

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Bendetta Roux, New York 212.636.2680

broux@christies.com

Jill Potterton, London 207.752.3121

jpotterton@christies.com

**CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK TO OFFER GUITARS FROM ERIC CLAPTON
SOLD TO BENEFIT THE CROSSROADS CENTRE IN ANTIGUA**

*"These guitars are the A-Team ... What I am keeping back is just what I need to work with.
I am selling the cream of my collection."*

Eric Clapton, February 2004

Crossroads Guitar Auction

Eric Clapton and Friends for the Crossroads Centre

June 24, 2004

New York – On June 24, 1999, Christie's New York organized A Selection of Eric Clapton's Guitars ~ In Aid of the Crossroads Centre, a sale that became legendary overnight. Exactly five years later, on June 24, 2004, Christie's will present the sequel when a group of 56 guitars, described by Eric Clapton as "the cream of my collection," as well as instruments donated by musician friends such as Pete Townshend, will be offered. Featuring iconic instruments such as 'Blackie' and the cherry-red 1964 Gibson ES-335, Crossroads Guitar Auction ~ Eric Clapton and Friends for the Crossroads Centre, promises to be a worthy successor to the seminal 1999 sale. The proceeds of the sale will benefit the Crossroads Centre in Antigua.

Referring to the selection of guitars that will be offered in this sale, Eric Clapton said:

"These guitars are in fact the ones that I kept back from the first auction because I seriously couldn't consider parting with them at that point ... I think they are a really good representation of Rock Culture ... all great Rock and Blues guitars."

Eric Clapton's Guitars

One of the most illustrious guitars to come up for sale is undoubtedly 'Blackie,' the composite Fender Stratocaster, circa 1956, which in Eric Clapton's own words "has become part of me" (estimate: \$100,000-150,000). 'Blackie' features in the league of superstar instruments that are practically alter egos of their players. The guitar is uniquely personal to Eric Clapton since he created the instrument himself, combining different components from three separate Stratocasters purchased in Nashville in 1970. Clapton has tremendous affection for this guitar, and had an intense working relationship with Blackie throughout the 1970s and early 1980s. 'Blackie' also served as the template for the 'Eric Clapton Signature Stratocaster' - custom guitars produced by Fender in collaboration with Clapton - which went into production in 1988. Included in the sale is the very first black version, used by Clapton extensively from 1990 onwards, and well known to Clapton fans (estimate: \$8,000-12,000).

A credible rival to 'Blackie' in stellar ranking is Clapton's 1964 cherry-red Gibson ES-335. This famous Gibson is the second electric guitar Eric Clapton ever bought, and as such it is the one he has owned the longest and is most sentimental about (estimate: \$60,000-80,000). His interest in this type of guitar was initially triggered by a record cover featuring Blues legend Freddy King with a similar model. As soon as Clapton had saved up enough money playing with the Yardbirds, he bought this Gibson. For Clapton this guitar represented "...a Rock guitar and a Blues guitar ... The 'Real Thing.'" Although most fans associate the ES-335 with his days with Cream, Clapton actually used this guitar throughout his remarkable career, from his time with the Yardbirds until today. He says of it: "No other tool in my life has been as long-serving." The guitar will be offered with its case, which has the word 'Cream' and the initials 'EC G ES' stenciled in white paint on the exterior.

A very recent history, although a colorful one, is that of 'Crash 3,' Clapton's newest graffiti Fender Stratocaster (estimate: \$4,000-6,000). This guitar is currently being used by Clapton and will feature prominently in the European Tour and Crossroads Festival this spring. It was designed by the famous street-artist Crash with a vividly colorful pattern. Eric Clapton first used a Graffiti Stratocaster at the Royal Albert Hall, London in 2001 and they have become his first choice working guitar ever since. This is also the first of Clapton's collection of graffiti guitars to appear on the market.

Eric Clapton became fascinated with the guitars of C.F. Martin & Company, which he associated mainly with the 000-type instruments used by blues guitarists such as Big Bill Bronzy. In 1970, he acquired one of his first Martins, a 1966, 000-28/45-model, which he bought at the Nashville Tennessee GTR shop (now George Gruhn Guitars) when he was doing the Johnny Cash show

(estimate: \$20,000–30,000). The guitar became known as ‘The Longworth,’ after the guitar maker who embellished the instrument with exquisite abalone inlay. It is a guitar that has “a deep association” for Clapton and one that he used on stage throughout the 1970s. It also features on the back cover of the ‘461 Ocean Boulevard’ album.

Once on the Martin track, Clapton became intrigued by the models created prior to World War II and started collecting them. Smaller in body size, these guitars are less powerful, but Clapton liked them visually and used them constantly when playing at home. The sale offers a 1939, 000–42 Martin, the instrument he played on the ‘Unplugged’ album (estimate: \$60,000–80,000); another 000–42, also from 1939 (estimate: \$40,000–60,000) and a 1929, 00–45 (estimate: \$35,000–55,000).

Several of the guitars offered for sale carry great stories, revealing Eric Clapton as a man who constantly intertwines daily life with his instruments and vice versa. The 12-string guitar he co-designed with Tony Zemaitis in 1969 is a splendid example (estimate: \$30,000–50,000). This instrument, nicknamed ‘Ivan,’ was modeled after a Zemaitis instrument that Clapton, aged 13, had seen being played in the streets of London by a Bohemian street musician called ‘Buck.’ Years later, he discovered Tony Zemaitis and made this fabulous instrument with him. With its massive body, ‘Ivan’ is not easy to play but Clapton loved its sound and played it extensively with Blind Faith.

Other guitars personally owned by Eric Clapton include a custom, gold-leaf decorated Fender Stratocaster, numbered EC-1, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the model (estimate: \$8,000–12,000); the Gibson L-5-P, 1948, fitted with Alnico pickups (estimate: \$20,000–30,000); and the Fender Stratocaster, known as “The Rainbow Rod,” circa 1996, with an iridescent finish, created by Roy Brizio, the famed Californian hot rod builder (estimate: \$5,000–7,000).

Friends’ Guitars

The Who guitarist Pete Townshend, famous and notorious for his wild live performances, is donating a Townshend Signature SG Gibson guitar (estimate: \$3,000–5,000). This guitar comes with an extraordinary array of accessories especially created for the new owner, including two guitar cases, a CD recording of Townshend playing the instrument, an official donation letter from Townshend to Clapton, a certificate of the guitar, and a polaroid of Townshend with it.

Also included is Sonny Landreth’s custom 1995 Gibson Firebird (estimate: \$1,500–2,500), which he played during the Gibson show at Anaheim NAMM in California in 1997. Landreth used it for ‘Turning Wheel’ on the ‘South of I-10’ album and again with John Hiatt and the Goners in 1999.

Other instruments will include Brian May's Les Paul Model guitar (estimate: \$1,000–1,500); J.J. Cale's 1979 Stratocaster (estimate: \$1,500–2,500); a Gibson ES-335 signed by Otis Rush (estimate: \$2,500–3,000); and a Gibson B.B. King Lucille model, signed by King himself (estimate: \$1,500–2,000).

Crossroads Centre

Founded in 1997, Crossroads Centre, Antigua was created to provide treatment and education to the chemically dependent person, those with other compulsive addictive behaviors, their families and significant others. Treatment is provided through residential care, family and aftercare programs. The pathway to recovery is founded on the movement toward a change in lifestyle. Crossroads Centre, Antigua also operates a 16-bed halfway house called The Bevon House and facilitates a school-based education series, Breaking the Cycle. For more information, please contact Crossroads Center on tel.: 268 562 0035 or www.crossroadsantigua.org.

Crossroads Festival

A three-day Crossroads Guitar Festival will take place from Friday, June 4 through Sunday, June 6 at Fair Park in Dallas. This one-time event, created for music enthusiasts around the globe, will raise money for Crossroads Centre, Antigua. The festival will be the first of its kind to create a unique bridge between fans and musicians through leading guitar manufacturer exhibits and guitar clinics. Attendees will be offered once-in-a-lifetime opportunities to be in an intimate setting as artists give fans the ultimate look into their craft. The Crossroads Guitar Festival culminates on Sunday, June 6 with an All-Star special benefit concert at the Cotton Bowl Stadium including performances by Eric Clapton and Doyle Bramhall II, J.J. Cale, Larry Carlton, Robert Cray, Buddy Guy, David Hidalgo, Eric Johnson, B.B. King, Sonny Landreth, Brian May, Robert Randolph, Otis Rush, Carlos Santana, Hubert Sumlin, Dan Tyminski, Steve Vai, Jimmie Vaughan and Joe Walsh among many others. For more information, please contact Ronnie Lippin or Paki Newell at The Lippin Group, tel.: 323 965 1990, email: ronnie@lippingroup.com or pnewell@lippingroup.com.

Auction: Crossroads Guitar Auction

Eric Clapton and Friends for the Crossroads Centre June 24 at 6 p.m.

Viewing: Christie's King Street, London

May 21-25

Dallas, Centennial Hall, Fair Park

June 4-6

Christie's Los Angeles

June 8-12

Christie's Galleries at Rockefeller Center

June 19-24

More information about Christie's sale of Crossroads Guitar Auction ~ Eric Clapton and Friends for the Crossroads Centre can be found on 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 provides information on more than 80 sale categories, buying and selling at auction, complete auction results, and Christie's international auction calendar.

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