

For Immediate Release

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AROUND THE WORLD IN A DAY – CHRISTIE'S EXPLORATION AND TRAVEL SALES GO FROM POLE TO POLE

Exploration and Travel with The Polar Sale

The P.R. Sandwell Collection of Pacific and Arctic Voyages

21 September 2005



King Street – Christie's is pleased to announce a series of sales dedicated to exploration and travel, to take place on 21 September 2005. There will be three main sections to the day; *Exploration and Travel*, *The Polar Sale* and *The P.R. Sandwell Collection of Pacific and Arctic Voyages*, all of which will reflect the magical, brave and romantic history of exploration. Included in the sale will be books, maps, pictures and relics representing expeditions and voyages to both Poles and spanning the seven seas.

Leading the sale of *Exploration and Travel* is a large and previously unknown Tahitian landscape by William Hodges (1744-1797), '*Waterfall in the Tiaurua Valley, Tahiti*' (estimate: £300,000-500,000). Hodges was the official artist to Captain Cook on his second voyage, and this work was painted upon his return to England from two smaller sketch panels which had been drawn in situ. The scene was recommended to Hodges by George Forster, the expedition naturalist, who said that he had found '*a scene.... which in itself was dark, wild and romantic.... I recommended it to Mr Hodges to visit the cascade which I had found in the valley; and accordingly the next day he went up with several gentlemen and took a view of it, and of the basalt pillars under it.*' The picture illustrates this tropical scene and portrays two groups of bathing ladies. On one side of the river are the Tahitian women, bathing freely and without restraint while on the other side of the river, a group of classical women look on with an air of reservation, overseen by the draped figure of death. Hodges was making an explicit comparison of the newly discovered paradise of Tahiti to the Arcady of classical mythology. This picture, one of the few large Cook voyage paintings to remain in private hands, remained unrecognized until earlier this year and represents an important discovery.

Also included in the sale will be a very personal relic from the travels of Captain Cook; his Antimony Cup (estimate: £40,000-60,000). Medical opinion of the 18th century was that illness could be caused by the build up of bad 'humours' in the body. In order to prevent serious illness, the body would be purged of these 'humours' by bleeding or induced vomiting. Antimony is a toxic metal that causes the necessary bouts of vomiting and diarrhea, and this cup would be filled with wine and used by Captain Cook to produce an emetic to cure fevers and other complaints while on his voyages.

Three sketchbooks by the first Prussian consul to Rio de Janeiro, Karl Wilhelm von Thérémín, will be offered in the sale, presented as a single lot with an estimate of £280,000-350,000. These sketchbooks provide an important record of the topography of the city of Rio de Janeiro, charting the city's development after it was opened to international trade and diplomacy in the early 19th century. Thérémín was appointed as the first Prussian consul to Rio de Janeiro in 1820, and spent the next 15 years there as a businessman and philanthropist to the city. The sketchbooks, which are being sold by his descendents, portray a number of scenes still synonymous with the Brazilian city, including the baroque church of La Gloria perched on the waterfront, the sweep of Botofago Bay, dwarfed by the surrounding mountains, and the towering Corcovado.

The annual Polar Sale is a particular highlight of the day, and will offer approximately 80 lots related to historic expeditions to both the Arctic and the Antarctic. This section of the sale will feature a range of art and objects, including watercolours, relics and photographs, ranging from Captain Oates's bandana to a stuffed Adelie penguin. A highlight of



this section is a de-luxe album of 79 photographs taken by Frank Hurley during Shackleton's ill-fated Imperial Trans-Atlantic Expedition of 1914–1916, titled '*Scenes and Incidents of the Weddell Sea Party*' (estimate: £25,000-35,000). This album, which is signed and dedicated by Shackleton to his supporter Frank Houlder, offers a striking flashback to the extremities of exploration in the early part of the 20th century. The photographs portray the difficulties faced by this expedition as their ship became trapped and crushed in the ice, and follows their subsequent struggle to survive marooned on drifting ice in the Weddell Sea, their escape to land at Elephant Island and their eventual rescue in 1916. This section will also offer a selection of relics of Petty Officer Patrick Keohane, who was a stalwart member of Captain Scott's shore party during the fated Terra Nova expedition of 1910-

1914. Keohane was part of the search party that discovered the bodies of Scott, Wilson and Evans in their tent in Antarctica in 1912. The relics include Keohane's green glass snow goggles (estimate: £2,000-3,000), his sledging harness (estimate: £2,000-3,000), as well as Captain Oates' paisley bandana, labeled '*Oates*' (estimate: £400-600). Also of interest in this section of the sale is an extraordinary portfolio of watercolours painted by Lev Kantorovich, which document the first ever navigation of the Northeast passage (estimate: £20,000-30,000). Kantorovich was on board the Soviet icebreaker *Sibiriakov*, which travelled from Archangel to the Bering Strait in 1932, and this portfolio includes Arctic landscapes and portraits of the crew, as well as sketches and paintings of phenomena encountered along the way, including Aorora Borealis (the northern lights).

The P.R. Sandwell Collection of Pacific and Arctic Voyages includes a library of over 190 titles and 450 volumes, representing every significant voyage to the Pacific and North West Passage from 1700 to 1850. This comprehensive collection, which was amassed over 50 years and inspired by P.R. Sandwell's own sailing experiences in Tasmania and sailing the North West Coast during the 1940s and 1950s, is highlighted by a very rare copy of '*Catalogue of the different specimens of cloth collected in the Three voyages of Captain Cook*' by Alexander Shaw (estimate: £35,000-45,000). Also offered from the collection are fine copies of Flinder's '*Voyage to Terra Australis*', 1801-1803, and Vancouver's '*Voyage to the North West Passage*', 1790-1795 (estimate: £15,000-20,000), as well as other classics of voyage literature including the accounts of Cook, Bligh, Dixon and others.

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Images available on request

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