

CHRISTIE'S

PRIVATE SALES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ETTORE SOTTASS: IMPORTANT WORKS FROM A PRIVATE COLLECTION

CHRISTIE'S PRIVATE SALES INAUGURAL DESIGN EXHIBITION FEATURES THE NEVER BEFORE SEEN PERSONAL COLLECTION OF THE ESTEEMED POST-MODERN ITALIAN DESIGNER AND ARCHITECT



New York – Christie's Private Sales is pleased to announce its inaugural design exhibition of **Ettore Sottsass: Important Works from a Private Collection** will be held in New York from December 7-20, 2013. Ettore Sottsass (1917-2007) is regarded as one of the most significant and influential post-war architect-designers, whose idiosyncratic and highly versatile talents have guided a modern understanding of the relevance of Design. Presented to the public for the first time, works are drawn from the personal possessions of the designer and his wife, the pioneering literary agent, Fernanda Pivano (1917-2009), who exposed European audiences to the Beat writers. The collection encompasses more than 80 works of furniture, ceramics, metalwork, textiles and jewelry, alongside artworks, drawings, collages and examples of the self-published artists' and poets' books. The exhibition presents many previously unseen works, including furnishings and objects from the couple's via Manzoni, Milan apartment, once featured in *Domus* magazine in early 1967.

Simon Andrews, Director of 20th Century Decorative Art & Design, comments, "*Viewed in its entirety, the exhibition of the personal collection of Ettore Sottsass offers an unrivalled opportunity for a reassessment and an enriched interpretation of the pioneering figure and profoundly influential architect-designer. The collection is representative of the critical turning point in Ettore's career, illustrating the transition from experimentation and intuition, towards the establishment of an aesthetic credo that was resolved, defined, and invested with highly personal mythologies.*"

Active across all categories of expression, from architecture to craft, Ettore was a unique personality who was able to synthesize seemingly opposed influences, encompassing the authoritative rigor of fin-de-siècle Austrian architecture, American Pop culture, Eastern spirituality and technological progress, to render his own unique, fluent and highly painterly design vocabulary. A grandee of late 20th century Italian design, his work is in institutions including The Museum of Modern Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Los Angeles County Museum of Art and Centre Georges Pompidou, among others.

Ettore's life mirrored the international currents of the 20th Century. He was born in Austria at the sunset of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, a student of architecture in 1930s Italy, and briefly active in America during the 1950s, before returning to Italy for many decades of influential and systematic creativity. He established successful alliances not only with serial-production furniture manufacturers such as *Poltronova*, but also with an intuitive exploration of craft objects, ceramics, metalwork and jewelry, exemplified by his long collaboration with the influential Milanese gallery, *Il Sestante*. Best known as the founder of the 1980s seminal design collective, Memphis, named after a Bob Dylan song, the Milan group was famous for its brightly colored post-modern furniture, lighting and ceramics that defined that decade. He also designed iconic electronic products for Olivetti, such as the familiar bright red plastic Valentine typewriter, and the Elea mainframe computer.



A critical turning point for Ettore's creative vision was after a trip to India in 1961 triggered a near-fatal illness that required Ettore to urgently seek medical attention and recovery in the San Francisco area in 1962. Here he and his wife, Fernanda Pivano, were immersed amongst the artists, writers and poets that represented the Beat movement. During their life, he and Fernanda surrounded themselves with the most influential writers, artists and musicians of their time – Allen Ginsberg, Helmut Newton, Carlo Mollino, Ernest Hemingway, Bob Dylan, Chet Baker, Umberto Eco, to name a few.

Highlights of the Collection Include:



ETTORE SOTTASS
LARGE TONDO, CIRCA 158-1960
 Executed by *Bucci*, for *Il Sestante*,
 Enamel on copper, slightly concave
 Enamel painted mark *Il Sestante* to underside
 11 ¾ in. (30 cm.) diameter



ETTORE SOTTASS
MONUMENTAL VASE, 1968
 executed by the Manifattura Societa Ceramica
 Toscana, ceramic with gloss-glaze
 painted mark Sottsass Italy to underside
 18 ¾ in. (48 cm.) high



ETTORE SOTTASS
TONDO, CIRCA 1958-1960
 executed by *Bucci*, for *Il Sestante*,
 enamel on copper, slightly concave
 stamped mark *Il Sestante* and applied paper
 label 341 9000 to underside
 8 in. (20.2 cm.) diameter



ETTORE SOTTASS

RING, CIRCA 1965

Unique, executed by Walter de Mario, yellow and white 14ct gold
1 ½ in. (3cm.) diameter



ETTORE SOTTASS

PENDANT AND COLLAR, CIRCA 1960-1965

unique, enamel on copper, with three articulated cylinders, wire suspension unmarked
8 ½ in. (21.5 cm.) overall, 1 ½ in. (4.5 cm.) width each cylinder



ETTORE SOTTASS

MAUSOLEUM RING, CIRCA 1965

unique, executed by Walter de Mario, silver, yellow 14ct gold and Bangkok jade unmarked
1 3/8 in. (3.4 cm.) at widest



ETTORE SOTTASS

CABINET, CIRCA 1959-65

Produced by Poltronova, Indian Rosewood, Brazilian Rosewood, painted wood, bronze handles
31 ¼ in. (82 cm.) high, 46 7/8 in. (119 cm.) wide, 18 7/8 in. (48 cm.) deep



ETTORE SOTTASS

CALIFFO SETTEE, CIRCA 1965

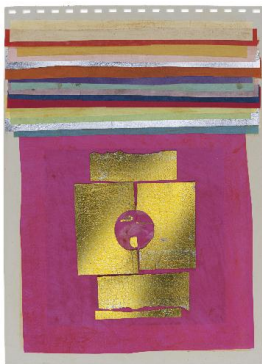
Painted beech, wool upholstery
24 ¾ in. (63 cm.) high, 78 ¾ in. (200 cm.) wide, 31 ½ in. (80 cm.) deep



ETTORE SOTTASS

TOWER, CIRCA 1965

stained and varnished laminated wood, painted steel, Allen keys
85 ½ in. (217 cm.) high, 19 ¾ in. (50.5 cm.) wide, 19 ¾ in. (50.5 cm.) deep



ETTORE SOTTASS

STORIA PER NANDA, PALO ALTO, CAMERA 128 EST, 1962

An illustrated and annotated portfolio, 36 pages total



ETTORE SOTTASS

DRAWING OF A CAT, CIRCA 1965

colored pencil on paper
11 ¾ x 8 ¾ in. (29 x 20.6 cm.)



ETTORE SOTTASS & FERNANDA PIVANO

ENCICLOPEDIA PER LA CHI AMA LA VITA – AGURI PER SEMPRE, 1962-1963

An illustrated and annotated portfolio, 19 four-fold pages total
Portfolio overall, approximately 19 ¾ x 15 ¼ in (50 x 40 cm.)

Ettore Sottsass: Important Works from a Private Collection

20 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 10020

7-20 December 2013

Monday-Saturday: 10 am – 5pm

Sunday: 1-5 pm

PRESS CONTACT: Sara Fox | +1 212 636 2680 | sfox@christies.com

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

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, reached a total of £2.4 billion/\$3.68 billion in global auction and private sales in the first six months of 2013. In 2012, global auction and private sales totaled £3.92 billion/\$6.27 billion, marking the highest annual revenue ever reached by Christie's. 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, jewelry, photography, 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 an emphasis on Post-War and Contemporary, Impressionist and Modern, Old Masters and Jewelry. Global private sales totaled £465 million/\$711 million in the first half year of 2013, an increase of 13% from the same period last year, breaking the sales record of half year private sales for Christie's and the art market for three consecutive years.

Christie's has a global presence of 53 offices in 32 countries and 11 salerooms around the world including London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, Hong Kong, and Shanghai. Christie's has recently led in growth markets such as Russia, China, India and The United Arab Emirates, with successful sales, exhibitions and initiatives held in Beijing, Mumbai and Dubai.

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