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POST-WAR & CONTEMPORARY ART SALE REALIZES £6.1 MILLION Christie's establishes new world records for any painting by Jeff Koons and Eva Hesse at Christie's Tonight

Post-War and Contemporary Evening Sale

5 February 2003

London: Christie's evening sale of *Post-War and Contemporary Art* realized £6,141,410 **(\$10,151,750/€9,279,671) tonight, bringing the total of** Christie's February sale series so far to over £45 million. ***This selective, well-estimated sale was 81% sold by lot and 77% by value. A new world record at auction was established for any painting by the artist Jeff Koons when his canvas entitled Cracked Egg sold for £303,650 (\$501,933/€458,815). A world record at auction was also set tonight for a painting by Eva Hesse, with Untitled selling for £160,650 (\$265,554/€242,742).***

The sale tonight was lead by Andy Warhol's *Skull* of 1976 which sold for £1,216,650 **(\$2,011,122/€1,838,358) and was** from a series of paintings of human skulls from the mid-1970s, acknowledged to be the black-humoured flip-side to his series of society and celebrity icon portraits.

Cracked Egg, from 1995-7, is one of a number of canvases by Jeff Koons from the *Celebration* series of paintings, highly consumer-based images from childhood festivities such as birthday parties, Christmas presents and Easter eggs. *Cracked Egg*, measuring 3.25 metres by 2.52 metres, is an extraordinarily detailed super-realist representation that aims to awaken the viewer's child-like delight and sense of wonder at the new.

Gerhard Richter's *Villa* was another notable work this evening, selling for £391,650 **(\$647,397/€591,783)**. An oil on canvas, it was acquired directly from the artist the year it was

painted in 1972. Further highlights tonight included Francis Bacon's *Study for a Portrait*, painted in 1979, which realized £556,650 (**\$920,142/€841,098**) and Cy Twombly's *Roman Notes* of 1971 which achieved £391,650 (**\$647,397/€591,783**).

An iconic work from the Young British Artist scene, *Excessive, Sensual Indulgence*, a stunning electronic fountain sculpture by Tim Noble and Sue Webster, sold tonight for £71,700 (**\$118,520/ €108,338**). Measuring nearly 2 metres high, the work was produced for an edition of three, and the present work is the artist's proof, which has been uniquely adapted by Sue Webster for outdoor use, and since 1998 it has been hung in a garden in Dublin.

Buyer activity in the auction was 68% from the UK and 32% from the Americas. 85% of lots sold within or above estimate, 31% of which sold above estimate and 54% sold within estimate.

Impressionist and Modern Works on Paper and *Post-War and Contemporary* day sale will take place tomorrow.

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Images available on request

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