

**For Immediate Release**  
12 April 2017

**Exhibition / New York**  
4–25 May 2017  
Monday – Friday  
10 am – 5 pm

**Auction / Chicago**  
25 May 2017  
12 pm central

**Isamu Noguchi's *Magatama*, a sublime onyx sculpture with a star-studded pedigree, is among the select offerings in Wright's Design Masterworks auction on May 25th.**



**Wright**  
980 Madison Ave  
Third Floor  
New York, NY 10075  
t 212 585 0200  
f 212 585 1085

**wright20.com**  
wright-now.com

For press inquiries  
contact **Emilie Sims**  
t 312 235 4181

**press@wright20.com**

*Magatama* by Isamu Noguchi has a commanding presence and an illustrious Hollywood history. The work was a gift from the artist to John Huston, director of numerous films including *The Maltese Falcon* and his wife Evelyn Keyes, the actress best known for her role as Suellen O'Hara in *Gone With the Wind*. Since then the piece has been witness to tales of love and heartache, in true Hollywood fashion.

John Huston and Evelyn Keyes, avid art collectors, were gifted *Magatama* when they visited Noguchi in his studio while honeymooning on the East Coast in 1946. When the couple divorced amicably in 1950, they divided their collection of art by coin toss, winner takes all. Huston lost and Ms. Keyes retained the Noguchi sculpture along with works by Picasso, Rufino Tamayo, Paul Klee and a large collection of pre-Columbian art.

A few years later, Keyes fell in love with the film producer, Mike Todd of *Around the World in 80 Days*. Upon their engagement, Keyes gifted the Noguchi work to Todd only to have him return it six weeks later, when he broke their engagement to pursue a relationship with Elizabeth Taylor whom he married in 1957. Tragically, Todd died a year later in a plane crash.

---

*Magatama* will be sold at auction on May 25th in Wright's Design Masterworks sale. The work will be featured over multiple pages in Wright's full-color catalog alongside additional content and new scholarship. The sculpture will be exhibited in Wright's New York gallery located at 980 Madison Avenue, 3rd Floor, 4–25 May 2017, 10 am–5 pm Monday – Friday.

For Immediate Release  
12 April 2017

Exhibition / New York  
4–25 May 2017  
Monday – Friday  
10 am – 5 pm

Auction / Chicago  
25 May 2017  
12 pm central



John Huston and Evelyn Keyes with *Magatama* by Isamu Noguchi

Evelyn Keyes married the bandleader and clarinetist, Artie Shaw in 1957. They separated in the 1970s but didn't divorce until 1985. At some point, without Keyes consent, Shaw sold off the majority of her art collection. Fortunately, the Noguchi avoided sale. *Magatama* remained in the collection of Ms. Keyes until her death in 2008 when it was bequeathed to the renowned film producer, Allan Glaser and his partner, Hollywood's Golden Boy, Tab Hunter.

The abstract work reveals a confluence of Asian and Western culture, ancient and modern art and ultimately conveys a sense of timelessness, a hallmark of Noguchi's art. The title, *Magatama*, is a reference to curved beads made of stone, earthenware or jade and worn as jewelry or used as ceremonial objects in prehistoric Japan while the surrealist, biomorphic shape relates to the work of his contemporaries such as Jean Arp or Henry Moore.

This exceptional work not only embodies a luminous history but it is a perfect expression of Noguchi's greatest work.

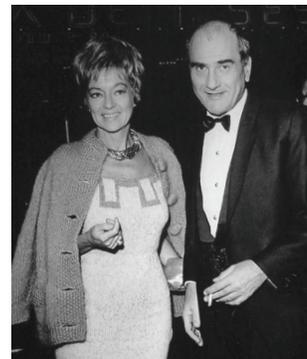
## Wright

980 Madison Ave  
Third Floor  
New York, NY 10075  
t 212 585 0200  
f 212 585 1085

[wright20.com](http://wright20.com)  
[wright-now.com](http://wright-now.com)

For press inquiries  
contact **Emilie Sims**  
t 312 235 4181

[press@wright20.com](mailto:press@wright20.com)



Left to right: Mike Todd with Elizabeth Taylor, Tab Hunter, Evelyn Keyes with Artie Shaw

*Magatama* will be sold at auction on May 25th in Wright's Design Masterworks sale. The work will be featured over multiple pages in Wright's full-color catalog alongside additional content and new scholarship. The sculpture will be exhibited in Wright's New York gallery located at 980 Madison Avenue, 3rd Floor, 4–25 May 2017, 10 am–5 pm Monday – Friday.

# WRIGHT

*Magatama* will be sold at auction on May 25th in Wright's Design Masterworks sale. The work will be featured over multiple pages in Wright's full-color catalog alongside additional content and new scholarship. The sculpture will be exhibited in Wright's New York gallery located at 980 Madison Avenue, 3rd Floor, 4–25 May 2017, 10 am–5 pm Monday–Friday.

**For Immediate Release**  
12 April 2017

**Exhibition / New York**  
4–25 May 2017  
Monday – Friday  
10 am – 5 pm

**Auction / Chicago**  
25 May 2017  
12 pm central

## Wright

980 Madison Ave  
Third Floor  
New York, NY 10075  
t 212 585 0200  
f 212 585 1085

**wright20.com**  
wright-now.com

For press inquiries  
contact **Emilie Sims**  
t 312 235 4181

**press@wright20.com**

---

*The essence of sculpture is for me the perception of space,  
the continuum of our existence* —Isamu Noguchi



## Isamu Noguchi

*Magamata*

1946

Onyx

**Estimate:** \$300,000–500,000

---

*Magatama* will be sold at auction on May 25th in Wright's Design Masterworks sale. The work will be featured over multiple pages in Wright's full-color catalog alongside additional content and new scholarship. The sculpture will be exhibited in Wright's New York gallery located at 980 Madison Avenue, 3rd Floor, 4–25 May 2017, 10 am–5 pm Monday – Friday.

For Immediate Release  
12 April 2017

Exhibition / New York  
4–25 May 2017  
Monday – Friday  
10 am – 5 pm

Auction / Chicago  
25 May 2017  
12 pm central



Evelyn Keyes in her home with a painting by Rufino Tamayo, 1948

## Timeline

- 1946** Gift from the artist to John Huston and Evelyn Keyes
- 1950** Evelyn Keyes wins the couple's art collection, including the Noguchi sculpture, in a coin toss following their divorce
- 1956** Keyes gifts the sculpture to Mike Todd
- 1956** Six weeks later, Todd returns the sculpture when he breaks up with Keyes after falling in love with Elizabeth Taylor
- 1957** Keyes marries the bandleader, Artie Shaw
- 2008** Keyes passes away and the sculpture is bequeathed to Allan Glaser and Tab Hunter
- 2017** The sculpture will be offered to the marketplace for the first time by Wright at auction on May 25th

About Wright: **Wright is the premier auction house specializing in modern and contemporary design. Since its founding in 2000, Wright has handled more than 40,000 lots across the spectrum of 20th century and contemporary design. Based in Chicago, with a gallery in New York in the historic Parke-Bernet building at 980 Madison, the company was founded and is run by Richard Wright along with a group of creative and innovative specialists who have pioneered whole fields of collection, championed architecture at auction and presented fine art with dependable results, cultivating an illustrious place within the auction industry. Wright is also a leading figure in direct and private sales of art and design with an online marketplace for furniture, decorative arts and design, Wright Now.**

**Wright**  
980 Madison Ave  
Third Floor  
New York, NY 10075  
t 212 585 0200  
f 212 585 1085

**wright20.com**  
wright-now.com

For press inquiries  
contact **Emilie Sims**  
t 312 235 4181

**press@wright20.com**

---

*Magatama will be sold at auction on May 25th in Wright's Design Masterworks sale. The work will be featured over multiple pages in Wright's full-color catalog alongside additional content and new scholarship. The sculpture will be exhibited in Wright's New York gallery located at 980 Madison Avenue, 3rd Floor, 4–25 May 2017, 10 am–5 pm Monday – Friday.*