

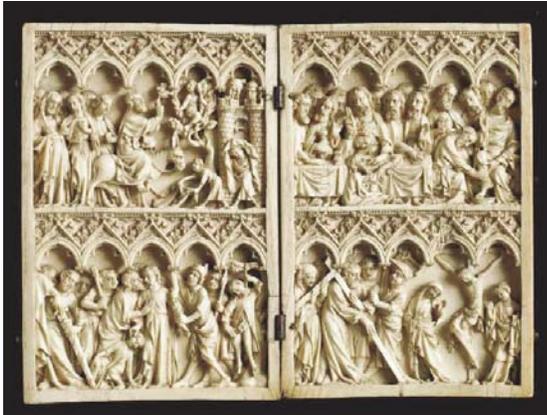
**For Immediate Release**

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**ANCIENNE COLLECTION CHARLES GILLOT (1853-1903)  
The Art of collecting in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century**

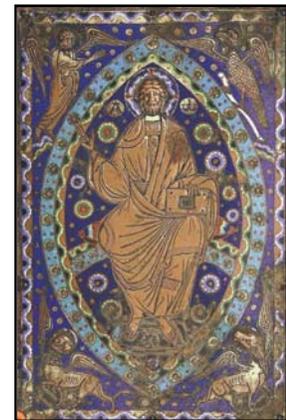
4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> March 2008



A carved Ivory diptych of the Passion of Christ  
Workshop of the Master of the Passion Diptychs,  
circa 1370-1380  
Estimate: €200,000 – 300,000



A Mamluk Glass mosque lamp  
Egypt or Syria late 14<sup>th</sup> / early 15<sup>th</sup> Century  
26 cm high  
Estimate: €150,000- 200,000



A gilt copper and enamelled book cover  
representing Christ in Majesty; Limoges  
Master of the Chiselled Asters  
Circa 1185-1190  
Estimate: € 150,000-250,000

**Paris** – A few months ago, it is with much amazement that a team of Christie's Specialists discovered in an unassuming Parisian flat a collection which had remained untouched since the nineteenth century. Wars and waves of collecting trends left little chance for such an ensemble to survive in its entirety only to reappear today, more than 100 years after the death of the man who had passionately collected these works of art, Charles Gillot (1853-1903).

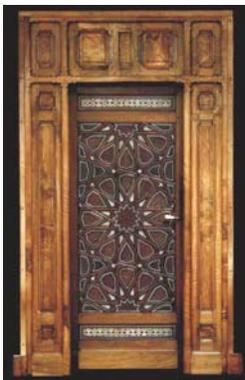
The collection estimated around € 5 million, includes admirable examples of 14<sup>th</sup> Century Mamluk art, 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Century French sculpture and works of art and a fine selection of Egyptian antiquities. It also

comprises a group of Haute Epoque furniture and works of art, Russian icons, as well as examples of Hispano-Moresque ceramics, Chinese porcelain and Japanese works of art. The ensemble also includes works of art and fine jewels by some of the collector's Contemporaries. Exactly 104 years after a first sale that marked auction history, the second part of the Charles Gillot Collection is on the point of being dispersed.

## ISLAMIC ART

It was in the closing years of the nineteenth Century that Charles Gillot became truly enthusiastic about Islamic art, after traveling in Egypt. From this trip he brought back a number of pieces, three of which are included in our catalogue.

Under the aegis of Gaston Migeon, renowned curator of the Louvre Museum, Charles Gillot was a member of the small group of collectors who made an active contribution to organizing the very first Exhibition of Muslim Art, which opened at the *Union Centrale des Arts Décoratifs* in 1903. Charles Gillot lent items from his collection for the occasion, ten of which are included in the sale, among them: a Mamluk mosque lamp (*illustrated page 1*) from Egypt or Syria which dates late 14<sup>th</sup> –early 15<sup>th</sup> Century (estimate: € 150,000-200,000).



Gillot was not just a collector. He bought pieces so that he could live with them. The clearest demonstration of this is a geometric 14<sup>th</sup> Century wooden panel. In 1900, one of the leading wood workers at the time, Fulgraff, incorporate it into larger structures with frames that then served as the door to his study (*illustrated left*). This wood, ebony and ivory panel comes from the *minbar* made for the mosque of the amir Qawsun who was the most powerful noble in the Mamluk empire in the mid-14th Century (estimate: €300,000-500,000)."

## EUROPEAN SCULPTURE AND ARCHAEOLOGY

The European collection formed by Charles Gillot is dominated by mediaeval works of art and sculpture, particularly in the form of Romanesque enamels from Limoges, gothic ivories, and northern European religious wood sculpture. In this respect his tastes were quite orthodox, being reflected in the collecting habits of many wealthy connoisseurs at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

Pieces from his European sculpture collection were exhibited at the *Musée du Petit Palais* in Paris at the time of the 1900 Great Exhibition, ten of which are included today in the sale. The study published by

Raymond Koechlin, (one of the founders of the Society of Friends of the Louvre and subsequently its Chairman), listing more than 1.300 ivory items, also includes a number of pieces from Gillot collection, eleven of which feature in the catalogue.

The ivories in the collection are similarly impressive, with a broad range of diptychs, free-standing figures and other objects. One of the most charming among these is carved ivory mirror case cover which depicts four courtly scenes divided by a stylized tree (estimate: € 50,000-80,000).



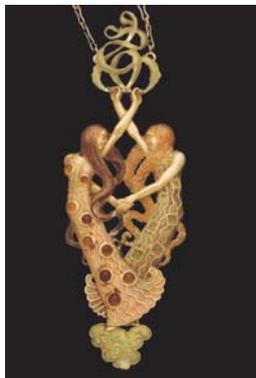
The mirror case cover (*illustrated left*) is very close to another ivory mirror case in the Louvre; however the present example has been embellished with four dragons on the corners which are not found on the Louvre version.

One of the most important pieces from this section is a carved diptych of the Passion of Christ, from the workshop of the Master of the Passion Diptychs, circa 1370-1380, estimated: € 200,000-300,000 (*illustrated page 1*)

The Archaeological section includes a fine selection of Graeco-Roman and Egyptian antiquities, led by a rare Egyptian limestone statuette of Taweret, circa 664-525 B.C. (estimate: € 80,000-120,000), (*illustrated right*).



## PAINTINGS, BOOKS, JEWELS, AND OTHER WORKS OF ART



Charles Gillot's collection is eclectic by nature. It is also includes examples of Chinese art, Russian icons, Renaissance furniture and tapestries, textiles and fans, a few silver pieces and some jewels by one of Gillot's friend, Henri Vever, comprising a beautiful Art nouveau enamel past and gold 'witches' pendant by Vever and Grasset (estimate: € 12,000-18,000) which has been exhibited at the *Great Exhibition* in 1900, (*illustrated left*).

A few particularly attractive books will be proposed, including a number of manuscript sheets, probably Bolognese, circa 1320 (estimate: € 70,000-100,000). The section is almost exclusively focused on the decorative arts. Pictures and drawings seem to have been left aside, except for a few work such as a moving pieta attributed to Goncal Peris, active in Valencia, documented between 1380 and 1451, which will be included in the 26 June 2008 Old Master Pictures sale in Paris. Other works of art found their place in the collection primarily for family reasons: a terracotta group by the sculptor Charles-Henri Cordier (1827-

1905), uncle and godfather of Charles Gillot; several busts and portraits of parents, by artists who were contemporaries of the collection.

Although ancient history was Gillot's true passion, the collector remained open to exchanges with artists of his own time. Records relate dinners with Whistler, a correspondence with Puvis de Chavannes, and most particularly a close friendship with Eugene Grasset.

## EUGENE GRASSET



Eugène Grasset illustrated many books produced in Charles Gillot's printing house, and with their collaboration as a starting point the two men developed a friendship in which they shared a passion for Japanese art. In about 1880, Charles Gillot commissioned from Grasset an entire set of furniture to decorate his apartment in Paris, and twenty-five years later Louise-Marcelle Gillot-Seure (1884-1958), the collector's daughter, nostalgic for her childhood, commissioned a second set from the artist. Several pieces from these two substantial sets are currently in the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, and the remaining ones are represented in our catalogue, including a set of six carved oak upholstered chairs designed by Grasset and manufactured Fulgraff, 1880-1885, (estimate: €3,000-5,000) and also a carved oak and enamelled stoneware bookshelf and a cosy corner by Eugène Grasset and Alexandre Bigot, circa 1905-1910, (estimate: €12,000-18,000).

## CHARLES GILLOT (1853-1903)

### GILLOTAGE



The collector's family made a name for itself around 1850, when Charles' father, Firmin Gillot (1819-1872), revolutionised the bookmaking industry by inventing 'paniconography', also called gillotage, a process allowing the simultaneous printing of text and image. On his father's death, Charles Gillot took over the family engraving business in the Faubourg Saint Martin, and subsequently made significant improvements to his father's invention by incorporating the photographic discoveries of Daguerre and Niepce. His work won awards at all the Great Exhibitions and earned him appointment as a Knight of the Order of the French Legion of Honor in 1886.

## THE 1904 SALE AND JAPANESE ART

In 1904, only months after the death of Charles Gillot, part of his collection – the part devoted to Asian art – was the subject of an important auction at the Durand-Ruel gallery in Paris. Samuel Bing, a famous dealer and a friend of Charles Gillot, was the expert in charge. With 3,453 lots listed in two thick catalogues, the sale was a major event. Even today it constitutes a reference in the history of auctions. Top curators and collectors, most of them former companions of Gillot in his quest for that very special piece, were present as the collection was dispersed – they included Gaston Migeon, the renowned curator of the Louvre Museum, Raymond Koechlin, one of the founders of the Society of Friends of the Louvre and subsequently its Chairman, Dr Justus Brinckmann, head of the art museums in Hamburg, the Comte de Camondo, the Marquis de Biron, and Messrs Vever, Aynard, Veil-Picard, Marteau and Hayashi, to name but a few.

Exactly 104 years after a first sale that marked auction history, the second part of the Charles Gillot Collection is on the point of being dispersed. Most of the works of art included in our catalogue have been rigorously documented by the collector himself, either in his account books or on the index cards he archived for the pieces; he was careful to keep whenever possible all the invoices for his purchases, as if he was anxious to pass on the objects he so admired accompanied by what could be considered as documentary evidence of their nobility, for the greater happiness of today's humanist collectors.

In the *Journal des Arts* of 19 March 1903, Raymond Koechlin hailed Gillot's taste in these terms: “*Above all, it was character that he sought in works of art, and that is why his taste was not exclusive – he also found the character he liked in Japanese art, in Gothic art, in Oriental art, and in the lovingly arranged display cases of his gallery items where every age rubbed shoulders together in perfect harmony. Never did a collection better reflect the personality of its originator, and never did a collector collect more for his own pleasure, to satisfy his own eye.*”

**Auction:** 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> March 2008

**Viewing:** 29<sup>th</sup> February, 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2<sup>nd</sup> March, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2008

Press Release

CHRISTIE'S

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\*Estimates do not include buyer's premium

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*Images available on request*

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More information about Christie's sale of **ANCIENNE COLLECTION CHARLES GILLOT (1853-1903)** can be found on [www.christies.com](http://www.christies.com). All lots from the sale can be viewed online along with full catalogue descriptions on Lotfinder®, which also allows clients to leave absentee bids. [www.christies.com](http://www.christies.com) provides information on more than 80 sale categories, buying and selling at auction, complete auction results, and Christie's international auction calendar.