

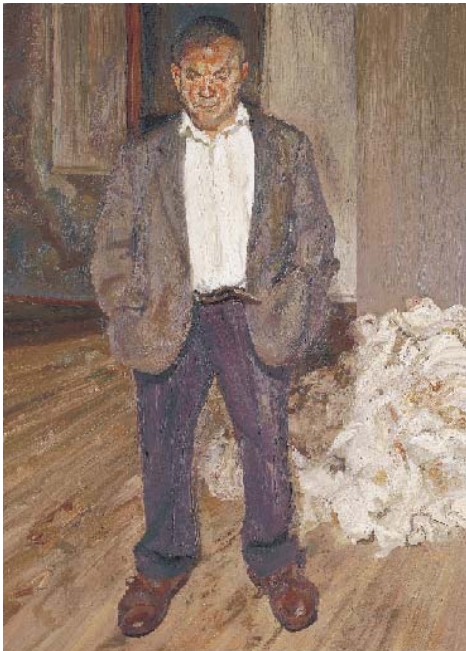
For Immediate Release

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Contact: Rhiannon Broomfield +44 (0) 207 389 2117 rbroomfield@christies.com

FREUD MASTERPIECE EXPECTED TO BREAK RECORD AT CHRISTIE'S LONDON POST WAR & CONTEMPORARY ART EVENING SALE IN JUNE 2007

- **Freud, Bacon and Auerbach Highlight Most Important Collection of School of London Works to Ever Appear at Auction**



Lucian Freud, *Bruce Bernard*, 1992
Estimate: £4,500,000-5,500,000

Selected works from the Elaine and Melvin Merians Collection
Post War & Contemporary Art Evening Sale
Christie's London, Wednesday 20 June 2007

London – The most important collection of School of London works to ever appear at auction leads Christie's **Post War & Contemporary Art Evening Sale** on **20 June 2007**. The sale of *Selected Works from the Elaine and Melvin Merians Collection* is led by the most important painting by Lucian Freud ever to appear at auction, *Bruce Bernard*, 1992 which is expected to set a new world auction record for the artist* (estimate: £4,500,000-5,500,000). The comprehensive collection features a range of 21 major works by the so-called School of London artists which all appear at auction for the first time. Significant works include Francis Bacon's *Two Men Working in a Field*, 1971 (estimate: £5,000,000-7,000,000) and Frank

Auerbach's *Tree in Mornington Crescent*, 1991-92 (estimate: £1,000,000-1,500,000) together with examples from Michael Andrews, Leon Kossoff, R. B. Kitaj and Paula Rego. The collection is expected to realize in excess of £15 million.

"This is the most important collection of works by the School of London artists ever to appear on the international art market. Over 25 years, Elaine and Melvin Merians have assembled an outstanding collection devoted to this period of British Art in America," says **Pilar Ordovás, Head of Post War & Contemporary Art, Christie's London.** *"Lucian Freud is renowned as the most prominent British portrait painter of the 20th century and Christie's has pioneered the market for the School of London artists, establishing numerous artist records over the years including the current record for Lucian Freud. We expect this record to be broken at Christie's sale with Bruce Bernard which is an incredibly powerful and successful portrait of a very close friend of the artist."*

Lucian Freud's magnificent portrait of *Bruce Bernard* was painted in 1992. Bruce Bernard, who died in 2000, was a close friend of the artist for many years and a highly respected picture editor of the *Sunday Times* magazine. Bruce wrote a number of books on photography and painting and was the author of one of the most important monographs on Freud's work; he was also the brother of the legendary columnist and Soho *bon viveur* Jeffrey Bernard.

Elaine and Melvin Merians

Drawn initially to the work of Lucian Freud, Elaine and Melvin Merians set out to collect the figurative works of the School of London artists after acquiring their first Lucian Freud from the Marlborough Gallery in 1978. Over the next 25 years, the Merians developed a deep passion for School of London artists and regularly travelled to Britain from their native America to acquire the best possible works directly from the artists and their galleries. The couple have become close friends with a number of the artists they admired and some of the people that they painted.

The Merians' passion for their collection is such that they have lived with all the works they have acquired. In 2000 their collection was exhibited at the Yale Center for British Art in New Haven, Connecticut and then in Neuberger Museum of Art in New York in 2001.

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*Visit Christie's at www.christies.com
A selection of images is available on request*

Notes to Editors

Record for Lucian Freud

*The current record for any work by Lucian Freud is *Red Haired Man on a Chair*, 1962 – 1963 which sold for £4,152,000 (\$7,703,153) at Christie's London on 9 February 2005

International Exhibition Tour

- 12-16 May 2007: Christie's Rockefeller Centre, New York
- 25-27 May 2007: Convention Centre, Hong Kong
- 7-9 June 2007: Gritti Palace Hotel, Venice, Italy

Christie's London Auctions in June 2007 of Impressionist & Modern Art and Post War & Contemporary Art:

- Impressionist and Modern Art (Evening Sale): 18 June 2007 at 6.30pm
- Impressionist and Modern Art (Day Sale): 19 June 2007 at 2.00pm
- Impressionist and Modern Works on Paper: 19 June 2007 at 10.30am
- Post War and Contemporary Art (Evening Sale): 20 June 2007 at 6.30pm
- Post War & Contemporary Art (Day Sale): 21 June 2007 at 10.00am

About Christie's

Christie's is the world's leading art business with global sales in 2005 that totaled \$3.2 billion. It is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service, and 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, jewelry, photographs, collectibles, wine, cars 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 markets such as Russia, China, India and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Mumbai and Dubai.