



CHRISTIE'S

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Christie's 250th Anniversary Celebrations will be launched with

Defining **BRITISH ART**

**A Curated Evening Sale & Loan Exhibition Spanning 4 Centuries of British Art
In London, June & July 2016**

**Early Sale Highlights to be Announced Include Major Paintings by
Lucian Freud, Frederic, Lord Leighton & Sir Joshua Reynolds**



London - An intimate family portrait by Lucian Freud painted in 1992 (*left*); a pivotal example from 1864 of British Aestheticism at auction for the first time in 100 years by Frederic, Lord Leighton (*centre*); and from 1778, an exquisite portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds on the market for the first time (*right*), are among the great works of British art to be offered in a sale alongside an exhibition which will launch Christie's 250th anniversary in London this June. Building on the success of Christie's pioneering series of curated Evening Sales to date, including *Looking Forward to the Past* and *The Artist's Muse* in 2015, Christie's will celebrate the artistic legacy of four centuries of British artists, with *Defining British Art: Evening Sale* (30 June) and *Defining British Art: Loan Exhibition* (17 June to 15 July). These Evening Sale highlights, a trio of exceptional figurative paintings which come from major private collections and illustrate the evolving face and social customs of British portraiture over three centuries, are among the works that will tour to Christie's New York: 6 to 12 May and Christie's Hong Kong: 26 May to 30 May.

Ever since James Christie first opened his doors for business in 1766, in St James's London, where the headquarters remain today, Christie's has championed British art and artists, with both Reynolds and Gainsborough among the regular visitors to Christie's salerooms. The greatest masterpieces are those that define the artist; paintings and sculpture that reflect the quintessential nature of that artist's lasting legacy. Christie's Loan Exhibition and Evening Sale will present works which exemplify this.

Orlando Rock, Chairman, Christie's UK: *"A celebration of Britain's artistic achievements, the Defining British Art Loan Exhibition and Evening Sale will break new ground for Christie's, charting the evolution of British art over the last 400 years. A fitting launch to Christie's 250th Anniversary celebrations in London and inspired by James Christie's own innovative spirit, the sale and exhibition will create dynamic juxtapositions and, we hope, inspire artists and collectors of the future. Open to all, I would like to encourage not only those who are already friends of Christie's but also those we have yet to welcome, to share in these celebrations and become part of our next chapter, looking ahead to the next 250 years and beyond."*

Jussi Pylikkänen, Global President of Christie's International: *"On the night of 30 June here in London we will hold a landmark sale of major paintings and sculpture to celebrate our 250th year. The auction will be the first sale of its kind to span four centuries of great British painting from Sir Joshua Reynolds to Frederic, Lord Leighton and Lucian Freud. Our specialists from across the globe have worked together to curate what promises to be a fascinating overview of the very best of British Art."*

Lucian Freud *Ib and Her Husband*, 1992, is a scene of family affection: (Estimate on Request: in the region of £18 million). The tender brushstrokes that describe the entwined figures of Freud's daughter Ib (Isobel Boyt) embraced by her partner Pat Costelloe, give a glimpse into the world of the artist's family at a moment of extreme intimacy: Ib's pregnancy. Freud's paintings of his daughters trace an ever-growing tenderness between father and child that was only forged later in life, since Freud had been absent for much of Ib's childhood. This painting has been exhibited in Freud's major retrospective, 'Lucian Freud: Recent Work' (1993-4) which took place in London, The Whitechapel Art Gallery; New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art and Madrid, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía.

At auction for the first time in 100 years, *Golden Hours*, 1864, by **Frederic, Lord Leighton** (1830–1896) is a celebration of youth, beauty, and love, three universal elements which transcend time and geographies (estimate: £3-5 million). Transporting the viewer to 16th century Venice and the world of Giorgione, this work is recognised as a pivotal masterpiece of British Aestheticism, allowing the viewer to revel in the seductive atmosphere, and to dream. With most major works by Leighton in museum collections, this is one of the last remaining examples in private hands. Last seen in public 20 years ago, it was exhibited in the Leighton retrospective at the Royal Academy of Arts in 1996.

Never previously offered for sale, **Sir Joshua Reynolds**, P.R.A. *Portrait of Lucy Long, Mrs George Hardinge* - a society beauty - is one of the finest works by the artist to come to the market in a generation (estimate: £2-3 million). Preserved in remarkable condition, this is a prime example of the work of the first President of the Royal Academy, who was a close friend and advisor to James Christie. Offered from the collections at Harewood House, Yorkshire, it was originally painted for Georgina, Lady Peachey in 1778. A prime date for the artist, it has passed by direct descent through the Marquess' of Clanricarde to the present day. Last included in a public exhibition at the Royal Academy in 1934, this painting has not been seen outside of Harewood for over 80 years.

Further details about Evening Sale highlights will be available in May.

The Loan Exhibition will present many outstanding British art works that have been handled by Christie's in the last 250 years, including examples by leading artists working in Britain (open free to the public from 17 June to 15 July).

Full information about the Loan Exhibition will follow.

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Images available on request

Notes to Editors

2016 marks Christie's 250th anniversary and will be celebrated with a series of events and exhibitions throughout this historic year for the company. As the world's leading art business, Christie's has continued to be recognised as tastemakers in the art market, continually innovating its sales calendar and curating sales to create different perspectives of the art market and collecting trends. Over the last 250 years, Christie's has expanded its reach beyond the headquarters in London, with first sales in America in 1970, then Hong Kong in 1986 and more recently the Middle East in 2006, China in 2013 and India in 2013. Since 2012, Christie's has also included regular online sales across all collecting categories. This continuing spirit of innovation has enabled art collecting to become truly global, allowing clients to acquire or sell works across sale locations, collecting categories and via auction, private sale and online. Within our 250th year, Christie's also celebrates 10 Years in Dubai and 30 Years in Asia. www.christies.com/250