



**Raf Valls at Sotheby's**  
David Dallas, Old Master Specialist



## A Ray of Sunshine: Results of the Rafael Valls sale at Sotheby's



**James Baker Pyne,  
1800-1870**

Lyme Regis

Estimate (quite correctly in my opinion) £2,000-£3,000

Realised £30,000, which makes it the 3rd most expensive J B Pyne ever auctioned and almost three times the price of his 6ft masterpiece "The Vales of Ennerdale and Buttermere" which Sotheby's sold in February of last year.

In mid-March I drew your attention to the upcoming sale of 100 Old Masters consigned to Sotheby's by the West End dealer Rafael Valls. The entire sale was to be online in the first week of April. As the time drew nigh and the Corona virus started to truly bite I began to regret my final sentence which went "a sale in cyber-space could be the way forward."

I need not have worried. The sale was a complete and utter triumph! 98 of the 100 paintings sold, which is an extraordinary statistic and the prices achieved were also exceptional. The first lot went for five times the top estimate and this set the tone for the rest of the sale. The sale total was £1.6m.

Raf, as he is universally known, has, with Simon Dickinson and Richard Knight, the greatest breadth of knowledge in paintings of anyone I know. I like his taste, the pictures were all in good state and he and Sotheby's had estimated them at sensible levels. Nevertheless, what the sale achieved was an unexpected beacon of hope for the market at a desperately gloomy time.



**Italo-Flemish School,  
17th Century**

Portrait of a Gentleman

Estimate £8,000-£12,000  
Realised £275,000



**Dutch School, Circa 1640**

Portrait of a young girl

Estimated at £8,000-£12,000  
Realised £81,250

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