

COMMERCE

Christie's global president Jussi Pylkknen to step down

October 31, 2023



Mr. Pylkknen will make his final appearance at a New York auction on Nov. 9. Image credit: Christie's

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

After 38 years, British auction house Christie's is preparing to bid farewell to one of its leading forces.

Announced last week, the company's global president, Jussi Pylkknen, is preparing to step away from his role come 2024 to pursue work as an independent art advisor. A specialist in 20th-century art, the executive will make his final appearance as an auctioneer on Dec. 7, 2023, as a part of the Old Masters Evening sale in London.

"Jussi is a well-loved member of the Christie's family," said Guillaume Cerutti, CEO of [Christie's](#), in a statement.

"We are very grateful for his tremendous contribution to Christie's, as a respected art specialist, a remarkable business getter and one of our best auctioneers," Mr. Cerutti said. "We wish him the best on beginning this next phase of his career as an independent client advisor."

Going, going, gone

Mr. Pylkknen will make his final appearance in New York on Nov. 9 for the 20th Century Evening sale, playing into his area of specialization.

Having spent nearly 40 years working for the auction house, appointed global president in 2014, the executive has served in a variety of roles, from director of the impressionist and modern art department from 1995 to 2005 to president of Christie's Europe, Middle East and Russian operations for a decade. Despite this experience, Mr. Pylkknen is almost certainly known best for his work around the globe as an auctioneer, a pursuit he began in the early 2000s.

His auctioneering highlights include the \$450.3 million sale of Leonardo da Vinci's "Salvator Mundi" in 2017, Andy Warhol's "Shot Sage Blue Marilyn" drawing in \$195 million in 2022 and the collection of Paul G. Allen garnering a record-breaking \$1.6 billion that same year.

"Christie's is an inspiring place to work and has brought me great happiness across four decades working with the very best specialists in the market, at the very heart of the art world," said Mr. Pylkknen, in a statement.

"I have been privileged to have the opportunity to befriend collectors all over the globe and auctioneer works of art of superb quality in every category in London, New York, Paris and Hong Kong," he said. "The art market continues to evolve and the

extraordinary influx of buyers at the top of the market now offers me a unique opportunity to share my experience with a new generation of collectors who are keen to buy major works of art both privately and at auction.”

Christie’s is not the only luxury name bidding farewell to a longtime leader, with British automaker Rolls-Royce’s longtime CEO retiring come Nov. 30 ([see story](#)).

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