

Beat: Arts

## **A National Treasure of modern Art on auction by Doctors without borders**

**By ArtCurial on June 6**

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**USPA NEWS** - On June 6th 2016, during the prestigious Impressionist and Modern art sale, Artcurial will put up a national treasure for auction: the famous oil painting on panel, Nu sur nu by Marcel Duchamp (estimate : 500 000 "" 700 000 € / 555 000 "" 775 000 \$).

On June 6th 2016, during the prestigious Impressionist and Modern art sale, Artcurial will put up a national treasure for auction: the famous oil painting on panel, Nu sur nu by Marcel Duchamp (estimate : 500 000 "" 700 000 € / 555 000 "" 775 000 \$). The work, offered by N.G.O. Médecins sans frontières in order to finance humanitarian aid, was previously left to the association by ancestors of the renowned art publisher Arnold Fawcus, a close friend of Marcel Duchamp. The painting is key to understanding Marcel Duchamp's work and was recently shown at the Centre Pompidou at the monographic exhibition dedicated to the painter in 2014. The painting was National Treasure by the French state in 2016.-----

"The piece "Nu sur nu" (Nude upon nude) represents an important step in the evolution of Marcel Duchamp's work. It was painted just months before the famous Nu descendant l'escalier (1912), a cubic work which was celebrated at the Armory Show in New York the following year. At this time, he moved away from fauvism and was influence by symbolism. Being classed as a national treasure is an additional mark of quality for this painting which is already quite remarkable due to its provenance. » explains Bruno Jaubert, Director of the Impressionist and Modern art department at Artcurial.

### **THE ARTWORK WAS BEQUEATHED TO DOCTORS WITHOUT BORDERS (M.S.F.)**

The last owner of this work was Arnold Fawcus. Born in India, to an English father and an American mother, he studied in London, Trinity College first, then to Cambridge, where he studied history of art. His passion for art led him to create in 1946 a publishing house in France, first with Pierre Bordas, and then only under the banner of Trianon Press. The first book they publish includes works by Marc Chagall reproduced with high fidelity.-----

Also in France Arnold Fawcus met Marcel Duchamp. They quickly became friends, and art book publisher asked him to collaborate on several projects including the first monograph on the artist, published in 1959, they co-design. They will work together on several occasions.-----

"Nu sur nu" is on the testimony of their friendship. It is acquired directly from the wife of Henri-Pierre Roché collector Arnold Fawcus who retain until his death. His wife, Julie Fawcus, bequeathed the painting to Doctors Without Borders to death. Today, Doctors Without Borders puts the auction table to fund its humanitarian work. Indeed, the governance rules of the association require it to sell the property bequeathed to him, his vocation is not to maintain a heritage but to focus resources to develop its programs. M.S.F. chose the auctions, and Artcurial, to get the best price possible for this important work. The acquisition of a National Treasure by an individual or a company allows, under certain conditions, tax deductions.

### **Article online:**

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Sophia RACHDI

**Editorial program service of General News Agency:**

United Press Association, Inc.

3651 Lindell Road, Suite D168

Las Vegas, NV 89103, USA

(702) 943.0321 Local

(702) 943.0233 Facsimile

[info@unitedpressassociation.org](mailto:info@unitedpressassociation.org)

[info@gna24.com](mailto:info@gna24.com)

[www.gna24.com](http://www.gna24.com)