

ARTSPACE

NOVEMBER 10, 2021

NICOLAS PARTY SMASHES AUCTION RECORD

by Artspace Editors



Christie's New York November 9, 2021

“So many talented artists – a whole generation of mentors – were lost to AIDS,” said the Swiss painter Nicolas Party, upon donating his work to Unquestioning Love, an auction benefiting the New York City AIDS Memorial. “To know that they, and over 100,000 other New Yorkers, are being remembered through the New York City AIDS Memorial and their public cultural and educational programs is moving. It is an honor to be donating work to support the Memorial’s future.”

Last night (9 November), *Landscape*, the pastel on linen work that Party donated, set a new auction record for the artist, achieving a price of \$3,270,000 at Unquestioning Love, which formed part of Christie’s 21st Century Evening Sale. This comfortably beats the artist’s previous record of just over \$1.5m, set at Sotheby’s in Hong Kong last month.

Party was in good company. After two hours of bidding, Christie’s 21st Century Evening Sale set ten new auction records, with new highs for Xinyi Cheng, Hilary Pecis, Issy Wood, Stanley Whitney, Peter Doig, Jacqueline Humphries, Barbara Kruger, Kenny Scharf and Rashid Johnson whose record of \$2,550,000 was set with *Bruise Painting “Or Down You Fall”* a beautiful 2021 work, which evolved from his well-known and much-praised 2015-17 series, *Anxious Men*.

Dana Schutz’s work, *Smokers*, which formed part of the Unquestioning Love sale, also performed spectacularly at Christies, realising a price of \$1,830,000, far beyond its high estimate of \$600,000. In total auction’s sales amounted to \$219,278,750, with registered bidders from across 27 countries driving up sales.

Landscape is an apt piece to set Party’s record, as it is a prime example of the

artist's work, with its bold and contrasting colours, and graphically defined composition. The painting also depicts some fantastical world, without laying too bold a claim to such a fanciful scene's actual existence – a common choice of subject for this artist. As the Swiss critic and curator Stefan Banz puts it in Party's recent Phaidon monograph, "With his art, Party not only succeeds in awakening this longing for paradise, but also in playfully and pleasurably giving it a face."

And with this heavenly work, Party has also improved a small but very important plot of ground back on earth, as proceeds from the sale ensure the preservation of the NYC AIDS Memorial's physical space in Manhattan and supports and strengthens many future years of ambitious arts, cultural, and educational programs associated with the site.

To find out more about this brilliant artist commanding high prices go [here](#); for more on Unquestioning Love go [here](#).. And be sure to sign up for our Artspace newsletters to be first in line for a chance to buy a highly anticipated forthcoming Artspace edition.