



CHRISTIE'S

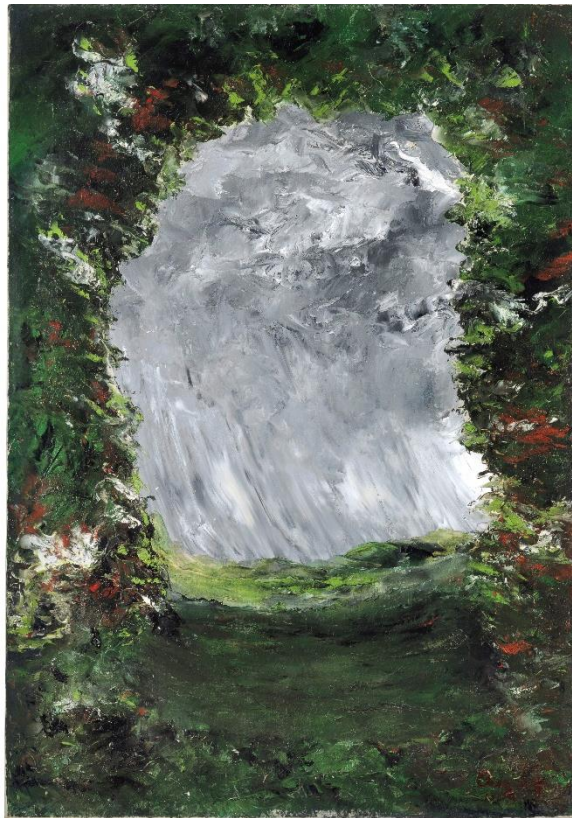
PRESS RELEASE | NEW YORK | 20 OCTOBER 2016 | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AUGUST STRINDBERG'S *INFERNO* TO BE OFFERED IN CHRISTIE'S IMPRESSIONIST & MODERN EVENING SALE IN NEW YORK NOVEMBER 16

**First Strindberg Painting To Appear At Auction
In New York Since 1990**

Estimate: \$3-5 Million

Public Exhibition In Stockholm from October 24-26



PROPERTY FROM THE COLLECTION OF J.E. SAFRA
August Strindberg (1849-1912)

Inferno
signed and dated 'Aug Sg/1903' (lower right)
oil on canvas
39 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 27 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (100 x 70 cm.)
Painted in 1901
Estimate: \$3,000,000-5,000,000

New York – Christie's will present Swedish artist **August Strindberg's *Inferno*** (estimate: \$3-5 million) in its upcoming Impressionist and Modern Art Evening Sale on November 16. Widely exhibited and published, *Inferno* has been in the collection of J.E. Safra since 1992, and marks the first time that any work by Strindberg has been offered at auction in New York since 1990. In advance of the sale, the painting will be unveiled at the CFHILL Art Space in Stockholm for a public exhibition from October 24-26, 2016.

Adrien Meyer, Christie's International Director of Impressionist and Modern Art, comments: “*Inferno* strikes for its daringness and singular freedom. An *avant-garde* masterpiece through and through, this canvas implements the same philosophies revolutionized by Abstract Expressionist pioneers, Mark Rothko and Willem de Kooning, half a century later.”

Painted in 1901, the striking landscape depicts Strindberg's conception of Inferno–Hell. The canvas is thickly painted as a field of light consuming darkness, spreading outward from the center of the canvas enveloping and overwhelming the light within. The effect draws the eye to the brilliant white radiance at lower right, the proverbial light at the end of this tunnel. Strindberg was especially attached to the present picture, which he retained for eight years.

In addition to his accomplished painting career, Strindberg also authored dozens of plays, novels, stories, poetry, autobiographies and articles on a range of diverse subjects. He studied metaphysical philosophy, parapsychics, and occultism. Completed in 1897, *Inferno* was first the title of Strindberg's most famous autobiographical tract. Based predominantly on actual experience, *Inferno* recounts the events that transpired during the artist's Paris sojourn from late 1894, which followed the separation from his second wife, Frida Uhl. Living alone in Paris, without the prospect of theatrical success, Strindberg soon fell prey to hallucinations, delusions, paranoia, and depression, while his proclivity for alchemic research damaged his health.

At the end of 1896 Strindberg returned to Sweden where his fortune began to improve. He commenced a prolific campaign of playwriting, completing nearly a dozen dramatic works during the next several years. In 1900, his well-received plays filled the theaters in Stockholm, and he fell in love with Harriet Bosse, a gifted actress 27 years his junior. They married a year later, but within months, rising tensions and jealousy fomented a new inferno into which Strindberg rapidly descended, the tumult of his emotions, including thoughts of suicide, filling the pages of his *Occult Diary*. This dark but fruitful time in Strindberg's career yielded his most prolific body of paintings, including the present canvas, a clear apogee of this period.

PRESS CONTACT: Sung-Hee Kim | +1 212 636 2680 | shkim@christies.com

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction, private and digital sales in the first half of 2016 that totalled £2.1 billion / \$3 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. Christie's offers around 350 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 & Contemporary, Impressionist & Modern, Old Masters and Jewellery.

2016 marks Christie's 250th anniversary. 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. Click [HERE](#) to view a short film about Christie's and the 250th anniversary.

Christie's has a global presence in 46 countries, with 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.

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Images available on request

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