularly exciting moment for Dubuffet, with the Barbican staging the first major survey of his work in the UK for over 50 years this Spring. The inclusion of *La féconde journée* in our April Evening Sale marks the first time that the work will be offered at auction."

Dubuffet's oeuvre comprises a number of celebrated series, including *Portraits*, *Corps de Dame*, *Paris Circus*, *L'Hourloupe*, and *Théâtres de mémoire*, to which the present work belongs. He worked on the *Théâtres de mémoire* series from September 1975 until August 1978. Containing some of the largest compositions Dubuffet ever made, this series would be the last sequence of paintings of this magnitude before the artist, suffering from back ailments, would be forced to focus on smaller-scale projects. Rendered in his immediately recognisable palette of reds and blues and on an exceptionally large scale, Dubuffet has built upon the definition of *Art Brut* that characterised his work of the late 1940s, layering materials (44 sections precisely) to impart the composition with added impressions of movement and tumult.

Included in Dubuffet's major centenary retrospective at the Centre Pompidou, Paris, in 2001 – the first substantial monographic exhibition of the artist's work in France since his show at the Grand Palais in 1973 – *La féconde journée* is an exquisite, museum-quality example of his revolutionary opus. With his heightened sensitivity to colour, form, and raw human physiology, the work is a testament to Dubuffet's unique sensibility towards humanity and urban spaces. The artist's oeuvre will once more be the subject of critical and institutional acclaim in Spring 2021, with a major monographic exhibition taking place at the Barbican, London.

Evening Sale: 15 April 2021, 3pm GMT

Day Sale: 16 April 2021, 2pm GMT

Virtual viewing: 7-11 April 2021 on www.Phillips.com

Public viewing: 12-15 April 2021

Location: 30 Berkeley Square, London

Click here for more information: <https://www.phillips.com/auctions/auction/UK010121>

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**Estimates do not include buyer's premium; prices achieved include the hammer price plus buyer's premium.*

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