

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Christie's CEO speaks on digital security breach

May 13, 2024



Disruptions to online auction pages at Christie were first spotted on May 9. Image credit: Christie's

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

British auction house **Christie** is attempting to recover from a recent security breach.

Last Thursday, the company's web platform went down due to what it is calling a "technology security incident." The issue remains active and could impact the outcome of its marquee spring sales week the firm's CEO Guillaume Cerutti provided an update in an email distributed on May 12.

"I want to assure you that we are managing this incident according to our well-established protocols and practices, with the support of additional experts," said Mr. Cerutti, in a statement.

"This included among other things the proactive protection of our main website by taking it offline," he said. "I can now confirm that all eight of our live New York and Geneva auctions this coming week will take place as scheduled, with the exception of the Rare Watches sale that is postponed to Tuesday 14 May.

"I am also pleased to reassure you that our clients for these sales will be able to bid securely in person, on the phone or via Christie's Live."

Security slip

Disruptions to online auction pages were first spotted on May 9. A placeholder catalog was made available for digital viewership the following day, May 10.

As of Monday afternoon, clients are still unable to bid or register for spring auctions via the site. Instead, interested buyers are encouraged to phone or email its London, New York, Paris, Geneva and Hong Kong offices.

A pivot to in-person lot walk-throughs is also in effect. The alleged hackers hit the company ahead of one of its most lucrative annual calendar moments in 2023, the event garnered Christie's just over \$922 million in sales across eight live auctions held over eight days though its Spring Marquee Week 2024 will proceed offline.

According to Christie's, clients for each of this week's sales can bid securely in person, on the phone or via Christie's Live, noting that "all information, catalogs and content related to these sales can be found via [Christies.com](https://www.christies.com) and on [Christie's YouTube channel](#), as well as experienced on our social media."

Of the eight live auctions slated to stream from New York and Geneva this week, Christie's has rescheduled one: originally set to occur at the Four Seasons Hotel des Bergues in Geneva, today's Rare Watches sale is now postponed to May 14, joining the Rosa de la Cruz Collection Evening Sale.

Additional events include its 20th and 21st-Century Art Evening Sales, slated for May 14 and 16, and May 18's Impressionist and Modern Art Works on Paper and Day Sales. Mr. Cerutti, who recently stepped into his role at Christie's ([see story](#)), shares what attendees can expect.

"In New York, I would like to highlight the Collection of Norman & Lyn Lear and the Rosa de la Cruz Collection, as well as masterpieces by Monet, Van Gogh, Joan Mitchell, Ana Mendieta, Lynette Yiadom-Boakye and many others," said Mr. Cerutti, in a statement.

"In Geneva, watches from the Property of Michael Schumacher and the top lot of our Magnificent Jewels sale, the Yellow Rose, a 202-carat unmounted colored diamond from South Africa, have been widely admired," he said. "We are looking forward to welcoming you to our exhibitions and to registering you to participate in these auctions."

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