

For Immediate Release

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FRANCIS BACON TRIPTYCH SELLS FOR £26.3 MILLION (\$51.7 MILLION/€35.2 MILLION)

- The Highest Price for a Post-War Work of Art Ever Sold in Europe

POST-WAR & CONTEMPORARY ART SALE TOTALS £73 MILLION/\$143 MILLION/€35.2 MILLION

- Second Highest Total for Post-War & Contemporary Art Sale

- Artist Records Established for Richter, Fontana and Riley

- Christie's Continues to Lead Contemporary Art Market

London – *Triptych 1974-77* by Francis Bacon (1909-1992) sold for £26.3 million (\$51.7 million/€35.2 million), becoming the most expensive work of art ever sold at Christie's in London and the most valuable Post-War and Contemporary work sold in Europe.

Christie's *Post War & Contemporary Art Evening Sale* realised a total of £72,930,500 (\$143,089,641/€97,581,009). The sale was 88% sold by value and 69% sold by lot. 23 lots sold for over \$1 million and 12 lots selling for over £1 million with four artist records established. The buyer breakdown was (by lot): 57% European including UK; 43% Americas.

"Christie's established the highest price for any Post-War and Contemporary work of art sold in Europe this evening, with the superb result for the Triptych 1974-77 by Francis Bacon," said Pilar Ordovas, Head of Post-War and Contemporary Art at Christie's London. *"Throughout the sale, we saw active participation from American clients who bid competitively alongside other international collectors. Christie's again established very strong prices for works of art of the highest quality, resulting in the second highest total for Post-War and Contemporary Art sale at Christie's London demonstrating the underlying, continued strength of the market."*

Appearing at auction for the first time and offered from a private collection, *Triptych 1974-77*, is the last in the great series that Bacon painted in response to the tragic death of his lover George Dyer in 1971. Many of Bacon's works after that date - marking what David Sylvester maintained was the absolute 'peak period' of Bacon's entire career - were preoccupied with Dyer. Painted between May and June of 1974 and revisited in 1977, this great, strangely open, Baconian landscape was immediately recognised as a major landmark in his oeuvre.

Further highlights at Christie's sale this evening included *Zwei Liebespaare*, 1966 by Gerhard Richter (b. 1932) that sold for £7,300,500 (\$14,323,581/€9,768,069), establishing a new world record price for the artist. Painted at the height of his involvement with Pop, the work was acquired from the artist by the mother of the present owner. It has been on long-term loan to the Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus in Munich.

A monumental *Concetto spaziale, Attesa* by Lucio Fontana (1899-1968), 1965, sold for £6,740,500 (\$13,224,861/€9,018,789), a world record for the artist at auction (estimate: £3,500,000-5,500,000). An iconic piece dedicated to the artist's wife, the smooth, red surface is interrupted by one single, long straight slash over a metre long.

Palm Springs Jump, 1982 by Jean-Michel Basquiat (1960-1988), an electrifying work made in a surge of creativity when he had just broken through to star status, was a further highlight selling for £6,516,500 (\$12,785,373/€8,719,077).

Further world auction records were established for British artist, Bridget Riley, whose *Static 2* obtained £1,476,500 (\$2,896,893/€1,975,557), bought by an anonymous collector.

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Images available on request

About Christie's

Christie's is the world's leading art business with global auction sales in 2007 that totaled £3.1 billion/\$6.3 billion. This marks the highest total in company and in art auction history.

Christie's is the leading marketplace internationally for Post-War and Contemporary Art with global sales in the first half of 2007 totalling £459 million / \$914 million. Christie's New York *Post-War and Contemporary Art Evening Sale* in May 2006 became the most valuable auction ever in the category, and the second highest art auction in history totalling \$384,654,400. In June 2007, the highest ever European sale total for *Post-War and Contemporary Art* was achieved at Christie's London when the evening sale realised £74.1 million / \$147.3 million.