

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Matthew Paton

020.7389.2965

mpaton@christies.com

FREUD MASTERPIECE AND PREVIOUSLY UNSEEN BACON TRIPTYCH HIGHLIGHT CHRISTIE'S LONDON AUCTION OF *POST-WAR AND CONTEMPORARY ART* IN JUNE 2008



Lucian Freud (b. 1922), *Naked Portrait with Reflection*, 1980
Estimate: £10 million to £15 million

Post-War and Contemporary Art Evening Sale

Exhibition: 22 to 30 June 2008 at Christie's South Kensington

Auction: 30 June 2008 at 7pm, Christie's, 8 King Street, London

London – Christie's announce two exceptional highlights to be offered at the *Post-War and Contemporary Art Evening Sale* on 30 June 2008 in London; *Naked Portrait with Reflection* by Lucian Freud (b.1922), one of the most important works by the artist to be offered at auction (estimate: £10 million to £15 million) and *Three Studies for a Self Portrait* by Francis Bacon (1909-1992), which has never before been seen in public (estimate: on request). The London sale follows the strong results seen at Christie's recent auctions of *Post-War and Contemporary Art* in New York, which realised \$431 million / £221 million and saw Lucian Freud's *Benefit Supervisor Sleeping* sell for \$33 million / £17.3 million, a world record price for a work by a living artist sold at auction.

Pilar Ordovas, Head of Post-War and Contemporary Art, Christie's London: "Following the success of the spring series of *Post-War and Contemporary art* sales in New York, we are excited to announce that we will offer in London exceptional paintings by Lucian Freud and Francis Bacon. In recent years, the growing international demand for exceptional works by Freud and Bacon has seen them established and recognised as two of the most talented, influential and valuable artists of the second half of the 20th century.

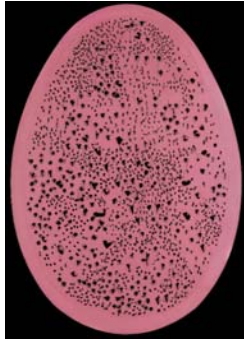
Freud's 'Naked Portrait with Reflection' is one of the most important of his works to appear on the open market, and Bacon's 'Three Studies for a Self Portrait' is a rare and emotionally charged work from the artist's brief but creative period in Paris in the 1970s which has been in the ownership of the same collector since it was painted and has never before been seen in public or offered at auction. We look forward to exhibiting these works in Hong Kong in May and London in June, and we expect the interest of international collectors from around the world when the paintings are offered at auction on 30 June in London."

Naked Portrait with Reflection by Lucian Freud (b.1922) was painted in 1980 and is one of the most important works by the artist to appear at auction (estimate: £10 million to £15 million). The portrait stirs a sense of vulnerability – the model lies spread out on a tattered sofa, and is viewed from above, subject to the analysis of the artist—and to us, his accomplices, her public. In the top right corner of the painting, a pair of legs are apparent, adding a strange narrative tension to the painting: while initially appearing as though these were the feet of some clothed, departing man, it becomes clear by looking at the title and the peculiar angle of the floorboards that this is the artist himself, reflected in a mirror, smuggled into the picture through a device that had previously been favoured by Van Eyck and Velázquez. The painting was acquired by an anonymous collector at auction in London in 1998, and it has remained in their possession since. It has been widely exhibited, most recently in the artist's Retrospective at Tate Britain in 2002.



Three Studies for a Self Portrait by Francis Bacon (1909-1992) (*illustrated above*) is a rare self-portrait triptych that the artist painted while in Paris in 1975 and that has never before been seen in public (estimate: on request). Throughout his career, Bacon's reputation was greater in Paris than anywhere else, and he always held a desire to maintain a studio there. In 1971, Bacon's lover George Dyer died in Paris at the time of the artist's great retrospective in the city and in 1974, after a period of grieving, he left London for the French capital in a move that his biographer Michael Peppiatt described as '*a mixture of morbidity, guilt and a masochistic desire to suffer more*'. Painted in 1975, the present work is one of the first of an outstanding series of stark, piercing and highly analytical self-portrait triptychs painted by the artist in the mid 1970s and exploring the notion of mortality. In 1975, Bacon remarked to David Sylvester that '*One of the nice things that Cocteau said was 'Each day in the mirror I watch death at work.'*' Acquired by the present owner in Paris in 1976, the work has never before been seen in public and has never been offered at auction.

The *Post-War and Contemporary Art Evening Sale* on Monday 30 June 2008 follows on from the success of the evening sale in London in February which realised £73 million, and saw Francis Bacon's *Triptych 1974-77* sell for £26.3 million, the highest price for a Post-War work of art sold in Europe. The *Post-War and*



Contemporary Art Day Sales will take place the following day, on Tuesday 1 July 2008. A leading highlight of the auction is (*Concetto spaziale*) *La fine di Dio*, 1964, by Lucio Fontana (1899-1968) (*illustrated left*). The *La Fine Di Dio* series of 1963 and 1964 represents arguably the pinnacle of the artist's career, and the example to be offered at Christie's is expected to realise in excess of £8 million.

A further highlight is *Madrid desde Torres Blancas* by Antonio Lopez (b. 1936) (estimate: £1,500,000-£2,000,000). Along with *Gran Vía* (1974-1981), a much smaller painting, *Madrid desde Torres Blancas* is the most important urban view ever painted by the artist. It was started in 1976 and finished only in 1982 after which it was sold from the artist's studio to an important private European collection. It has since passed by inheritance to the present owner. It has been seen very rarely in public and could become the most expensive work by a living Spanish artist sold at auction.

Christie's will offer a selection of Indian art at the London evening sale for the first time, as the international demand for post-war and contemporary Indian art continues to grow. Highlights include *La Terre*, 1973, by Syed Haider Raza (b. 1922) (estimate: £1,000,000-£1,500,000) and *Curry 2 (3)* by Subodh Gupta (b. 1964) (estimate: £250,000-£350,000).

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Images available on request
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Notes to editors:

Auction – Christie's, 8 King Street, St. James's, London SW1Y 6QT

Thursday 30 June 2008 at 7pm

Viewing:

Christie's, Hong Kong – 22 to 25 May 2008

Christie's, London – 21 to 30 June 2008

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.