

**For Immediate Release**

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**IZNIK DELIGHTS FROM THE OTTOMAN WORLD AT CHRISTIE'S**



**Iznik Pottery - The Vincent Bulent Collection**

**26 April 2005**

**Christie's King Street**

**London** – A brilliant collection of Iznik pottery, the most extensive to be offered in London since the second World War, leads Christie's Islamic sales in April 2005. With almost all of the pieces dating from the most important period of production in the 16th century, the collection comprises over 80 vessels and is estimated to realise in excess of £1.3 million. Chosen for the brilliance of design and colour, the collection also features some of the most impressive blue and white Iznik dishes ever made. With prices ranging from £1,200 to £150,000, the collection will have wide appeal. Interest in works of art from Turkey is ever increasing as this week sees the opening of the exhibition, *Turks: a Journey of a Thousand Years 600-1600*, at London's Royal Academy of Arts.

The painted wares from Iznik represent the apogee of technical and aesthetic achievement of Islamic ceramic production. Manufactured at Iznik, south-east of Istanbul in north-west Anatolia (Asian Turkey), this pottery has been prized in both Europe and the Orient since production began in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century. The Vincent Bulent Collection has been formed with an eye to the long tradition of collecting; of particular interest were vessels with a long provenance, chosen for the design and vibrancy of colour. It includes pieces from almost all the great collections of Iznik

formed since the 19<sup>th</sup> century - British and French collections of the 19th century; Alexandrine collections of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as well as American and Arab collections. Housed in a specially-commissioned showcase, this collection was formed over a 30-year period from 1970.

A key highlight of the sale is an early, large, blue and white pottery dish, *circa* 1535, estimated at £100,000-150,000. Featuring scrolling tendrils and lotus flowerheads painted in two shades of cobalt blue, the design combines motifs from Yuan and Ming porcelain. In the early period of Iznik production, the potters sought to emulate or surpass the Chinese porcelains which the Sultans and their courtiers avidly collected at that time. Several examples in this collection reflect this trend, including this magnificent dish.



Later dishes from the Iznik ateliers feature a wider range of colours. After the 1550s, a newly-developed iron oxide pigment, *bole red*, was applied in thick relief giving a brilliant red colour characteristic of the best known style of Iznik pottery. These colours and the Iznik mastery of vegetal designs are evident in two plates from the collection - an Iznik pottery dish, *circa* 1575, decorated with a finely painted *saz* leaf surrounded by roses and tulips (estimate: £18,000- 25,000) and an Iznik pottery dish, *circa* 1570 decorated with a slender Cypress tree within radial sprays of red carnations (estimate: £20,000-30,000).

Geometric designs, based on organic motifs, form another distinctive design set of designs of this period and are well represented in this collection. A pottery dish, *circa* 1570, is decorated with feathery *saz* leaves arranged in pairs over a dense green fishscale ground (estimate :£ 30,000-40,000). Figural and pictorial designs, with human or animal figures, also feature in this collection. An Iznik pottery water bottle, *circa* 1580, decorated with gambolling hares, deers, lions and birds, in white on a turquoise ground (estimate : £35,000-50,000), is a fine example.



Other highlights of the collection include a rimless Iznik pottery dish, *circa* 1570, decorated with a turbaned rider contemplating a fast-flowing stream, painted in blue, green, turquoise and black (estimate: £30,000-50,000) and an Iznik pottery jug, *circa* 1560, decorated with clusters of *saz* leaves in white with bole-red highlights on cobalt-blue ground (estimate: £10,000-15,000).

The rarity, variety and brilliance of these pieces will excite interest amongst Western and Eastern collectors alike.

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**Notes to Editors:**

**1. CHRISTIE'S ISLAMIC SALES in 2005**

Christie's Islamic sales include carpets, ceramics, manuscripts and metalwork from regions stretching from the Middle East and southern Spain to China, India and Southeast Asia. Sales are held in April and October in London.

- 26 April 2005, King Street, **Iznik Pottery - The Vincent Bulent Collection**
- 26 April 2005, King Street, **Islamic Art and Manuscripts**
- 28 April 2005, King Street, **Oriental Rugs and Carpets**
- 27 April, South Kensington, **Islamic and Asian Costume and Textiles**
- 29 April, South Kensington, **Indian and Islamic Works of Art**
- 11 October 2005, King Street, **Islamic Art and Manuscripts**
- 13 October 2005, King Street, **Oriental Rugs and Carpets**

**2. FORTHCOMING EXHIBITION**

**The Royal Academy of Arts, London,  
Turks : A Journey of a Thousand Years, 600-1600**

22 January - 12 April 2005

Devoted to the artistic and cultural riches of the Turkic-speaking peoples, with loans from the Topkapi Palace and the Museum of Turkish and Islamic art of Istanbul, featuring paintings to ceramics. Many of the works have not been exhibited outside Turkey before.

**3. MARKET LEADERSHIP**

Christie's is the market leader for Islamic Art and holds the top three record prices achieved in the field: £3,631,500 for an important bronze fountainhead in the form of a Hind, Spain, c. mid-10th century (April, 1997), £3,303,750 for a Mamluk enamelled and gilded clear glass jug, Egypt or Syria, second half 13th century (December, 2000), and £2,917,250 for a Mughal ruby and emerald inset, gold and silver lined and inlaid jade covered flask, North India, first half 17<sup>th</sup> century (April, 2004).