

For Immediate Release

September 20, 2004

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**CHRISTIE'S OFFERS EXCEPTIONAL FURNITURE COLLECTIONS THIS
OCTOBER**

Property from the William S. Paley Collection – October 14 and October 21

Property from the Collection of the late Deane F. Johnson, sold to benefit The Johnson Charitable Remainder Unitrust and The Deane F. Johnson Alzheimer's Research Foundation – October 21

Property from The Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Leo S. Bing – October 21

New York, NY – Christie's English and European furniture sales, including three celebrated American single-owner collections, will offer collectors an exceptional mixture of furniture and decorative arts that span many collecting eras.

The sale of Important English Furniture on October 14 will feature Property from the William S. Paley Collection, a colorful selection of works collected by William S. Paley, television's greatest tycoon, and his glamorous wife Babe Paley. Highlights, including a magnificent late Louis XV commode from this collection, will also be offered in the sale of Important European furniture, works of art, tapestries, ceramics, carpets on October 21. Also featured in the European furniture sale is the Collection of the late Deane F. Johnson, sold to benefit The Johnson Charitable Remainder Unitrust and The Deane F. Johnson Alzheimer's Research Foundation, one of the finest collections of 18th century French furniture and decorative arts formed in the mid-20th century, and Property from the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Leo S. Bing, a rare grouping of Medieval and Renaissance works of art and sculpture.

Property from the William S. Paley Collection - October 14 and October 21

William S. Paley was the unrivalled visionary of American broadcasting whose television programs left a mark on American life. He built CBS and 'the Tiffany Network' of Edward Murrow and Walter Cronkite, and introduced such figures as Lucille Ball and Ed Sullivan to the medium. He and his wife Babe who defined glamour formed dazzling interiors with the help of such legendary decorators as Stéphane Boudin, Billy Baldwin, Sister Parish and Albert Hadley, during the second half of the 20th century. The Paleys filled their Fifth Avenue duplex and country houses in Manhasset and later Southampton, Long Island with an eclectic mix of important paintings and fanciful decorative objects that exhibited both subtle and bold colors and textures.

The collection comprises a varied group of English furniture effectively mixed with Russian, Italian, Anglo-Indian and Chinese pieces, many with painted or japanned surfaces. Highlighting the selection is a late Louis XV ebony and scarlet lacquer commode (estimate: \$100,000-200,000); Régence giltwood mirror, circa 1720 (estimate: \$25,000-40,000); a pair of George III style black and gilt-japanned cabinets, 20th century (estimate: \$15,000-25,000); a Chinese brown and polychrome coromandel lacquer twelve-panel screen, early 18th century (estimate: \$25,000-50,000); and a group of European porcelain, including a pair of Meissen ormolu-mounted models of Turks riding an elephant and a rhino, 18th century (estimate: \$40,000-60,000).

Paintings and sculpture from the William S. Paley Collection will be sold in the November and December sales of Impressionist and Modern art, Post-War and Contemporary art, American Paintings and Antiquities.

Property from the Collection of the late Deane F. Johnson, sold to benefit The Johnson Charitable Remainder Unitrust and The Deane F. Johnson Alzheimer's Research Foundation – October 21
Known as one of the greatest ensembles of French furniture and decorative arts of the mid-20th century assembled by Deane F. Johnson and Anne Ford Johnson and augmented by his widow, Kate Edelman Johnson, this collection speaks to Deane F. Johnson's consummate taste and extraordinary choices. A true Renaissance man, Mr. Johnson was an eminent lawyer, a successful producer, a philanthropist and an environmentalist, a rancher and a gardener, and a connoisseur and collector. He spent countless hours visiting museums, exhibitions, galleries and collections studying and comparing the works of artists he was interested in acquiring for his growing collection. In addition to furniture, he collected Old Master Paintings, 19th century European art and English watercolors.

A part of the collection was sold in a landmark auction in 1972 and featured a number of exceptional pieces, including a console by Jean-Henri Riesener from Queen Marie Antoinette's Cabinet Intérieur at Versailles. This console appeared again at auction in 1988 and became the most

expensive piece of French furniture ever sold for many years. *Subsequent sales of pieces from the collection by Christie's in 1997 and 1998 featured pieces from Mr. Johnson's New York residence.*

In this current sale there is a judicious assemblage of European furniture and *objets d'art* acquired from some of the foremost dealers working in the mid-20 century, such as Rosenberg & Stiebel, Ramsay, and Etienne Lévy. A classic group of mainly French furniture of the Louis XV and Louis XVI periods, the collection ranges from the crisply carved *menuiserie* of the Louis XVI giltwood consoles (estimate: \$30,000-50,000), and the richly inlaid Louis XV floral marquetry commode (estimate: \$25,000-40,000), to a fine pair of Directoire ormolu candlesticks (estimate: \$8,000-12,000).

Additional property from the Johnson collection will be offered in select Christie's sales including 19th century European art on October 27 in New York; British Art on Paper on November 18 in London; The House Sale on January 11, 2005 in New York; and Old Master paintings on January 26, 2005 in New York.

All proceeds of these sales will benefit The Johnson Charitable Remainder Unitrust and The Deane F. Johnson Alzheimer's Research, which was established in 1999 by his widow, Kate Edelman Johnson, following his heroic battle with the disease.

The Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Leo S. Bing - October 21

The Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Leo S. Bing will offer rare Medieval and Renaissance works of art and sculpture, acquired in the 1920s and 1930s through well-known dealers in New York, Paris and Florence. Highlighting the offering of 13th century gilt-copper and champlevé enamel pieces is a French chasse, or reliquary casket, that displays an image of the Magi on horseback (estimate: \$70,000-100,000). The backs and sides of the casket illustrate figures and sophisticated geometric decoration typical of the period. A high-point of Medieval French metal work, these dazzling objects, which used unique translucent enamels, were considered some of the most virtuosic pieces produced by Medieval craftsmen.

Other early works include an Italian polychrome-glazed terracotta plaque of the Virgin and child, late 16th century (estimate: \$15,000-20,000); a French gilt-copper enamel pyx, 13th century (estimate: \$7,000-10,000); and a gilt-decorated alabaster fragmentary carving of Christ on the cross, Nottingham, 15th century (estimate: \$5,000-8,000)

Additional Sale Highlights

In addition to the featured American private collections, Christie's will offer a wonderful selection of Italian furniture. A magnificent specimen marble table top, circa 1600, with a late 18th century gilt-bronze border (estimate: \$200,000-400,000), celebrates the splendor of Renaissance Rome. Its

rich inlay of colored marbles and semi-precious stones, known as *commesso*, an artistic technique revived in the 16th century, was used to emulate ancient Rome. Closely related tops are in the Prado Museum, Madrid, and the Galleria Borghese, Rome. Typical of the extravagant work of Roman *intagliatori* of the early 18th century, is a pair of Italian giltwood side tables, Rome, circa 1725 (estimate: \$150,000–250,000). The tables are carved with extraordinary baroque vigor displaying deeply twisting scrolls, strapwork and grotesque masks. The Italian tradition of inlaying marbles continued through the 19th century as seen by an Italian specimen marble and micromosaic table top, early 19th century (estimate: \$40,000–60,000). These colorful tabletops were often created for English gentlemen as souvenirs of the Grand Tour. This example is embellished by a fine micromosaic panel of Pliny's doves, an image derived from an ancient mosaic in the Capitoline Museum, Rome.

The grandeur of Neoclassic Rome is exemplified by a superb pair of Roman giltwood armchairs, circa 1770 (estimate: \$100,000–150,000). The richness of the carving and their palatial scale suggest that a prestigious Roman family commissioned the pair. The armchairs, which display medallions of Roman emperors, are similar in design to a suite of chairs that bears the label of the Borghese family.

Viewing:

Christie's Galleries at Rockefeller Center

Important English Furniture

October 9 – 14

Important European furniture, works of art, tapestries, ceramics, carpets

October 10 – 20

Sale Dates:

Property from the William S. Paley Collection

October 14 and

October 21

Property from the Collection of the late Deane F. Johnson,
sold to benefit The Johnson Charitable Remainder Unitrust
and The Deane F. Johnson Alzheimer's Research Foundation

October 21

Property from the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Leo S. Bing

October 21

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Images available upon request

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