

For Immediate Release

March 4, 2005

Contact: Sara Fox 212.636.2680 sfox@christies.com

SENSATIONAL STRAD AND CAPTIVATING CELLO AT CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK

'Such violins never come into the saleroom nor are they offered publicly in any way'
Arthur F. Hill commenting on *The Lady Tennant* violin, 1900

**Fine Musical Instruments
April 22, 2005**

New York — Christie's New York sale of Fine Musical Instruments on Friday April 22, 2005 features two of the finest and rarest instruments to come to market in America in the last five years; an important Stradivari violin and a cello by Matteo Goffriller. The sale in its entirety includes over 180 lots and is expected to realize between \$1.8 and \$2.7 million.

Created in 1699 when Antonio Stradivari was 55 years old, *The Lady Tennant* violin (estimate: \$800,000-1,200,000) illustrates the hallmarks of Stradivari's emerging *Golden Period* style. An exciting and significant prospect for discerning collectors and musical virtuosi across the world, the violin has a wonderfully rich provenance and bears the label *Antonius Stradinarius Cremonensis / Faciebat Anno 1699*.

The earliest record of ownership was by the celebrated French violinist Charles Philippe Lafont, a contemporary and rival of Nicolo Paganini. After his death in 1839 the violin passed to the London dealers W. E. Hill and Sons, who made note of the instrument's importance in their seminal work titled *Antonio Stradivari, His Life and Work*. In 1900 Arthur F. Hill sold the violin to Scottish industrialist Sir Charles Tennant, who presented it to his new wife, an amateur violinist, Marguerite Miles. The violin from then on would be known as *The Lady Tennant*.

On the 17th of March 1900 Arthur Hill wrote in a letter to Lady Tennant while delivering the violin to her residence at 40 Grosvenor Square, “.....*though you may perhaps see a Strad that you may be told is of a different period or more attractive, you cannot get one in the very perfect state that this instrument is. Such violins never come into the saleroom nor are they offered publicly in any way.*”

By 1937 the violin was in the collection of dealer and connoisseur Max Moller of Amsterdam. In that same year it was included in the Cremona exhibition celebrating the bicentennial of Stradivari. Subsequently Moller sold the violin to the collector and philanthropist, Doctor Bernhard Sprengel of Hannover, and for the last twenty-four years the violin has been in the possession of a private collector.

Another exciting highlight of the sale is a superb cello by Matteo Goffriller of Venice made in 1701 (estimate: \$400,000-600,000). It boasts strong provenance, is fresh to the market and is an excellent player's instrument. An example of Matteo Goffriller's immaculate craftsmanship, the cello has been the primary concert instrument of a professional cellist since 1948.

The Goffriller cello was sold in 1932 to Russell Kingman, a wealthy industrialist, and amateur cellist of distinction, and former president of both the United States Lawn Tennis Association and the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra. Kingman held a close friendship with Emmanuel Feuermann, one of the most famous cellists of the 20th century, and it is likely that Feuermann played the Goffriller cello.

Auction:	Musical Instruments	April 22 at 10 a.m.
Viewing:	Christie's Galleries at Rockefeller Center	April 16 - 21

More information about Christie's sales of *Musical Instruments* can be found on www.christies.com. All lots from upcoming sales 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.

#

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