

For Immediate Release

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**REDISCOVERED PAINTING BY SIR JOHN LAVERY TO BE SOLD BY
CHRISTIE'S IN SCOTLAND IN OCTOBER**



The Scottish Sale

Christie's at The Assembly Rooms, Edinburgh

28 October 2004

Edinburgh – Christie's have unveiled a previously unknown painting, *The Goose Girls*, by one of Scotland's most important painters, Sir John Lavery R.A. (1856-1941). Recently discovered in South West Scotland, the painting is a superb example of the artist's work and is estimated to realize over £200,000 at auction in Edinburgh at Christie's annual *The Scottish Sale* on 28 October 2004.

Lavery painted this enchanting scene in 1885 on his return to Glasgow from Grez sur Loing in France. The theme of the painting, that of the fairy tale goose girl, was one favoured by many of his contemporaries including Sir James Guthrie, Henry Herbert la Thangue and William Lee Hankey. In Lavery's depiction, attention is drawn more to the geese than to their attendants

who are trailing behind on the path. This exceptional painting, executed at the start of the artist's illustrious career, has never been exhibited and has been in the same private family collection until now. It is an important discovery and addition to the artist's oeuvre.

Born the son of an unsuccessful publican, Lavery was orphaned at the age of three and was brought up by relatives, initially in the north of Ireland and then in Ayrshire. He became an apprentice retoucher to a Glasgow photographer and attended the Haldane Academy, Glasgow, in the 1870s. After spending a winter term at Heatherley's School of Art, London, he moved in 1881 to Paris where he studied at the Académie Julian. At this time he was influenced by Jules Bastien-Lepage and painted in a *plein-air* style, working at the village of Grez-sur-Loing with an international community of artists.

After Lavery's return to Glasgow in 1885, he quickly became one of the leaders of the Glasgow Boys, a group of young painters committed to the ideals of naturalism. Lavery moved to London in 1896. He became vice-president of the International Society, which was set up in 1897 to hold regular international exhibitions in London, under the successive presidencies of Whistler and Rodin. When World War I broke out Lavery began recording scenes at military camps, naval bases and munitions factories. He was appointed Official War Artist in 1917, assigned to the Royal Navy; one of his duties was to paint the surrender of the German Fleet at Rosyth (Fife) in 1918. At the end of the war Lavery became involved in Irish affairs, painting his friend, Michael Collins, the negotiator of the Irish Treaty, on his deathbed. Lavery travelled widely between World War I and World War II, producing many 'portrait interiors' of the rich and famous, caught in a mood of elegant relaxation. He also painted horse-racing, swimming-pool and casino subjects.

Apart from the Lavery, other highlights in *The Scottish Sale* include an important work by the Scottish Colourist George Leslie Hunter (1877-1931) *House Boats at Balloch* (Estimate: £70,000-100,000), painted during the artist's most productive and financially successful period of his life at Balloch on Loch Lomond 1929-1939. Dr. T. J. Honeyman, friend of the artist, recalled in his monograph that his move there "*was a very wise decision to judge from the results, although he had a period of rather riotous living with certain bright young fellows and ended up setting the houseboat which he had rented, quite effectively on fire. The drawings, with their charred edges, which were rescued and from which he later made some fine canvases, have been preserved, and they stand in evidence of his new approach to an old subject.*" Other views of Loch Lomond from this period can be found in three major Scottish museums.

Other works by the Colourists to be offered in the sale include John Duncan Fergusson's *The Fete Cassis*, 1913 (Estimate: £20,000-£30,000) and *A Rocky Glen*, 1922 (Estimate: £30,000-50,000) which come directly from the artist's family and Francis Cambell Boileau Cadell's *Uplands of Iona* (Estimate: £10,000-15,000).

Thomas Faed was one of the most successful Scots-born artists working during the 19th century, who quickly established himself in both Edinburgh and London art circles. *Coming events casts their shadows before* (Estimate: £30,000-50,000) represents Faed at his best, incorporating its charming central subject within a distinctly Highland landscape; the dramatic light heightening the sense of anticipation inherent in the title. Other 19th Century works include Joseph Farquharson's *Homeward thro' the glistening Snow* (Estimate: £40,000-60,000).

Archibald Thorburn, the leading bird painter of the 19th Century, is represented in the sale with his watercolour *Partridge in the stubble, goldfinch on thistle in the foreground, watercolour* (Estimate: £60,000-80,000), an atmospheric and charming portrayal of partridges basking in the last of the summer sun.

A variety of works by distinguished 20th and 21st Century Scottish artists including William McTaggart, David Young Cameron, Edward Atkinson Hornel, Elizabeth Violet Blackadder, Joan Kathleen Eardley, Sir William Russell Flint, George Houston, Alison Watt and Jack Vettriano are also included in this special annual sale.

Notes to Editors:

In advance of the closing date for The Scottish Sale, Laura Lindsay and Phillip Harley will be in Scotland from Monday 9 to Friday 13 August, please call Angela McGrath on 0131 225 4756 to make an appointment. The deadline for consignments is 25 August 2004.

Scottish Sale Public Viewing:

Paris: 11 – 13 September 2004
London: 3 – 6 October 2004
Edinburgh: 24 – 27 October 2004

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Images available on request

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