

Banksy's
TROLLEY HUNTERS
To Make Auction Debut

Offered with an estimate of \$5-7 million
In Sotheby's New York 'The Now' Evening Auction on November 18



Images [Here](#)

4 November 2021, New York: Coming to market at a time when the vulnerability of our dependence on consumer products is constantly making headline news, Banksy's *Trolley Hunters* – a typically powerful, witty and prophetic critique of society's often irrational predilection for processed and packaged products – will make its auction debut on November 18. Depicting three prehistoric figures from the dawn of mankind in the act of hunting a herd of empty supermarket trolleys, this large-scale painted canvas will go on public view this month, for the first time in the U.S. since Banksy unveiled the work in his seminal state-side exhibition - the breakthrough '[Barely Legal](#)' show, held in Los Angeles during 2006.

Like so many of Banksy's best images, *Trolley Hunters* is uncannily prescient. Although painted over 15 years ago as an indictment against the excesses of consumerist society, the painting has arguably never been as relevant as it is today, with the disruption to the global supply chain having exposed the fragility of our fast-paced consumerist eco-system. With manufacturing delays, queues at ports, a shortage of hauliers, 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.

Here, a trio of hunters prepares to spear down their 'prey', yet before them is not a mammoth but a family of empty shopping carts (parents, child, infant). Ignoring the natural resources around them, they prefer instead to concentrate their 'hunter gatherer' instincts on the empty trolley – perhaps representative of consumer society's predilection for, and reliance on, highly processed and branded products, which are shipped globally for consumers' ease. Despite all the evolutionary advances of the last 40,000 years, mankind is 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.

The same critique of consumerism is explored in other works by Banksy such as *Very Little Helps* - a cutting reference to Tesco's slogan 'Every Little Helps' - which show a group of children saluting to the supermarket's plastic bag, here shown flying high as a flag. In addition, [Show me the Monet](#) - Banksy's dissident version of Claude Monet's masterpiece which he transformed into a modern-day fly-tipping spot - responds to society's disregard for the environment in favour of the wasteful excesses of consumerism. Along a similar theme, in 2005, Banksy placed a fake prehistoric rock scrawled with a caveman pushing a shopping trolley in the British Museum. The piece went unnoticed by the institution for almost a week.

The sale of *Trolley Hunters* comes just weeks after Sotheby's broke the artist's auction record when [Love is in the Bin](#) tripled its high estimate to sell for \$25.4 million (£18.6 million) as part of the Frieze Week Contemporary Art Evening Sale in London (est. £4-6 million). Nine of the top ten prices for Banksy at auction have been set since the beginning of 2020, five of which were set at Sotheby's. In September, Sotheby's London held a "white-glove" [Banksy](#) prints auction, which made a combined total of £2.4 million / \$3.3 million - more than double its low estimate (£1.1-1.6 million).

The work will feature in Sotheby's New York newly-conceived [The Now](#) Evening Auction on November 18, a sale of cutting-edge works executed in the last 20 years. Among the other offerings are [Yoshitomo Nara](#)'s early work, *Nice to See You Again* (est. \$8-12 million), [Mark Bradford](#)'s *Method Man* (est.\$5-7 million), [Thomas Schütte](#)'s monumental *Großer Geist Nr. 1* (est. \$4.5-6.5 million) and [Flora Yukhnovich](#)'s *It's Better Down Where It's Wetter* (est. £150,000-200,000). At Sotheby's London in October, Yukhnovich's painting, *I'll Have What She's Having*, sold for a record £2.3 million / \$3 million - three times the previous record (\$1.2 million).

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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.