



**PRESS RELEASE - EIFFEL TOWER STAIRS TO BE SOLD AT AUCTION
SALE - 1 DECEMBER 2020, PARIS**

An emblematic piece of the French capital will be presented at auction by Artcurial on 1 December : a section of the Eiffel Tower's staircase !

Measuring nearly 3 metres high, this is a piece of the original spiral staircase, dating from 1889, that linked the 2nd and 3rd floors of the monument. In 2016, Artcurial sold another original section of the «Dame de Fer» for half a million euros.

PARIS - On 1 December, in its traditional Art Deco and Design auction, Artcurial will present for sale a section of the Eiffel Tower's staircase. Measuring 2.6-metres in height and with some 14 steps, this is part of the monument's original spiral staircase, dating from 1889, from the section linking the 2nd and 3rd floors. Coming from a private Canadian collection, it is estimated at 30 000 to 40 000 euros.

Stairs from the 'Dame de Fer' at auction

In 1983, the installation of a lift between the bottom two sections of the Eiffel Tower required the dismantling of a staircase. It was cut into 24 sections, each measuring between 2 and 9 metres. One of these pieces was retained on the first floor of the Tower and three other sections were offered to French museums : The Musée d'Orsay and La Villette in Paris, along with the Musée de l'Histoire du Fer in Nancy. On 1 December 1983, the remaining 20 sections were sold at auction. The sale was a huge success and pieces of staircase were acquired by collectors from all around the world.

Today, there are different sections on display in prestigious locations worldwide. There is one in the gardens of the Yoishii Foundation in Yamanashi, Japan, another close to the Statue of Liberty in New York and another in Disneyland. Other pieces went to private collections abroad, notably in Switzerland, Italy and Canada, as is the case with the piece to be offered by Artcurial on 1 December.



Gustave EIFFEL
Staircase from the Eiffel Tower n° 17
- 1889
In bolted wrought iron
H.: 2,60 m (minus support) D.: 1.73 m
Estimate : 30 000 - 40 000 €



Section n°17 of the Eiffel Tower staircase, on display in the courtyard of the Hôtel Dassault at Artcurial

Gustave Eiffel at the top with his son-in-law and collaborator, M. Salles. 1889
© Neurdein Roger-Viollet, DR



Simulation of the Eiffel Tower staircase in situ in an apartment
© Pascal Cossu



In 1983, the sculptor César acquired elements of the Eiffel Tower after renovation work was carried out, which he used in his sculpture *Hommage à Eiffel*. The only two sections to remain in France were acquired by the singer Guy Béart who later sold them in March 2015. Sections of staircase have regularly reappeared in public sales.

This will be the fourth time that Artcurial has presented a piece of the Eiffel Tower at auction. In 2013, an original section measuring 3.5m was sold by the auction house for 220 000 € including premium. In 2016, section no. 13 of the *Dame de Fer* (Iron Lady) fetched ten times its estimate, selling for 523 800 €. In 2018, section no.4 went under the hammer, realising 176 150 € including premium.

Powerful symbol of modernity

Constructed by Gustave Eiffel (1832-1923) and his collaborators for the Universal Exhibition of 1889, the Eiffel Tower has become an iconic symbol for the French capital and one of the most famous monuments in the world. It took two years, two months and five days to build, between 1887 and 1889. Measuring 324 metres high, the *Dame de Fer* dominates the Paris skyline. Opening on 31 March 1889, it symbolised the industrial and technological power of France. Although attracting fierce criticism in the famous *Protestation des artistes*, signed notably by Guy Maupassant, Charles Garnier and Alexandre Dumas junior, as published in the newspaper *Le Temps* on 14 February 1887, the Tower was a huge public success, attracting 2 million visitors during the Universal Exhibition.

An amazing feat of engineering, it remained the highest monument in the world until 1930, when the Chrysler building in New York was constructed. A powerful symbol of modernity, the Eiffel Tower has inspired writers, painters, photographers and filmmakers. Robert Delaunay and Germaine Krull have both celebrated the aesthetics and essence of the monument, «*le haut, l'aérien, le léger et ajouré*», (the altitude, the aerial view, the lightness, the openwork design) to borrow the words of Roland Barthes.

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USEFUL INFORMATION

Sale Art Déco / Design on Tuesday 1 December at 14.30

Artcurial - 7, rond-point des Champs-Élysées - 75008 Paris

High resolution images available on request
Catalogue available online at www.artcurial.com

UPCOMING AT ARTCURIAL

8 & 9 December : sales *Impressionist & Modern Art*
Post-War & Contemporary Art

16 December : sale *Urban & Pop Contemporary*

ABOUT ARTCURIAL

Founded in 2002, multidisciplinary Paris based auction house, Artcurial confirmed its leading position in 2019 on the international art market scene. With three sale venues (Paris, Monte-Carlo and Hong Kong), Artcurial achieved an overall sales total of 203,1 M€ in 2019. Artcurial covers all the major specialist fields: From Beaux-Arts to Decorative Arts, Collectors' Cars, jewellery and watches, Fine wine and spirits. With a strong international bias, Artcurial maintains its presence abroad with offices in Milan, Vienna and Brussels, Monte-Carlo and Munich and representatives in Beijing and Tel Aviv, as well as twice-yearly exhibitions in New York. In October 2015, Artcurial held its first sale in Hong Kong and Morocco.

www.artcurial.com

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