

**For Immediate Release**

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**CHRISTIE'S CELEBRATES POP CULTURE**

**Pop Culture**  
**25 June 2008**

**New York** – Christie's *Pop Culture* auction on June 25 in New York will include a range of collectibles celebrating the diverse nature of American popular culture — from 1930s comic strips to the current craze for vinyl designer toys. The sale will offer approximately 330 lots of Hollywood memorabilia, Rock and Roll memorabilia, animation and comic art, space memorabilia, and a collection of designer toys. Also featured is a collection of costumes from James Gandolfini's role as Tony Soprano in *The Soprano's*, which will benefit Wounded Warrior Project (see separate press release.)

**TOYS**

Appearing for the first time at auction will be a section of limited edition original art toys from **Kidrobot**, the premier creator and retailer of art toys and apparel. These toys are reflective of a growing artistic movement which merges urban street trends, fashion, and pop art to produce limited edition, collectible toys. These designer toys made by contemporary artists have become further recognized as innovative art objects when 13 pieces were accepted into the permanent collection at The Museum of Modern Art's in 2007, and in 2006 the toys were also the centerpiece of the Cooper-Hewitt Smithsonian Museum Design Triennial.



Among the Kidrobot toys offered in the auction are various models of the Dunny, a vinyl rabbit-like figure which artists use as a blank canvas to create their quirky designs that often mix pop culture ideas of fashion, cartoons, graffiti, comics, music, and fine art. Dunnies by artists Huck Gee, Gary Baseman, Deph, Doze Green and Sket One are featured, with estimates ranging from \$400-5,000.

Joe Ledbetter works include a vinyl yellow *Mr. Bunny*, accompanied by its original box (estimate: \$1,000-2,000) and a painting *The Defender* (estimate: \$3,000-5,000). The whimsical creations of Natalia Gianinazzi include a giant plush soft toy, a Grusli, accompanied by his mouse (estimate: \$1,500-2,000).



From the artist with a cult-like fan base, Suckadelic has built his notoriety by blending nerdy obsessions with hipster cool, as demonstrated by *Graff-At*, a graffiti covered and customized Star Wars AT-AT Walker (estimate: \$1,500-2,000), and *Gay Empire Attack!* a series of 40 pink colored Star Wars Storm Trooper figures attached to a plastic backboard (estimate: \$1,500-2,000).

## HOLLYWOOD MEMORABILIA

Leading the selection of film memorabilia is an **Academy Award statue** presented to cinematographer Joseph Lipkowitz for his contribution to *Prelude to War*, best documentary feature of 1942 (estimate: \$15,000-20,000). The film was produced by the U.S. Army Special Service Division and directed by the renowned Frank Capra and it was used as a U.S. Army training film prior to its theatrical release.



**King Kong** memorabilia from the estate of Willis O'Brien, a pioneer in motion picture special effects, features a handcrafted plaster, pre-production model head of King Kong by O'Brien (estimate: \$6,000-8,000). One of the earliest known renditions from the 1933 film, King Kong has detailed features and teeth and is approximately two inches high — a minute version of the motion picture giant.

A number of **Walt Disney Studios** plaster models used for animation are offered including *Mickey*, *Pluto*, and *Goofy*, and characters from *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* and *Pinocchio*, as well as a celluloid applied to a watercolor background of *Pinocchio* (estimate: \$15,000-20,000).

## COMICS & ANIMATION

The sale will feature a rare group of popular animation drawings and comic book art. Six lots from the estate of one of the original creators of the comic book medium, **Harold Moore**, include eight bound volumes of *Famous Funnies*, 1934-1941 (estimate: \$3,000-5,000) and a collection of nine original daily comic strips such as *Felix the Cat*, *Blondie*, and *Betty Boop* (estimate: \$2,500-3,500). Ten comics of *Dick Tracy* are



a highlight in the group from the estate of **Chester Gould**, the creator of Dick Tracy (estimates start at \$2,000).

### ROCK AND ROLL MEMORABILIA



A grouping of rock and roll memorabilia is led with the 'Holy Grail' of record collecting, a 1952 record of *Stormy Weather* by **The Five Sharps** (estimate: \$20,000-30,000). This record by a relatively unknown teenage quintet from Jamaica, Queens, attained its legendary rarity when a popular radio show in 1961 held a contest with a lucrative reward to anyone that could find an additional copy of this record.

A concert poster featuring **The Who** and **Led Zeppelin** at the Merriweather Post Pavilion in Columbia, Maryland on May 25, 1969, is one of a handful made and is an early rare example of for both bands (estimate: \$15,000-20,000). A leather motorcycle jacket by Harley Davidson owned by **Elvis Presley**, initially 'EP' with a diamond encrusted badge reads, *Elvis Presley, Chief Deputy, Shelby County, Tennessee*, was gifted by Presley to his employee Mike McGregor (estimate: \$15,000-20,000).



### AMERICAN HISTORY MEMORABILIA



Not only are Hollywood stars honored in the sale, but memorabilia from the stars of **NASA** are available with eight lots of photos autographed by astronauts. Coming from the estate of Lewis Hartzell, the former head chef at NASA during the Saturn, Gemini, and Apollo space programs, a highlight includes an official NASA photograph of the crew of the Apollo 11, signed and inscribed by all three astronauts, Neil Armstrong, Michael Collins and Buzz Aldrin (estimate: \$3,000-5,000).

A collection from the estate of **Harvey Milk**, the supervisor of San Francisco in 1978 and figurehead of the gay-rights movement includes photographs, a watch, and camera owned by Milk, with estimates starting at \$300. Harvey Milk was the first openly gay elected official of any large American city and he was assassinated in 1978. In 1999 *Time* magazine honored Milk in the issue 'Time 100: The Most Important People of the Century.'

A signed and typewritten letter on White House stationary dated May 26, 1962, from **President John F. Kennedy** to entertainer Bobby Darin thanking him for his birthday salute at Madison Square Garden, rounds out the section (estimate: \$10,000-15,000).

**Auction:** *Pop Culture*

Wednesday, June 25, 2008

**Viewing:** Christie's 20 Rockefeller Galleries

Friday - Tuesday, June 20 - 24

### **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.

\*Estimates do not include buyer's premium

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*Images available on request*

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More information about Christie's sale of Popular Culture can be found on [www.christies.com](http://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](http://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.