

For Immediate Release

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A YOUNG PRINCE AND NELSON'S MISTRESS
Remarkable British Works to be Offered at Christie's in June



English School, *circa 1547-9, King Edward VI*
(estimate: £400,000-600,000)



George Romney, *Portrait of Lady Hamilton as a Bacchante*
(estimate: £300,000-500,000)

Important British and Irish Art Evening Sale

9 June 2004

London – A remarkable portrait of King Edward VI which has been in the same family for over 400 years is one of the highlights of Christie's **Important British and Irish Art Evening Sale on 9 June 2004**. One of George Romney's most important portraits of Lady Hamilton, the artist's great muse and celebrated mistress of Horatio, Lord Nelson is a further highlight. Intriguing and romantic Pre-Raphaelite works from the John H. Schaeffer Collection will also be offered together with portraits by Gainsborough and Zoffany from the Estate of Mary, Viscountess Eccles.

Portrait of Emma Hart, Lady Hamilton as a Dancing Bacchante by George Romney (1734-1802) (estimate: £300,000-500,000) is considered to be one of his most important portraits of Nelson's mistress. A celebrated beauty, Emma Hamilton captivated Romney who first met her in 1782 and over the next nine years he immortalised her in many different guises, creating some of his most famous paintings. Offered from a private Swedish collection where it has been for the last twenty-five years, the picture

dates from 1791 when Emma briefly returned to London from Naples, spurring Romney into beginning a new series of portraits of her.

Emma fell in love with Nelson after the Battle of the Nile (1798), when she and her husband William Hamilton, the British Ambassador at Naples, offered the wounded victor hospitality. Emma and Nelson returned to England in 1800 where a daughter was born. The affair was an international scandal, but it enhanced Nelson's reputation as a romantic hero. At his death, in 1805, Nelson entrusted Emma's care to the nation, but this was ignored by the government. She died a pauper in France in 1813.

The tragic life of King Edward VI (1537-1553), the only, and much longed for, son of Henry VIII (by his third wife Jane Seymour), was cut short when the frail young man died at 15 years old, possibly from a combination of tuberculosis and the measles. During his brief reign, Edward demonstrated impressive piety and intelligence and had he lived into manhood, he potentially could have become one of England's greatest kings. Crowned King of England at the tender age of 9 years old, this portrait depicts the young King aged about 11 years old (estimate: £400,000-600,000) and relates closely to the Royal Collection portrait at Windsor Castle. Until recently the portrait hung in the main gallery at Loseley House in Surrey and had been passed down through the family. It is likely that the portrait was acquired by Sir Christopher Moore's son, Sir William Moore, one of Queen Elizabeth I's most trusted advisers, who built Loseley House between 1562 and 1568.

The John H. Schaeffer Collection

Beautiful and poetic pre-Raphaelite works by Burne-Jones, Burton, Strudwick and Rossetti are among highlights to be offered from the John H. Schaeffer Collection. Frederick William Burton's (1816-1900) *The Child Miranda*, 1864 (estimate: £200,000-300,000) is a celebration of beauty and innocence of youth and a prime example of his most Pre-Raphaelite phase. Medieval and mythical subjects were much favoured by Sir Edward Coley Burne-Jones (1833-1898) and are depicted in the two paintings, *The Pilgrim at the Garden of Idleness* (estimate: £120,000-180,000) and *An Angel Playing a Flageolet* (estimate: £70,000-100,000).

John Melhuish Strudwick's (1849-1937), *The Ten Virgins* (estimate: £100,000-150,000) illustrates the famous parable recorded in St Matthew's Gospel and is characteristic of his mature style. *Study of Alexa Wilding*, 1873 (estimate: £80,000-100,000) by Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882) depicts one of the artist's favourite models who posed for many of his most important works in the 1860s and 1870s. A further work by Rossetti, *Portrait of Christina Rossetti*, 1877 (estimate: £60,000-80,000) is a sensitive portrait of his sister, the poet Christina Rossetti, who also modelled for him.

The Eccles Collection

From the Estate of Mary, Viscountess Eccles is a superb collection of British portraits including the enchanting *The Misses Garrick by the Thames at Hampton* by Johann Zoffany (1733-1810) which shows

the nieces, Arabella and Katherine, of the celebrated actor, David Garrick (estimate: £250,000-350,000). It is one of four scenes of the Garrick household that the young Zoffany painted in 1762 and originally hung in the dining room of the Adelphi, Garrick's townhouse in London. Also offered is the elegant portrait by Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788) of *Captain John Stanley* in military uniform which was painted when the artist after the artist had moved from Bath to London (estimate: £80,000-120,000).

A beautiful watercolour by Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775-1851), *Oberhofen on Lake Thun, Switzerland* (estimate: £200,000-300,000) is a further sale highlight. Inspired by the sublime Swiss landscape, this superb work was painted during one of his last trips to Switzerland in the mid-1840s and is a wonderfully atmospheric example in his late style. The painting is one of the most highly worked of Turner's late studies, with contrasting use of washes and precise penwork. Arguably Turner's late Swiss views constitute his loveliest landscapes in watercolour. With its skilful composition of the boat and figures and beautifully described architecture, as well as the profound blues of lake and hills, this work sums up the sure touch, subtlety and overall mastery of his late style.

Another highlight is Philip Mercier's (*circa* 1689-1760) seductive composition, *Woman taking off her stocking* (estimate: £50,000-70,000). Mercier, like Zoffany, made his reputation and fortune in England where he was appointed Principal Portrait Painter to Frederick, Prince of Wales. Exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1889, Edmund Blair Leighton's (1853-1922) *Fame* (estimate: £250,000-350,000) takes the viewer back to an idealised version of medieval England. The picture offers a subtle commentary on the fleeting nature of fame with an elderly harpist sitting silent and dejected, whilst a young protégé entertains the king. Embodying feminine qualities attributed to the classical age: beauty, poise and sedate intelligence, *A Pompeian Garden* by John William Godward (1861-1922) (estimate: £200,000-300,000) is a superb example of his images of beautiful maidens set in ancient Rome or Greece.

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Images available on request

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Christie's is market leader of the international British Art market. 2003 was a record breaking year with sales totalling £64.5 million; the highest yearly total ever achieved by Christie's in this category. Christie's holds sales of British & Irish Art sales at South Kensington and King Street throughout the year. Christie's retains the auction record for the highest sale total of Victorian Art of just under £17 million (\$27 million) which was established in February 2003 for *The Forbes Collection of Victorian Pictures and Works of Art*, which set 65 new world auction records. In June 2000, Christie's set the auction record for the highest price ever paid for a Victorian picture when John William Waterhouse's *St. Cecilia* sold for £6.6 million.

Notes to Editors:

British Art Week 3-11 June 2004

British Art on Paper including Victorian Watercolours from the Albert Dawson Charitable Trust, 3 June 2004

20th Century British and Irish Art, 4 June

Important British and Irish Art, Evening Sale, 9 June

British Pictures 1500-1850, 11 June

Victorian Pictures including the John H. Schaeffer Collection of New British Sculpture, 11 June

Lectures

Filling the tasteful Gap: Victorian Watercolours from the Albert Dawson Collection.

A lecture by Stephen Calloway, curator at the Victoria and Albert Museum, historian of Interiors, Taste and Collecting on 1 June 2004 at 7pm at Christie's King Street.

Viewing

A selection of works from British Art Week sales will go on view at Christie's New York from 17 – 21 April 2004.

British Art Week sales will go on view on selected days at London, King Street from 26 May 2004 onwards.

The John H. Schaeffer Collection

On 15 & 16 May 2004, Christie's will offer the contents of the historically significant home 'Rona', in Sydney, Australia which is owned by Mr John H. Schaeffer A.O. Held in situ, the house sale is estimated to realise in excess of AUD\$3 million and comprises paintings (notably Victorian and Pre-Raphaelite pictures), Gothic furniture, bronzes, statuary and garden ornaments. A number of significant works have also been consigned to Christie's auctions in Europe and America for sales later in the year.