

## For Immediate Release

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## THE SPLENDOURS OF INDIA



A highly important antique carved and polished emerald bead and pearl pendant necklace  
Estimate: £1,400,000- 1,600,000  
*Formerly the property of Ranjitsinhji Vibhaji, Maharaja Jamsalub of Nawanagar (1872-1933)*



A late 19<sup>th</sup> century magnificent silver carriage made for H.H. Maharaja of Bhavnagar,  
Estimate: £50,000-80,000

### Arts of India 23 September 2005

**London** – Over the centuries, India has inspired a wide variety of artists, both at home and abroad. Gathered together for Christie's eagerly awaited *Arts of India* sale on 23 September 2005, is a wonderful array of unusual and beautiful works led by a magnificent emerald necklace once in the collection of Maharaja Jamshib of Nawanagar, estimated at over £1 million, and an outstanding silver horse-drawn carriage belonging to the Maharaja of Bhavnagar. The sale will also include a superb selection of jewellery, furniture, textiles and works of art as well as a wide variety of paintings, watercolours, prints and illustrated books by British artists.

A highly important emerald necklace is one of the star lots in the sale. This antique carved and polished emerald bead and pearl pendant necklace contains a 17<sup>th</sup> century central oblong emerald which is estimated to weigh 155cts and an 18<sup>th</sup> century hexagonal emerald estimated to weigh 200cts. It is exceedingly rare to find a carved emerald necklace in its complete form as more often than not, these tended to be broken up and sold separately, sometimes with the carvings polished off (estimate: £1,400,000-1,600,000).

The necklace was a particular favourite of Ranjitsinhji Vibhaji, Maharaja Jamsahib of Nawanagar (1872-1933), a ruler of a small state in Gujarat, who used to play cricket for the county of Sussex. One of his friends was Jacques Cartier, who frequently supplied and remounted many of his jewels in order to emphasize the individual stones. While there is no signature on this necklace, the fine quality would indicate that it is of

European and not Indian mounting. Other jewellery in the sale includes a magnificent antique single row emerald bead necklace with diamond clasp (estimate: £290,000-350,000).

A further highlight of the sale is an unusual 19<sup>th</sup> century silver *Landau-style* carriage made in Bombay, with possible European additions, for H.H. Maharaja of Bhavnagar (estimate: £50,000-80,000). This impressive carriage is in good working order and is nearly 5 meters long, 1.7 meters wide and over 2 meters high. The exterior is covered in silver sheet, bedecked with naturalistic flowers and animals such as hummingbirds worked in repoussé, together with enamelled decoration and areas of gold overlay, which appear more European in style than Indian. On each door is the crest of the princely state of Bhavnagar in Gujarat while the interior is upholstered in woven yellow and olive silk.

A fascination for the cultures of other peoples and religions is what gives much later Indian Art its vitality. Akbar, a Muslim and one of the early Mughal emperors, commissioned a series of illustrated versions of Hindu epics, one of the most important of which was the *Harivamsa*. One of the best paintings from this manuscript, shows *Krishna dancing on the head of Sesha*, circa 1590-95 (estimate: £40,000-60,000). The last Arts of India sale included Anglo-Indian paintings from the collection of W.G. and Mildred Archer. This auction features over forty Indian miniatures from the same collection, most of them from the Pahari School.

It was not just the Indian people and customs that were of interest; the landscape was a revelation and early artists who travelled there found it fascinating. Chief among these were the Daniells, Thomas and his nephew William, who during their travels left the areas of European control, often venturing into unmapped districts, as shown in the oil painting *The Temples at Tirukalikundran, Tinnevely District*, 1816, (estimate: £80,000-120,000). In India, the Daniells were able to indulge in the “picturesque”, a fashionable concept in England at the time and this can be seen among watercolours offered in the sale. Alongside the European school, a native school of painting developed in the late 18th century that was highly stylized and varied according to region. Two outstanding examples in the sale depict Sir John Dalling (estimate: £50,000-60,000) and Colonel Antoine-Louis Polier (estimate: £20,000-30,000), each enjoying local customs, and are reminiscent of the type of East India Company employee portrayed in William Dalrymple's book 'White Moghuls'.

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Images available on request

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### Notes to Editor

A lecture on the Palaces of Rajasthan by architectural historian, George Michell, will take place at Christie's King Street on Tuesday 20 September 2005 at 7.45pm followed by a reception. Tickets £35, in aid of Ra, please contact [raassociation@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:raassociation@yahoo.co.uk) or 020 7352 4336.