PRESS RELEASE - PARIS - 15 OCTOBER 2019 - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE ARISTOPHIL COLLECTIONS
18-22 NOVEMBER & 4 DECEMBER 2019

Paris • The 4 auction houses gathered under the name OVA (The Auction Houses for the Aristophil Collections - Aguttes, Artcurial, Drouot Estimations and Ader) are pleased to announce that the Autumn series of sales will take place from 18 to 22 November and later on 4 December 2019 at Drouot.

This new session includes 6 sales. The first auction gathers Anglo-Saxon and Latino-American autographs, manuscripts and rare books from the 9th to the 20th centuries, exploring literary, artistic, historical and scientific productions. The second sale includes works by the greatest authors of French 19th century literature such as Lamartine, Flaubert, Stendhal, Dumas, Maupassant, Chateaubriand or Baudelaire. Victor Hugo will be particularly featured through his novels, poetry and his works for theater. Auctions n°24 and 25 consist of a single collection about the French Academy, gathered by six generations of the marquis de Flers family starting in 1830. It will be offered in its entirety, first by Drouot Estimations and then by Ader and will take visitors and bidders through candidacies, elections, receptions or even the creation of French dictionary across a fine selection of letters, manuscripts and documents. The last sale of the week will focus on History of France through its Kings, Emperors and Presidents from the 14th to the 20th century. On 4 December, the 27th auction of the series will be dedicated to Jean Cocteau and organised by Drouot Estimations.

Since 20 December 2017, 21 auctions of the Aristophil Collections have been organised by the OVA (Aguttes, Artcurial, Drouot Estimations and Ader) at Drouot. Highlights include 3 lots selling above €1M among 11 lots that sold above €500K, 90 preemptions by museums and institutions and a total of sales that reaches €41M.

Sale n°22 • Aguttes • 18 November • 2pm
Various Themes • Britannica | Americana

Sale n°23 • Artcurial • 19 November • 2pm
Literature • French literature of the 19th and 20th centuries

Sale n°24 • Drouot Estimations • 20 November • 2pm
Literature • French Academy | Part I

Sale n°25 • Ader • 21 November • 2pm
Literature • French Academy | Part II

Sale n°26 • Aguttes • 22 November • 2pm
History • Great Historical Figures

Sale n°27 • Drouot Estimations • 4 December • 2pm
Literature • Jean Cocteau

Consultation on demand at each auction house until 9 November

Public exhibition – Drouot – Saleroom 9
Friday 15 November – 11am / 6pm
Saturday 16 November – 11am / 6pm
And each morning prior to the afternoon’s auction from Monday 18 to Friday 22 November – 11am / 12pm

PRESS CONTACTS
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Leading the sale and probably the most moving piece, is the unpublished miniature manuscript that Charlotte BRONTÉ (1816-1855) wrote when she was only 14 years old (estimate: €600,000-800,000). This is a unique opportunity to acquire such a precious autograph piece of the origin of this genius novelist, as well as a glance at the children's games and the imaginary world of the “Glass Town” of the Bronte children.

Beyond language, a civilisation is also defined by its artistic and pictorial production. The sale includes important engraved books such as Lamoignon-Philipps’ magnificent copy of *Natural History of Carolina, Florida and the Bahama Islands* [1754] by Mark CATESBY (1683-1749), “the most famous comprehensive survey of the flora and fauna of south-eastern North America”. This masterpiece, by the founder of American ornithology, is the most impressive survey about botany, zoology, climate and anthropology created during the colonial period, and the most important publication of illustrated natural history prior to Audubon (estimate: €40,000-50,000). Among this section that combines sciences and arts, the autograph manuscript of the episode entitled *The Lost Portfolio*, from John James AUDUBON (1785-1851)’s renowned *Ornithological Biography*, will be offered at an estimate of €4,000-6,000.

Sciences also include important highlights, with key names such as Isaac Newton, Samuel Morland, Thomas Edison, Charles Darwin and the incredible selection of letters by Albert EINSTEIN (1879-1955) including a major one on the theory of relativity sent to Richard de Baillehache in 1911 (estimate: €10,000-15,000).

Highlighting Artcurial’s sale is a 1913 original edition of *Alcools. Poèmes*. by Guillaume APOLLINAIRE (1880-1918). The writer and poet signed and sent it to his friend and novelist Frédéric Boutet. It is illustrated with a drawing by Louis Marcoussis and presented in a stunning cubist binding by Paul Bonet. An original drawing by Victor HUGO (1802-1885) from an album of drawings and manuscripts dated circa 1840-50 and a sketch by French painter Eugène DELACROIX (1798-1863) will also be offered. The latter drawing was executed circa 1832-1845 for Moroccan Sultan Moulay Abd-er-Rahman and represents his palace of Meknes, surrounded by his guard and main officers. A signed autograph poem by Guy de MAUPASSANT (1850-1893) is featured on the back of an engraved ivory and silk screen, addressed to “A Madame la Comtesse Potocka” (estimate: €10,000-15,000) and a 34-letter correspondence between Maupassant and Gustave FLAUBERT (1821-1880) sent from 1870 to 1880 is estimated at €50,000-70,000.
The sales Drouot Estimations and Ader will offer consist of a single collection on French Academy, gathered by six generations of the marquis de Flers family. Started around 1830 by Hyacinthe Pellevé de La Motte-Ango, marquis de Flers (1803-1866), the collection was substantially enriched by his son Camille, the historian of King Louis-Philippe. When Camille passed, the contents gathered until then were given to his brother Raoul (1846-1907), whom transmitted it to his son Robert de Flers (1872-1927), famous dramatic actor, editor-in-chief of Le Figaro and who himself, joined the French Academy in 1920. The collection was continued by his son François (1902-1986), and was finalised by his grand son, the late Philippe de Flers (1927-2012), who nearly doubled its content, filling in the blanks or completing it with relevant documents, including some about non-members of the Academy, unlucky candidates, as well as its enemies.

The entire collection was acquired in 2009 by Aristophil and in 2010, book editor Gallimard published and illustrated the highlights of it. The collection includes over 7,000 letters, manuscripts and documents and will always remain the greatest collection ever assembled on this theme.

The first part, dispersed by Drouot Estimations, will tell the story of the Academy, from its foundation in 1634 to its abolition in 1793 during the Revolution. At first, men of letters gathered informally around Valentin Conrart (1603-1675), but with the support of Cardinal de Richelieu, these meetings took a more official turn. Extremely rare autographs by about thirty of the founding members are presented in the sale. After a long wandering, the Academy and its forty seats were welcomed by Colbert at the Louvre. Then the motto “To Immortality” was born. Around these men of letters, the Academy included scholars, prelates, men of the church and of the state. Nearly all the great writers of the time were welcomed, from Corneille to Voltaire. But an order issued on 8 August 1793 by the National Convention abolished the French Academy, along with any “literary societies licensed by the Nation”.

Ader’s auction will focus on the Academy’s rebirth, first by founding the National Institute in 1795 and its literature and applied arts class and its reorganisation in 1803 with the linguistic and French literature class. By Royal order, the institution takes its name back on 21 March 1816 in exchange for excluding 11 members. Collectors and connoisseurs will be able to live through its activities until the 1980’s, including with the forgiven speech Chateaubriand still gave when a foreign member – Julien Green – was elected, the first woman to join – Marguerite Yourcenar –, as well as the unsuccessful candidacies of Balzac, Beaudelaire and Zola, or even the sometimes fierce attacks against the institution, such as Barbey d’Aurevilly’s. A fascinating correspondence by Marcel Proust to Robert de Flers, who where in school together and remained close friends, will also be offered.

Pierre CORNEILLE (1606-1684)
Piece signed « Corneille », and signed by 8 other academicians in Paris, on 12 February 1663 regarding Guez De Balzac’s legacy to found a Price Estimate: €20,000-25,000

Jules BARBEY D’AUREVILLY (1808-1889)
Autograph manuscript signed « J. Barbey d’Aurevilly », L’Académie sans candidats, a controversial article against the French Academy published in Le Gaulois on 19 May 1873 Estimate: €5,000-6,000
SALE N°26 • HISTORY

GREAT HISTORICAL FIGURES
Friday 22 November at 2pm, Drouot, Paris | Expert: Thierry Bodin

Closing the week of sales, the ‘History’ auction by Aguttes will take visitors through France’s past. A letter signed on 30 January 1410 by King Charles VI (1368-1422) orders the payment to be made to the cupbearer he just dismissed (estimate: €7,000-8,000) as well as letters by Kings Henry II, Henry III, Henry IV, François I and Louis XIV (1638-1715) who sent a moving letter to the Duke of Vendôme after the Dauphin Louis succumbed to smallpox on 14 April 1711.

Napoléon I (1769-1821) is the main character of this catalogue. An important ensemble of manuscripts the former Emperor dictated and edited when in Sainte-Hélène (estimate: €40,000-50,000), an autograph project for Ajaccio’s defence (€20,000-25,000) will be offered, as well as the manuscript notes Napoléon made to the treaty written by General Antoine, baron of Jomini (1779-1869) – working for Russia – correcting how several battles were described (estimate: €8,000-12,000).

The period of Empire is also represented through documents by Joséphine de Beauharnais, Letizia Bonaparte, the Général Henri Bertrand, Claude-Joseph or Rouget de Lisle, etc. and contemporary history is told through letters of politicians such as Clémenceau, Schoelcher or Charles de Gaulle.

SALE N°27 • LITERATURE

JEAN COCTEAU
Wednesday 4 December at 2pm, Drouot, Paris | Expert: Thierry Bodin

The sale dedicated to Jean COCTEAU (1889-1964) gathers numerous manuscripts, drawings, correspondences and books, most of which are from the collection of Carole Weisweiller. Cocteau’s multiple facets are represented through various unpublished works. From the poet, there is the manuscript of his first book La Lampe d’Aladin (1909) and Appogiatures (1952); from the dramatist, there is the impressive illustrated manuscript of Parents terribles; from the intimist writer, there is La Difficulté d’être.

Additional works unveil the film director and the artist (self portraits, portraits of his friends such as Apollinaire and Max Jacob) that Cocteau was. Original editions and correspondences are also featured in the sale, including love letters to Natalie Paley or the ones received by Cocteau from some of his colleagues.

About OVA [The Auction Houses for the Aristophil Collections]

Following two court orders, auction house Aguttes has carried out various logistical operations concerning the transfer, sorting, inventory-taking and conservation of works from the Aristophil collections. It then restored these works to their owners. Aguttes has also proposed a strategic plan for organising auctions in the coming years. As a result, part of the Aristophil Collections (assets belonging to the Aristophil company, now in receivership) will be dispersed in legal sales, while the rest (belonging to single owners or joint owners) will be sold at public auction.

The contents of public auctions has been entrusted to four auction houses: Aguttes, Artcurial, Drouot Estimations and Ader-Nordmann. Aguttes will act as the coordinator for sales of jointly-owned pieces and will also organise the legal sales and auctions of assets belonging to single owners.