

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Rhiannon Bevan-John 020 7389 2964 rbevan-john@christies.com

CHRISTIE'S CELEBRATES THE ARTS OF INDIA



A magnificent 17th century Mughal carved emerald, set in a diamond brooch.
Estimate: £650,000-850,000



William Daniell, *Zenana Scene*
The Collection of William and Mildred Archer
Estimate: £15,000-20,000

Arts of India, 24 September 2003

London – Celebrating the splendour and diversity of Indian art and culture, Christie's *Arts of India* sale on 24 September 2003 will once again offer a beautiful range of the very best of Indian jewellery and art led by works from *The Collection of William and Mildred Archer*. The sale will include jewellery, furniture, textiles and works of art, as well as a wonderful variety of paintings, watercolours, prints, illustrated books and photographs depicting the landscape, life and times of India during the Mughal period and the Raj.

Reflecting the Mughal's love of ornament and beauty, the sale is highlighted by a magnificent 17th century Mughal carved emerald set in a diamond brooch, *circa* 1820 (estimate: £650,000-850,000). The emerald was formerly the property of Robert Clive of India, Governor of Bengal and founder of British India and was later reset by Rundell, Bridge & Rundell in 1829 for Charlotte Florentia, Duchess of Northumberland.

Weighing 55.84 carats, the emerald is superbly decorated with fine Mughal carvings of flowers on the front and back and would have originally belonged to a highly important

member of the Indian Royal Court. Floral motifs were symbolic of fertility and nature and according to Indian folk-law, emeralds were thought to improve the vision of those who wore them. Mounted and secured by the drill holes to each side, it is likely that this exquisite stone would have originally been worn as part of a major jewelled ornament such as a sarpech, a head ornament worn by Indian nobleman.

Further sale highlights include *The Collection of William and Mildred Archer* which provides a fascinating record of late 18th and early 19th century India. With a shared knowledge and enthusiasm, the Archer's acquired a unique personal collection of pictures, watercolours and printed material of India by distinguished British artists including Thomas and William Daniell, George Chinnery, Edward Lear, Sir Charles D'Oyly, William Prinsep, Emily Eden and William Hodges. Hodges was one of the first professional artists to visit India and was the official artist on Captain Cook's second voyage in 1725-75.

Highlights of the collection include three works by two of the great European artist's working on the Indian sub-continent in the 18th and the 19th century, Thomas and William Daniell. Thomas Daniell is represented by *Hill House at Bhagalpur, Bihar* (estimate: £40,000-60,000) and the beautiful watercolour *View of the Ganges* (estimate: £25,000-35,000) and William Daniell by his *Zenana Scene* (estimate: £15,000-20,000). The uncle-nephew team toured India on sketching tours from 1785 until 1794. Greatly inspired by William Hodges, the Daniell's ventured further than any previous artist and drew unrivalled views of the scenery and architecture of this fabled and exotic land.

The late Dr. William G. Archer and his wife, Dr Mildred Archer were internationally renowned for their unique knowledge of Indian and Anglo-Indian art. Following sixteen years in India, they returned to London in 1946 where William became the Keeper of the Indian Section at the Victoria & Albert Museum. Meanwhile Mildred compiled the first two volumes of the catalogue of the British Drawings at the India Office Library as well as publishing numerous authoritative works on British and Company School art in India.

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