

For Immediate Release

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CHRISTIE'S TO AUCTION THE CHAMPALIMAUD COLLECTION IN JULY

Most Important Collection to be offered in London this Season Expected to fetch in the region of £15 Million

The Champalimaud Collection

6 and 7 July 2005



London - Christie's will present *The Champalimaud Collection* for sale in London on 6 and 7 July 2005. In contrast to his immensely distinguished public life as a financier and entrepreneur of international stature, as well as a munificent philanthropist and benefactor to Portugal, Antonio Champalimaud's collection was a very personal quest, created for the enjoyment of his family and those close to him. The collection is expected to fetch in the region of £15 million, with proceeds to go primarily to a Medical Foundation that Mr Champalimaud set up for the nation.

Antonio Champalimaud's passionate eye sought out the very best in every category, from French furniture and *objets d'art*, to European Sculpture and Chinese export porcelain. The crown of the collection is a remarkable ensemble of French eighteenth century pictures by a constellation of artists such as Boucher, Fragonard, Hubert Robert and Greuze. Mr Champalimaud's passion for Italian *vedute*, is represented with works by Francesco Guardi and Canaletto, whose spectacular view of *The Bucintoro at the Molo on Ascension Day* (estimate: £4,000,000-6,000,000) dominated the staircase of the *hôtel particulier* in Lisbon that Antonio Champalimaud restored with such dedication.

OLD MASTER PICTURES



"A search for high artistic quality, distinguished provenances and a keen eye for the beautiful and decorative unite this exquisite group of pictures from eighteenth-century France and Italy," says Paul Raison, Head of Old Master Paintings, London.

The undoubted star of the picture collection is Canaletto's *View of the Molo, Venice*, with the Doge's Barge, the *Bucintoro*, prominently moored in front of the latter's palace. The Ascension Day celebrations are almost certainly shown, when tourists flocked to Venice to witness all the pageantry of the events, here captured in a richly orchestrated palette, and

produced on a scale that makes it the most monumental Venetian view of the artist's London period. The subject matter was popular with Canaletto's patrons: several variations of the theme exist, but this is unique in its vertical format and its viewpoint. Moreover it was commissioned, presumably as an overmantel, by the Hon. Peter King, later 5th Lord King, as part of what was to constitute the most ambitious series of decorative canvases of the artist's career.

More intimate in scale are Canaletto's views of the *Piazzetta* and *Piazza San Marco* (estimate: £700,000-1,000,000 for the pair) executed after his final return to Venice in or after 1755. Here light was clearly a prime concern, and the artist achieves a new fusion between his teeming figures and their setting. It was these particular qualities that appealed to his younger contemporary, Francesco Guardi, who is represented in the collection by two by two pendant canvases: the *Grand Canal Venice with the Church of the Scalzi and the Lista di Spagna* and the *Island of San Cristoforo, Murano* (estimate: £1,000,000-1,500,000). Two further small but dazzling Guardi's, architectural *capricci*, painted on panel, that depict people dressed in the highest fashion ambling among ruins (estimate: £80,000-120,000 and £50,000-80,000) will also be offered.

The great names of French Rococo painting anchor the collection: Fragonard, Robert, Greuze and Francois Boucher, who is represented by no fewer than six canvases, including his coquettish *Young Woman taking a Footbath* (estimate: £300,000-400,000), 1766. This picture was presumably painted for Paul-Louis Randon de Boisset (1709-1776), *receveur-général des finances*, in whose posthumous sale it appeared in 1777. Described by Diderot as '*ami des scènes, des arts et des lettres*', Randon de Boisset was an avid collector of furniture, paintings and drawings, patronizing several artists including Vernet, Robert, Greuze and Boucher. *La Jardinière* (estimate: £400,000-600,000), datable to *circa* 1754-5, is an exquisite example of Fragonard's painterly style not long after he had left the studio of Francois Boucher. It was acquired by Champalimaud at the London sale of property of Lady Beaverbrook in 1963. A beautifully preserved *Head and Shoulders of a Girl* by Jean-Baptiste Greuze (estimate: £150,000-250,000) is also offered.

FRENCH FURNITURE



"The magnificent collection of French furniture and objets d'art, acquired mainly in the 1950s and 1960s in Paris and London and mis en valeur by Louis XV and Louis XVI boiseries purchased in Paris, shows M. Champalimaud remarkable depth of knowledge and a very genuine love and appreciation of the decorative arts," says Charles Cator, Christie's Chairman and International Head of Furniture. *"Concentrating principally on neoclassical Louis XVI pieces, the collection is particularly rich in gilt-bronze and mounted porcelain."*

The Grand Salon, with its superlative Louis XVI *boiseries* emblematic of the Four Continents and the Elements (estimate: £150,000-250,000), is particularly rich in French furniture and ormolu-mounted objects, including an exceptional pair of Louis XVI serpent-mounted Chinese porcelain pot-pourri vases from Lady Baillie's Collection (estimate: £120,000-180,000) which dominated the mantelpiece. These flanked a monumental Louis XVI bronze

and ormolu clock by Gavelle L'ainé a Paris (estimate: £40,000-60,000), while to either side of the Louis XVI fireplace stood a pair of transitional amaranth, tulipwood and sycamore petites secretaires by Léonard Boudin (estimate: £100,000-150,000). A suite of Louis XVI giltwood seat-furniture by Nicolas-Simon Courtois and Pierre Bernard, originally from a Rothschild Collection (estimate: £70,000-100,000), and a Louis XVI 'bamboo' gueridon almost certainly supplied by Dominique Daguerre and Adam Weisweiler (estimate: £40,000-60,000) also graced the Grand Salon.

A sumptuous suite of Louis XVI Japanese lacquer and ebony furniture, comprising a commode a l'Anglaise by Claude-Charles Saunier with inset Sicilian jasper top (estimate: £800,000-1,200,000) and a pair of *encoignures* attributed to Martin Carlin (estimate: £200,000-300,000) represents the highest achievements of the French *marchand-merciers*. Last seen at auction in 1946, when sold by the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry at Christie's, this commode and matching *encoignures* almost certainly entered the Buccleuch Collections in the early 1830s through the intervention of the 'furniture man' Edward Holmes Baldock. A white marble group of Venus by Jean-Baptiste Pigalle, dated 1749 (estimate: £70,000-100,000) also features in the sale. This follows the original terracotta model of 1742 which Louis XV commissioned as a gift to the King of Prussia, created as a pendant for the celebrated *Mercury attaching his Sandals*, today in the Louvre.

A pair of Louis XVI ebony and Japanese lacquer etageres by Martin Carlin with brocatelle d'Espagne tops (estimate: £250,000-400,000) are jewel-like examples which come from the collection of Baron Henri de Rothschild in Paris. A Louis XVI ormolu-mounted thuya commode attributed to Adam Weisweiler adorned the Long Wall in the Dining Room (estimate: £250,000-300,000). This was originally purchased by Baron Meyer Amschel de Rothschild for Mentmore Towers, Buckinghamshire in the mid-19th Century, along with two very similar commodes which bore the Versailles brand – one of which has now returned to Versailles.

The Sitting Room was dominated by Louis XVI oak boiseries and lit from above by one of the ormolu chandeliers after designs by André-Charles Boulle. Its suite of Louis XVI white-painted and gilded seat-furniture by Michel Bauve (estimate: £120,000-180,000) sat alongside one from a pair of late Louis XVI ebony and *contre-partie* Boulle marquetry *meubles d'appui* by Etienne Levasseur (estimate: £200,000-300,000).



The Dining Room table was crowned by an important Louis XV silver soup-tureen, cover and stand by Jean-François Dapcher, Paris, 1773 (estimate: £100-150,000), engraved with the arms of Stroganov, presumably for Count Aleksander Sergeevich Stroganov (1734-1811), who married Ekaterina Petrovna Trubetskaya (1744-1815). Also from the Dining Room is one from a set of four silver Louis XV table-candlesticks by Louis Lenhendrick, Paris, 1753 and 1754 (estimate: £30,000-50,000), and one from a set four Louis XVI ormolu five-light candlesticks by François Rénard with removable five-light candelabra (estimate: £150,000-250,000) which were displayed against a

backdrop of early Louis XV *boiseries* (estimate: £40,000-80,000) and contemporaneous Aubusson tapestries from La Tenture Chinoise (estimate: £50,000-80,000). This Chinoiserie theme was continued on the fireplace wall, with its exotic and sculptural Louis XV ormolu mantel clock by Michel à Paris (estimate: £100,000-150,000) complimented to each side by a rare pair of Louis XV ormolu-mounted Japanese Kakiemon porcelain double-gourd ewers entwined with chimerae (estimate: £250,000-400,000).

SCULPTURE



The classical staircases in Mr Champalimaud's *hôtel particulier* was dominated by an exceptional pair of Italian Baroque parcel-gilt alabaster, lead, gesso, paste and hardstone blackamoor figures acquired from the Duke d'Harcourt and Marquise de Pomereu.collection (estimate: £600,000-900,000). Although these fantastic figures are inspired by the antique and depict regally dressed Moorish kings, they date from 17th century, taking as their lead such sculptors as Nicholas Cordier, whose celebrated Moor, today at Versailles, was

executed for the Borghese family in Rome between 1607 and 1612.

In the Garden, architectural trellis formed an illusionistic backdrop to a set of eight Italian marble busts (estimate: £100,000-150,000). Designed as a decorative ensemble of youthful and aged men drawn from both antique and contemporary prototypes, their craggy features and sometimes pained expressions are particularly close to the work of one of the most prolific Venetian sculptors of the late 17th and early 18th centuries, Orazio Marinali (1643-1720).

CHINESE EXPORT PORCELAIN

The magnificent and extremely rare pair of Chinese Export Kangxi porcelain figures of snarling leopards (1662-1722) took centre stage in the Sitting Room (estimate: £400,000-600,000). Formerly in the Collection of Florence J. Gould, these leopards are apparently unique, although a figure of a prowling tiger, sold in London in 1996, is very closely related in its modelling and style, and was very probably made in the same workshop. The leopard occupies an interesting position in Chinese mythology as the ancestor of the horse, which in turn procreated man. In this pair of leopards, the Chinese potters created a work of art that not only illustrated in detail the magnificence of this animal, but also captured the uncertainty and insecurity that is the link between the leopard and the man.

A rare Chinese Export Qianlong porcelain tureen and cover (estimate: £50,000-80,000), modelled as a seated goose, is a superb example. It is recorded that the Dutch East India Company ordered twenty-five goose tureens for stock in 1765. These tureens derived from European ceramic models, of which the faience models produced in Strasbourg under the influence of Adam von Lowenfinck from 1750-54 represent the most likely prototypes for the Chinese models.

Notes to Editors:

Highlights of the Collection will be exhibited in the following locations

Christie's New York	14-24 May
Christie's exhibiting at the Hotel Gritti Palace during the Venice Biennale	9-11 June
Christie's King Street	5-16 June

The entire collection will be on view ahead of the sale at Christie's King Street from 29 June – 6 July

Christie's Collections Sales

Since its foundation in 1766, Christie's has traditionally held the most significant and successful Private Collection and House sales, from the jewels of Madame du Barry in 1793 through forty days of the Stowe sale in 1848, to more recent triumphs for Cecil Beaton, Marilyn Monroe, Rudolph Nureyev, the Viennese Rothschilds, Hubert de Givenchy, Christopher Gibbs and Axel Vervoordt.

In 2004 the London based House Sales and Collections Department staged nine sales, collectively totalling £17.8 million, and dominated the field with 80% market share against our nearest competitor. Highlights included Christie's sale of *Property from Two Ducal Collections*, on 20 and 21 September, staged in the Sculpture Gallery at one of Britain's best-loved houses, Woburn Abbey, Bedfordshire. The sale totalled £3,553,576, selling 92% by lot and 97% by value. *Le Pavillon Chougny, Property from a Private Swiss Collection*, staged in London in December, included fabrics, furniture and lighting by renowned interior designer, Alberto Pinto, realized £ 4,295,477. The sale was 100% sold by lot and value.

Christie's notable successes in the wider furniture field were crowned in December 2004 when the Badminton Cabinet sold in London for £19,045,250/\$36,662,106/ €27,463,250 breaking its own record price of £8.5 million established at Christie's on 5 July 1990, and becoming the most expensive non-pictorial work of art ever sold at auction. It was purchased in the room by Dr. Johan Kraeftner, Director of the Liechtenstein Museum in Vienna on behalf of Prinz Hans-Adam II of Liechtenstein for the museum.

Forthcoming Collection and House Sales at Christie's London

- English and Continental Furniture including the estate of Countess Moira Rossi de Montelera
21 April
- The Collection of S. A. R. La Principessa Reale Maria Beatrice di Savoia,
22 April
- The Royal & SunAlliance Collection
19 May
- 22 Arlington Street, A William Kent House
11 May
- European Furniture, Works of Art, Tapestries and Carpets including Property from Moundsmere Manor
8 June
- Two Late Regency Collectors: Philip John Miles and George Byng
9 June
- The Champalimaud Collection
6 & 7 July

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