

For Immediate Release

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RETAIL THERAPY AT CHRISTIE'S

Appealing Objects, Furniture, Pictures and Works of Art from the Town and Country Homes of Sir Ralph and Lady Halpern to be Auctioned in February 2005



Sir Ralph and Lady Halpern

Sir Ralph and Lady Halpern Collection

24 February 2005

London – The contents of the town and country homes of Sir Ralph and Lady Halpern, will be offered at Christie's at 2.30pm on 24 February 2005. Lovingly amassed over a period of twenty years, and in the true spirit of the English country house collecting tradition, the auction embraces everything from paintings, furniture, silver and porcelain to copperware and natural crystals. Sir Ralph is well known in the business and financial world as the former Chairman and CEO who successfully transformed the Burton Group that owned at the time Harvey Nichols, Debenhams, and a variety of some 2000 specialist chain stores. The collection reflects the Halperns' passions for British landscape and seascape paintings and Georgian furniture, as well as fun and unusual objects. With estimates from £100 upwards, this single owner auction will appeal to collectors, designers and enthusiasts with every size of pocket.

"This auction is the result of twenty, happy years of collecting," says Sir Ralph Halpern. "My wife and I are shortly to engage in an overseas adventure which would not enable us to take our collections with us, so we have decided to sell everything, from our maritime paintings and silver candlesticks, to the Wedgwood dinner service, copperware and trinket boxes. It is with some sadness that we will be parted from objects and paintings that have adorned our home, and given us such pleasure, but we very much hope that they may inspire a new generation of collectors to begin their very own adventure in art and antiques."

The Halperns' town residence, just off the Kings Road, was a showcase for Sir Ralph's equestrian pictures. John Wootton's superb *An equestrian portrait of Ferdinand, Duke of Brunswick* (estimate: £30,000-50,000), and Charles Towne's scene *Mrs Townely Parker's favourite hunters in a landscape* (estimate: £40,000-60,000) are notable examples.

The sale also boasts a selection of paintings, from the Halperns' London home, which celebrate the great age of British Naval supremacy. Highlights include Thomas Whitcombe's dramatic canvas *HMS Crown with a cutter off Dover* (estimate: £25,000-40,000). A pair of marine pictures by James Edward Buttersworth, one of *A 70 Gunner with two frigates*, the other *Off Gibraltar* (estimate: £12,000-18,000), an impressive and imposingly large canvas, *Shipping off Lisbon, with the tower of Belem*, by John Thomas Serres (estimate: £40,000-60,000) and Anton Schranz's *Grand Harbour, Valetta* (estimate: £4,000-6,000) also feature. Anton Domenico Gabbiani's outstanding *Triple portrait*, which hung in pride of place in the Halperns' London drawing-room, is also offered (estimate: £40,000-60,000)

The Halperns furnished their country house with traditional English furniture, pictures and silver. Colefax & Fowler curtains (estimates ranging from £300-1,000) helped to create a comfortable bolthole from the hustle and bustle of London life. Among the portraits is one by Enoch Seeman of *Dudley North* (estimate: £5,000-8,000) and another from the circle of Huysmans, of *John Couper* (estimate: £8,000-12,000). The furniture in the dining-room includes a large George III mahogany breakfront bookcase (estimate: £12,000-18,000) and a mahogany four-pedestal dining table (estimate: £8,000-12,000) with fourteen mahogany dining-chairs (estimate: £5,000-8,000). Several of the pieces of furniture and pictures come from some of England's great houses, including Elvedan Hall, Thornby Hall and Waldershare Park. White marble busts of Shakespeare (estimate: £3,000-5,000) and Wellington (estimate: £1,500-3,000), a collection of decanters and stoppers (estimate: £100-200) and a pair of Victorian silver-plated twin-branch candelabra (estimate: £500-600) are also offered from the country house dining-room.

The auction will also include a selection of silver, sculpture, objects, glass and porcelain, with a wide variety of shapes, colours, sizes, styles and estimates. An extensive 'Columbia' pattern dinner service by Wedgwood (estimate: £400-600), a collection of silver trinket boxes, snuff boxes and dishes and baskets (estimates ranging from £100-£300) and a collection of copperware (estimate: £1,000-1,500), as well as 19th century Aubusson style tapestry cushions (estimate: £500-1,000) and a pair of ceremonial dress swords (estimate: £300-500 each), will appeal to collectors, far and wide.

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Visit Christie's at www.christies.com

Notes to Editors:

Viewing Dates	Sunday 20 February	2pm-5pm
	Monday 21 February	9am-4.30pm
	Tuesday 22 February	9am-8pm
	Wednesday 23 February	9am-4.30pm