

CHRISTIE'S

For Immediate Release

Contact: Roger McIlroy +61 419 575 282
Patricia Kontos +613 9820 4311 pkontos@christies.com
Christie's Press Office 44.207.389.2664 hschmidt@christies.com

'A VIEW OF GEELONG' RETURNS TO TOWN

Christie's Concludes Private Treaty Sale of Eugene von Guerard's '*A View of Geelong*' to the Geelong Gallery, Victoria

Victoria, Australia - Christie's announce that **Eugene von Guerard's** (1811-1901) painting '*A View of Geelong, 1856*' has been sold to the Geelong Gallery for £1.6 million (A\$3.9 million).

Lisa King, International Managing Director, Christie's comments, "We are delighted to have successfully concluded this private sale to the Geelong Gallery and that this superb masterpiece will return to Australia and to such a natural home. Brokering highly significant private sales is very much part of Christie's ongoing strategy for Australia and this transaction demonstrates our strength in bringing together global buyers and sellers in the art market as well as our ability to combine specialist knowledge through our international network. These negotiations demonstrated the teamwork of Nick Lambourn, Director of Topographical Pictures, who worked closely with our outgoing Chairman, Roger McIlroy on this sale.

Roger McIlroy and Nick Lambourn commented, "The painting is a significant part of Australia's national cultural history, not just of Geelong. We are grateful to all the stakeholders in the transaction – vendor The Lord Lloyd-Webber, the Geelong Gallery Trustees, their director Mr. Geoffrey Edwards and funding contributors such as the State Government of Victoria, the Federal Government and the City of Greater Geelong for their co-operation in protracted negotiations in order to achieve this successful outcome."

'A View of Geelong' was the first Australian painting to be sold at auction for in excess of \$1 million when it was purchased by The Lord Lloyd-Webber for \$1,982,500 at Christie's Melbourne in April 1996. Thereafter, The Lord Lloyd-Webber generously lent the work to Geelong Gallery before displaying it prominently in his English country home alongside his significant collection of Pre-Raphaelite and Impressionist paintings. Commenting on the sale of the painting The Lord Lloyd-Webber said: "This painting formed an interesting link in my 19th century collection and was much admired in my home. While I am very pleased that

Geelong has acquired the work as I recognize its significance to the city, I must say I am a reluctant seller. I committed to make my British works available to the public and it seems therefore logical that the von Guerard should enjoy this same opportunity in Australia.”

Painted in 1856 the work has long been regarded as the Austrian-born Eugene von Guerard’s finest landscape. It depicts a sweeping vista across the thriving gold-rush township of Geelong, across Port Phillip Bay and the You Yang Ranges to as far as Melbourne and Mount Macedon, all of which is contrasted against the detail of a rustic foreground. Of all the artist’s panoramic Australian landscapes, this is acknowledged as his greatest achievement.

The purchase was made possible through the fundraising of the Geelong Gallery with assistance from the State Government of Victoria, the Federal Government and the City of Greater Geelong and private donations. Lord Lloyd-Webber has generously undertaken to donate the insurance costs involved in returning the work to Geelong and Christie’s the shipping and export costs.

Lisa King, International Managing Director, further commented: “A significant private sale like this from a private collection reflects similar sales negotiated by Christie’s in Australia. These include works from the John Schaeffer Collection that have now found homes in institutions and private collections across the globe and here in Australia. Most notable of these private sales is the John Webber 1782 portrait of Captain Cook that was sold to the National Portrait Gallery for \$5.3 million that was previously in the Dallhold Art Collection put together by Alan Bond.”

“It is also fitting that the negotiations were concluded by our outgoing Chairman, Roger McIlroy, who after thirty years leaves the company. I would personally like to thank Roger McIlroy for the contribution he has made to Christie’s both in Australia and internationally, and for concluding such an important sale on behalf of Christie’s.”

###

Visit our Website on www.christies.com

Images available on request

Notes to Editors:

For further information about Christie’s Australia, please contact representatives

<i>Ronan Sulich (Sydney)</i>	+61 (0)2 9326 1422	rsulich@christies.com
<i>Patricia Kontos (Melbourne)</i>	+61 (0)3 9820 4311	pkontos@christies.com

Andrew Lloyd Webber is also to sell a highly important blue period Picasso in Christie’s New York sale in November 2006. Estimated to make over \$40 million, the proceeds are destined for charitable purposes. (see separate press-release)