

For Immediate Release

23 February 2007

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CHRISTIE'S FINE MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS AUCTION FEATURES A 1729 STRADIVARI VIOLIN, "SOLOMON, EX-LAMBERT"

Fine Musical Instruments
2 April 2007

New York – Christie's is pleased to announce the *Fine Musical Instruments* sale on April 2 in New York will be lead by a 1729 Stradivari violin known as the "Solomon, Ex-Lambert" (estimate: \$1,000,000-1,500,000). Christie's holds the world record price for any musical instrument sold at auction with the sale of "The Hammer" Stradivari which realized \$3,544,000 May of 2006.



The "Solomon, Ex-Lambert" derives its name from the late Seymour Solomon, co-founder of Vanguard records, and amateur violinist who bought the violin at auction in 1972, and from Miss Murray Lambert, a British concert violinist during the 1920-30s who was the previous owner. Made in Cremona by Antonio Stradivari in 1729, the violin emanates from his mature period and retains the bold outline, superb arching and quality materials which account for the power, sonority and tonal balance his work is recognized for.

Provenance

The first recorded owner of this 1729 Stradivari was the Berlin dealer and expert August Riechers who sold it to 'Miss Price', a student of the violin who was studying in Berlin at the time. From Miss Price the violin passed to the venerable English collector Robert Bower, one of the preeminent connoisseurs of his day who owned no fewer than twenty-four works by Stradivari. By 1922 the violin was sold through the London dealers of John and Arthur Beare to Ernest E. Winterbotham who paid the price of £1,600 and gave the violin to his wife Dorothy Mary Murray Lambert.

Known as Miss Murray Lambert, she was among the few British women of the 1920's and 30's who pursued a career as a concert violinist. A student of both Carl Flesch and Leopold Auer she was a champion of British contemporary composers and a prolific performer of the works of Sir Hamilton Harty. It is said that her performances of Frederick Delius's Violin Sonata No.1 inspired the artist Hugh Riviere R.A. to create his final full length portrait entitled *Delius Sonata*. By the late 1930's she withdrew from the concert stage to concentrate on teaching which she pursued through the 1950's. Following her death the violin was offered at auction in 1972 where it was presented as *The Property of Miss Murray Lambert* and sold for £17,500 to Seymour Solomon.

Unique to the sale is the fact that Seymour Solomon was not a member of the trade, but a private collector and talented amateur violinist with a discerning eye and equally good ear. He was also a lover of classical music and one of the major forces to advance its audience in the last half of the 20th century. Born in New York in 1922, Seymour Solomon attended the Julliard School majoring in Musicology and the violin. His studies were interrupted by World War II, and upon his return in 1946 he continued at New York University, concentrating on the music of Johann Sebastian Bach. Frustrated at the lack of recorded works of Bach and other baroque composers he set about changing that situation irrevocably in 1950 when he and his brother Maynard formed the Bach Society, aided by the new technologies of magnetic recording tape. In an improvised recording studio in the basement of Vienna's Konzerthaus he completed the first of what would become five recordings of the Bach cantatas, using members of the Vienna Philharmonic along with soloists and the chorus of the Vienna State Opera. After the successful release of this first LP the Solomon brothers quickly realized the need to expand their horizons and include other classical works both chamber music as well as symphonic music. This was the birth of the Vanguard Recording Society and would be known to all audiophiles as Vanguard Records. With a catalogue of recorded artists such as Alexander Schneider, Antonio Janigro, Misha Elman and Joseph Szigeti the Vanguard label established itself as one of the premier independent record companies in classical recordings.

Auction: *Fine Musical Instruments*

2 April

Viewing: Christie's King Street, London

23-28 February

Christie's Rockefeller, New York

29 March – 1 April

About Christie's

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today remains a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 600 sales annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewelry, photographs, collectibles, wine, cars and more. Prices range from \$200 to over \$80 million. Christie's has 85 offices in 43 countries and 14 salerooms around the world including London, New York, Los Angeles, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Tel Aviv, Dubai and Hong Kong. Most recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in emerging markets such as China, India and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Dubai, Mumbai and Russia. Christie's also offers its clients worldwide access to its sales through Christie's LIVE, its unique, real-time online bidding service.

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More information about Christie's sale of *Fine Musical Instruments* can be found on www.christies.com. All lots from the sale can be viewed online along with full catalogue descriptions on Lotfinder®, which also allows clients to leave absentee bids. www.christies.com provides information on more than 80 sale categories, buying and selling at auction, complete auction results, and Christie's international auction calendar.