

**For Immediate Release**

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**SELECTED WORKS FROM  
THE COLLECTION OF THE KNIGHT OF GLIN  
TO BE OFFERED AT CHRISTIE'S IN MAY**

**GLIN CASTLE - A Knight in Ireland**

**Auction: Thursday, 7 May 2009 at 10.30am**

**London** – Christie's announce the auction of *Glin Castle; A Knight in Ireland* on 7 May 2009 at Christie's in London. The sale will offer selected works from the personal collection of Desmond FitzGerald, 29<sup>th</sup> Knight of Glin, the renowned collector, scholar and a leading campaigner for the conservation of Irish heritage. The pre-sale exhibition will present the works from the sale of *Glin Castle - a Knight in Ireland* alongside works from the auction of *Irish and Sporting Art* on 8 May, and will be on public view from 30 April to 1 May and 5 to 6 May 2009 at Christie's, 8 King Street, St. James's, London. Highlights will be on view at the Merrion Hotel, Dublin, from 22 to 24 April 2009.

Desmond FitzGerald, 29<sup>th</sup> Knight of Glin: "*Glin has been the ancestral property of my family for over 700 years, and it is my greatest hope that it will continue to remain in the family and be enjoyed and cherished long into the future. The collection to be offered at Christie's is mostly works which I have acquired throughout my life, and I hope that the proceeds of this sale can safeguard the future of Glin for generations to come, and ensure that the Castle retains the historical character for which it is so widely appreciated.*"



The collection offers a broad selection of paintings, furniture, ceramics, silver and works of art, and is led by *Dolbarden Castle, Llanberis with early morning mists dispersing*, a landscape by the greatest of 18<sup>th</sup> century Irish painters and founding member of the Royal Academy, George Barrett, R.A. (1728/32-1784) (estimate: £80,000 to £120,000). *The east and west prospect of the Gant's causeway, Co. Antrim* by Susannah Drury (fl. circa 1733 – circa 1776), an artist whose

life is little known, but who was influential in the development of Irish landscape painting, is expected to realise £20,000 to £30,000; and *Portrait of a lady, three-quarter-length, seated, in a blue dress and a straw hat, holding a rose* by James Latham (1696-1747), the greatest Irish portraitist of the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, carries an estimate of £10,000 to £15,000. The auction will offer four views by William Turner de Lond (fl. *circa* 1820 - *circa* 1837), including *The Market Place and Court House, Ennis, Co. Clare*, 1820 (estimate: £30,000 to £50,000) and *A View from Bank Place, Limerick* (estimate: £25,000 to £35,000).



The Knight of Glin is perhaps best known for his pioneering research into Irish decorative arts – culminating in his recent publication on Irish Furniture, 2007. The highlights of the furniture collection at Glin – many of them used to illustrate the seminal publication on the subject – are included in the sale, with rare labelled examples by the Jackson Brothers, the del Vecchios and the Bookers. Alongside these is a George II marble top table acquired through Christopher Gibbs from the late Hon. Simon Sainsbury, whose private collection was sold at Christie's in London in June 2008 for £27.1 million / €34.1 million (estimate: £30,000 to £50,000). An important Irish George II bureau bookcase, *circa* 1750, supplied to George St. George of Woodsgift,

Co. Kilkenny, carries an estimate of £70,000 to £100,000; an Irish George II mahogany side table with characteristic lion mask, *circa* 1760, is expected to realise £50,000 to £80,000; and a George II giltwood mirror by John Booker, *circa* 1750, carries an estimate of £40,000 to £60,000.

Further highlights of the collection include a pair of Dublin delft polychrome flower-holders, *circa* 1759, perhaps World's End pottery, Mary Delamain's factory (estimate: £8,000 to £12,000) from Birr Castle; a set of four George



III silver entrée dishes and covers with wild boar crested handles, mark of Robert Garrard, London, 1813, and bearing the arms of FitzGerald (estimate: £6,000 to £8,000); and a pair of Irish silver-footed salvers, Dublin, *circa* 1745, awarded to Richard FitzGerald in the 1740s as racing trophies when his horse Sterling featured at the races in Clogheen (estimate: £10,000 – 15,000).

Desmond FitzGerald, 29<sup>th</sup> Knight of Glin, is a scholar of international standing and is a leading campaigner for the conservation of Ireland's architectural heritage. The Knight studied at Harvard University and worked for eleven years as a curator at the Furniture Department of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. He is a governor of the National Gallery of Ireland,

President of the Irish Georgian Society, and sits on the boards of the Irish Heritage Trust, the Irish Landmark Trust and the Castletown Foundation. Recently, he was elected a member of the Royal Irish Academy (MRIA). He has written some of the definitive reference books relating to Irish art and furniture, including *Irish Portraits*, *Ireland's Painters*, published by Yale University Press, and *The Watercolours of Ireland* (all co-written by Anne Crookshank), and very recently, he completed a pioneering work on Irish furniture published by Yale University Press (co-written with James Peill).

Glin sits on the banks of the River Shannon in County Limerick, and has been home to the FitzGeralds since the early 14<sup>th</sup> century when they were granted the lands by their Desmond overlords. The first castle was built *circa* 1250, and the family have safeguarded their lands through many challenging times, including the Elizabethan, Cromwellian and Jacobite Wars. In July 1600, during the Nine Years War, the old Glin Castle was besieged by the English, led by Sir George Carew. The English captured the Knight's six year old son and tied him to a cannon, threatening to blow him to pieces unless the Knight surrendered, and he is reputed to have replied that he was virile and his wife strong, and it would be easy to produce another son. The ruins of old Glin Castle can be seen to this day in the village of Glin.



The present castle was built in the 1790s and is one of Ireland's great heritage houses. It still contains a wonderful collection of 18<sup>th</sup> century Irish art, furniture and ceramics. During the lifetime of Desmond FitzGerald, 29<sup>th</sup> Knight of Glin, the hereditary collection has been complimented by his own, which has been described by Professor Roy Forster as '*a gazetteer of Irish life*'. Guests at the Castle during Desmond's

tenure have included Mick Jagger, Marianne Faithful and Mrs Lyndon Johnson, the widow of the late President of the United States.

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- The auction of *Irish and Sporting Art* will take place on 8 May 2009 and will be led by a stellar portrait of *Count John McCormack*, 1923, by Sir William Orpen RA, R.H.A (1878-1931) (estimate: £400,000 to £600,000). A work with exceptional provenance, it is offered fresh to the market having been acquired directly from the artist by the sitter, when both men were at the pinnacle of their careers, and has since passed by descent to his grandson, Count John McCormack. The large scale of this arresting painting (127cm x 102cm) reflects the international stature of the sitter, John McCormack (1884-1945), who was perhaps the greatest lyric tenor of the 20th Century and whose musical legacy is cherished to this day. A true celebration of excellence, this painting's rich combination of an exemplary Irish artist, sitter and provenance provide an outstanding, once in a lifetime, opportunity for international collectors and institutions.