

For Immediate Release

23 June 2005

Contact: Catherine Manson 44.207.389.2664 cmanson@christies.com
Christina Freyberg 44.207.389.2117 cfreyberg@christies.com

**POST-WAR AND CONTEMPORARY ART AT CHRISTIE'S
TOTALS £24.5 MILLION / US\$44.5 MILLION / €36.7 MILLION**

- **Sale Total Equals Highest Ever Achieved For Post-War and Contemporary Art At Auction in Europe as Christie's Leads the Market**
- **Nine Record Prices for Artists including Francis Bacon, Georg Baselitz and Eduardo Chillida**

London – Christie's evening sale of Post-War and Contemporary Art realised £24,459,600 (\$44,516,472/€36,689,400) tonight. The sale was 90% sold by lot and 91% sold by value with 89% of the works sold tonight achieving prices within or above estimate. Nine new world auction records were set with 11 works sold for over \$1 million. Buyers were 75% European, 23% American, 2% Asian.

"Christie's continues to lead the international market in Post-War and Contemporary Art and tonight's sale demonstrated the continued strength and health of the market as clients chose their works carefully and then bid, very competitively. Complementing the classic Post-War artists was the newer generation of European artists whose work continues to achieve rising prices," said Fernando Mignoni, Director and Head of Christie's Post-War and Contemporary Art department in London. *"This sale was carefully selected and tailor-made for the European market and the results speak for themselves. Christie's policy of placing sensible and appealing estimates on works of art continued to result in good prices."*

The top lot of the evening was *Portrait of George Dyer Staring into a Mirror*, 1967, a powerful painting in which Francis Bacon depicts his greatest model and 'Muse' George Dyer. It was acquired after intense bidding for £4,936,000 (\$8,983,520), a new world record price for the artist at auction. In *Portrait of George Dyer Staring into a Mirror*, the unmistakable features of a suited Dyer are shown from two angles, reflected in a mirror. Bacon used this motif in several of his pictures of Dyer, creating a jarring duplicity, a double-portrayal rather than a reflection. The mirror acts almost as a second canvas, Bacon exploring in one canvas a similar refracting multiple depictions of his subject to those in his triptychs. Visually, the rigidity of the forms, the lines and the fields that make up most of the painting jars with the organic, almost haphazard smearing of Dyer's face and body.

Another top lot was Lucian Freud's *Bella*, which achieved £1,800,000 (\$3,276,000). A collaborative product between father and daughter, this painting is reflective of the familial intimacy between the two of them as well as the paternal and painterly curiosity of the artist.

Andy Warhol was well represented and arguably the most eye-catching work was his fabulous rendering of *Joseph Beuys*, 1981, a diamond dust portrait that has something of the epic about it and sold for £1,688,000 (\$3,072,000). Beuys' reputation and the shamanic example he set as an artist concerned with the social reform of the world gained him an almost mystical status in the eyes of many.

Georg Baselitz's *Partisan*, 1965, sold for £904,000 (\$1,645,280) a new world record for the artist. Eduardo Chillida's striking sculpture, *Deep is the Air-Stele XIII*, executed in granite in 1990, also established a new world record price for the artist when it sold for £814,400 (\$1,482,208). As well as the records for Francis Bacon, Georg Baselitz and Eduardo Chillida, further record prices were established for Thomas Hirschorn, Gabriel Orozco, Alighiero Boetti, Michelangelo Pistoletto, Rosemarie Trockel and Doris Salcedo.

Coinciding with the renaissance of contemporary painting, the sale offered an extremely strong selection of the most important artists who are bringing the traditional medium of painting to the fore of contemporary collecting, and strong prices were realised in the field. Marlene Dumas was represented by two paintings, *The Broken Mirror* which fetched £90,000 and *Handy*, which achieved £243,200. Other strong prices included Peter Doig's *Buffalo Station* that sold for £192,800 and Luc Tuymans' *Lamproom*, painted in 1992, sold for £232,000. Other highlights of this evening's sale included *Hanging Heads # 1 (Blue Andrew, Mouth Open/Red Julie with Cap)*, executed in 1989 by Bruce Nauman that sold for £680,000 (\$1,237,600) and Miquel Barcelo's *El Segundo*, 1990, that realised £702,400 (\$1,278,368).

Offered from a French private collection was Jean Michel Basquiat's *Untitled*, 1982. Tonight it was acquired for £1,072,000 (\$3,072,160). *Untitled* belongs to a series of the artist's most seminal works, depicting hero-figures, boxers, athletes and prophets.

The sale of Post-War and Contemporary Art will continue tomorrow.

###

Images available on request