

For Immediate Release

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LEADING CHRISTOPHER DRESSER EXPERT TO SELL IMPORTANT COLLECTION AT CHRISTIE'S

Single-Owner Collection Celebrates 100 Years of the Design Pioneer



A James Dixon and Sons Electroplated Tea Service by Christopher Dresser (estimate: £12,000-15,000)

The Harry Lyons Collection: Late 19th Century British Design. 19 October 2004

South Kensington – In this, the centennial year of Christopher Dresser's death (1834-1904), Christie's is pleased to offer the most significant single-owner collection of objects designed by Christopher Dresser to come to auction. Amassed over 40 years by Harry Lyons, a leading expert on Christopher Dresser, this important collection is a tribute to the design pioneer and offers collectors a unique opportunity to bid for over 300 lots, all offered without reserve and with estimates ranging from £150 to £20,000.

Christopher Dresser was a pioneer in the field of industrial design from the mid-1860s to the 1890s. His versatility is demonstrated in his ability to design across a whole range of materials from textiles, ceramics, glass and furniture to metalwork. A true innovator, he aimed to bring good design into homes through producing everyday household items at affordable prices. Dresser was a contemporary of William Morris but his reputation lapsed into obscurity following his death in 1904 and it is only in the last few decades that interest in his designs has escalated. An electroplated teapot

design by Dresser in 1879 for James Dixon and Sons, recently fetched a record £94,850 at Christie's last Arts and Crafts sale in July 2004.

Christopher Dresser produced designs for the Sheffield based firm James Dixon and Sons between 1879 and 1882. The range of wares he designed for them represent the zenith of his career. Not only do they embody the essence of his design principles but also they demonstrate unequivocally his position as the first modernist designer. Highlights from the collection include a James Dixon and Sons Electroplated Tea Service by Christopher Dresser (estimate: £12,000-15,000); a James Dixon and Sons Electroplated Toast-rack by Christopher Dresser (estimate: £3,000-4,000); a Clutha Glass Vase by Christopher Dresser (estimate: £5,000-6,000) and an Ault Frog Vase by Christopher Dresser (estimate: £2,000-3,000).

The sale of his collection celebrates Harry Lyons' life's work and passion: "*I believe Christopher Dresser is one of the truly great design pioneers of our age. I hope this sale will inspire a new generation of people to collect his innovative designs to have and enjoy in their homes,*" said Harry Lyons.

Harry Lyons' interest in Christopher Dresser grew out of a general interest in the field of Design which was borne through his mother's appreciation of the simple lines and proportions of Georgian furniture. After a career in the Armed forces, Lyons spent some time in the Arabian Peninsula and was inspired by the colour and design of the traditional palace interiors. Upon returning to London in 1988, he set about establishing a secondary career as an antiques dealer in Arts and Crafts in which he could indulge his interest in design. Lyons is now retiring to spend the next few years re-examining the Design Registry at the National Archives, without the pressures of running a business.

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Images available on request
Visit Christie's Web site at www.christies.com

Notes to Editors:

- A gallery talk by Harry Lyons about his collection will be held on Sunday 17 October 2004 at Christie's South Kensington, 85 Old Brompton Road, SW7. Please contact Naushaba Awan for further information, tel: 020.7752.3236
- **Christopher Dresser 1834-1904: A Design Revolution**
The Victoria and Albert Museum, 9 September – 5 December 2004
This autumn the Victoria and Albert Museum will open the first UK retrospective on Christopher Dresser, one of the most influential British designers, to mark the centenary of his death. This exhibition will examine Dresser's career with examples of his silver, metalwork, furniture, ceramics, textiles, wallpaper and watercolours on display.
Exhibition ticket booking line: 0870 906 3883. Exhibition tickets are also available online at www.vam.ac.uk