

For Immediate Release

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THE MASPRO ART MUSEUM TO SELL MAJOR WORKS AT CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK AND LONDON

May, June & October 2005

New York – Christie's New York will offer the collection of Western paintings of The Maspro Art Museum, Japan in a series of sales in New York and London in the spring and fall seasons. The collection comprises thirty-seven 19th and 20th century paintings including works by Paul Cézanne, Pablo Picasso and Vincent van Gogh. The paintings will be presented in the sales of *Impressionist and Modern Art* on May 4 & 5 and *19th Century European Art* on October 26 in New York and *Victorian Paintings* on June 16 in London.

Impressionist and Modern Art Evening Sale

A masterpiece of the first order is the painting by **Paul Cézanne**, *Les grands arbres au Jas de Bouffan* (estimate: \$12,000,000-16,000,000), executed circa 1885-1887. Jas de Bouffan, the Cézanne family country retreat from 1859 until 1899, not only provided Paul Cézanne with a real sense of 'home,' it also presented him with one of the most exquisite and boundless subject matters for his increasingly avant-garde paintings. The stately rows of chestnut trees, the large manor house with a red-tiled roof, the tenant farms and vineyards and, perhaps most importantly, the constant view of the Mont Sainte-Victoire, were motifs that sparked Cézanne's artistic inspiration and helped him develop a new visual language. The present painting shows five trees depicted in a manner that announces a move away from impressionism. The tree trunks alone are solidly outlined whereas the remainder of the landscape is rendered as a vibrant sea of greens, blues, yellows and browns, in vertical or diagonal series of zigzag strokes. Cézanne had a predilection for trees and woods, which emerged during the 1870s when he worked with Pissarro, absorbing the older painter's use of the luminous palette and patient observation of nature. In his turn, Cézanne exerted a very profound influence on

younger artists well into the 20th century, with such remarkable painters as Arshile Gorky and Clyfford Still lauding his genius.

Pablo Picasso's *Boulevard de Clichy* from 1901 (estimate: \$1,800,000-2,500,000) presents an aerial view over the busy boulevard reminiscent of impressionism and of Camille Pissarro in particular. Executed by a nineteen-year old Picasso in preparation for an exhibition at the gallery of Ambroise Vollard, *Boulevard de Clichy* was one of the 64 works Picasso was showing at the famous dealer's gallery at the Rue Laffitte. He worked frantically, producing at a rate of two to three paintings a day, with subjects as diverse as prostitutes, Parisian views, racetrack scenes and flower still-lives. Stylistically, these Picasso works differed dramatically from his previous work, painted in Spain. The Parisian paintings vibrate, showing broad, broken brushwork and a bright palette. The Vollard exhibit was a resounding success, with more than half of the works selling to influential patrons and new commissions for posters, magazine illustrations and portrait drawings on the table. However, soon after the flurry of compliments had calmed down, Picasso returned to the dark and lonely figures of the women's prison of Saint-Lazare, changing his style yet again and initiating the Blue Period.

Another view from a Parisian apartment window, *Vue de la chambre de l'artiste, rue Lepic*, was painted in 1887 by **van Gogh** (estimate: \$1,500,000-2,000,000). Vincent and his brother Theo lived in Paris from 1886 until 1888, in an apartment which offered gorgeous views of Meudon and St. Cloud. Whereas the first views done in 1886 still showed the muted browns and grays he used in Nuenen, the later works, including the present painting, were painted in a much brighter palette. In Paris, van Gogh had discovered the works of the impressionists and neo-impressionists and had become intrigued by the pointillist techniques and the color theories used by Seurat and Signac. The present work reflects his neo-impressionist sympathies as well as his well-known fascination with Japanese printmaking. The composition reveals a strong influence by Hiroshige as can be seen in the juxtaposition of the looming structures in the foreground and the telescoped view into the far distance. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec was the first owner of this work, which he might have received directly from van Gogh in exchange for a portrait he did of the Dutch artist.

La Manufacture de Sèvres by **Alfred Sisley** (estimate: \$1,400,000-1,800,000) is the fourth painting to appear in the evening sale. The painting was executed in 1879, a year after Sisley had moved to 7 avenue de Bellevue in Sèvres. The town of Sèvres inspired him and many of its features such as the quays, the bridge and the porcelain factory appear in his works. The present painting shows Sisley's focus on pictorial organization, which he achieved by relentlessly using verticals, horizontals and diagonals. This search for order in a world of flux, resulting in a more geometrical approach, gives his works a strikingly modern look.

Impressionist and Modern Art Day Sale

The day sale will include Georges Braque's *Fruits et bol*, 1924 (estimate: \$180,000-250,000); *Deux vaches au pré* executed by Paul Gauguin in 1884 (estimate: \$180,000-250,000) and Pablo Picasso's *Les Communiantes*, 1919 (estimate: \$400,000-600,000). Other highlights include *Nu au peignoir*, circa 1906 by Pierre Bonnard (estimate: \$320,000-380,000); *Cameret, le Port* by Eugène Boudin (estimate: \$100,000-150,000); Camille Pissarro's *Le Port et l'imprimerie à Moret*, 1903 (estimate: \$250,000-350,000) and Marc Chagall's *Nu au divan*, 1950 (estimate: \$130,000-160,000).

19th Century European Art

On October 26, Christie's New York will offer three works from the Maspro Art Museum in the sale of 19th Century European Art. Included are *Venetian Canal*, by Martin Rico y Ortega (estimate: \$70,000-90,000); Rubens Santoro's *Gondolas on a Venetian lagoon* (estimate: \$50,000-70,000) and *An interesting story, an elegant young couple* painted by Pablo Salinas (estimate: \$30,000-50,000).

Victorian Paintings

Christie's sale of Victorian Paintings, to take place in London on June 16 will feature 8 works from the Maspro Art Museum. Figured in the sale are *Players of the Garden* by James Hayler (estimate: £10,000-15,000); Thomas Charles Bale's *Still Life of Fruits and Game* (estimate: £6,000-10,000); Arthur Hill's *Before the Bath* (estimate: £7,000-10,000); and works by William Stephen Coleman, William John Wainwright, Edward Witkins Waite and Maude Goodman.

The Maspro Art Museum

The Maspro Art Museum, based in Japan, was founded thirty years ago by Takashi Hashiyama, President of the Maspro Denkoh Corporation and Director of the Museum. Mr. Hashiyama is foremost a passionate collector and connoisseur of Japanese ceramics of which the Museum has an impressive collection, including exquisite examples of Seto and Mino ceramics and Nabeshima porcelain. The sale of the collection of Western paintings will benefit further acquisitions of Japanese ceramics.

Auction: Impressionist and Modern Art Evening Sale

Works on Paper

Impressionist and Modern Art Day Sale

May 4 at 7 p.m.

May 5 at 10 a.m.

May 5 at approx. 11.15 a.m.
and 2 p.m.

19th Century European Art

Victorian Paintings at Christie's in London

October 26

June 16

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

More information about Christie's sales of *Property from the Maspro Art Museum, Japan* can be found on www.christies.com. All lots from the sale 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.