

## For Immediate Release

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## CHRISTOPHER HOWE – THE FIRST TWENTY YEARS



**24 March 2004**

**Christie's South Kensington**

**London** – An unmissable sale harking back to the great country house sales of the past, over four hundred lots are to be offered on behalf of Christopher Howe, the London-based antique dealer, at Christie's South Kensington on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2004. The sale is to celebrate Howe's first twenty years of voracious buying, reflecting his love of design, form and texture. Almost all of Howe's unique personal collection will be for sale.

This unusual single-owner auction presents an opportunity to acquire fine pieces, many of which have come from sources which no longer exist. Highlights include a fabulous George III canopy bed owned by theatre designer Oliver Hill (estimate: £8,000-12,000), a George II mahogany side table from Casewick Hall, Lincolnshire (estimate: £30,000-50,000) and a set of eight Regency mahogany chairs attributed to Gillows from Stoneleigh Abbey, Warwickshire (estimate: £20,000-£30,000). Also of note is a Tuscan-style carved oak semi-circular side table by Sir Robert Lorimer and a rare pair of 18th century-style ash ladderback armchairs designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens for Deanery Garden, Sonning, Berkshire and Little Thakeham in Sussex (estimate: £8,000-12,000).

Christopher Howe is one of the great aficionados of country house provenance and since the age of twenty he has acquired an extraordinary range of rare furniture and objects dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> through to the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

*“I studied as a sculptor; therefore form and texture inspire me. I love research and academic discoveries which tell you more about a piece, but the mood created by the design, scale, colour or condition is what really inspires me.”*

Christopher Howe 2004

At his shop on the Pimlico Road Howe has many followers and prestigious clients. Lucian Freud buys chairs to use in his portraits, such as the 19<sup>th</sup> century Holland & Son’s easy chair in the famous painting *Leigh Bowery (Seated)*, 1990, the matching pair of which will be in the sale.

Howe’s brilliant eye for good design is reflected strongly in the sale – items range from 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century English country house furniture through to the Arts and Crafts of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the innovation of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Included items range from upholstery by Howard and Sons, an early 18<sup>th</sup> century limestone pool surround and an exceptional collection of patented Regency Colza oil lamps. Moulded fibreglass shell armchairs designed by Charles and Ray Eames form part of a collection of 20<sup>th</sup> century modern design. There are many quirky objects too - vintage dog collars, bull’s eye mirrors, Parisian hat lasts and fine and unusual 18<sup>th</sup> century carvings - all creating a veritable treasure-trove for enthusiasts, both new and experienced.

*“This sale will clear some much needed space in my home and workplace and I hope will inspire a new generation of people to collect beautiful and unusual works of art to have and enjoy in their homes.”* Christopher Howe 2004

Christopher Howe’s career has been a fascinating one; in 1986, having just left Goldsmith’s College of Art, he took on a derelict shop in a small street in Belgravia with his girlfriend Alison. They opened the shop using a small bank loan and stock found in markets and borrowed from friends, relying on candles for lighting. A year on, after some building work, the shop re-opened with a window displaying a Gae Aulenti lamp and a pair of Pierre Paulin white vinyl Tulip chairs, an innovative style which has remained the essence of Christopher’s approach to antique dealing ever since. In 1995 the business moved to a much larger premises on the prestigious Pimlico Road where it remains today.

The sale will also include favourite pieces from HOWE; Christopher’s bespoke range of furniture and lighting. To compliment the sale, the prolific artist Trevor Newton has drawn illustrations of some of Christopher’s most inspirational pieces.

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