Sotheby’s To Announce Live Bidding Increments in Ether (ETH) Cryptocurrency
For Banksy’s Trolley Hunters and Love Is In The Air

In an Unprecedented and Groundbreaking Auction First for Physical Artworks, Sotheby’s Auctioneer Oliver Barker Will Field Real-Time Bids in ETH, in a Fusion of Live Auction and Crypto

Both Works Are Highlights of Sotheby’s Inaugural ‘The Now Evening Auction’ on 18 November in New York

Virtual Exhibition on View via Sotheby’s HQ in Decentraland

NEW YORK, 11 November 2021: In an auction world first, Sotheby’s auctioneer Oliver Barker is set to field bids live from the New York saleroom in Ether (ETH) cryptocurrency for Banksy’s Trolley Hunters and Love Is In The Air (2006), when the artist’s works make their auction debuts as part of the newly-conceived ‘The Now Evening Auction’ on November 18. The paradigm-shifting move marks the first time that a cryptocurrency will be used as the standard currency for bidding on physical artworks in real-time during a live auction. Viewers from across the globe will be able to follow the livestreamed broadcast of the auction across Sotheby’s social media channels, including the company’s dedicated Discord channel, and via Sothebys.com.

Today’s announcement comes just months after Sotheby’s became the first auction house to accept cryptocurrency as a payment option for a physical work of art, when a separate painting by Banksy was offered in the May 2021 Contemporary Evening Auction. Together, these milestone offerings not only spotlight the artist’s
position as the leading disruptor of the art world whose work resonates with the boundary-pushing ethos of the crypto community, but they demonstrate the innovative spirit in which Sotheby’s continues to experiment with and expand the possibilities of the auction format.

Ether, the world’s second largest cryptocurrency by market value, is a preferred cryptocurrency for the digital art and NFT community, as the Ethereum blockchain is the primary network where NFTs are minted and transactions are registered. While bidding increments for both works will be announced in Ether, the winning bidders will have the option of paying the hammer price for each work in fiat currency or in the three cryptocurrencies accepted by Sotheby’s: Ether (ETH), Bitcoin (BTC), and USD Coin (USDC).

**BANKSY’S TROLLEY HUNTERS**

Estimate $5/7 Million

Banksy’s *Trolley Hunters* is a typically powerful, witty, and prophetic critique of society’s often irrational predilection for processed and packaged products. Depicting three prehistoric figures from the dawn of mankind in the act of hunting a herd of empty supermarket trolleys, the work is uncannily prescient. Painted more than 15 years ago and unveiled in the artist’s seminal breakthrough exhibition ‘Barely Legal’ in Los Angeles in 2006, *Trolley Hunters* is an indictment against the excesses of consumerist society and is arguably never been as relevant as it is today, with the disruption to the global supply chain having brutally exposed the fragility of our fast-paced consumerist eco-system. With manufacturing delays, queues at ports, a shortage of haulers, and the Whitehouse pronouncing that some toys will not be on the shelves this Christmas, society’s erstwhile unfailing belief in consumerist culture is, in some ways, being shaken to its core. Despite all the evolutionary advances of the last 40,000 years, mankind is shown here by Banksy reduced back down to its primal instincts: hunting down empty shopping trolleys, just as – in our own world – we see hunter-gatherers ready to fight in petrol station forecourts and supermarket aisles for fuel and toilet-paper they may not even need. By juxtaposing the hunter-gatherers with shopping trolleys, comic in their incongruity with the natural environment, Banksy shines a typically witty
and critical light on how far we have deviated from our natural instincts. *Separate press release available for further information.*

**BANKSY’S LOVE IS IN THE AIR**

Estimate $4/6 Million

*Love is in the Air* is a quintessential Banksy painting: instantly recognizable, the image has become synonymous with the artist’s indelible graphic style, wry humor, and galvanizing political commentary. Banksy’s subject adopts the archetypal pose of civic unrest, preparing to hurl a projectile towards an unseen foe, however the artist replaces the object with a bunch of flowers, disarming this image of violent unrest to create a work that is both a call for change and advocation of peace.

One of the artist’s most cherished works on canvas, the work is further distinguished by the inclusion of hand painted flowers in oil – a unique feature rarely seen in Banksy’s oeuvre. With this delicate touch, *Love is in the Air* reminds the viewer of the injustice and inequality that exists around us, but also offers a simple message of hope.

In the tradition of other iconic images of art history, such as Leonardo’s *Mona Lisa*, Andy Warhol’s *Marylin Diptych* or Alfred Leete’s *Lord Kitchener Wants You* poster, *Love is in the Air* has been referenced, replicated and imitated countless times in a testament to its visual power. It is indisputable that this bold and declarative work helped to establish Banksy’s place in art history as one of the most famous and provocative artists of the 21st century, cementing the artist’s reputation as a pivotal and universally heard artistic voice.

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

*Images are available upon request*