

For Immediate Release

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CHRISTIE'S PAYS TRIBUTE TO A 20TH CENTURY STYLE ICON IN SEPTEMBER



"Shimmering Magic", 1966-67
Estimate: £150-200



"Gala-Abend" Japanese, 1967
Estimate: £400 - 600

Barbie: 1959 – 2002, The Ietje Raebel and Marina collection

Tuesday 26th September 2006, 10.30am & 2pm

Christie's South Kensington

ON VIEW: Saturday 23rd September, 10am onwards.

South Kensington – Christie's will be offering one of the most significant and complete collections of Barbie Dolls ever to come onto the market on 26th September 2006. Comprising some 4,000 dolls, it is thought to be the largest collection in the world, spanning the entire history of Barbie, her family, friends and fashion during the second half of the 20th-century. The sale will take Barbie fans and fashionistas alike on a fascinating journey from the very first Barbie, to limited editions, designer Barbies, Holiday Barbies and of course the infamous boyfriend Ken, right through to the more current dolls of the new millennium. Estimated to realise in excess of £100,000, estimates start at £80, both the view and auction will provide endless entertainment for Barbie fans young and old.

Barbie - was invented by Ruth Handler, co-founder of Mattel in 1959. The idea came to her as she watched her daughter Barbara play with paper dolls, and rather than assuming they were babies, Barbara was imagining them in grown-up roles. As a result, Ruth decided to make a teenage doll

that little girls could dream about the future with. She and her husband Elliott Handler unveiled Barbie doll, the teenage fashion model, at New York's annual Toy Fair in 1959. Despite initial skepticism from the trade, the rest is history. Ruth named the doll Barbie, after her little girl, and during the first year of production 351,000 dolls were sold.

Fashion - The late 1950s saw the beginnings of the trends that still strongly influence today's designers and Barbie encapsulated this perfectly with her wardrobe. She started following fashion and teenage lifestyle trends, eventually becoming known for blazing her own fashion trail.

In the late **1950s** and early **1960s**, she wore designer outfits such as “Gay Parisienne” (1959) which featured the famous “balloon-line skirt” conceived by *Hubert de Givenchy* (estimate: £400-600), and “Sweater Girl” (c. 1960) which featured a knitted twin-set reminiscent of *Lana Turner's* skirt and sweater appeal, (estimate: £80-100). *Coco Chanel's* influence can clearly be seen in “Fashion Luncheon” (c. 1966) featuring a *Jackie Kennedy-style* suit (estimate: £80-100), and “Solo in the Spotlight” featuring a *Balenciaga*-inspired gown from a design in 1951 (estimate: £70-100). Other highlights from this important era include “Enchanted Evening” inspired by *Grace Kelly's* sumptuous evening gown which she was photographed wearing in *Life Magazine*, January 1956, (estimate: £60-80), and Barbie No.1 (1959) (estimate: £800-1,200).

The late **1960s** and early **1970s** saw Barbie following the trends of London's pop culture and taking inspiration from the “flower-power” movement. Mattel even produced a “Twiggy” Barbie inspired by style icon Twiggy in 1967 (estimate: £80-100) and Barbie's fashions included “palazzo pajama” pant suits, the zany glitz of the “disco” era, hot pants, mini-skirts and flares.

It was in the **1980s** that Barbie collecting amongst adults really took off. With Barbie doll's original fans now in their twenties and thirties, Barbie collecting began attracting adults as well as little girls. In the **1990s**, some of the world's most famous designers such as *Bob Mackie*, *Givenchy*, *Versace*, *Vera Wang*, *Dolce & Gabbana* and *Christian Dior* began creating fashions for Barbie. The Bob Mackie designs set a new standard with over-the-top glamour for Barbie featuring stunning gowns of sequins and beads. These are included in the sale at £200 for a lot comprising 2-20 dolls.

Ietje Raebel – was born in Utrecht, Netherlands, in 1921, part time fashion designer, Ietje Raebel started collecting Barbies in the early 1960s. Originally buying them as playthings for her daughter Marina, she was driven by her love of clothes and fashion, to start collecting Barbie, who over the decades has become known as a fashion icon as well as a plaything. Fortunately both Marina and her friends didn't play with Barbie as children, so the collection is untouched and in perfect condition. Once Marina was a teenager, she joined her mother in collecting virtually every Barbie in existence, both vintage ones and ones that were current on the market at the time. Leaving virtually

no stone unturned, between them, they amassed the largest Barbie collection in private hands. It was Ietje Raebel's dream to turn their collection into a private museum, however she succumbed to Alzheimer's in 2002 and the dream has never been realized.

Barbie Trivia

- Ken is named after Ruth Handler's son
- Ruth Handler was born Ruth Mosko on 4th November 1916 in Denver, Colorado the daughter of Polish immigrant parents. She died on 27th April 2002 in Los Angeles, California.
- Barbie has had more than 95 careers – from rock star to palaeontologist and presidential candidate
- The first Barbie doll sold for \$3.00.
- Barbie is sold in more than 150 countries.
- Every second, three Barbie Dolls are sold somewhere in the world
- Barbie has represented 45 different nationalities
- Barbie has had over 43 pets including 21 dogs, 14 horses, 3 ponies, 6 cats, a parrot, a chimpanzee, a panda, a lion cub, a giraffe and a zebra
- Barbie's full name is Barbie Millicent Roberts
- Over 1 billion outfits and pairs of shoes have been produced since 1959 for Barbie and her friends, using 105 million yards of fabric

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

Notes to Editors:

This sale is part of **20th Century Week** at Christie's South Kensington. Other sales included in this week are:

20 th Century British and European Decorative Arts	Tuesday 26 th September, 2pm
Vintage Film Posters	Wednesday 27 th September, 2pm
Modern Decorative Prints	Wednesday 27 th September, 10.30am & 2pm
20 th Century Fashion and Accessories	Wednesday 27 th September, 10.30am
Modern Design	Thursday 28 th September, 2pm

Christie's South Kensington is the British market leader in Doll sales, holding two sales a year in Spring and Autumn. Featuring all the best known makes such as Bru, Steiner and Schmidt, past highlights have included a rare Charles II carved doll which realised £71,500 in 1989, and more recently an English turned and carved wood doll c.1794 which sold for £18,000 in May 2005. The most expensive item to be auctioned at Christie's South Kensington was 'Titania's Palace' which sold for £135,000 in 1978 and is the world record for the most expensive doll's house ever sold.

The Ietje Raebel and Marina collection

Public Auction: Tuesday 26th September 2006, 10.30am & 2pm

Address: 85 Old Brompton Road
South Kensington
London SW7 3LD

Public Enquiries: 020 7930 6074 / www.christies.com

Opening Times: Monday, 9am – 7.30pm
Tuesday – Friday, 9am – 5pm
Weekends, 10am – 4pm