

For Immediate Release

December 13, 2002

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CHRISTIE'S TO HOST FIRST SALE OF SELF-TAUGHT AND OUTSIDER ART AT A MAJOR AUCTION HOUSE

20th Century Self-Taught and Outsider Art, Featuring Works from the Robert M. Greenberg Collection

January 27, 2003

New York, NY – Christie's is pleased to announce the groundbreaking sale of 20th Century Self-Taught and Outsider Art, featuring works from the Robert M. Greenberg Collection at the firm's Rockefeller Center saleroom on January 27, 2003. The sale will be the largest, most valuable and most comprehensive of its kind at a major auction house. The majority of the works offered in the sale will come from Mr. Greenberg, the founder of the acclaimed creative agency R/GA, who is widely considered to have the finest collection of its kind in private hands.

Outsider art is loosely defined as art created outside the mainstream art world of galleries and museums, usually by culturally isolated individuals. The Christie's sale will include works by more than 50 artists, from over eight countries and consist of paintings, drawings, sculpture and photography. The artists included are considered important 20th Century artists outside of the narrow confines of Self-Taught/Outsider Art, such as Henry Darger (1892-1973), William Edmondson (c. 1870-1951), Bill Traylor (1856-1949) and Adolph Wolfli (1864-1930).

Mr. Greenberg is the founder, chairman and chief creative officer of R/GA. He is a pioneer in digital imaging for both feature films and television commercials, as well as for interactive media. Honored by Adweek magazine as the "Best Creative Design Agency" of 2000, R/GA is perhaps the only company in the world to have received the top awards for film (The Academy Award), broadcast (Gold Clio and Cannes Grand Lions), and interactive (Milia d'Or, I.D. magazine awards and New Media Invasion awards). R/GA's top tier client roster includes AOL Time Warner, Nike,

Bed Bath & Beyond, Ericsson, IBM, Reuters, Ralston Purina, the Rhode Island School of Design and the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation.

*The highlight of the sale is William Edmondson's **Untitled (Ark)** (estimate: \$400,000–600,000), arguably the artist's magnum opus. Edmondson was a stone carver from Nashville who was active in the 1930s and 1940s. Discovered by the photographer Louise Dahl-Wolfe who brought the work to the attention of MoMA director Alfred Barr, Edmondson was the first African-American and Self-Taught/Outsider artist to have a solo exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in 1937. With its simplified and abstracted shapes, **Untitled (Ark)** is a tour de force of modern sculpture, with a whimsical charm, unerring sense of volumetric form and composition, filtered through a Southern vernacular language, that is uniquely his own.*

*Another highlight of the sale is a major work by Henry Darger (1892–1973), entitled **While inside they await developments** (estimate: \$50,000–70,000). Darger's densely detailed and large-scale works have recently been the subject of major exhibitions, including a travelling retrospective that was shown at the Museum of American Folk Art in 1997 and **Disasters of War: Francisco de Goya, Henry Darger, Jake and Dinos Chapman at P.S. 1/MoMA** in 2000–2001. His entire oeuvre was only discovered after the artist passed away and is primarily an illustration of a surreal imagined war between two groups of young girls, the virtuous Vivian Girls and the evil Glandelinians. In addition to his innovative use of color, compositional design and intricate methods of working, his subject matter speaks to a contemporary art world that is fixated on children or child-like imagery. Artists such as Yoshimoto Nara, Takashi Murakami, Kim Dingle, James Reilly and Robin Lowe regularly depict children, with a Dargeresque undercurrent of mystery or danger.*

*James Castle (1900–1977) from Garden Valley, Idaho, is known for his delicate constructions of paper and string, as well as drawings of simplified houses, interiors and abstracted geometric personages. Christie's will offer two constructions by Castle, **Untitled (Figure)** (estimate: \$18,000–25,000), and **Untitled (Bird)** (estimate: \$12,000–18,000), important works by the artist which will mark his debut at auction. Despite his severe physical handicaps—he was deaf and never learned to speak, read or write—he created an incredible imaginary world that has been widely celebrated. His work has been enormously popular since its introduction to a wider audience a few years ago at the Outsider Art Fair. Since then, his work has entered the collection of the Museum of Modern Art and has been the subject of solo exhibitions, among other venues, at the Drawing Center (2000) and the Knoedler Gallery (2001) in New York.*

The sale will also feature major works by the Swiss Outsider Adolph Wolfli (1864–1930), who will be the subject of a retrospective at the American Folk Art Museum in February of 2003, the Mexican-American artist Martin Ramirez (1895–1963), and the Swiss artist Aloise Corbaz (1886–1964).

Additional offerings include Calvin and Ruby Black's rare doll-like Possum Trot sculptures and the drawings and paintings by the important African-American artist Bill Traylor.

Auction: 20th Century Self-Taught and Outsider Art, January 27, 2003
Featuring Works from the Robert M.
Greenberg Collection

Viewing: Christie's Galleries, 20 Rockefeller Plaza January 22-27, 2003

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Images available on request
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