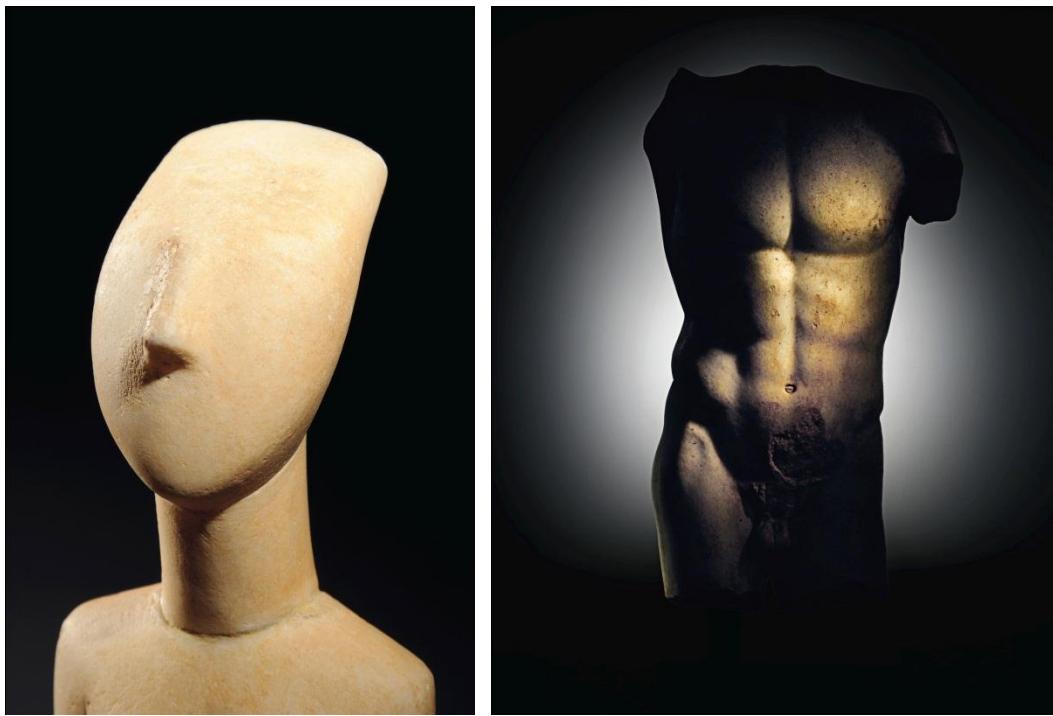


# CHRISTIE'S

PRESS RELEASE | LONDON  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 3 October 2013

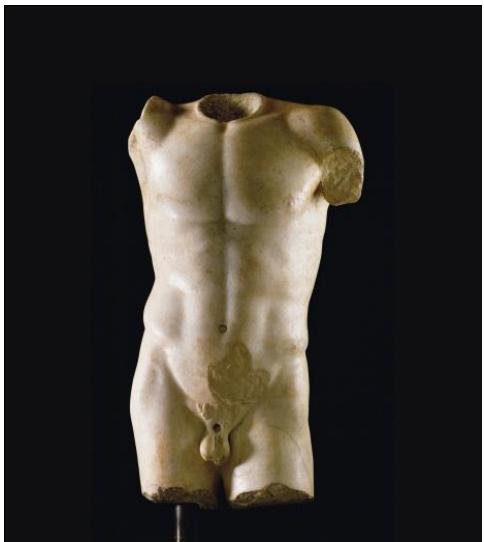
## THE ORIGINS OF ART *ANTIQUITIES AT CHRISTIE'S LONDON IN OCTOBER*

- An important Cycladic marble figure of a reclining woman – a masterpiece of early Greek art and a form that has influenced generations of later artists
- An Egyptian bronze cat once owned by architect, William Welles Bosworth, whose most notable commissions included the Egyptian Museum in Cairo and the restoration of the Palace of Versailles and Notre-Dame de Reims
- A Roman marble torso of an athlete once in the collection of Yves Saint Laurent



**London** – The sale of *Antiquities* at Christie's King Street on 24 October 2013 comprises 130 carefully selected lots with exceptional provenance spanning the ancient world. Featuring objects which trace the development of art through antiquity, the sale is led by a Roman marble torso of an athlete, formerly in the collection of Yves Saint Laurent (estimate: £800,000 – 1.2 million, *detail illustrated above right*) and an important Cycladic marble figure of a reclining woman (estimate: £120,000 – 180,000, *detail illustrated above left*). With estimates ranging from £1,000 to £800,000 the sale is expected to realise in excess of £3 million.

**Laetitia Delaloye, Specialist in the Antiquities department said:** “*This Antiquities sale is the first to be held at King Street since 2008. We are honoured to be offering iconic examples of ancient sculpture including the over-lifesized Roman torso, formerly in the collection of Yves Saint Laurent. Spanning the 3<sup>rd</sup> Millennium B.C. to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D., this extraordinary range of objects offers both new and established collectors a chance to own a slice of history.*”



The over-lifesized Roman marble torso of an athlete, dating to *circa* 1<sup>st</sup> century – 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, was housed in Yves Saint Laurent’s Parisian home for over 30 years (estimate: £800,000 – 1.2 million). It is incredibly rare to find an example in such exceptional condition on the market. This iconic symbol of marble statuary demonstrates how the Imperial Roman sculptor was inspired by the Greek masters of the Classical period, *circa* 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.. The pose of this impressive athletic torso recalls that of the ‘oil-pourer’ traditionally associated with Polykleitos and his followers. From the raised right hand he would be pouring oil from a vessel into a bowl held in his lowered left hand. The astonishing dynamism of this sculpture and its clean lines and form are likely to appeal to collectors of both Ancient and Contemporary Art.

Dating to *circa* 2600-2500 B.C., this Cycladic marble reclining female figure is a masterpiece of early Greek figural art with a modern aesthetic and a striking silhouette (estimate: £120,000 – 180,000, *illustrated right*). The female figure, her arms crossed beneath her bust, gazes upwards. The timeless attitude of this style of sculpture has inspired generations of artists throughout the centuries including Giacometti, Modigliani and Brancusi. A figure such as this would originally have originally been richly painted in black, red and blue pigment and a rare paint ‘ghost’ is still visible across the top of the forehead.



An Etruscan alabaster cinerary urn *circa* 3<sup>rd</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C., formerly in the Lowther Castle collection and most recently in a private UK collection for over 60 years, epitomises the British collecting tradition (estimate: £20,000 – 30,000, *illustrated left*). The urn depicts the myth of the chariot race between Pelops and King Oinomaos, where the former competed for the hand of the King’s daughter Hippodameia. Each time a suitor came to ask him for her hand in marriage, Oinomaos would challenge him to win her

in a chariot race. Oinomaos had already disposed of a dozen suitors, thanks to his master-charioteer, Myrtilus. Seeking assistance in the coming trial, Pelops prayed to Poseidon who furnished him with a winged chariot of gold and a team of winged immortal horses to drive it. He then sought out Myrtilus, who had himself fallen in love with Hippodameia. In turn for the driver’s betrayal of his master, Pelops offered him half of his prize: half the kingdom and the right to enjoy the bride on the wedding night. Myrtilus agreed, and sabotaged the

king's chariot by replacing its bronze axel linchpins with pins made of wax. During the race Oinomaos closed in on Pelops, raising his great bronze spear to dispatch the hero. However his linchpins melted causing his chariot to crash and the king to be dragged to his death. Pelops thereby won the hand of Hippodameia.

Antiquities from Egypt include a bronze cat dating to the late Ptolemaic period, *circa* 664-30 B.C (estimate: £40,000 – 60,000, *illustrated right*). It was once owned by William Welles Bosworth, an important architect whose most notable commissions include the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, the Cambridge campus of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the restoration of the Palace of Versailles and Notre-Dame de Reims. He also enjoyed the patronage of the Rockefeller family throughout his career. His work for the Egyptian Museum placed him in Egypt in the 1920s and more specifically in Luxor in 1925. Whilst there, he became an acquaintance of Howard Carter, the discoverer of Tutankhamun's tomb. The iconic symbol of ancient Egypt, cats have been highly sought-after on the market as witnessed in June 2013 when an Egyptian bronze cat fetched over \$2 million at Christie's New York, setting a new world record price for an Egyptian cat sold at auction.



Further highlights include a Roman sardonyx cameo ring, *circa* 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D., which features a rare depiction of Eros riding a butterfly-drawn chariot (estimate: £12,000 – 18,000). The butterflies may have sought to allude to Psyche, who often represented the soul and was Eros's mythological bride. Scenes of

Cupid and Psyche often involve the god toying with his bride as is the case here, where butterflies are forced to pull his chariot. Such images have been argued to have a potent allegorical meaning, representing Eros, or love, torturing the soul.



A silver shell-shaped dish is a wonderful example of a luxury Roman item dating to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD (estimate: £50,000 – 70,000, *illustrated left*). Shell-shaped dishes, often called *forme di pasticceria* or patisserie moulds, were produced in both bronze and silver. They were often used as a scoop for water during ablutions though some of the finer silver examples formed part of dining sets, and appear to have been used as finger bowls.

---

**PRESS CONTACT:** Dernagh O'Leary | +44(0)207 389 2398 | [doleary@christies.com](mailto:doleary@christies.com)

Please click [here](#) for the complete eCatalogue

**PUBLIC EXHIBITION:**

Sunday, 20 October: 12:00pm – 5:00pm  
Monday, 21 October: 9:00am – 4:30pm  
Tuesday, 22 October: 9:00am – 8:00pm  
Wednesday, 23 October: 9:00am – 4:30pm

**AUCTION:**

*Antiquities*  
Thursday, 24 October 2013  
Time

## About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in the first half of 2013 that totaled £2.4 billion/\$3.68 billion. In 2012, Christie's had global auction and private sales that totaled £3.92 billion/\$6.27 billion making it the highest annual total in Christie's 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 has since conducted the greatest and most celebrated auctions through the centuries providing a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 450 auctions 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 \$100 million. Christie's also has a long and successful history conducting private sales for its clients in all categories, with emphasis on Post-War and Contemporary, Impressionist and Modern, Old Masters and Jewellery. Private sales totaled £465.2 million (\$711.8 million) in the first half of 2013, an increase of 13% on the previous year, and for the third successive year represents the highest total for the period in both company and art market history.

Christie's has a global presence with 53 offices in 32 countries and 12 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Mumbai. More recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in growth 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. 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.*

# # #

Visit Christie's Website at [www.christies.com](http://www.christies.com)

Complete catalogue available online at [www.christies.com](http://www.christies.com) or via the Christie's iPhone app

## FOLLOW CHRISTIE'S ON:

