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**Masterpiece by Vincent van Gogh
Emerges After a Century in the Same Private Collection
To Make Auction Debut in Paris This March**

***Scène de rue à Montmartre* Will be Placed on Public Display for the First Time
Since it Was Painted in 1887**



Scène de rue à Montmartre (Impasse des Deux Frères et le Moulin à Poivre), 1887 (est. €5-8 million)

Paris, 24 February 2021 – Painted in the Spring of 1887 – during Vincent van Gogh’s two-year sojourn in Paris – *Scène de rue à Montmartre* is a not only a major work by the artist but also from his very rare series of paintings depicting the legendary *Moulin de la Galette* in Montmartre. The work has remained in the same family collection for over 100 years, and despite having been published in seven catalogues, it has never been exhibited until now. This Spring, Sotheby’s and Mirabaud Mercier are delighted to present the painting to the public for the first time; with exhibitions to be held in Amsterdam, Hong Kong and Paris ahead of the Impressionist & Modern Art auction on 25 March.

“The moment we set eyes on this painting for the first time were immediately captivated. It is with great pleasure that we can now present this to the world, after being treasured by the same French family for a century.”

Claudia Mercier and Fabien Mirabaud of Mirabaud Mercier Auction House

“Very few paintings from Van Gogh’s Montmartre Period remain in private hands, with most of the series now held in prestigious museum collections around the world. The appearance on the market of a work of this caliber and from such an iconic series is undoubtedly a major event, and indeed opportunity, for both collectors of the artist and the art market more widely.”

Aurélie Vandevoorde et Etienne Hellman, Senior Directors of Sotheby’s Impressionist & Modern Art Department in France

Scène de rue à Montmartre is a remarkable witness to a crucial moment in the *oeuvre* of one of the greatest masters of modern art. In 1887, Van Gogh was living with his brother Theo in Paris on the Rue Lepic and was fascinated by the peculiar pastoral yet urban atmosphere of Montmartre where the mills blended with cabarets. This work reveals Van Gogh’s exploration of a new city – the capital of the nineteenth century – but also the artist’s first encounter with the Impressionists and the pioneers of the avant-garde, which was to spark the transformation of his palette. Gone were the dark tones of his early works, replaced with colour in all its brilliance. It was in Montmartre, during these formative years, that the foundations of his inimitable style were established.

This painting brilliantly captures the distinct atmosphere of Montmartre at the end of the 19th century when the mills, no longer in operation, had become tourist attractions and places of leisure where Parisians came to mingle, drink, dance and relax. Van Gogh offers a vibrant and highly original depiction of a quarter of Paris that had, and would continue to have, an almost mythic significance for generations of artists.

In this work, the artist chooses to represent one of the most famous places in the heart of *La Butte*: the Pepper Mill, also known as the *Moulin Debray*. Built around 1865, it was destroyed during the construction of Avenue Junot in 1911. The mill is depicted as seen from the *Impasse des deux frères* with the entrance of the *Moulin de la Galette*’s enclosure topped with decorative lanterns, and a carousel visible behind the wooden palisades.



Impasse des Deux Frères, end of the 19th Century



Main entrance of Moulin de la Galette,
End of the 19th Century



Moulin de la Galette from the rue Lepic where Vincent Van Gogh lived in 1886

Before the auction, this work, which has never been exhibited to the public, will be presented at Sotheby's Amsterdam (March 1-3) and Hong Kong (March 9-12). French amateurs will then be able to admire it at Drouot (March 16-18) and at Sotheby's Paris (March 19-23).

EXHIBITION DATES:

- **1 – 3 March:** Sotheby's Amsterdam
- **9 – 12 March:** Sotheby's Hong Kong
- **16 – 18 March:** Drouot Paris
- **19 – 23 March:** Sotheby's Paris

IMAGE CAPTION:

Sotheby's and Mirabaud Mercier
Impressionist & Modern Art
Sotheby's Paris, 25 March 2021

Private Collection, France

Vincent van Gogh

Scène de rue à Montmartre (Impasse des Deux Frères et le Moulin à Poivre), 1887

oil on canvas

46.1 x 61.3cm; 18½ x 24½ in.

Estimate: €5,000,000 – 8,000,000

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*Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Prices achieved include the hammer price plus buyer's premium and are net of any fees paid to the purchaser where the purchaser provided an irrevocable bid.

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About Sotheby's

Sotheby's has been uniting collectors with world-class works of art since 1744. Sotheby's became the first international auction house when it expanded from London to New York (1955), the first to conduct sales in Hong Kong (1973), India (1992) and France (2001), and the first international fine art auction house in China (2012). Today, Sotheby's presents auctions in 10 different salesrooms, including New York, London, Hong Kong and Paris, and Sotheby's BidNow program allows visitors to view all auctions live online and place bids from anywhere in the world. Sotheby's offers collectors the resources of *Sotheby's Financial Services*, the world's only full-service art financing company, as well as the collection advisory services of its subsidiary, *Art Agency, Partners*. Sotheby's presents private sale opportunities in more than 70 categories, including S|2, the gallery arm of Sotheby's Global Fine Art Division, and two retail businesses, Sotheby's Diamonds and Sotheby's Wine. Sotheby's has a global network of 80 offices in 40 countries and is the oldest company listed on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE).

About Mirabaud Mercier

Founded in 2010, the Mirabaud Mercier auction house, located at 174 rue du Faubourg Saint Honoré, in the heart of the capital's Golden Triangle, has established itself as one of the leading players in the Parisian art market. With a young and dedicated team, the auctioneers Fabien Mirabaud and Claudia Mercier offer expert advice and valuation of the works entrusted to them by each family. In 10 years of exciting finds and sales at the Hôtel Drouot, Mirabaud Mercier has recorded nearly a hundred pre-emptions, several world auction records and dozens of French records. Fabien Mirabaud, vice-president of SYMEV (Syndicat national des maisons de ventes volontaires), a former business lawyer at the New York and Paris bars, and a graduate of the Ecole du Louvre, founded the auction house in 2010. He was joined by Claudia Mercier, who had a lengthy experience in the inventory department of Christie's before leading Tajan's development department, notably working on its international development.