

ART

Step Aside, Picasso: Acquavella Plans a Braque Retrospective

By Andrew Russeth 7/20 2:11pm



Braque's *La Treille* (1953-54) demolished its \$5-million high estimate at Christie's New York last year, selling for \$10.16 million. Photo: Christies

For each of the past three years, Gagosian Gallery has earned **largely favorable reviews**—and boatloads of attention—for its epic Picasso exhibitions, which have often been rich with loans from international museums and private collections. Now one of its secondary-market rivals, **Acquavella Galleries**, appears to be courting similar praise, announcing that it will present an ambitious survey of work by Picasso's Cubist compatriot, George Braque, this fall.

Acquavella's exhibition, "Georges Braque: Pioneer of Modernism," which it notes is the first Braque retrospective in the U.S. in more than 20 years, will run from Oct. 12 to Nov. 30, and is set to include some 50 of the artist's paintings, all sourced from private and public collections.

Like Gagosian (which has tapped Picasso biographer John Richardson for its exhibitions of the Spanish master's work), Acquavella is also bringing in a name-brand curator, Dieter Buchhart, a scholar of 20th-century art who has previously written on Basquiat and Munch. Mr. Buchhart, as well as scholars Isabelle Monod-Fontaine and Richard Schiff, will contribute essays to an accompanying catalogue.

Braque's works have done well on the auction block recently, with three of the artist's top ten prices coming over the past three years. Last year, a late still life by Braque sold for an astonishing artist record of \$10.16 million at Christie's New York, more than twice the \$5-million high estimate that the auction house had tagged to the work. Seeing that figure, market watcher Souren Melikian wrote that, **not too long ago**, "at best, it might have matched the \$3-million lower end of the estimate."

Judging by recent market activity, those days may be over.

topics: **ART**, **ACQUAVELLA**, **GEORGES BRAQUE**
