

**For Immediate Release**

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**RARE BEATRIX POTTER PICTURES TO BE  
AUCTIONED AT CHRISTIE'S SOUTH KENSINGTON**



Helen Beatrix Potter (1866-1943), *'First he ate some lettuces and some French beans; and then he ate some radishes'* (estimate: £12,000-18,000)

**British & Continental Watercolours**

**Wednesday 29 June 2005, 10.30am & 2.00pm**

**South Kensington** - A rare collection of 12 original Beatrix Potter watercolours which have been hidden away in a private collection for over 30 years and are expected to fetch over £120,000, lead Christie's South Kensington sale of **British and Continental Watercolours** on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2005.

Appearing at auction for the first time, the rare and complete set of 12 original watercolours on silk, depict scenes from the Tale of Peter Rabbit and include well-known images from this highly popular and collectable artist; estimates range from £6,000 to £18,000. Given by Beatrix Potter to her friend Lady Vernon in gratitude for a stay at her home, Hanbury Hall, Worcestershire, they were then passed onto the poet, Mrs Russell of Hanbury, who in turn passed them onto the current owner's family as a gift for the grandchildren.

Amongst the highlights include includes the well-known and much recited, *"Now, my dears,' said old Mrs. Rabbit one morning, 'you may go into the fields or down the lane, but don't go into Mr. McGregor's garden: your father had an accident there; he was put in a pie by Mrs. McGregor"* (estimate: £8,000-12,000).

Many of Potter's creations like Peter Rabbit began as characters in illustrated letters or as greetings cards. Potter wrote to Noel Moore on the 4th September, 1893, saying, *"I don't*

*know what to write to you, I will tell you a story about little rabbits whose names were Flopsy, Mopsy, Cottontail and Peter".*

First published privately in 1900, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* was quickly taken up by Frederick Warne and Co., and made available to the public in 1902, selling over 50,000 copies in its first year of distribution. Many works followed, each exploring the subtle interplay between text and image.

Peter Rabbit's cheeky and adventurous attitude, boundless energy and mischievous scrapes, resonate with meaning and memory across generations of readers and fixes him as one of the most illustrated icons of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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Images available on request

Visit Christie's Web site at [www.christies.com](http://www.christies.com)

**Notes to Editors:**

**Christie's South Kensington, 85 Old Brompton Road**

**Opening hours:**

**Monday - 9am to 7.30pm**

**Tuesday to Friday - 9am to 5pm**

**Open for Weekend Shopping on Saturday and Sunday - 10am to 4pm**

The weekend openings will be throughout the year except for bank holidays.

The UK's busiest auction house, Christie's South Kensington offers more sales more often than any other auction house.