

For Immediate Release

29th March 2006

Contact: Matthew Paton

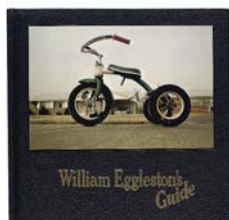
020 7389 2965

mpaton@christies.com

NEW CATEGORY OF COLLECTING AT CHRISTIE'S **- First ever sale of *Rare Photobooks* to take place in May**

Rare Photobooks

18 May 2006



King Street – Christie's announce that they will hold the first ever auction entirely dedicated to photobooks on 18 May 2006 in London. *Rare Photobooks* will include 200 representative examples from traditional photographers including John Thomson and Eadweard Muybridge, through to important contemporary artists including Ed Ruscha, William Eggleston and David Bailey. Estimates range from £300 to £80,000.

Sven Becker, Specialist Head of Sale: *"In light of the strong worldwide demand for photobooks and increasingly impressive prices in the field of photography, we are delighted to be offering the first ever sale dedicated entirely to photographic books on 18 May in London. The photobook offers a narrative through collective images and is the original and most representative form of illustrating the development of photography. As the photobook becomes a more widely recognized artistic medium, it is exciting to pioneer this new and accessible collecting category."*

Leading the sale is one of only 12 known copies of Maurice Loewy and Pierre Puisseux's *Atlas Photographique de la lune* (1896-1910), the first copy to be offered at auction in over 30 years. This early atlas of the moon is considered to be the superlative achievement of 19th century astronomical photography, and nearly all surviving copies are now found in institutions. These photographs could only be executed when the weather was favourable and as a result it took 14 years to complete the book, which was considered to be the most comprehensive photographic catalogue of the moon until the 1960s. This copy is expected to realise £50,000-80,000.



Other highlights include:



- A fine collection of 16 photobooks by Ed Ruscha, dated between 1963 and 1978. This includes a copy of the rare and conceptual *Twenty-six Gasoline Stations* (estimate: £15,000-20,000). One of only 400 copies published in the first edition of 1963, this book presents black and white photographs of 26 gasoline stations situated along Route 40, which connects Oklahoma City and Los Angeles in the United States.

- One of only 500 copies of *La Tour de Trois Centes Metres* by G. Eiffel (estimate: £8,000-12,000). This monumental monograph on the Eiffel Tower includes a history, the calculations, the execution of the work and a summary of scientific work carried out between 1889 and 1900. This book was published at the expense of the author and never issued commercially.



- A rare and signed first edition of *The Steichen Book*, which was published in 1906 and includes some of the best known photographs from the turn of the 20th century. Inscribed as number 20 of only 65 printed copies, this book includes 29 selected proof photogravures including *The Pond – Moonrise*, a print of which set the world auction record for a photograph in New York this year when it sold for \$2,928,000. It is estimated to realise £40,000-60,000.

The sale will also offer a first edition copy of *Montparnasse* by Andreas Gursky (estimate: £300-500), a first edition copy of *William Eggleston's Guide*, which is regarded as seminal in the development of colour photography (estimate: £300-500) and a collection of signed works by David Bailey, including *Box of Pin Ups* (1964) which carries an estimate of £4,000-6,000.



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

Notes to Editors:

- *Rare Photobooks* will be on public view at Christie's, 8 King Street, St. James's, London SW1Y 6QT between 14 and 17 May. See website for further details.

- The renowned photographer and author Martin Parr will deliver a lecture on photobooks at Christie's King Street on 16 May 2006 at 6:30 pm.

- Christie's have been selling Books and Manuscripts since 1766. One of the earliest auctions held by Christie's was the sale of Samuel Johnson's library in 1785. The international department now offers regular sales of books and manuscripts in New York, London, Paris and Rome. The world auction record for a manuscript was established when the Codex Hammer by Leonardo da Vinci was sold at Christie's New York in November 1999 for \$30,802,500 / £19,263,602.