

For Immediate Release

19 February 2007

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The sale at Christie's of Audrey Hepburn's iconic black dress from *Breakfast at Tiffany's* funds 15 new educational centres in the heart of Bengal, India.

The money raised from the sale of Audrey Hepburn's stunning Givenchy gown at Christie's South Kensington on December 5, 2006 is to be used to fund fifteen new educational centres in Bengal, bringing hope to poverty-stricken children in some of India's most deprived areas.

The iconic black dress designed by Hubert de Givenchy from the much-loved 1961 classic film, *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, more than exceeded pre-sale expectations, selling for £467,200/\$923,187/€692,390. It was donated to the Calcutta-based charity *City of Joy Aid* by Hubert de Givenchy himself, and established a new world record for a dress made for a movie.

Using proceeds from the December sale at Christie's, the first new educational centre is to be built in the village of Lakshikautapur, about two hours from Calcutta, in the heart of rural Bengal. It will be equipped with computers and audio-visual installations to teach English to children who otherwise would never go to school. Many of these children are forced into the hands of local mafia gangs who use them to bring illegal alcohol at night onto the ships anchored on the banks of the Ganges. They get the equivalent of one dollar for that job, so *City of Joy Aid* pays one dollar to their families to keep the children at school. The new educational centre in Lakshikautapur will be officially opened on Wednesday 28 February 2007 at 10am, with a procession of 15,000 children, the population of around thirty local villages, together with local authorities.

City of Joy Aid was founded in 1981 by bestselling international author Dominique Lapierre and his wife, also named Dominique, following a meeting with Mother Theresa. Acting principally in Calcutta and surrounding regions, it is dedicated to helping the poorest of the poor through a network of clinics, schools, rehabilitation centres and hospital boats. The Lapierres rely entirely on Dominique's book royalties and donations from readers to fund their activities, personally absorbing all other expenses themselves. They have contributed to the rescue, shelter and rehabilitation of over 4 million patients

suffering from tuberculosis, cholera, leprosy and other diseases which exist under the shadow of poverty.

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www.cityofjoyaid.org / www.christies.com

Notes to editors:

Audrey Hepburn was born Audrey Kathleen Hepburn-Ruston in Brussels, Belgium on 4th May 1929. Daughter of Joseph Hepburn-Ruston, a British Banker and Ella van Heemstra, a Dutch Baroness, she was educated in the UK and trained in dance by Marie Rambert, who also trained Vaslav Nijinski. She made her stage debut as a chorus girl in 1948, in *High Button Shoes* at London's Hippodrome. She was awarded an Oscar for "Best Actress in a leading role" for her performance in *Roman Holiday* in 1953 and it was during this year that she began a lifelong friendship with Hubert de Givenchy. In her later life, she became known for her humanitarian work, becoming Unicef's Goodwill Ambassador in 1988. Following Audrey's death in 1993, The Audrey Hepburn Childrens' Fund in Los Angeles was set up to continue her work.