

For Immediate Release

28 April 2006

Contact: Christina Freyberg 020 7389 2117 cfreyberg@christies.com
Stephanie Manstein 020 7389 2962 smanstein@christies.com

DR FREDERICK GERSTEL'S PRIVATE COLLECTION FOR SALE AT CHRISTIE'S THIS JUNE



Egon Schiele
Moa, 1911
Estimate: £2,400,000-3,200,000



Egon Schiele
Stehendes Mädchen in weissem Unterkleid (Standing Girl in White Petticoat), 1911
Estimate £1,800,000-2,400,000

German and Austrian Art

Christie's King Street

20 June 2006

London – An outstanding group of five works on paper by Egon Schiele are to be offered in Christie's *German and Austrian Art* section on Tuesday 20 June 2006. Growing interest in this area of the market, as seen in February 2006 when this section realised £24.5 million, has encouraged Christie's to build on the success and hold a second dedicated section of *German and Austrian Art* this summer as part of the evening sale of *Impressionist and Modern Art*. The February 2006 sale reaffirmed Christie's dominant position in this section of the market and established a new auction record for a work on paper by Egon Schiele, when *Kniender weiblicher Halbakt (Kneeling female half-nude)*, 1917, sold for £4.15 million.

“Masterpieces by Egon Schiele rarely appear on the market. It is therefore unprecedented to have five museum-quality works in the same sale. With the German and Austrian art market at fever pitch, it promises to be the most exciting sale in the field we have seen for a decade,” said Jussi Pylkkänen, President of Christie's Europe.

Five superb watercolours by Egon Schiele (1890-1918) are among the highlights of this sale. Painted between 1911 and 1917, they were acquired by Dr Frederick Gerstel, one of the first collectors in the United States to purchase Schiele's work. These five major works span much of the range of the young artist's numerous and varied sitters and subjects, each one reflecting a different aspect of Schiele's rich and surprisingly varied oeuvre. Three of the works, *Moa*, *Stehendes Mädchen in weissem Unterkleid* (*Standing Girl in White Petticoat*) and *Bildnis eines jungen Mannes* (*Erich Lederer*) are well known to modern audiences, having for many years been on long term loan to the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

This group of pictures allows an intriguing glimpse into Schiele's world and reflects the bohemianism of some of his circle. The dancer Moa featured in several of Schiele's pictures, including this sublime example, *Moa*, from 1911 (estimate: £2,400,000-3,200,000), which is filled with the flesh and eroticism that fuels so much of the artist's work. This richly coloured and painterly portrait of Moa is one of Schiele's finest and most complete renderings of the subject. Moa was the girlfriend of Schiele's close friend the mime Erwin Osen. Osen was also an occasional artist whose interest in strange and distorted poses led him to create several portraits of mentally ill patients, an interest he shared with Schiele.

In the exceptionally powerful *Stehendes Mädchen in weissem Unterkleid* (*Standing Girl in White Petticoat*), 1911 (estimate £1,800,000-2,400,000) Schiele depicts an unknown red-haired model staring moodily out of the picture. Dressed only in her white underclothes, he captures a young girl lost in a moment of private contemplation, her fragility heightened by the artist's subtle elongation of the figure and by her position of apparent isolation on the empty page. This is a feature that is dramatically enhanced by the shimmering white halo painted around her outline, which infuses the work with a subtle mysticism.

Bildnis eines jungen Mannes (*Erich Lederer*), 1912 (estimate £800,000-1,200,000) is one of the finest watercolour portraits of the young Erich Lederer executed by Schiele. In this affectionate portrait of the young fifteen year old Erich, Schiele reveals his superb ability to capture the unique personal idiosyncrasies of his sitter, so that the inner character becomes not only recognisable but almost familiar. The Lederer family were to play an important role in Schiele's life. Erich was to become a close friend and important patron of the artist, persuading his family to build one of the largest and most important collections of Schiele's drawings.

Two other highlights from this impressive collection include *Female Nude with White Border*, 1911 (estimate £300,000-400,000), which also features a white halo around the outline of the figure and *Bauernhaus auf dem Hügel*, 1917 (estimate: £250,000-350,000), a watercolour of a Tirolean farmhouse, painted by Schiele while on tour of the region during his brief time in the army. Other works from the Gerstel's collection to be offered include a number of other examples by Schiele as well as watercolours and drawings by leading German and Austrian artists such as Emil Nolde, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and Otto Dix.

In addition to the Gerstel's private collection, the *German and Austrian Art* sale will also features the recently rediscovered and restituted lost masterpiece by Egon Schiele, *Herbstsonne*, 1914 (estimate: £4-6 million), formerly in the collection of the Viennese art dealer Karl Grünwald. In this work, Schiele pays homage to the famous image of sunflowers created by Vincent van Gogh (see separate release).

#

Images available on request

Visit Christie's on the Web at www.christies.com

Notes to Editor

In 1993, Christie's was the first auction house to hold a theme sale dedicated to German and Austrian Art. Since then, Christie's has established many of the current auction record prices for the leading German and Austrian artists. In February 2006, the German and Austrian Art section of the sale realized £24.5 million and established new auction records for Ernst Ludwig Kirchner's double-sided canvas *Frauenbildnis in weissem Kleid*, 1908, which sold for £4.9 million and a large colourful painting by Heinrich Campendonk's *Kuh Mit Kalb*, 1914, which realized £1.68 million as well as a setting a new auction record for a drawing by Egon Schiele, *Kniender weiblicher Halbakt* (Kneeling female half-nude), 1917, which sold for £4.15 million.

#

Images available on request

Visit Christie's on the Web at www.christies.com