

For Immediate Release

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**CHRISTIE'S TO SELL INDIAN ART FROM
THE COLLECTION OF THE WORLD-RENOWNED
FRENCH DEALER AND TASTEMAKER ARIANE DANDOIS**



Picchvai of Krishna and Radha
India, Rajasthan, 19th Century
Est. \$25,000-35,000



Celestial Woman
India, Madhya Pradesh, dated to 1173
Est. \$120,000-180,000

Indian and Southeast Asian Art

Including Property from the Collection of Ariane Dandois

September 21, 2007

New York – On September 21, as a key collection within the sale of *Indian and Southeast Asian Art*, Christie's will offer Property from the Collection of Ariane Dandois, a captivating group of 18th and 19th century Indian paintings and a select ensemble of sandstone and terracotta sculpture. Consisting of over 150 works of art, the Dandois Collection is expected to realize in excess of \$1.8 million.

A beautifully balanced group of sculpture and paintings, the Dandois Collection presents the market with a unique opportunity to acquire Indian works of art that are rarely featured in sales. The exquisitely intricate miniature paintings from the Ragamala; the beguiling and enlightening tantric paintings; the impressive-sized picchvai works created as wall hangings for important events; the alluring 19th century Kalighat paintings created to captivate pilgrims visiting the Kali temple – all exude an irresistible charm and act as prisms, reflecting the many different nuances and characteristics of the Indian identity. This rare ensemble of paintings is complemented with terracotta and sandstone sculpture, dating from the 1st century to medieval times.

Sculpture

A buff sandstone sculpture of Mother Goddess, India, Madhya Pradesh, Gupta Period, circa 6th century (estimate: \$250,000-350,000) leads the sale. The magnificent goddess is portrayed seated on a throne with a child in her lap, feeding a second child a mango and three further infants at her right side while an apsara is flying above. The scene is pregnant with symbols of fertility and motherhood.

A mottled red sandstone figure of a lion, India, Mathura, Kushan Period, circa 1st century (estimate: \$120,000-180,000), shows the animal standing with his left foreleg extended and his powerful chest covered with thick locks of wavy hair. This statue possibly served as a support for a throne or a capital. Mathura and Gandhara were respectively the Southern and Northern sites of the Kushan Empire but whereas Gandharan sculpture was executed in gray schist, the Mathuran equivalent was carved from mottled red sandstone quarried from the region. Another example of Mathuran sculpture, but from a later date (Gupta Period, circa 7th century), is a triangular relief depicting Vishnu at the center flanked by two standing male attendants and a rotund figure of the seated Ganesh (estimate: \$40,000-60,000).



An exceptional and rare find is the buff sandstone figure of a reclining celestial woman, India, Madhya Pradesh, which bears an inscribed date of 1173 (estimate: \$120,000-180,000). The jewelry the woman wears – earrings, armlets, belts, anklets and a toe ring – as well as the red lacquer dye applied to her feet, are part of the canon of adornments for married women, thus identifying this woman as the wife of a Hindu god.

The three dancing Mother-Goddesses which are portrayed on the buff sandstone fragment of a relief, India, Uttar Pradesh, circa 8th century (estimate: \$120,000-180,000) are part of the *saptamatrika* or ‘seven mothers,’ created by Durga to harness the feminine power of the heavens and fight the buffalo demon Mahishasura. After nine days of fighting, Durga and the *matrika* defeated the demon and restored the heavens to the gods.

Paintings

There is something entirely refreshing and eye-opening about the collection of paintings from Ariane Dandois. With much attention on modern and contemporary Indian art, revisiting the 18th and 19th century paintings augments the appreciation of later works while bringing a new level of sophistication to the older paintings. Ariane Dandois' collection offers an insight into four different types of painting: miniature, tantric, picchvai and Kalighat paintings.

A beautiful example of Bikaner miniature paintings is the group of fourteen paintings from a *Ragamala*, circa 1800 (estimate: \$80,000-100,000). Each miniature depicts a scene of daily court life and all show a text above the painting and an inscription on the back.

Ragamala paintings portray scenes connecting daily life to seasonal cycles and music.

Kalighat paintings were traditionally created by itinerant painters (*patuas*) who sang the epic stories they had painted, attracting pilgrims who visiting the Kali temple in Kalighat (Calcutta). Kalighat paintings usually have a rectangular format; the three Kalighat paintings offered are rare because of their exceptionally large dimensions and fresh colors. They portray Krishna, Durga and Shiva (estimate for each: \$60,000-80,000).



A sumptuous picchvai celebrating Gopashtami with Krishna, India, Benares, early 19th century (estimate: \$40,000-60,000) represents these typical devotional paintings, often commissioned for a public temple or private shrine. The present example was created in honor of Gopashtami, the festival that commemorates the day that Krishna graduated from calf herder to cow herder. The picchvai depicts Krishna at the center playing his flute beneath a tree, a single white cow behind him and twenty-two painted and decorated cows facing him. A second picchvai represents Rasamandala with SriNathji, India, Rajasthan, circa 18th century (estimate: \$35,000-50,000).

The sale offers a lively and comprehensive selection of tantric paintings, traditionally created to enhance meditation and spiritual serenity. Diagrams and geometrical forms are used as attention-focusing devices for practitioners of meditation and yoga. The sale includes a large Chakra *purusa* with diagram of the Middle World



(estimate: \$10,000-15,000) and a large diagram of the Middle World with Jina at the center (estimate: \$2,000-3,000).

Ariane Dandois



Ariane Dandois, the world-renowned French dealer and tastemaker, started her art collecting journey in the early 1970s when, intrigued by the delicate features and finesse of Indian works of art, she traveled extensively through India. Inquisitive by nature and highly sensitive to natural beauty and form, Mme Dandois became enamored of the country and its inimitable vivacity. As a result, Indian art not only constituted one of the cornerstones of her career as an art dealer but also became one of the true personal art passions of her life. The works of art offered in this sale are mementos of a life densely filled with travel, East meeting West experiences and the joys of discovering and nurturing connoisseurship.

Auction: Indian and Southeast Asian Art Including Property from
The Collection of Ariane Dandois

September 21 at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Viewing: Christie's Galleries at Rockefeller Center

September 14 – 20

About Christie's

Christie's is the world's leading art business with global auction sales in 2006 that totaled £2.51 billion / \$4.67 billion. This 36% increase over 2005 marks the highest total in company and in art auction history. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service, and international glamour. Founded in 1766 by James Christie, Christie's conducted the greatest auctions of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, and today remains a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 600 sales annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewelry, photographs, collectibles, wine, cars and more. Prices range from \$200 to over \$80 million. Christie's has 85 offices in 43 countries and 14 salerooms around the world including London, New York, Los Angeles, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Tel Aviv, Dubai and Hong Kong. Most recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in emerging markets such as China, India and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Dubai, Mumbai and Russia. Christie's also offers its clients worldwide access to its sales through Christie's LIVE, its unique, real-time online bidding service.

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