

Bundle of Jerry's joy is home to stay



AP
"Femme aux Bras Croisés" sold for \$55 million yesterday, tops for a Picasso.

Picasso fetches record \$55M

By BILL HUTCHINSON
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

A painting from Picasso's "blue period" brought in a record amount of green last night at Christie's.

"Femme aux Bras Croisés," which was once owned by the author Gertrude Stein, fetched \$55 million, the highest price ever for a Picasso painting.

Officials at the East Side auction house had estimated the painting would go for about \$25 million.

The previous top price paid for a Picasso was the \$51.6 million put down for "Pierrette's Wedding" at a Paris auction house in 1989.

The buyer of the painting was not immediately identified.

The "blue period" piece of a seated woman was painted between 1901 and 1902 and was the highlight of Christie's fall sale of Impressionist and Modern art.

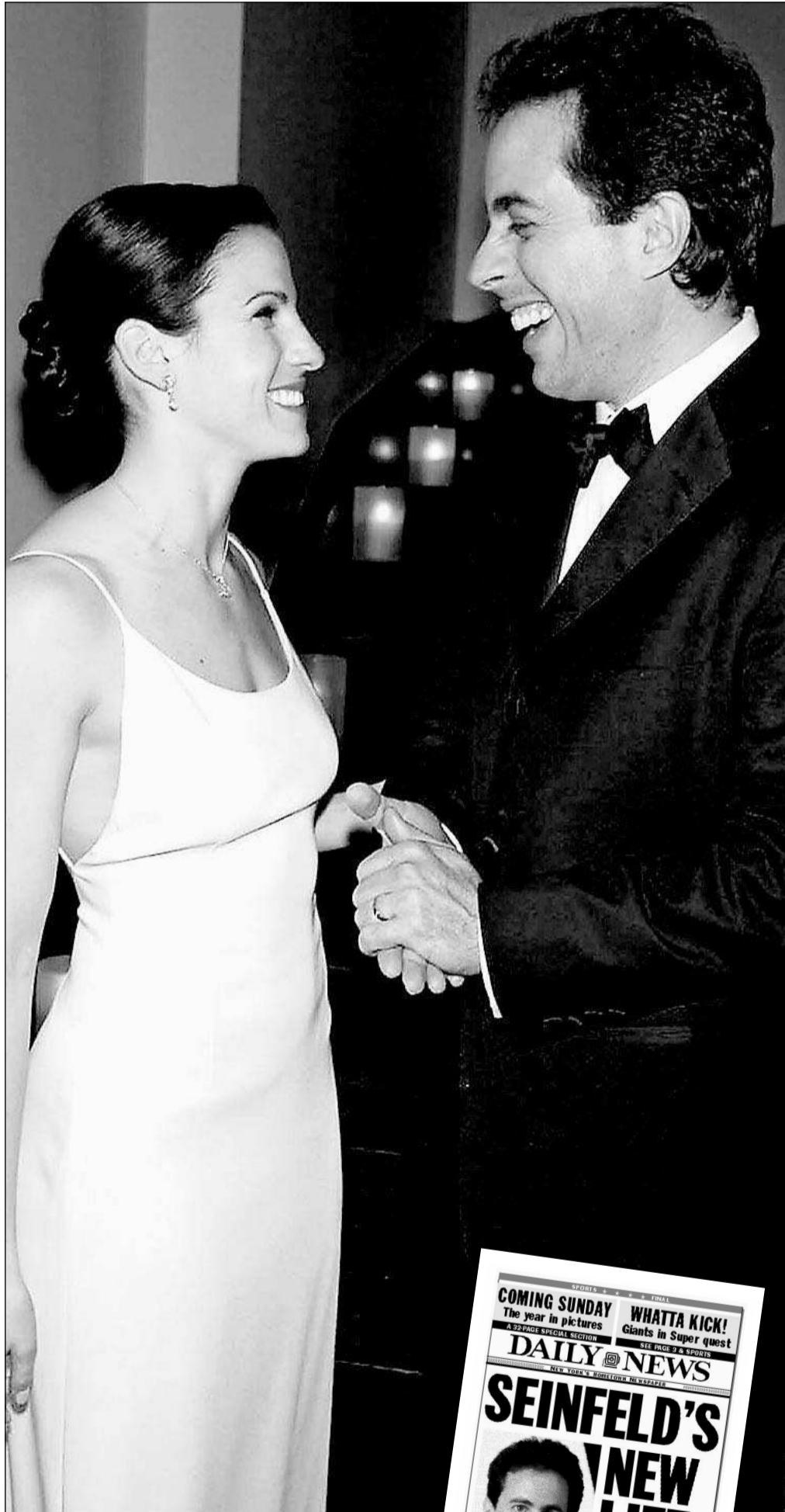
Vincent Van Gogh still has Picasso beat when it comes to getting the most money for an auctioned painting.

In May 1990, Van Gogh's "Portrait of Dr. Gachet" sold at Christie's for a world-record \$82.5 million.

Other big-money pieces at last night's auction included an Alberto Giacometti sculpture called "Large Standing Woman I" that fetched \$14.3 million, and an Henri Fantin-Latour painting that went for \$3.5 million.

Also up for bid was a Claude Monet painting titled "Es Peupliers" and a Paul Cézanne painting, "Bords de la Marne."

With News Wire Services



AP
NOW THEY ARE THREE Funnyman Jerry Seinfeld and bride, Jessica, at their wedding last Christmas. Two Decembers earlier, the Daily News foresaw a new life for Jerry that included a big, happy family.

By RUTH BASHINSKY and LEO STANDORA
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITERS

A "euphorically happy" Jerry Seinfeld and his wife walked their newborn baby girl home yesterday.

Little Sascha, who arrived early on Election Day, weighed in at 7 pounds, 1 ounce. Mama Jessica delivered the 20-inch infant at Weill Cornell Medical Center without a hitch.

"Jerry's on cloud nine, euphorically happy," said the comic's longtime buddy Dr. Cliff Singer. "He was happy during the pregnancy, but once she was born and he saw her . . . well, all these chemicals go off in your head."

It was the first child for both Seinfeld, 46, and the former Jessica Sklar, 29, a public relations exec who married the sitcom king in December.

The couple left the hospital for their Central Park West apartment with the baby snuggled in a blanket. But eventually, Sascha also will occupy the nursery in the \$32 million East Hampton, L.I., mansion her parents bought from singer Billy Joel this year.

Singer, who has known Seinfeld since their fourth-grade days on Long Island, says his buddy and wife named their newborn Sascha because they liked the name — rather than honoring a deceased family member, a common practice in Judaism.

He added that his pal likes to keep things simple.

"Jerry is very Zen," said Singer. "He doesn't have a middle name, and I don't think Jessica has one, either. They think it's cleaner, easier, lighter."

Singer added that Seinfeld has "a lot going on and will continue to work on his act, but he is going to take it easy."

"He will definitely focus on home life" — including diaper-changing and middle-of-the-night feeding. And, "He's going to be a great father," Singer predicted.

Singer, who has a 17-year-old daughter, said that Seinfeld did not have a preference for a boy or a girl. The couple didn't know the baby's gender until she was born.

"I told him when my daughter was born, it was the best day of my life," Singer said. "It is such a special experience, and he went through it just like everyone else."

The Seinfelds met at the posh Reebok Sports Center health club last year, shortly after Jessica married Broadway scion Eric Nederlander.

She ditched the producer for the comic, but later split from Jerry. They reconciled, and Jerry proposed last November.

The Seinfelds were wed on Christmas Day in a simple ceremony in New York attended by a handful of friends and family.

News of Jessica's pregnancy was broken on "Live With Regis and Kathie Lee" in April.

Shortly after his wildly successful NBC show went off the air in 1998, Jerry said he wanted to move back to New York, have a family and start a new life.

Jerry has now told friends he'd like to have "five or six" kids, but there's no word on what Jessica has in mind.