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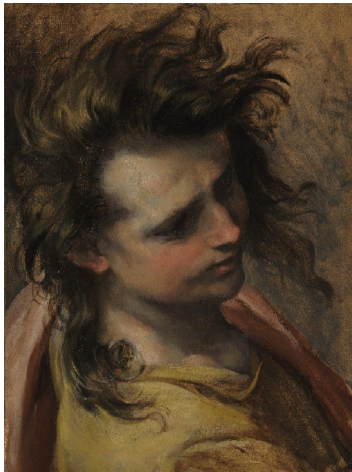
14 January 2009

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RARE FINDS FROM PRIVATE COLLECTIONS TO HIGHLIGHT CHRISTIE'S OLD MASTER PAINTINGS SALE IN NEW YORK



Important Old Master Paintings and Sculpture January 28, 2009

New York – Christie's is pleased to announce details of its upcoming *Important Old Master Paintings and Sculpture* sale on January 28, 2009. The sale of over 200 items brings together a remarkable selection of artwork from the leading masters of European art, including a number of rare, privately-sourced, and historically significant items not seen on the market for decades. Highlights of the sale include an altarpiece study by Barocci, landscapes by Turner and Constable, Italian Renaissance *tondi* from the studio of Botticelli and the anonymous Master of Memphis, portraits by Girodet and Van Dyck, still lifes by Chardin and van Veerendael, and an excellent selection of bronze and wooden sculpture.

Old Masters Week at Christie's New York begins Monday, January 26, with a 6 p.m. lecture on J.M.W. Turner entitled, "Continuing Revolution: A Life in Watercolor" by Andrew Wilton, Former Curator of the Turner Collection, Tate Britain. On Tuesday, January 27 the sales begin with Part I of *The Scholar's Eye: Property from the Julius Held Collection. Important Old Master Paintings and Sculpture* on January 28 is followed by *Old Master and 19th Century Drawings* on Thursday, January 29, and Part II of *The Scholar's Eye* on Friday, January 30.

Barocci's *Head of Saint John the Evangelist*

A thrilling recent discovery from a private collection, *Head of Saint John the Evangelist* is a full-scale study in oil on paper by the 16th century Italian painter Federico Barocci. The study is believed to be a fully-realized *modello*, a last step in Barocci's preparatory process before he began painting his Senigallia altarpiece, *The Entombment of Christ*. Inspired by Raphael's original composition for *The Entombment*, Barocci portrays Saint John as a beautiful youth with gorgeous flowing locks (estimate: \$400,000-600,000; pictured page 1 at left). The other known full-size version of *Head of Saint John* is in the collection of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.

Turner and Constable

From the collection of Chicago philanthropists William and Eleanor Wood Prince, Christie's offers a group of spectacular watercolors by the great 19th century British artist J.M.W. Turner. Viewed together, the five watercolors present a cross-section of Turner's painting career from an early Lake District view to a majestic late-career painting of the Swiss Alps. Three landscapes in the group bear the distinction of having been originally owned by John Ruskin, the Victorian-era art critic and collector who championed Turner's distinctive style of landscape painting (*separate release available*). *The Brunig Pass from Meiringen, Switzerland* (estimate: \$1,500,000–2,500,000) is recognized by experts as one of the most evocative of Turner's Swiss watercolors. Originally owned by Ruskin, *The Brunig Pass* has been in the Wood Prince private collection for more than 50 years.

Some of John Constable's most iconic and beloved works were painted at the Salisbury Close home of his friend John Fisher. *A View of Salisbury* from the Wood Prince collection is a *plein air* sketch by Constable that re-creates the setting near the river Avon with lively brushwork and a rich impasto of paint (estimate: \$500,000-800,000). Capturing the fleeting effects of light and weather was Constable's constant ambition, and in this sketch he achieves maximum effect, capturing a dramatic sunburst breaking through cloud cover with just a few rapid, brilliant strokes.

Italian Renaissance *tondi*

The sale boasts two important Florentine *tondi*, both from *circa* 1500. *The Holy Family with the Infant Saint John the Baptist and two shepherds* (estimate: \$500,000-800,000; pictured page 1 at center) is a tender devotional image painted on a circular panel. It was recently recognized by scholars as the work of the Master of Memphis, an as-yet-unidentified assistant of the Florentine master Filippino Lippi (1457-1504). Like Filippino himself, the anonymous Master paints with an expressive linearity inherited from Fra Filippo Lippi and Botticelli. His work is further characterized by the long, slender fingers and toes of his figures and voluminous drapery with numerous pleats and folds.

The second *tondo*, *The Madonna and Child with two Angels*, (estimate: \$200,000-300,000) comes from the Florentine studio of Sandro Botticelli and claims a distinguished provenance. First recorded in the holdings of George Salting, a passionate and prolific collector of old master works in the late 19th century, it was sold in 1885 to a pair of equally avid collectors, Robert and Evelyn Benson. When business expenses forced the sale of the Benson collection in its entirety to art dealer Joseph Duveen in 1927, the event made headlines. This *tondo*, included in that landmark transaction, was subsequently acquired by Mr. E.W. Edwards, father of Eleanor Wood Prince. It has remained in the family's private collection for nearly 80 years since.

Remarkable Portraiture

One of the most romantic works by the early 19th century French court painter Anne-Louis Girodet de Roucy-Trioson is *Portrait of Jacques-Joseph de Cathelineau*. Known as the “saint of Anjou”, Jacques Cathelineau (1759-1793) was the only peasant general in the Royalist forces to be selected by King Louis XVIII for immortalization in portraiture. To complete the posthumous portrait of the war hero, Girodet asked Cathelineau's son, Jacques-Joseph, to lend his features to this bust-length study for a later full-sized portrait. The resulting study in oil is a handsome though highly idealized depiction of the war hero Cathelineau portrayed with a faraway gaze and pleasantly mussed blond locks. While Girodet's full-length portrait of the elder Cathelineau remains in the municipal museum of Cholet in the Vendée, this smaller study of his son has remained the treasured property of Cathelineau's descendants to the present day (estimate: \$800,000-1,200,000).



Another significant portrait included in the sale is a striking full-length depiction of Anne Cavendish, Lady Rich by Sir Anthony Van Dyck (estimate: \$500,000-700,000). Executed by the painter at his

creative peak during the years 1635 to 1639, the picture has a remarkable early history, having been commissioned or purchased by Philip, 4th Baron Wharton, whose collection of royal portraits was renowned. Among its later owners was Sir Robert Walpole, Prime Minister (1721-42).

Still Life Masterpieces

A sumptuous pair of still life flower paintings by Nicolaes van Veerendael (Antwerp 1640-1691) are packed with bright blooms, including peonies, tulips, morning glories, and roses (estimate: \$600,000-800,000). Highly praised for his skill in depicting white flowers, the artist displays his talents here with at least four different species of white flower in each arrangement. The palette is similarly contrasting, with royal blues offset by bright orange throughout the arrangements. The paired compositions casually mirror each other and present a full compendium of the painter's skills.

By contrast, an exceptional still life by Jean Siméon Chardin (Paris 1699-1779), *Still Life with a copper pot, a pitcher, fish, a glass, two nuts and an onion*, rejects the traditional lavishness of still life composition in favor of a spare setting suggestive of a simple stone kitchen. It is among the earliest works by Chardin in which he deployed the quotidian household utensils that would become characteristic of



his later kitchen still lifes. Despite the apparent casualness of this depiction of mundane elements – a copper cauldron, an earthenware pitcher, two perch waiting to be gutted – Chardin has in fact arranged them with great artistry into an eloquent composition of unexpected monumentality (estimate: \$1,200,000-1,800,000).

Sculpture Highlights

From the collection of Professor and Mrs. Clifford Truesdell of Baltimore comes *Saturn Devouring One of His Sons*, a late-Baroque bronze after Pietro Francavilla that is both gorgeous and terrible in form. Despite its apparent narrative of infanticide and cannibalism, the composition was intended as an embodiment of winter, the season of destruction and renewal. Only three other versions of the Saturn model are known to exist, including one in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. The Truesdell version – acquired in the 1960's for the couple's private collection – bears the distinction of having once been owned by Queen Marie of Romania, and later Prince Nicholas (estimate: \$700,000-900,000).

A rare survival of the early 16th century is a carved walnut figure of King Louis XII of France (1462-1515), the popular monarch known as “*Le Père du Peuple*”. Standing 43 inches tall, the sculpture remains in remarkably good condition, with nearly all of its original surface decoration of silver, gilt and polychrome intact. The sculpture boasts a storied provenance; once a part of the celebrated collection of George and Florence Blumenthal, former president of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the figure was gifted to the museum collection in 1941 (estimate: \$250,000-350,000; pictured page one at right).

Auction:

Old Master Paintings (Parts I & II)

January 28, 2009 at 10am & 2pm

Viewings: Christie’s Rockefeller Galleries

January 24-27, 2009

About Christie’s

Christie’s is the world’s leading art business with global art sales in 2007 that totalled £3.1 billion/\$6.3 billion. This marks the highest total in company and in art auction history. For the first half of 2008, art sales totalled £1.8 billion / \$3.5 billion. 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 conducted the greatest auctions of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, and today remains a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie’s offers over 600 sales 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 \$80 million. Christie’s has 85 offices in 43 countries and 14 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Los Angeles, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Tel Aviv, Dubai, Hong Kong and Zurich. Most recently, Christie’s has led the market with expanded initiatives in emerging and new 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

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Images available on request

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