

## **For Immediate Release**

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Contact: Clare Roberts 44 207 389 2117 [croberts@christies.com](mailto:croberts@christies.com)

### **DECORATIVE ARTS OF GEORGIAN ENGLAND AT CHRISTIE'S Strong, Healthy Art Market Message As Sale Far Exceeds Expectations Realising £6.5 Million / \$10.4 Million**

#### **50 Years of Collecting – The Decorative Arts of Georgian England**

**14 May 2003**

**London** – A particularly strong market reaction to all sections of the superb single-owner auction offered today was witnessed at Christie's London. The results of the sale, *50 Years of Collecting – The Decorative Arts of Georgian England*, clearly demonstrates that key ingredients of quality, provenance and rarity continue to result in the very best prices at Christie's. The collection realised £6,502,231 (\$10,449,085) selling 92% by lot and 98% by value.

“This was a true collectors collection; formed very carefully with love and passion and now passing on to a new generation. We saw a packed saleroom, competitive bidding at all levels and an electric atmosphere today at Christie's as the audience enthusiastically bid for the superb works,” said Charles Cator, Co-Chairman of Christie's UK and International Head of Furniture. “The overall success of the sale today is a sure sign of the underlying strength of the furniture market. This was a landmark English furniture collection sale and the most significant since the Messer sale in 1991. This afternoon, we also saw strong prices for the fantastic porcelain and glass sections of the sale led by fine examples from the Chelsea factory.”

The sale, conducted by auctioneers Co-Chairman of Christie's UK, Dermot Chichester and Chairman of Christie's South Kensington, Hugh Edmeades, was the first to be overseen by the newly formed Private Collection and Country House Sale Department led by directors, Orlando Rock and Andrew Waters.

The Georgian period relates to furniture and works of art produced during the reigns of the four English King Georges, 1714-1830, and is characterised by classical inspiration, superlative design and excellent craftsmanship. Six pieces in the sale were by arguably the most renowned craftsman of the Georgian era, cabinet-maker, Thomas Chippendale including the second most expensive lot of the day, a George III mahogany secretaire display-cabinet that sold for £341,250.

***The top lot of the day, and also dating from the early 18<sup>th</sup> century was an unusual George I walnut bachelors chest, raised on extremely rare, short cabriole legs, attributed to Giles Grendey (estimate: £100,000-150,000), which sold for a world record price of £363,650. The sale also boasted pieces by Chippendale's most successful competitors, the Broad Street partnership of John Mayhew and William Ince. A satinwood and marquetry demi-lune commode demonstrates how successfully they had perfected this technique (estimate: £80,000-120,000) and sold for £139,650. Further highlights included a George III breakfront bookcase, also attributed to Mayhew and Ince, which realised £229,250.***

A pair of ormolu-mounted white marble candle vases by Matthew Boulton sold for £201,250 and an unusually large pair of candle-vases, particularly notable for their colour and figuring (estimate: £60,000-90,000), sold for £173,250.

The English glass and ceramics offered today were arguably the strongest selection seen at auction in recent years, with Chelsea porcelain in particular realising strong prices. The appeal of fantastic provenance for the well-recorded, exquisite Chelsea Kakiemon dish drove the realised price to £47,800, well ahead of pre-sale expectations. Similar provenance contributed to the results of further highlights including a Chelsea flared octagonal bowl in the Meissen style which realised £40,630. The best of the fable-decorated Chelsea pieces included a silver-shaped large oval dish decorated with a scene from Aesop's fables that sold for £47,800. Two leveret tureens, also from Chelsea factory, made £26,680 and £26,290 respectively and the best of the botanical wares reached £31,070.

The results of the glass section of the sale again demonstrated how the best of advice was sought for the collection, in this case from Martin Mortimer of Delomosne. Pieces ranged from the exceptionally rare group of English opaque-white glass, made in South Staffordshire, are very seldom seen on the market. The two top prices of this section were paid for the opaque-white glass guglet, dated *circa* 1755-60, probably South Staffordshire which sold for £21,510 and a pair of beaker vases that realised £22,705. Bidders today were mainly established buyers with a good balance trade and private interest and success.

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**Notes to Editors**

*Park West – The Property of a Private Collector* will be held on 22 May and is the next sale to be staged by the recently formed Private Collection and Country House Sale Department. Orlando Rock heads the team, ably assisted by Andrew Waters, Director of the department, both highly experienced specialists. The Private Collection and Country House Sale Department concentrates on developing single-owner and special collection sales as well as house sales in the UK, and house sales in those Continental European countries without a dedicated saleroom.