

For Immediate Release

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SPOIL YOUR GARDEN THIS SPRING

Garden Ornaments and Architectural Elements to be offered at Christie's during the RHS Chelsea Flower Show

Elements: The Property of Michael Roberts

Christie's South Kensington

23 May 2007 at 2pm



South Kensington – A wide array of predominantly English garden ornaments and architectural elements from the 16th to early 20th century will be offered at Christie's South Kensington's sale *Elements: The Property of Michael Roberts* on Wednesday, 23 May 2007. This is the second of two auctions of Michael Roberts' collection, with the first taking place in 2004. Coinciding with the second day of the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, the sale presents a wonderful opportunity for both collectors and gardening enthusiasts to acquire a focal piece to decorate their garden and living space. Around 250 lots ranging from magnificent sculptures, garden seats, decorative urns and vases to sundials, fountains, lighting, chimneypieces and fireplace furniture will be offered, with

estimates ranging from £200 to £20,000. The sale is expected to realise around £500,000. In addition, an exhibition of exquisite 18th century Chelsea porcelain will be held at Christie's South Kensington from 22 to 26 May 2007, during the week of the RHS Chelsea Flower Show.

Stoneware features prominently in the sale and includes increasingly rare examples of Coade stone. Eleanor Coade produced 'artificial stone' from a site on the Thames in Lambeth now occupied by the Royal Festival Hall. Examples include a delightful pair of large ovoid urn finials, (estimate: £20,000-30,000) which would have been used by the great architects of the late Georgian period from Robert Adam to Sir John Soane, as well as a Coade stone figure of Flora, by Rossi, early 19th century (estimate £8,000-12,000), a Coade stone plaque of architecture, late 18th century (estimate £7,000-10,000) and a large heraldic lion fragment (estimate £5,000-8,000)



A good section of 19th century terracottas also feature. Terracotta was revived as an architectural element during the mid-19th century. Assisted by the end of a tax on bricks and promoted by the Great Exhibition in 1851, a number of small firms sprung up to fulfil this terracotta demand. Highlights from the sale include a set of four terracotta urns by Mark Henry Blanchard, mid 19th century (estimate £8,000-12,000) and a terracotta figure of Juno, beautifully modelled by John Marriot Blashfield, mid 19th century (estimate £4,000-6,000) (see previous page). Later examples include a pair of terracotta urns, designed and manufactured by Liberty, in the style of Archibald Knox, late 19th century (estimate £3,000-5,000) and a Compton Pottery terracotta sundial and pedestal, early 20th century (estimate: £1,500-2,000) fashioned by arts and crafts exponent Mary Watts, wife of the celebrated painter G.F. Watts.



One of the stars of the sale is a rare large white marble cistern, circa 1800, in the *antique* manner (estimate: £20,000-30,000) alongside a smaller Italian *rosso Verona* marble cistern, dating from 1633 (estimate: £4,000-6,000). A selection of marble chimneypieces mainly from the 19th century also feature with estimates ranging from £1,000 to £8,000 together with an extraordinary large steel and iron firegrate in the Adam manner, probably by Elsley, *circa* 1880 (estimate: £10,000-15,000).



The sale will also offer a pair of two rare lead figures of cherubs by the Bromsgrove Guild, 1905 (estimate: £8,000-2,000), made from a design by Louis Weingartner. Smaller models feature on the main lock of the gates at Buckingham Palace in addition to similar-sized gilt bronze models found on top of piers at the Canada Gate entrance. Among the collection of lighting featured are five pairs of amazing Gothic-revival lanterns, from King's College, Cambridge, *circa* 1840 (estimate £8,000-12,000 for each pair).

Michael Roberts interest in garden and architectural elements grew from salvaging pieces from building sites; one of his first jobs was working for a local builder after graduating in geology. His knowledge of the materials used in architecture and garden ornaments, and his delight in the chase and acquisition of an object, led to a flourishing business where he established himself as a market leader in his field. Following a period of travel after the Christie's sale in 2004, Michael Roberts has changed direction of his business and is now focusing on restoring buildings across Europe.

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Images available on request
Visit Christie's website at www.christies.com

Exhibition of Chelsea Porcelain to be held at Christie's South Kensington from 22-26 May, during the week of the RHS Chelsea Flower Show

An exhibition devoted to exquisite 18th century **Chelsea porcelain** will be held at Christie's South Kensington from 22 to 26 May 2007, during the week of the RHS Chelsea Flower Show. This is a unique opportunity to see wonderful pieces of Chelsea porcelain from collections which have rarely been viewed by the public before, with many examples being lent from the families of the original purchasers of the wares in the 18th century.

The Chelsea porcelain factory was founded by the Huguenot silversmith Nicholas Sprimont in 1744. The factory moved to purpose-built premise in Chelsea in around 1749, to what is now Lawrence Street. The location was also conveniently close to the pleasure gardens at Ranelagh where Sprimont and his team of artists created porcelain fantasies that captured the imagination of Royalty, the aristocracy and rich patrons. Inspired by Meissen porcelain, Chelsea became famous for its botanical decorations when bouquets of blooming roses, scattered butterflies and insects appear on the creamy white porcelain. All the examples that will be on display reflect the charm and elegance of this 18th century factory.

CHRISTIE'S SOUTH KENSINGTON

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Nearest Underground: South Kensington

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Opening Hours: Monday: 9am–7.30pm, Tuesday – Friday: 9am–5pm

Weekends: 10am–4pm

About Christie's South Kensington

Christie's South Kensington is open seven days a week with monthly sales for the home on Sundays. Throughout 2007, Christie's South Kensington will hold 22 weeks of Interior Sales which bundle together all the regular home furnishing auctions over one week in the single easy, magazine-style catalogue.

The UK's busiest auction house, Christie's South Kensington offers more sales in more categories than any other auction house. Prices range from £200 to over £20,000, with the average price at just under £1,000. For those contemplating selling, Christie's expertise is also available 7 days a week, free of charge, at the Valuation Counter to advise you on the current market value for your works of art.

Established in 1975 on the Old Brompton Road, Christie's South Kensington offers over 50,000 objects a year including works of art, furniture, paintings, prints and drawings, glass, ceramics, lighting, modern design, fashion, jewellery and silver. There is something for everyone and all you need to decorate your home or start a collection.