

For Immediate Release

June 6, 2007

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**“BLOOD AND JUSTICE”:
CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK TO OFFER JOHN WILKES BOOTH MANUSCRIPT**

FINE PRINTED BOOKS AND MANUSCRIPTS INCLUDING AMERICANA

June 19, 2007

New York – On June 19, the sale of Fine Printed Books and Manuscripts will feature over 300 lots of rare books and manuscripts. It is highlighted by John Wilkes Booth's 21-page handwritten draft manuscript of a fiery political speech. In it, the Maryland-born Booth lashes out at the Northern abolitionists who, Booth believed, had



forced the secession of the Southern, slave-holding states. Booth's Secession Crisis Speech (estimate: \$200,000 – 300,000), written in December 1860, is the longest of any surviving writings of the assassin. Studded with violent rhetoric, it offers a unique insight into Booth's passionate pro-slavery political creed. The secession of South Carolina, in the wake of Lincoln's election as President, Booth saw, was the prelude to a "fierce Civil War." Deploring the dissolution of the Union (as did Abraham Lincoln), Booth prays that he "may never live to see the day...when we are no more a united nation."

Booth's chilling prophecy of bloody Civil War was amply fulfilled, and through the next four years his passionate dedication to the Southern cause never flagged. "If the nation is to be saved," he vows here, "it must be done with blood & justice." Booth's Secession Crisis Speech reveals that the pistol shot fired by Booth in the darkened Presidential box at Ford's Theatre was the fated consequence of Booth's extreme creed and his hatred of President Lincoln as a living symbol of the

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Union's moral, political and military victory over the South. Only a sacrifice, Booth believed, could avenge that defeat. Lincoln's murder marked the end of the nation's bloodiest war. As Booth ominously affirms in his Secession Speech, "there is a time when men should act for themselves." Now, he writes, "it is time to throw off all gentler feelings of our natures and summon resolution, pride, justice. Ay, and revenge..."

Edwin Thomas Booth, John Wilkes Booth's brother, kept this remarkable historical manuscript.

The Hampden-Booth Theatre Library, a library dedicated to advancing the arts and drama through the study, preservation and dissemination of materials related to 19th Century American and British theatre, is offering the manuscript for sale because it falls outside the scope of the Library's collections.

Auction: Fine Printed Books and Manuscripts
Including Americana

June 19 at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Viewing: Christie's Galleries at Rockefeller Center

June 15 - 18

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Images available on request

Visit Christie's Web site at www.christies.com

More information about Christie's sale of Fine Printed Books and Manuscripts Including Americana can be found on www.christies.com. All lots from the sale can be viewed online along with full catalogue descriptions on Lotfinder®, which also allows clients to leave absentee bids. www.christies.com provides information on more than 80 sale categories, buying and selling at auction, complete auction results, and Christie's international auction calendar.

