

Pablo Picasso Cat Portrait Sells for \$95m

The portrait, *Dora Maar au Chat*, depicts Picassos mistress with a black cat.

An anonymous buyer purchased the painting after heated bidding in the Sothebys New York auction room. The winning bid is the second-highest amount paid for a painting at auction.

Picasso painted the portrait in 1941 at the height of his relationship with Dora Maar. A rather large canvas, the portrait is recognized as one of Picassos most vivid renderings of his lover. Dora Maar sits majestically on a large chair, and a small black cat stands behind her. Art critics note that Picasso once compared Maars personality to that of a cat, lending significance to the presence of the black cat in this portrait.

The portraits final selling price was nearly double the pre-sale estimate, putting it just behind another Picasso painting as the second highest price paid for any artwork sold at auction. The *Garçon a la Pipe* sold at Sothebys for more than \$104m in May 2004. Posted: May 6, 2006, 5:00 a.m. EST