

For Immediate Release

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CHRISTIE'S TO SELL OUTSTANDING ART DECO COLLECTION Exceptional Private Collection Expected to Fetch Around €15 Million

Art Deco

Thursday, 8 June 2006

Christie's Paris



Paris – One of the most exceptional private collections of Art Deco furniture and *objets d'art*, many of museum-quality, together with modern and contemporary paintings and sculpture, will be offered in a spectacular two-day sale at Christie's Paris on Thursday 8 and Friday 9 June 2006. The collection was formed over a 25 year period and consists of works by iconic Art Deco artists, including many exemplary masterpieces. It is expected to realize in excess of €15 million.

The inspirational collection is made up of over 250 Art Deco works including many emblematic pieces by such highly talented and respected names as **Rembrandt Bugatti, Edgar Brandt, Pierre Chareau, Albert Cheuret, Daum, Dominique, Jean Dunand, Paul Dupré Lafon, René Lalique, Pierre Legrain, Jules Leleu, André Groult, Léon Indenbaum, Paul Iribe, Paul Jouve, Jean Mayodon, Eugène Printz, Armand-Albert Rateau, Emile-Jacques Ruhlmann, Louis Süe and André Mare.**

Among the highlights is the unique double-sided screen, *l'Oasis* by Edgar Brandt, first exhibited in 1924 (estimate: €1,000,000-2,000,000). This masterpiece of metalwork incorporates various contemporary influences including Art Deco stylized flowers reflecting the impact of motifs found in

Chinese fabrics. The tropical leaves evoke the art and culture of French colonial Africa, while the tendency towards geometric abstraction calls to mind the influence of Cubism.

This collection provides the rare opportunity to admire a breathtaking range of masterpieces by one of the most individualistic and rarefied designers of his era, Armand-Albert Rateau. He occupied a singular position within the Art Deco movement, introducing distinct and fresh ideas on ornamentation that went against the trend towards simplified surfaces and structure. The examples in the collection illustrate his *oeuvre* in magisterial fashion with an exceptional selection of his works in bronze – the most coveted aspect of his production. Inspired by his close observations of nature and by the revisiting of furniture forms from antiquity, Rateau draws us into a subtle and refined world of the imagination in his sculptural pieces always characterised by rational structure and faultless proportions. His low table *aux oiseaux* (estimate: €400,000-600,000) and his armchair *aux poissons* (estimate: €700,000-900,000), both created for the Blumenthals, a wealthy American collector couple he met in 1919, reveal his early mastery. The armchair, conceived on a marine theme, is inspired by an ancient curule seat and is a technical masterpiece in its use of a mesh of loose-linked stylised bronze fish. Other examples include a splendid pair of chased and gilt bronze *jardinières* with an openwork design of daisies (estimate: €700,000-900,000), an enchanting dressing table of around 1920 in bronze, patinated green after the antique, with a black marble top outlined in white (estimate €500,000-700,000), two floor lights *aux oiseaux* in bronze and alabaster (estimate: €400,000-600,000), as well as side tables, an ashtray *aux papillons* and a pair of table lights among other delights.

Emile-Jacques Ruhlmann is probably the best known *ébéniste-ensemblier* from the 1920s and early 1930s. The range and quality of his art is well demonstrated in the collection through a selection of top quality pieces that include one of his earliest masterpieces, the spectacular corner cabinet designed in 1916, veneered in amaranth and inlaid in ivory with a sumptuous stylised bouquet (estimate: €400,000-600,000), a *chiffonier Abbé*, completed in June 1925 from a 1922 design, in macassar ebony and ivory, (€250,000-350,000), a *bureau cylindre 'Boudoir de collectionneur'* from 1925 with its chair (estimate: €300,000-400,000), as well as a *meuble d'appui triplan*, a design from 1920, the top inlaid with an ivory mat (€300,000-500,000). This group is complemented by a magnificent table lamp from 1925 in silvered bronze with a hemispherical shade hung with a curtain of glass beads (estimate: €180,000-220,000), and a floor lamp from 1920-25 (estimate €150,000-200,000).

A number of splendid animals on lacquer panels appear to quietly survey the assembled treasures. Jean Dunand is their author and the sale includes the finest examples of his art. A panel *aux félins s'abreuvant* belonged to celebrated couturier Madeleine Vionnet in the 1920s (estimate: €100,000-150,000). The folding screen *aux animaux fantastiques* from 1926 is the result of a collaboration between Dunand and the Polish artist Jean Lambert-Rucki (estimate: €200,000-300,000) as is a striking life-size, full-length portrait of Josephine Baker (estimate: €200,000-300,000). Numerous vases, objects and eggshell lacquer tables by Dunand also feature in the sale.

A console executed in 1925 by Albert Cheuret (estimate: €140,000-160,000) is another remarkable piece. The shaped marble top is supported by a pair of herons modelled in full relief and patinated a deep green. The sale also includes a number of inventive bronze and alabaster light fittings by Cheuret. Pierre Legrain is represented in the collection by a small carved wood stool of African

inspiration, a piece of the utmost refinement that came from the collection of Jeanne Tachard (estimate: €400,000-600,000).

Other highlights include a commode in green galuchat, malachite and silvered bronze by André Groult (estimate: €250,000-350,000) and an exquisite *bonheur du jour* cabinet in pale cream-green galuchat and ebony by Paul Iribe (estimate: €400,000-600,000) which bear further witness to the creativity and technical invention of the great designer-decorators of the era.

Modern & Contemporary Art

Friday, 9 June 2006

Christie's Paris



This second part of the auction, to be held on Friday 9 June 2006, comprises monumental sculpture and figurative paintings. Notable among the modern works are paintings by **Kees van Dongen**, **Marc Chagall**, **Oscar Dominguez**, **Moïse Kisling**, **Tamara de Lempicka**, **Jean Metzinger**, **Francis Picabia**, and sculptures by **Emile-Antoine Bourdelle**, **Joseph Csaky**, **Salvador Dalí**, **Max Ernst**, **Jacques Lipchitz**, **Chana Orloff**, **Ossip Zadkine**, **Renoir** and **Guino**. Highlights of the contemporary section include works by **Botéro**, **César**, **Niki de Saint Phalle**, **Arman**, **Atlan**, **Hélión**, **Robert Combas**, **Alecos Fassianos** and **François-Xavier Lalanne**.

Lailla by Kees van Dongen is an audacious work, painted at the peak of the artist's Fauve period in 1908 (estimate upon request). Bold and sensuous, the heavily textured, painterly surface and the adventurous use of color shows Fauvism at its most vibrant. *Lailla* ranks amongst van Dongen's greatest nudes not only of this period, but of his entire career. The work shows an artist who was fully aware of the radical potential both of his subject matter and of his artistic style. While Fauvism as a general trend was petering out by the time *Lailla* was painted, van Dongen was almost alone in finding a new tack creating increasingly strong paintings in his own unique Fauvist manner. Also included in this sale is the artist's *Femme aux fleurs* (estimate: €350,000-550,000). In striking contrast to the 'femme fatale' *Lailla*, here the sitter's angelic gaze is presented amid a flurry of flowers evoking the gaiety of the *années folles*.

In *Les Souvenirs*, 1971 (estimate: €500,000-700,000) Marc Chagall illustrates once again the force of his imagination. The figures surrounding the artist are the almost mythological characters that are such a

distinct feature of his work. Elements of love, the farm and the magical come alive here, as a rapturous vision.

Chana Orloff has created with her skilled hands voluminous, almost geometrical sculptures: cylindrical chests, shaped legs, spherical heads. Among her bronzes, *L'Homme à la pipe* (*Portrait du peintre Widhoff*), 1924, (estimate: €30,000-50,000) is famous for its corpulent body rendered with humor and artistry. Other bronzes by Orloff included are *L'accordéoniste* (estimate: €30,000-50,000) and *Femme à l'éventail* (estimation: €40,000-60,000).

In the contemporary section is an important suite of three paintings by Jean Hélion, including *Sous un Parapluie gris*, 1946 (estimate: €120,000-180,000), and *Nu accoudé*, 1948 (estimate: €100,000-150,000). It was during these years that the nude figure played the most important role in Hélion's work: "It is the theme that inspires me the most", he said in 1948.

Two important paintings by the Colombian artist Fernando Botéro are offered, *Le Patron*, 1963 (estimate: €180,000–250,000), and *Les musiciens*, 1983 (estimate: €400,000-500,000), as well as an important bronze, *Nu allongé à la cigarette* (estimate: €350,000–450,000), which is characteristic of his style, marked by the roundness of his figures.

Also included in the sale is a superb *Nana serpent* by Niki de Saint-Phalle (estimate: €150,000-200,000) a well-known theme for the artist, celebrating the apotheosis of woman, as well as a very beautiful set of bronzes by César including *Le Pouce* (estimate: €100,000-150,000), *La Vénus de Villetaneuse* (estimate: €80,000-120,000), and *La poule à limes* (estimate: €80,000-120,000).

Notes to Editors:

Viewing:

Dubai	21 and 22 March 2006
Los Angeles	4 - 7 April 2006
New York	28 April – 2 May 2006
Paris	3, 6 and 7 June 2006

Sale:

Art Deco - Thursday 8th June 2006 - 3pm & 7pm

Modern and Contemporary Art - Friday 9th June 2006 – 5pm

Christie's Paris, 9 avenue Matignon, 75008 Paris

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Images available on request

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