

Press Release

For Immediate Release

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CHRISTIE'S

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CHRISTIE'S TO OFFER THE PRIVATE COLLECTION OF THE HON. SIMON SAINSBURY IN JUNE 2008

- The greatest collection of British art and furniture to be offered at auction for a generation
- Highlights include an unprecedented collection of English furniture, one of the finest collections of early English pottery ever assembled, and paintings by Reynolds, Stubbs, Matisse and Signac



Simon Sainsbury – The Creation of an English Arcadia

Wednesday, 18 June 2008

Christie's, 8 King Street, St. James's, London SW1Y 6QT

London - Christie's announce that they will offer the private collection of the Hon. Simon Sainsbury on 18 June 2008 in London. One of Britain's most generous philanthropists and discerning collectors, the late Simon Sainsbury assembled throughout his lifetime one of the finest private British collections of the 20th century which will be offered at a landmark single-owner auction at Christie's on Wednesday 18 June 2008. A further selection of Impressionist paintings from the collection will be offered at the auctions of *Impressionist and Modern Art* on 24 and 25 June 2008. Highlights of the collection include an unprecedented collection of English furniture, one of the finest collections of early English pottery ever assembled and paintings by Sir Joshua Reynolds, George Stubbs, Edgar Degas, Henri Matisse and Paul Signac. Proceeds from the sale will benefit the charity established by Simon Sainsbury in 1965, The Monument Trust.

Charles Cator, Deputy Chairman of Christie's International and Chairman of the International Furniture Department: "*Simon Sainsbury was an exceptional man and a true connoisseur, universally admired and respected by the whole art world. A very private and modest person, Simon was one of the greatest British collectors and most generous philanthropists of the 20th century. Over more than forty years, while masterminding with his two brothers the transformation of the family company that his great-grandfather founded in 1869, as well as establishing one of the most creative and influential charitable trusts in Britain, he assembled a most remarkable collection of English 18th century furniture, early British pottery, British pictures and Impressionist works, all chosen with immense care and understanding for his much loved home in Sussex, where he created an English arcadia. We are honoured to be presenting this very personal collection to international collectors and the public in June 2008 at Christie's in London.*"

ENGLISH FURNITURE

For his early eighteenth century home in Sussex Simon Sainsbury assembled one of the most distinguished collections of English furniture ever to have been formed, much of it acquired at some of Christie's greatest furniture sales over the years. Always conscious of what would be appropriate for the elysian setting he had created, quintessentially English in its understated perfection, he focussed on mid-eighteenth century carved mahogany from the golden age of English cabinet-making, one of the great glories of the English decorative



arts. A galaxy of leading London cabinet-makers is represented, particularly the successful partnership of Mayhew and Ince and most significantly Thomas Chippendale, whose accomplished oeuvre encapsulates so much of what enthused Simon Sainsbury about English furniture. His discerning eye sought pieces that combined elegance and purity of line with lustrous timber and an undisturbed surface, built up over generations of quiet care, almost always allied to an illustrious and romantic provenance. So, many fabled English houses and collections feature – Drayton House, Warwick Castle,

Chevening, West Wycombe Park, Dalkeith Palace, Wentworth Woodhouse, Clumber, Hinton House, Stoke Edith, Hornby Castle and Stoneleigh Abbey, as well as the famous twentieth century collectors who preceded him, all of whom were advised by the eminent connoisseur R.W. Symonds (1889-1958) – J.S. Sykes, Eric Moller and his brother Ralph Moller, Jim Joel, Samuel Messer, whose collection was sold on at Christie's in 1991 for £7.7 million (\$13.6 million), the current record total for a single-owner sale of English furniture, and above all Percival Griffiths, whose celebrated collection is revered by today's collectors. There are five Percival Griffiths' pieces in Simon Sainsbury's collection, including a strongly architectural George II mahogany chest (estimate: £150,000-£250,000) *illustrated above left*; a George II concertina-action card table with an elegantly sinuous profile (estimate: £70,000-£100,000) and an Irish George II mahogany centre table with exceptional colour and carved detail (estimate: £150,000-£250,000). At the Christie's sale of Samuel Messer's collection in 1991 he acquired two of the most admired pieces, a pair of George II mahogany and parcel-gilt torcheres from Campsea Ashe, Suffolk (estimate: £100,000-£150,000) and a late George II mahogany side table, *circa* 1755 (estimate: £200,000-£300,000).

A leading highlight is a pair of early George III mahogany hall chairs attributed to John Linnell from the third quarter of the 18th century, estimated to realise £250,000-£400,000 *illustrated right*. First recorded in the 1795 inventory of Harewood House, the chairs are from a suite of seat furniture closely related to a set at Chatsworth, and



were sold at Christie's London in 1976. A George III amarillo commode attributed to Mayhew and Ince *circa* 1775 is expected to realise £200,000-£300,000 *illustrated left*. Originally supplied to the 9th Earl of Winchilsea and 4th Earl of Nottingham shortly after he had inherited Burley-on-the-Hill in Rutland, the commode boasts ebonised borders and wreath ring handles, both of which are recurrent in the oeuvre of Mayhew and Ince; indeed a letter from Lord Winchilsea to his mother in the winter of 1774 states that '*I have got a number of things from Mayhew. I am sure the house will soon have a more furnished look*'.



Another highlight is a pair of George II mahogany open armchairs attributed to William and John Gordon from the mid-18th century. The chairs are from a suite which was commissioned for Ditton Park, Buckinghamshire by George Brudenell, 4th Earl of Cardigan and his wife, Lady Mary Montagu, heiress of John, 2nd Duke of Montagu. A set of eight chairs in the same model was supplied to the 2nd Duke of Atholl for Blair Castle in 1756 at the cost of £14, and the pair to be offered at Christie's, which is from the well-known Hochschild collection, is expected to realise £150,000-£250,000.

EARLY BRITISH POTTERY

Simon Sainsbury held a great passion for early British tin-glazed pottery and assembled one of the finest private collections ever known, refined over many years of careful and thoughtful pursuit of outstanding examples. He concentrated on English delftware which was introduced to Britain from Holland in the 16th century. The earliest known piece with an English inscription is a dish dated 1600, now in the London Museum. The collection to be offered at Christie's includes approximately 80 lots and includes extremely rare and early



examples of delft Royal Portrait chargers, tankards, jugs, wine bottles and vases, all dating to the 1600s. Presented in remarkable condition, the section is led by a London delft blue-dash polychrome Royal Oak Charger *circa* 1660 whose centre is painted with a manganese-trunked oak tree, the branches of which are capped by crowns (estimate: £80,000-£120,000) *illustrated left*. Further highlights include a London delft blue and white armorial jug dated 1673 (estimate: £40,000-£60,000); a Brislington delft small Royal portrait dish *circa* 1685 decorated by a portrait of James II (estimate: £20,000-£30,000); a London delft cat jug dated 1659 (estimate: £20,000-£30,000) *illustrated right* and a London delft polychrome handwarmer *circa* 1685 (estimate: £20,000-£30,000).



PAINTINGS

Throughout his lifetime, Simon Sainsbury assembled an intimate collection of paintings focussing on over 400 years of British art from 1600 to the present day and a carefully chosen group of Impressionist and Modern pictures. The selection to be offered at Christie's in June includes works by Sir Joshua Reynolds, George Stubbs, Joseph Wright of Derby, Angelica Kauffman, Sir Stanley Spencer, Pierre Bonnard, Edgar Degas, Henri de Toulouse Lautrec, Henri Matisse and Paul Signac, among others. A leading British highlight is *Portrait of William Charles Coby, 3rd Earl Of Portmore (1747-1823), when styled Viscount Milsington, as a boy, half-length, in a grey coat, leaning on a table, with a spaniel pup* by Sir Joshua Reynolds, P.R.A. (1723-1792) which has

been exhibited twice at the Royal Academy (estimate: £200,000-£300,000). *Portrait of three girls, three-quarter length, in green silk dresses, with lace embroidery, holding yellow and white feathered fans* by the Circle of Marcus Gheeraerts II (1561/2-1636) is an intricate early work which is expected to realise £150,000-£250,000 *illustrated right*, and *Thomas Freeman, Lord Clarendon's gamekeeper, with a dog and a shot doe in a wooded river landscape, his gun and hat beside him* by George Stubbs, A.R.A (1724-1806) is closely related to a similar composition from the Mellon Collection recently exhibited at The Royal Academy (estimate: £150,000-£250,000). British art from the 20th Century is highlighted by *The Last Supper* by Sir Stanley Spencer (1891-1959), painted in 1922, which has been widely exhibited, including at the artist's retrospective at The Tate in 1955 (estimate: £120,000-£180,000), and *Under the Hammer* by Robert Polhill Bevan (1865-1925) which was painted in 1914 and is expected to realise £150,000-£250,000.



Further works from the collection will be offered at the auctions of *Impressionist and Modern Art* on 24 and 25



June 2008 including paintings by Bonnard, Vuillard, Fantin-Latour, Toulouse-Lautrec, Degas and Matisse. Leading this section is *Collioure. Les Balancelles*, an early Pointillist picture by Paul Signac (1836-1935) which dates from the height of the artist's interaction with his friend and fellow artist, Georges Seurat (1859-1891) and whose importance is reflected in the extensive range of publications that discussed it soon after its execution in 1887 (estimate: £1,800,000-£2,500,000) *illustrated left*.

Jussi Pylkänen, President of Christie's Europe and Chairman of the International Impressionist and Modern Art Department: "The collection of Impressionist and Modern pictures assembled by Simon Sainsbury's over several decades pay testament to his discerning eye and exceptional taste. 'Collioure. Les Balancelles' by Paul Signac is the leading highlight of the auction in June – a crisp and beautiful work, Signac has carefully judged and juxtaposed each spot of coloured paint with another in order to intensify the vivid, shimmering colours that convey the elements in the picture. We look forward to welcoming collectors from around the world to Christie's in June for what promises to be the highlight of the summer auction season."

Another leading highlight is *Figure assise et le torse grec (la gandoura)* by Henri Matisse (1869-1954), a picture bathed in light and colour that was painted in 1939 and incorporates elements of the North African and Ottoman worlds which fascinated the artist (estimate: £600,000-£800,000). This work will be offered together with a photograph of the artist at the easel painting the picture. Further works to be offered in this sale include *Helène Rouart (Mme. Marin)* by Edgar Degas (1834-1917) (estimate: £400,000-£600,000), *Nature Morte aux Fruits dans le Soleil* by Pierre Bonnard (1867-1947) (estimate: £500,000-£700,000) and *Hortensias Giroflées, Deux Pots de Pensées*, an intricate still-life by Henri Fantin-Latour (1836-1904) which was sold from the Goetz Collection at Christie's New York in 1988 (estimate: £600,000-£800,000).



SIMON SAINSBURY

Simon Sainsbury was born in 1930 and was educated at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge. A keen sportsman, he trained as a chartered accountant before joining the family firm, Sainsbury's, in 1956. In 1969, on the retirement of his uncle Robert, Simon Sainsbury was appointed Deputy Chairman of the company, while his brother John became Chairman. Simon masterminded the flotation of the firm in 1973, which was described at the time as *'the sale of the century'*; share applications closed after just one minute and by 1992, the company had a turnover of more than £9 billion. Simon Sainsbury became one of Britain's most thoughtful, generous and private philanthropists. He was a Trustee of The Wallace Collection from 1977 to 1997, and its Chairman from 1992 to 1997, and a Trustee of The National Gallery from 1991 to 1998. Simon Sainsbury masterminded the building of the *Sainsbury Wing* at The National Gallery, which opened in 1991, donated by Simon and his two brothers, Lord Sainsbury of Preston Candover K.G. and the Hon. Sir Timothy Sainsbury. Beneficiaries of his generosity include the British Museum, The National Gallery, The Tate, The Victoria and Albert Museum, The Royal Academy, the Fitzwilliam Museum, Christ Church Spitalfields and The Landmark Trust, among countless others. In October 2007, it was announced that 18 paintings from the collection of Simon Sainsbury had been left to the Tate and the National Gallery in what was described by Sir Nicholas Serota as one of the most important bequests to come to the nation in the last 100 years. The entire bequest will be exhibited at Tate Britain in July 2008.

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Images available on request
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- *The Collection of Simon Sainsbury* will be on public view at Christie's, 8 King Street, St. James's, London SW1Y 6QT from 13 to 18 June 2008. For general enquiries, contact Christie's on +44 (0)207 839 9060 or visit www.christies.com

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 a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. Founded in 1766 by James Christie, Christie's conducted the greatest auctions of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, and 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, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, 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 in 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 and new markets such as Russia, China, India and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Mumbai and Dubai.