New York / Berlin, July 2, 2013—artnet Auctions is pleased to announce Picasso Ceramics, a sale featuring over 50 works by Pablo Picasso (Spanish, 1881–1973) dating from 1946 to 1971. The works, estimated at US$2,000 to 250,000, create a fascinating overview of the artist’s final creative burst in sculptural form. In 1946, Picasso, who spent his summers on the French Riviera, visited the nearby Madoura ceramics factory in Vallauris. He initially found that working with clay was a relaxing summer respite from the more strenuous demands of painting. The artist began with utilitarian objects, but proceeded to create more ambitious forms as his career progressed. The ceramics grew in stature as collectors began to want to own an editioned Picasso sculpture.

One of the highlights of the sale is an extremely rare 1947 work entitled Plat Visage Masque Putoise, estimated at US$175,000 to 200,000, which is one of the very first ceramic works Picasso ever created. The artist’s hand is seen in the expressive face in the center of the oval plate. The work also has an unprecedented provenance: it was in the personal collection of Jacqueline Roque, the artist’s second wife, whom he met while she was working at Madoura when she was 27 years old. From their marriage in 1961 to the artist’s death in 1973, she acted as his primary muse. Plat Visage Masque Putoise, which was treasured by Jacqueline until her suicide in 1986, was later authenticated by the artist’s daughter, Maya Widmaier-Picasso.
Another highlight is Picasso’s very first edition ceramic, *The Diaulos Player* (1947), estimated at US$15,000 to 20,000. As with some of his unique works, *The Diaulos Player* takes the form of a face on a platter, in this case a satyr playing a diaulos, a wind instrument commonly depicted on ancient Greek pottery. This work showcases the artist’s continued interest in Greek mythology.

Picasso’s ceramic explorations have a whimsy and a sense of freedom unmatched by his paintings and works in other media. In *Corrida with Figures* (1950), estimated at US$10,000 to 12,000, the artist uses the shape of the bowl to dictate the structure of the composition. The hollow center of the bowl becomes the pit of the bullfighting ring, and he uses the bowl’s shape to depict the spectators in the stands, watching the match from above.

The sale also features a number of works depicting animals, including *Fish Subject* (1952) and *Mat Owl* (1955). Estimated at US$11,000 to 12,000, the playful *Fish Subject* is an earthenware pitcher in the shape of a cartoonish, smiling fish. *Mat Owl* is a rectangular dish with a round, voluminous owl on a starry background, and is estimated at US$40,000 to 45,000.

*Picasso Ceramics* will be live on *artnet Auctions* from July 2 through 11, 2013, and on view here.

- **View all lots**: http://www.artnet.com/auctions/all-artworks/

For more information about this sale, please contact *artnet Auctions* specialist:
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