

**For Immediate Release**  
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**CHRISTIE'S**

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## **CHRISTIE'S TO OFFER THE PETER MEYER COLLECTION IN JUNE 2008**

- **One of the finest, most comprehensive collections of 20<sup>th</sup> Century British Art to be offered at auction**
- **Collection includes a drawing by Lucian Freud bought for £15 in 1950 - now expected to realise £60,000-£80,000**

### **BRITISH ART WEEK**

*20<sup>th</sup> Century British Art*, 6 June 2008

Christie's, 8 King Street, St. James's, London SW1Y 6QT

**London** - Christie's announce that they will offer *The Peter Meyer Collection* at the auction of 20<sup>th</sup> Century British Art on 6 June 2008 at Christie's London. The finest and most comprehensive selection of 20<sup>th</sup> Century British Art to be offered at auction for a generation, the collection was assembled during the 1940s and 1950s when many of the artists were relatively unknown and is expected to realise in excess of £2.5 million. Artists represented in the collection include Henry Moore, Lucian Freud, Ben Nicholson, Graham Sutherland, Bridget Riley and William Scott, and all of the works appear at auction for the first time.

Jonathan Horwich, Deputy Chairman of Christie's: "*Peter Meyer was an exceptional collector, who had the taste, vision and foresight to acquire works of art during the 1940s and 1950s by many of the artists who became the leading figures of the British art scene. His impressive eye for art was recognized as early as 1952 when highlights from his collection were exhibited at The Art Council's exhibition 'Three Young Collectors', as well as at the Venice Biennale in the same year. This collection offers a comprehensive selection of works which have never before been offered at auction and which were acquired directly from galleries or from the artists themselves. Christie's continues to lead the market for 20<sup>th</sup> Century British art, and we look forward to exhibiting Peter Meyer's collection in Dublin, New York and London, before presenting it to the international marketplace in June 2008.*"

Highlights of the collection:

- *The Sparrowhawk* by Lucian Freud, O.M. (b.1922) was bought in 1950 for £15. Measuring 6 x 8½ inches, this work shows a sparrowhawk resting on the neck of a rocking horse, and is signed and dated '*Lucian Freud / May 1947*'. Drawn when the artist was 24 years old, just three years after his first solo exhibition at the Lefevre Gallery in 1944, the drawing is expected to realise £60,000-£80,000.





- *Horizontal Form in Grasses* by Graham Sutherland, O.M. (1903-1980) was acquired at The Hanover Gallery exhibition in 1951 for £157.10, the year before the artist was selected to represent Great Britain at the prestigious *Venice Biennale*. An exceptional work from one of the most influential periods in the artist's career, it is expected to realise £250,000-£350,000 and establish a new record price for a work by the artist sold at auction.

- *Bowl, Eggs and Lemons* by William Scott, R.A. (1913-1989) was painted in 1950 and bought in the same year for £60 (estimate: £300,000-£500,000). An early example of the abstract still-lives for which the artist is most recognized, the present work is expected to attract significant international interest. A native Scot who moved to Northern Ireland at the age of 14, Scott went on to enjoy great acclaim as an artist, being selected to represent Great Britain at the Venice Biennale of 1958, and being the subject of a Retrospective at The Tate Gallery in 1972.



- *Working Model for a Reclining Figure: Festival* by Henry Moore, O.M., C.H. (1898-1986) was acquired in 1951 for £210 and is expected to realise £300,000-£500,000. Conceived and cast in 1950, this work is a study for a sculpture commissioned by the Art Council of Great Britain for the Festival of Britain exhibition in 1951. Moore had been asked to make a family group symbolising 'Discovery', but chose to make a large reclining figure in bronze, as had been his style since the late 1920s.

- *June 11-49 (Cornish Landscape)* by Ben Nicholson, O.M. (1894-1982) was purchased at the Leicester Galleries exhibition in 1950 for £57. Nicholson had married Barbara Hepworth in 1939 and together the couple founded an artist's colony that had a great influence over post-war British art. The present work is a landscape view of the Cornish countryside, and is expected to realise £80,000-£120,000.



## PETER MEYER

Peter Meyer grew up in the surroundings of his father's collection of Old Master pictures, and he soon developed a keen interest and appreciation of fine art. He started to collect 20<sup>th</sup> Century British paintings in the late 1940s, and assembled a collection, highlights from which was featured alongside those of Robert Banks and R.D.S. May in the Art Council's exhibition *Three Young Collectors* in 1952, as well as the Venice Biennale of the same year. Meyer wrote "I only bought a picture if I was really moved by it ... and I am sure that having grown up with good ones gave me a good eye, so the quality was usually high. As a result my pictures were often borrowed by the Arts Council and the British Council and my collection became known. It was unusual for comparatively young people to buy and in 1952 the Arts Council put on a show of *Three Young Collectors*. I was the only one of the three who was a member of the *Contemporary Art Society* and as a result was put on the committee. I was twenty or thirty years younger than any of the others and soon became Hon. Treasurer and eventually Chairman from 1971 to 1976.'

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*Images available on request*  
Visit Christie's at [www.christies.com](http://www.christies.com)

- The auction of *20<sup>th</sup> Century British Art* will be on public view at Christie's, 8 King Street, St. James's, London SW1Y 6QT on 30 May and from 1 to 5 June 2008. For general enquiries, contact Christie's on +44 (0)207 839 9060 or visit [www.christies.com](http://www.christies.com)

### **About Christie's**

Christie's is the world's leading art business with global auction sales in 2007 that totaled £3.1 billion/\$6.3 billion. This marks the highest total in company and in art auction history. 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 600 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 \$80 million. Christie's has 85 offices in 43 countries and 14 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Los Angeles, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Tel Aviv, Dubai and Hong Kong. Most 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.