



WIFREDO LAM (1902-1982)

Portrait / La Table I, coin d'atelier

(Portrait / The Table I, Workshop Corner)

Signed lower right "Wifredo Lam 1938"

tempera on paper (double sided)

38 x 24 3/4 in. (51 1/4 x 36 3/4 x 2 1/4 in.)

96.52 x 62.87 cm (130.18 x 93.35 x 5.69 cm)

1938

43070

PROVENANCE:

Private Collection, Paris

Galerie Saint Philippe, Paris

Private Collection

EXHIBITION:

West Palm Beach, Florida, Ann Norton Sculpture Gardens, *Figurative Masters of the Americas*, January 4 – February 12, 2023

Wifredo Lam was a Cuban artist who sought to portray and revive the enduring Afro-Cuban spirit and culture. Inspired by and in contact with some of the most renowned artists of the twentieth century, Lam melded his influences and created a unique style, which was ultimately characterized by the prominence of hybrid figures. Though he was predominantly a painter, he also worked with sculpture, ceramics and printmaking.

One of the most important artists of the Surrealist movement, Lam grew up in Cuba with a grandmother, a Santeria priestess, who practiced Vodoo rituals, and came of age in Paris where he and Picasso became very close friends. Of mixed ancestry, his father, Yam Lam was a Chinese immigrant and his mother, Ana Serafina, was born to a Congolese, former slave mother and a Cuban mulatto father. Lam's contact with African celebrations and spiritual practices proved to be one of his largest artistic influences.

Wifredo Lam's career in Europe exposed him to the work of Bosch and Bruegel, Leger, Matisse, Braque and Miro. Lam's dislike for academic conservatism led to his development of a primitive aesthetic merged with the traditions of Western composition. Influenced by Surrealism and Cubism, Lam began simplifying his forms before he came in contact with Picasso, but it is apparent that Picasso had a significant impact on him. It is said that Picasso's approval and encouragement led Lam to search for his own interpretation of modernism.

Upon his return to Havana, Lam developed a new awareness of Afro-Cuban traditions and his time there marked a rapid evolution of his style. Fusing a Surrealist and Cubist approach with imagery and symbols from Santeria, his work continued to simplify and synthesize abstraction while combining a radical modern style with the primitive arts of the Americas and Afro-Cuban influence. For this reason, his art does not singularly

belong to an art movement.

The information and material herein represents Gallery's best efforts and understanding of the current history and scholarship with respect to the provenance of the Work(s) of Art described and is not part of any warranty.



Side A



Side B















