

For Immediate Release

8 September 2006

Contact: Christina Freyberg 020 7752 3120 cfreyberg@christies.com

EXQUISITE MANUSCRIPT LEADS THE ISLAMIC SALE AT CHRISTIE'S

Islamic Art and Manuscripts

Christie's King Street, 10 October 2006

Oriental Rugs and Carpets

Christies King Street, 9 October 2006

London – A spectacular 18th century Indian manuscript is one of the highlights to be offered in the *Islamic Art and Manuscripts* sale to be held at Christie's London on 10 October 2006. In addition, the sale will include a diverse selection of Islamic pottery, manuscripts, enamelled jewelled boxes and works of art from the 9th century onwards. The sale of *Oriental Rugs and Carpets* the previous day, 9 October 2006, will include a wide variety of around 300 carpets ranging from magnificent early 16th century carpets to more contemporary examples.

A magnificent and large manuscript probably from Lahore in North West India, dating from *circa* 1730 leads the sale (estimate: £120,000-180,000). The volume, of around 500 sheets including 117 nearly full-page illustrations, contains an epic based on the Persian text of the Book of Kings or *Shahnama* that also includes elements from the much rarer *Garshaspnama* and *Sammama*. Superbly painted by a variety of artists, the best of whom is the previously barely known Miran, each sheet retains its original vibrant colouring. Among the memorable scenes depicted is a battle between two dozen demons and the hero, with each character exquisitely painted. Other manuscripts offered in the sale include an illustrated Safavid *Shahnama*, *circa* 1520 (estimate: £70,000-100,000) and a good selection of Qur'ans including a 16th century Safavid Persian example, (estimate: £15,000-20,000), a 17th century Mughal Indian Qur'an, (estimate: £5,000-7,000) and a spectacular 19th century Qajar Iranian Qur'an, (estimate: £20,000-30,000).

The sale also features two beautiful Indian enamelled gold boxes both displaying superb workmanship and an outstanding attention to detail. One is a white enamelled and ruby inset gold circular box, *circa* 1700 (estimate: £40,000-60,000), the other an 18th century green-ground dodecagonal gold box, possibly from Hyderabad (estimate: £60,000-90,000) with an intricate flower pattern. An exquisite Safavid Persian turquoise and ruby inset gold pendant, *circa* 1700 (estimate: £10,000-15,000) is also offered.

Medieval pottery ranging from the 9th to the 14th century is well represented in the sale, principally from two private collections. One of the collections is from The Estate of Frances Leventritt, New York and features ten medieval bowls. This includes an unusual Mesopotamian example with a brown lustre human figure in the centre, 9th century (estimate: £15,000-25,000), a Kashan silhouette-ware bowl with a turquoise glaze, 12th or 13th century, a Minai pottery bowl, *circa* 1200 which was exhibited in the New York *Persian Art* exhibition of 1940 and a further Minai pottery bowl, bought from Parish Watson and exhibited in the Royal Academy of Arts *Persian Art* exhibition of 1931. Estimates for the individual bowls range from £1,200-25,000.

The second collection of pottery includes a powerful and unusual turquoise-glazed sculptural aquamanile with decorative figures linked around the vase on the sphynx's back, 12th century (estimate: £15,000-25,000). The collection also features an extraordinary large very delicately potted Samarkand conical bowl with powerfully drawn confronted deer (estimate: £5,000-8,000).

A superb selection of nearly 300 decorative and classical carpets and rugs will be presented in the *Oriental Rugs and Carpets* sale on 9 October 2006. Among the selection of Caucasian carpets offered is an extremely unusual early 19th century South Caucasian rug which is remarkable in its design and quite different from any other known published example (estimate: £30,000-50,000). Classical 16th and early 17th century carpets are well represented in the sale and include a particularly early and rare "Lotto" rug, probably Ushak, late 16th century, (estimate: £12,000-16,000) and an Ushak carpet from West Anatolia, 16th century, (estimate: £10,000-15,000).

Woven in Heriz in North West Persia, Kashan in the centre and Kirman in the South East, the sale has a beautiful selection of Persian decorative carpets. Among these is a fantastic silk Heriz carpet from North West Persia, *circa* 1890 (estimate: £45,000-55,000). Renowned for their quality and design, the sale also contains a number of Kashan 'Mohtasham' carpets, including a very unusual ivory field example with a matching ivory border, (estimate: £20,000-30,000). More contemporary in style is a large Shahsevan kilim carpet, *circa* 1900 (estimate: £6,000-8,000) alongside a Shahsevan kilim runner, *circa* 1900 (estimate: £3,000-5,000).

Among the selection of Chinese and Peking carpets offered is a carpet of rare grapevine design on an ivory field believed to be based on Chinese ceramics of the period, 19th century (estimate: £22,000-28,000).

#

Images available on request

Visit Christie's on the Web at www.christies.com