

Picabia Sells for Record \$11 M., Garden Statue IDed as \$10.5 M. Canova, and More: Morning Links for March 17, 2022

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The Headlines

AUCTION ACTION. A 1929 painting by **Francis Picabia** that dealer **Léonce Rosenberg** commissioned for his Paris abode went for €10 million (about \$11 million) during a sale of Surrealist art at **Sotheby's** in the French capital city, setting a record for the artist at auction, the *AFP* reports. The wily artist's previous auction best was about \$8.8 million. The entire sale hauled in some €33 million (about \$36.4 million). Meanwhile, experts have determined that a sculpture of a reclining woman that traded 20 years ago for a modest £5,200 at an auction of garden statuary is, in fact, an 1819–22 **Antonio Canova** sculpture of **Mary Magdalene**. **Christie's** will offer it in July in London with an £8 million (\$10.5 million) high estimate. The sellers—a couple who bought the piece to adorn their garden, and then heard rumors about its identity—are remaining anonymous.

Related Articles

ARTIST UPDATES. A powerhouse group—**Rashid Johnson**, **Julie Mehretu**, and **Adam Pendleton**—are in *T: The New York Times Style Magazine*, discussing their work, along with **Ellen Gallagher**, to preserve singer and activist **Nina Simone**'s childhood home in North Carolina. “We live in a moment when half the country would be perfectly content to forget somebody like Nina Simone,” Pendleton said. **Nicholas Hlobo** is in the *Financial Times*, talking about his upcoming exhibition at **Lehmann Maupin** in London. He's made a point of turning down online shows. “I don't visualize myself as having an exhibition in some funny box called a computer,” he said. And **Yue Minjun** is in *Tatler*, in advance of an outing at **Tang Contemporary** in Hong Kong. Famed for his portraits of laughing men, some of his new pictures present faces consumed by enormous flowers.

The Digest

Annie Flanders, who founded *Details* magazine in 1982 to document the hothouse cultural world of Downtown Manhattan, died last week at 82. Contributors to the publication included the actor and model **Cookie Mueller**, who served as its art critic, and photographer **Bill Cunningham**, who provided fashion

coverage. [The New York Times]

The decorated Indonesian painter and educator **Srihadi Soedarsono**—who won renown “for his expressionist and gestural abstractions, brightly rendered landscapes, and depictions of classical Javanese and Balinese culture,” **H. G. Masters** writes—has died at 90. [ArtAsiaPacific]

In the wake of the stabbing at the **Museum of Modern Art** in New York last weekend, U.S. arts institutions are reviewing their safety protocols. At most of them, few guards carry weapons, according to one security expert, who told reporter **Zachary Small**, “The last thing you want is a gunfight with 5,000 kids present.” [The New York Times]

Museums run by the city of Johannesburg, South Africa, are in need of repair work to protect their collections from flooding and other threats, according to some experts. “The **Johannesburg Art Gallery** is in a disastrous condition,” heritage architect **Brian McKechnie** said. [Mail & Guardian]

This year’s **Gershon Iskowitz Prize**, which annually honors an artist in Canada “who has achieved maturity and a measure of success,” has gone to **Faye HeavyShield** (Kainai). HeavyShield will receive CA\$75,000 (about US\$59,100, making it Canada’s second-largest art prize) and a solo show at the **Art Gallery of Ontario**. [The Art Newspaper]

A mansion in the beautiful Bel Air section of Los Angeles that is on the market for \$87.7 million sports seven bedrooms, 11 baths, and—most relevant to this newsletter—an “**NFT art gallery**” with seven media displays and a laser device that “casts light in a rhombic-shape up to 1,650 square feet over the pool with misters.” [New York Post]

The Kicker

THE MOUNTAIN MAKERS. The *New York Times* checked in with the three cartographers responsible for drawing the Swiss Alps for Switzerland’s national mapping agency, the **Federal Office of Topography**. It sounds like hard work. Climate change has been keeping them busy—melting glaciers have been altering the landscape—and they undergo intense training: Each spent years apprenticing before touching the actual mountain maps. “It’s a little bit like being a god,” Jürg Gilgen, who is one of the trio, said of their profession. “You’re creating a world.” [NYT]

Source: [Picabia Sells for Record \\$11 M., Garden Statue IDed as \\$10.5 M. Canova, and More: Morning Links for March 17, 2022](#)