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CHRISTIE'S

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REDISCOVERED OLD MASTER & EARLY BRITISH DRAWINGS & WATERCOLOURS AT CHRISTIE'S IN JULY

- An important group of drawings by Rembrandt and his school found hidden in the attic of a Scottish house
 - 15 sketches by Constable which have not been seen by the public in over 60 years



London – Christie's is proud to announce the sale of *Old Master & Early British Drawings and Watercolours* which will take place on 3 July 2012, during London's Master Drawings week. Featuring a selection of works by Old Masters that have been recently discovered, this auction offers the opportunity to acquire drawings and watercolours which have not been seen in public for up to 100 years. Comprising 168 lots, the sale is expected to realise in excess of £3 million. Headlining an important group of newly discovered drawings by Rembrandt (1606-1669) and his school is *A blind beggar with a boy and a dog* (estimate: £50,000 – 80,000, *illustrated above*). This group of six previously unpublished drawings was discovered in the attic of a Scottish country house in 2012 and has not been seen for over 100 years.

OLD MASTER DRAWINGS

Benjamin Peronnet: International Head of Department, Old Master Drawings:

“It is always a thrill to discover and to have the opportunity to offer for sale previously unrecorded drawings. This group is particularly exciting as it includes a drawing by Rembrandt himself and six by his pupils. They offer a rare overview of his studio practices and how his pupils reinterpreted and developed his technique.”



The group also contains works after Willem Drost and by Samuel van Hoogstraten (1627-1678). An intricate drawing by Ferdinand Bol (1616-1680), *Jacob and Rachel*, bears all the trademarks of Bol's style depicting figures in historic dress and also shows the strong influence Rembrandt's work had on Bol (estimate: £20,000-30,000, illustrated above). This exceptional group is expected to realise a combined total in the region of £100,000.

Further highlights include a rare survival: a cartoon by Michelangelo Anselmi (1491-1554) for his frescoes in the Cathedral of Parma. The frescoes have since been overpainted but this cartoon section of *Putti dancing with hoops* hints at the elaborate design that once filled the vaults of the Duomo and is the only surviving segment of the cartoons. It is expected to realise between £150,000 and £250,000, illustrated right. Also on offer is a previously unpublished drawing by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo (1696-1770) estimated at £100,000 - 150,000. This large-scale drawing includes preparatory studies for the figure of Mars and for a prostrate captive, both of whom appear in the fresco of *Apollo and the Continents* above the main staircase of the Residenz at Würzburg, considered to be Tiepolo's greatest masterpiece. Between 1750 and 1753, Giovanni Battista Tiepolo and his sons Domenico and Lorenzo executed a monumental decorative scheme in this palace of the Prince-Bishops of Würzburg, which had been completed only a few years previously.



Coming to auction for the first time is an exquisite work on vellum by Jean-Etienne Liotard (1702-1789); *Pensive Woman on a Sofa* is based on a lost drawing of which only a counterproof is known, now in the Louvre. One of Liotard's most compelling compositions executed on an intricate scale it is estimated at £400,000 – 600,000. The drawing was executed by the artist during his travels in the Greek islands and Turkey between 1738 and 1742. The subject sits in a pose which echoes Dürer's *Melencolia*, with a crumpled letter discarded beside her, symbolizing the end of a relationship. Another pensive figure is seen in an imposing work by Caspar David Friedrich (1774-1840), *A Seated Man with a Telescope on White Chalk Cliffs*, in which a tiny figure of a man is shown in a vast landscape looking into the infinite distance (estimate: £200,000-300,000).

EARLY BRITISH DRAWINGS & WATERCOLOURS

Among the highlights of this strong selection of British drawings and watercolours are 15 sketches by John Constable (1776-1837); the works were rediscovered after being brought to Christie's front counter for a routine valuation. These sketches had lain forgotten in a cupboard for sixty years and include rare working drawings which shed light on the artist's method. Led by a moody view of *Borrowdale* dating from 1806 (estimate: £10,000-15,000, *illustrated right*), the drawings span the artist's career and include preparatory sketches for some famous works in Constable's *oeuvre*. *Elm Trees in Old Hall Park* is an important study which was made using a sheet of glass and ink. It gives an insight into how the final work, which is now in the V&A, was created (estimate: £10,000-15,000). Another drawing, *The Stour with Stratford St Mary Bridge*, includes a letter on the verso written by the artist to an unknown correspondent (estimate: £1,800-2,500). The collection of drawings is expected to realise a combined total in excess £50,000.



Harriet Drummond, International Head, British Drawings and Watercolours:

"Such a rare and interesting group of unrecorded drawings by the Master of English Landscape, has not appeared on the market since 1988. The drawing of Elm Trees in Old Hall Park is important as it shows Constable's very precise technique developed to accurately record scale when working direct from Nature."



The Destruction of Pharaoh's Host, a large and imposing watercolour by John Martin (1789-1854) is the epitome of the artist's extravagant style and range of vision (estimate £300,000-500,000, *illustrated left*). This work, which depicts the moment in *Exodus* when Jesus instructed Moses to stretch out his hand to let back the waters and drown the Egyptians pursuing the fleeing Israelites, has a depth and fullness of colour designed to rival the power of an oil painting: in this it represents the development of a movement begun by

watercolourists disgruntled by their treatment by exhibiting societies such as the Royal Academy at the beginning of the 19th Century. In its bold and elaborate technique it demonstrates Martin's determination to succeed regardless of his lack of recognition by the Academy.

A charming watercolour by Thomas Gainsborough, R.A. (1727-1788), *A Cottage with Trees reflected in a Woodland Pool*, is thought to have been completed during the period when the artist lived and worked in Bath (estimate: £12,000-18,000, *illustrated right*). It is one of the earliest of Gainsborough's depictions of a cottage in a wood, a theme that he was to develop in the 1770s and 80s in the form of his famous *Cottage Door* series of paintings. This drawing belonged to two important Gainsborough collectors: Dr Thomas Monro and William Esdaile. Monro was an enthusiastic amateur artist and collector and organised at his London house an evening 'academy' at which the likes of Turner and Girtin learnt by copying from his large collection of drawings and prints. Drawings by Gainsborough were among those which the younger generation studied and copied. Esdaile was a banker and connoisseur who purchased much of his collection of Gainsborough drawings at a posthumous sale of Monro's estate at Christie's.



Further examples of Early British Drawings and Watercolours will be on offer at Christie's during Masters Week: the sale of *Old Master Pictures* (3 July 2012) includes a magnificent and sublime mountain landscape *Mont Blanc from Fort Roch, Val D'Aosta* (estimate £1,000,000 – 1,500,000) by Joseph Mallord William Turner, R.A. (1775 -1851)'s and *Andrew Wylde: Connoisseur Dealer* (10 & 18 July 2012) comprises 400 lots from the Mayfair gallery of one of the finest dealers in his field, highlights of which will be on view 31 June – 5 July. Please see dedicated Press Release.

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*Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and do not reflect costs, financing fees or application of buyer's or seller's credits.