

**For Immediate Release**

Thursday, 14 April 2011

**CHRISTIE'S**

Press Contact: Hannah Schmidt +44 (0) 207 389 2964 [hschmidt@christies.com](mailto:hschmidt@christies.com)

Matthew Paton +44 (0) 207 389 2965 [mpaton@christies.com](mailto:mpaton@christies.com)

## **A RARE GLIMPSE INTO A PRIVATE IRISH TREASURE TROVE:**

**Important Douglas Hamilton Portrait amongst Works Offered from the  
Collection of the late Dr. Tony Ryan, from Lyons Demesne,  
at Christie's London in July**



**London** – Christie's London is pleased to announce the sale of *Lyons Demesne: Works of Art from the Collection of the late Dr. Tony Ryan* (1936-2007), from Lyons Demesne, County Kildare, Ireland, on 14 July. Comprising a relatively small selection of works from the collection, this auction will provide collectors and institutions around the world with a rare glimpse into the private Irish treasure trove assembled by Dr. Tony Ryan; a connoisseur who was one of Ireland's biggest philanthropists, supporters of the arts and the renowned businessman who co-founded Ryanair.

Featuring over 400 lots of European Fine and Decorative Arts spanning the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, highlights include an important full length portrait in pastel of *Arthur Hill, 2nd Marquess of Downshire (1753-1801)* by Hugh Douglas Hamilton, R.H.A., 1736-1801 (estimate: £200,000-300,000), *illustrated above*; a pair of George III giltwood and painted satinwood console tables in the manner of Thomas Chippendale the Younger (estimate: £50,000-80,000); a Louis XV Gobelins tapestry, by Claude Audran (estimate: £30,000-50,000) and a white marble sculpture of *Love Awakened* by Giovanni Battista Lombardi, Rome, *circa* 1870 (estimate: £30,000-50,000). A selection of highlights will be on view in a special pre-sale exhibition in the Village at Lyons Celbridge, located on the Lyons estate from 20-22 May. With estimates ranging from £300 to £300,000, the sale is expected to realise in excess of £2million.

**Orlando Rock, Deputy Chairman, Christie's Europe:** *"It is a privilege to be offering a small selection of works from the superb Irish collection of Dr. Tony Ryan. Dr. Ryan's nurturing vision and commitment to restoring and regenerating Lyons Demesne and its surrounding estate and village is an inspiration to us all."*

Dr. Ryan was born in Thurles, County Tipperary, in 1936. With transport ‘in the family blood’, Dr. Ryan’s professional enterprises included founding Guinness Peat Aviation in 1975 and co-founding Ryanair in 1986. As air travel continues to evolve, Dr. Ryan’s abiding cultural legacy at Lyons Demesne will live on as an integral part of Ireland’s heritage in the architectural treasure that he so lovingly restored. Lyons was commissioned by Nicholas Lawless, 1<sup>st</sup> Lord Cloncurry from the architect Oliver Grace in 1797, with subsequent remodelling just a few years later by Richard Morrison for Valentine Lawless, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lord Cloncurry; as part of the remodelling the principal rooms were adorned with beautiful murals by the Italian landscape artist Gaspare Gabrielli, who had married Cloncurry’s maid. Lyons was owned by the Lawless family until the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. It was then acquired by the University College Dublin for whom it served as an agricultural research facility, until purchased by Dr. Ryan in 1996. The restoration – ‘the largest, most ambitious and exhaustive programme of restoration ever undertaken in a private capacity in the history of the Irish State’ – received the *Europa Nostra* and *Institut International des Châteaux Historiques* joint award for refurbishment in 2001. Dr. Ryan’s passion for racing and thoroughbred horses led to the creation of the great stud at Lyons. His vision and celebration of skilled craftsmanship is reflected in the quality of the works to be offered from the collection, which are set to embark on the next chapter in their history when they sell at Christie’s London in July.

Amongst the highlights in the sale is a portrait by Hugh Douglas Hamilton, R.H.A., 1736-1801, the most distinguished pastellist from the Dublin Society Schools and a successful portraitist in Dublin, London and Rome, who brought the popularity of full length portraits in pastel to a new height. *Arthur Hill, 2nd Marquess of Downshire (1753-1801)* dates to 1785-90 and is one of the finest examples of the artist’s work on this large scale (estimate: £200,000-300,000), *illustrated page 1 center*. The sitter was a Privy Councillor of England and Ireland, whose seat was Hillsborough Castle, County Down.

### Further Highlights

#### PAINTINGS, DRAWINGS AND PRINTS



George Barret, R.A. is known for his topographical accuracy. In *A View of Lord Hamilton’s Landscape at Painsbill, Surrey* by Barret and Sawrey Gilpin, R.A. (estimate: £40,000-60,000), *illustrated left*, he captures the majesty of the garden that the Hon. Charles Hamilton (1704-86) created from wasteland near Cobham in Surrey, which was believed to rival the beauty of Stourhead and the inspiration of Stowe.



Thomas Roberts (c.1749-1778) is considered the most brilliant, though shortest-lived, Irish landscape painter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Depicting a popular subject, which Roberts made his own, *Powerscourt Waterfall, County Wicklow* (estimate: £40,000-60,000) illustrates his understanding of Irish light and ability to convey distance, with the golden-hued evening mist falling.

In addition to works by other old masters, such as *Portrait of Mrs. Thomas Edwards Freeman* (estimate: £50,000-80,000) by Sir Joshua Reynolds, P.R.A., *illustrated left*, the breadth and depth of Dr. Ryan’s



collection is reflected by works from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, including two Sir John Lavery designs for ladies' costumes from the film *Monsieur Verdoux* which featured Charlie Chaplin 1946 (each with estimates of £600-900), *example illustrated left*.

## FURNITURE AND TAPESTRIES

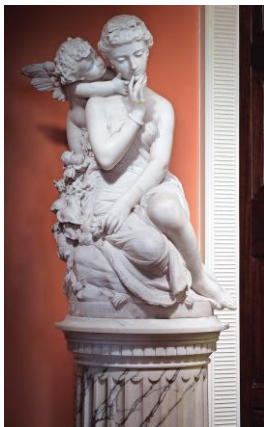


The wide array of superb furniture includes several Irish pieces such as an Irish George IV mahogany games table attributed to Stewart of Dublin (estimate: £7,000-10,000) *detail illustrated left* and a pair of Irish George III oval glass mirrors (estimate: £6,000-9,000). Mirroring the taste of the great Gabrielli Room at Lyons is a pair of George III giltwood console tables, in the manner of Thomas Chippendale the Younger (estimate: £50,000-80,000).



Tapestries are led by a sumptuous Louis XV Gobelins tapestry, by Claude Audran, depicting Sancho's feast from Don Quixote (estimate: £30,000-50,000), *illustrated left*. Further examples include a traditional mid-18<sup>th</sup> century Lille pastoral tapestry in silk and wool of *Peasants Dancing* by Katherine Werniers, after David Teniers the younger (estimate: £20,000-30,000) and of aeronautical interest, a charming pair of French machine-woven tapestry of Bleriot's trans-Channel flight (estimate: £300-500).

## SCULPTURE



The collection includes a charming group of sculpture from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, highlights of which include a white marble sculpture of *La Revelacion de Amor* (Love Awakened) by Giovanni Battista Lombardi, Rome, *circa* 1870 (estimate: £30,000-50,000). The Spanish title of this subject reflects that Lombardi's work was well received beyond Italy. A bronze and marble bust of *Selika*, an African slave from the opera *L'Africane*, is by Pietro Calvi (estimate: £20,000-30,000). Born in Milan, Calvi was a late 19<sup>th</sup> century sculptor of international standing who, in addition to working on the decoration of Milan cathedral like many of his contemporaries, also exhibited widely outside of Italy.

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## **Notes to Editors:**

### **About the Village at Lyons Celbridge, located on the Lyons estate**

The Village at Lyons offers diners the award winning restaurant La Serre, housed in an original Turner conservatory, The Mill Ireland's most prestigious Wedding & events venue, 17 luxuriously appointed suites located by a private lake, an all-day cafe and the acclaimed cookery school. And for the discerning client, there are beautifully furnished houses available for long term lease. [www.villageatlyons.com](http://www.villageatlyons.com) Telephone: 01-6303500

**Christie's International Real Estate** is offering the rare and historic Lyons Demesne estate in County Kildare, Ireland, for sale.

### **About Christie's**

Christie's, the world's leading art business had global auction and private sales in 2010 that totaled £3.3 billion/\$5.0 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. Founded in 1766 by James Christie, Christie's conducted the greatest auctions of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, and today remains a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 450 sales annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from \$200 to over \$100 million. Christie's has 53 offices in 32 countries and 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai and Hong Kong. More recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in emerging and new markets such as Russia, China, India and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Mumbai and Dubai.