

For Immediate Release
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IMPORTANT COLLECTION OF IRISH ART TO BE OFFERED AT CHRISTIE'S IN MAY



Jack Butler Yeats, R.H.A. (1871-1957)
Here She Comes!
Estimate: £400,000-£600,000 (€580,000-€870,000)

The Irish Sale including The William and Joan Roth Collection ***Friday 14 May 2004***

London – Christie's is delighted to announce the sale of one of the most important collections of Irish Art to appear at auction for several years. The 104-lot William and Joan Roth Collection forms the backbone of Christie's ninth annual sale of Irish Art and features all the major names in Irish painting, spanning more than three centuries. The collection is expected to fetch in excess of £1.5million (€2.1million) with individual estimates ranging from £200 to £600,000.

Christie's & Ulster Bank Group

Christie's is pleased to announce that following their successful collaboration last year, they will once again be joining forces with Ulster Bank Group to host pre-sale exhibitions in Belfast and Dublin. The Belfast exhibition of sale highlights will take place at Ulster Bank's magnificent Head Office in Donegall Square East on Monday 26 April. The exhibition will then travel to Dublin, where the entire sale may be viewed at The Shelbourne Hotel on Wednesday 28 and Thursday 29 April. Both events will offer collectors and enthusiasts an ideal opportunity to view highlights from the sale prior to the auction in London.

William and Joan Roth

Born in San Francisco in September 1916, William M. Roth's enchantment with Ireland began following his marriage to Joan Adams Osborn in April 1946 when, in spite of post-war visa difficulties, they decided to spend their honeymoon in Ireland. William Roth had become enamoured with the poetry of W.B. Yeats as a college student and in his senior year had compiled a bibliography of his works for the Yale Library. It was during this time that he started corresponding with the Yeats family, which led to an invitation to tea from the artist Jack Yeats during the summer of 1946. Almost 20 years later, the Roths bought a house in Ireland and, with walls to fill, continued to amass with passion their fine collection of Irish pictures. William and Joan Roth have lived in Princeton, New Jersey for the last 25 years and are still frequent visitors to Ireland.

The Paintings

*The collection is highlighted by the work of Jack Butler Yeats, R.H.A. (1871-1957), one of the most influential names and arguably the finest Irish artist of the twentieth century. Featuring a total of ten pictures by Yeats, the undoubted highlight is an exceptional early work entitled *Here She Comes!* estimated at £400,000-600,000/€580,000-870,000. Dating from 1913, it depicts two horses in a trotting race being keenly observed by the bookies and a couple of spectators. Measuring 24x36 inches, *Here She Comes!* is believed to be one of Yeats's largest paintings from this period. The horse is a recurrent theme in Yeats's work, his fascination stemming from his childhood in County Sligo, a place truly saturated in racing tradition.*

*A much later work, *Looking About Him*, 1949, painted when the artist was in his late 70s, carries an estimate of £300,000-500,000/€435,000-725,000. Dr Thomas MacGreevy, a former Director of the National Gallery of Ireland, acquired this picture in 1952 and it was subsequently bought by the Roths in 1967.*

Over the last number of years, Christie's has gained a strong reputation for selling 18th century Irish pictures, and the sale last May was no exception when an auction record was set for a magnificent George Barret, R.A. (1728 or 1732-1784) (£363,650/€506,928). This was followed in November by a record price of £158,900/€227,000 for the artist Joseph Patrick Haverty, R.H.A. (1794-1854).

The William and Joan Roth Collection includes a wonderful example of the work of Thomas Roberts (1748-1778), who has been described as 'the most brilliant Irish landscape painter of the second half of the eighteenth century'. A view of the Weir in Lucan House Demesne, Co. Dublin carries an estimate of £70,000-100,000/€101,500-145,000 – which relates to a similar composition in the National Gallery of Ireland.

The Galway born artist and one of the earliest members of the R.H.A., Joseph Patrick Haverty (1794-1854) is represented in the collection by A Group Portrait of a family, which may show the Reilly family of Scarvagh stepping ashore from a boat in an extensive lake landscape. John Lushington Reilly, who was an artist himself, was one of Haverty's most important early patrons. The picture is estimated to fetch in region of £25,000-£35,000/€36,250-50,750.

No comprehensive collection of Irish Art would be complete without the work of Sir John Lavery, R.H.A., R.A., R.S.A. (1856-1941), another artist for which Christie's holds the world record price at auction [£1,321,500 – 8 December 1998]. The Bathing Pool, North Berwick, dating from 1919 is sure to arouse keen interest amongst collectors (estimate: £40,000-60,000/€58,000-87,000). A beautiful view of Dun Laoghaire Harbour by Walter Frederick Osborne, R.H.A. (1859-1903) carries an estimate £40,000-60,000 (€58,000-87,000).

The Roth Collection also features a number of notable watercolours including the artists Mildred Anne Butler, R.W.S., R.U.A. (1858-1941), Andrew Nicholl, R.H.A. (1804-1886), John Nixon (c.1750-1818) and John Henry Campbell (1757-1828).

A group of six works by Andrew Nicholl includes one of his beautiful trademark depictions of wild flowers; executed with microscopic detail, Poppies, buttercups and daisies, may fetch up to £10,000/€14,500. A highlight among the three Mildred Anne Butler's on offer is a view of the house, Kilmurry, where she was born in Co. Kilkenny, the chief source of her inspiration – Doves near the Conservatory, Kilmurry carries an estimate of £6,000-8,000/€8,700-11,600. Thirteen landscape watercolours and caricatures by John Nixon range in estimate from £200-£1,500/€290-€2,175.

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Note to Editors:

SALE:

*The Irish Sale, Part I, Friday 14 May at 10.30am - 8 King Street, London SW1
& Part II at 2pm - 85 Old Brompton Road, London SW7*

VIEWING & EVENTS:

Belfast

*Ulster Bank Group Head Office, 11-16 Donegall Square East, Belfast BT1 5UB
Monday 26 April: 10am - 4pm*

Dublin

*The Shelbourne Hotel, St. Stephen's Green, Dublin 2
Wednesday 28 April: 2pm - 5pm & Thursday 29 April: 10am - 5pm*

New York

*Christie's, 20 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, New York 10020
17 April - 21 April*

London

King Street & South Kensington: Sunday 9 - Thursday 13 May

Lecture

*Desmond Fitzgerald, The Knight of Glin will give a lecture on Collecting Irish Art at
6.45pm on Tuesday 11 May at Christie's King Street.*

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