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Press Release

CHRISTIE'S

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CHRISTIE'S ANNUAL AUCTION OF IRISH ART TO TAKE PLACE IN LONDON ON 8 MAY 2008


The Irish Sale
8 May 2008, King Street at 10.30 a.m.
London – Christie's annual auction of *Irish Art* will take place in London on 8 May 2008. The sale will offer 168 lots representing Irish art from the 18th through to the 20th century, highlights from which will be on **public exhibition** at **Clandeboye Courtyard, Belfast on 22 April 2008** and **The Merrion Hotel, Dublin on 24 and 25 April 2008**. A broad selection of paintings will be offered from private collections, the majority of which have not been offered at auction for many years. The sale is expected to realise in excess of £3 million/ €4.5 million.

Bernard Williams, International Director of Irish Art at Christie's: *"This year's annual auction of Irish Art will offer an impressive selection of works representing 250 years of Irish art, and we very much look forward to exhibiting highlights in Belfast and Dublin before the auction in London on 8 May. Christie's international leadership of the art market has once again seen us source works from around the world, with a significant number of market-fresh consignments from America, Canada and Australia which will return to Ireland for the first time in many years during the April tours. We look forward to presenting these works to the international market place, which continues to show an ever-increasing appetite for Irish art."*

Rare, early highlights are led by two important **18th century** paintings *Double portrait of Lieutenant-General the Hon. Philip Sherard and Captain William Tiffin at the Battle of Brucke Mühle (1762) at the end of the Seven Years War*, by Nathaniel Hone (1718-1784) (estimate: £250,000-350,000) *illustrated right,* and *A rocky wooded river landscape with a waterfall and figures and cattle on the bank,* by George Barret the Elder (estimate: £200,000-300,000). Nathaniel Hone was amongst the most celebrated Irish portrait painters of the 18th century; this magnificent heroic double portrait, which was

painted towards the end of Hone's career and is among his most original and accomplished works, was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1782. Having passed by decent to the sitter's family until being sold at Christie's in 1952, it is being offered from The Property of The Trustees of Lord Gretton. George Barret's painting, *illustrated left,* is also fresh to the market, having been in a private collection for 50 years. The atmospheric light and dramatic landscape is characteristic of his work in the later half of the 18th century, before he left Ireland for London. Patronised by Viscount Powerscourt, Barret's works are featured in the collections of both the National Gallery in Ireland and the British Art Center, Yale.

From the **19th century**, *When I First Saw Sweet Peggy,* 1866 (estimate: £70,000-100,000), is by William Hopkins and Edmund Havell, two English sporting artists, who worked together in 1866 to depict this idealised interpretation of life in rural Ireland in which the beauty of a farmer's daughter attracts the glances of a well dressed landowner. First exhibited in London, then in France, this painting has adorned the dining room of a Scottish castle for the last 120 years. *Boundary Fence, Forest of Fontainbleau,* 1868 (estimate: £40,000-60,000) *illustrated right,* by Nathaniel Hone, great-grandnephew of the 18th-century Nathaniel Hone, is considered one of his most important early works and shows the direct influence of Courbet. A sensitive painter, Hone has captured a quiet, natural beauty and enhanced the silence of the glade by excluding any human presence.

"Interest in Irish art has increased dramatically over the last decade, with demand hitting new heights, particularly for 20th century works," **Claire Bailey-Coombs, Head of Irish Art, Christie's London.**

A rich array of **20th century** works feature in the sale, including *Miss Mary Aykroyd in riding habit,* 1933 by Sir John Lavery (1856-1941) (estimate: £200,000 - 300,000) and Louis Le Brocquy's (b. 1916) powerful, yet sensitive work *Connemara Cottage Dwellers,* 1946 (estimate: £250,000-350,000), *illustrated top left,* which is part of the Peter Meyer Collection, *please see separate release for more information.* Painted two years later, Jack Butler Yeats' (1871-1957) *He Sings to the Night,* 1948 (estimate: £100,000 - 150,000), *illustrated page 1 right,* lyrically evokes an Irish evening and the melancholy of the moment, whilst *Little Horse at Play,* 1948 (estimate: £100,000 – 150,000*), illustrated below* and *This Village Cannot Hold Him Back,* 1949 (estimate: £50,000-80,000), show the artist's celebration of the very essence of Irish rural life and the painterly movement and vigour for which he is renowned. One of the most admired, collected and iconic artists of the 20th Century, Jack B. Yeats is an artist whose work is consistently sought after by collectors, enjoying recognition on an international scale with works breaking the £1m price barrier. Christie's is proud to have achieved the top record price for the artist with *The whistle of a jacket,* 1946, which realized £1,103,750 at The Irish Sale Christie's, May 2001.

Over the past five years the rise in Irish Art has seen many records set and broken. A prime example is the demand for works by Paul Henry, whose sublime landscapes with their powerful expanse of sky, have made him one of the most sought after Irish painters of his generation. Capturing an almost vanished rural world, his paintings are inspired by his discovery of the west of Ireland in 1910. Christie's hold the top three world record prices achieved for Henry and are proud to be offering quietly captivating paintings such as *Showery Day on the Bog,* 1941 (estimate:£70,000-100,000) and *The Road to the Sea, Connemara,* 1937 (estimate: £40,000-60,000).

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Images available on request
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Notes to Editors:

The annual auction of *Irish Art* will be on public view at the following locations:
-Clandeboye Courtyard, Belfast *in association with Julius Baer - Switzerland's leading dedicated wealth manager* - **22 April 2008**

-The Merrion Hotel, Dublin *in association with Julius Baer - Switzerland's leading dedicated wealth manager*- **24 - 25 April 2008:**

-Christie's, King Street, London- 1 & 2 – 6 & 7 May 2008

The Irish Sale
Christie's King Street at 10.30 a.m - 8 May 2008,

- Christie's have held an annual sale dedicated to Irish Art since 1996, and have established world record prices at auction for a number of leading artists including George Barret, Gerard Dillon, Jack Butler Yeats, Paul Henry, Sir John Lavery and Thomas Roberts.

- The Baer family and the Julius Baer Foundation have always strongly supported the arts and culture. The forthcoming public viewing of Irish Art in Belfast and Dublin co-hosted by *Christie's* and *Julius Baer* is a further enhancement to the broad range of the Group's cultural engagements.

About Julius Baer: Julius Baer is the leading dedicated wealth manager in Switzerland. The Group, which has roots dating to the nineteenth century, concentrates exclusively on private banking and asset management for private and institutional clients. With more than 4 000 employees worldwide, the Group managed assets in excess of CHF 400 billion at the end of 2007. The Julius Baer Group's global presence comprises more than 30 locations in Europe, North America, Latin America and Asia, including Zurich (head office), Buenos Aires, Dubai, Frankfurt, Geneva, Hong Kong, London, Lugano, Moscow, New York, Singapore and Tokyo. Bank Julius Baer and GAM, a leading global active asset manager, are the key companies of the Group. The shares of Julius Baer Holding Ltd. are listed on the SWX Swiss Exchange and form part of the Swiss Market Index SMI which comprises the 20 largest and most liquid stocks. *For more information: www.juliusbaer.com*

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.