

For Immediate Release

April 15, 2008

Contact: Sung-Hee Park

212.636.2680

spark@christies.com

**DORIS DUKE'S MILLION DOLLAR RUG LEADS
CHRISTIE'S RUGS & CARPETS SPRING SALE**



“No more exquisite harmony was ever realized in any Persian Rug.”

- Aurthur Upham Pope, *A Survey of Persian Art*

Rugs and Carpets

June 3, 2008

New York – Christie's New York is pleased to announce its Spring 2008 auction of *Rugs and Carpets* on June 3. The sale will be led by a gorgeous silk Isfahan rug from Central Persia, circa 1600, from The Doris Duke Collection and the Newport Restoration Foundation (estimate: \$1,000,000-1,500,000). Also on offer will be ten more rugs and carpets from The Doris Duke Collection with estimates ranging from \$3,000 to \$180,000. The proceeds of the sale will benefit the Collections and Conservation Fund of the Newport Restoration Foundation. The sale is expected to realize in excess of \$2 million.

The Rug

Woven in Isfahan during the reign of Shah Abbas I (1587-1629), the rug measures approximately 7' 7" x 5' 7" inches. Its brilliant quality is established through the subtle use of fourteen shades of color - an important contrast from the eight to ten shades that is typical of fine oriental rugs. The light hues are complemented by the sapphire blue, scarlet and green areas that radiate throughout the rug.

Adding to the tonal effect is the formal composition of the rug. The overall motif is achieved through a system of scrolling floral vinery and arabesques, each with its own personality and destination. The central walnut medallion and triple border frame the energy that exudes from the lively field. Isfahan and similar, but later, "Polonaise" rugs were frequently given as diplomatic gifts to heads of state by the Safavid Shahs of the late 16th and 17th century. The present rug, however, is far finer and more exquisitely drawn than almost all "Polonaise" rugs.

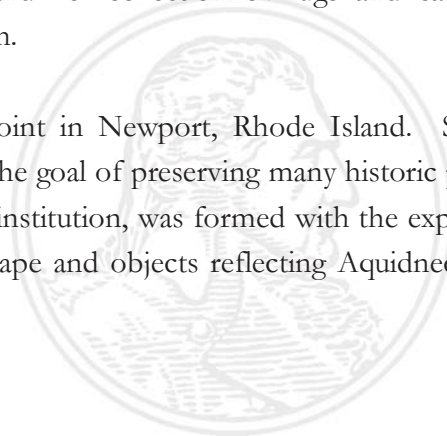
Provenance

Grace Rainey-Rogers was one of a number of discerning American collectors of Islamic Art in the earlier 20th century. She lent a number of items to the groundbreaking Exhibition of Persian Art held at the Royal Academy in London in 1931 under the patronage of HIM the Shah of Iran. The curator of that exhibition, Arthur Upham Pope, as a result of its success, published his six-volume magnum opus *A Survey of Persian Art* in 1938 in which this rug is one of the very few reproduced in color. In his description of it, describing in particular the color, he includes the sentence, "No more exquisite harmony was ever realized in any Persian Rug." Over the last century, this rug has been regarded as one of the most impressive creations of Safavid Persian looms. Since Grace Rainey Rogers, it has continued to have an illustrious provenance, passing to Hagop Kevorkian in 1943 and then to Doris Duke in 1990.

Doris Duke and The Newport Restoration Foundation

Doris Duke (1912-1993) was an American heiress and philanthropist. An extraordinary woman living in an extraordinary era, Doris Duke's life reflected her exquisite taste, limitless passion and total commitment in all its aspects. No area of interest was unexplored. The fascinating field of Oriental and Islamic Art was no exception and her collection of rugs and carpets shows an extremely knowledgeable and dedicated approach.

Doris Duke spent her childhood at Rough Point in Newport, Rhode Island. She created the Newport Restoration Foundation in 1968 with the goal of preserving many historic properties. The Newport Restoration Foundation, a non-profit institution, was formed with the express purpose of preserving, interpreting, and maintaining landscape and objects reflecting Aquidneck Island's 18th



and 19th century architectural culture. The foundation continues to be actively engaged in educational efforts, scholarly research and historical preservation.

Auction: Fine Rugs & Carpets

Viewing: Christie's Rockefeller Galleries

June 3

May 30- June 2

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.

*Estimates do not include buyer's premium

#

Images available on request

Visit Christie's Web site at www.christies.com

