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Contact: Jill Potterton 020.7752.3121 (jpotterton@christies.com)

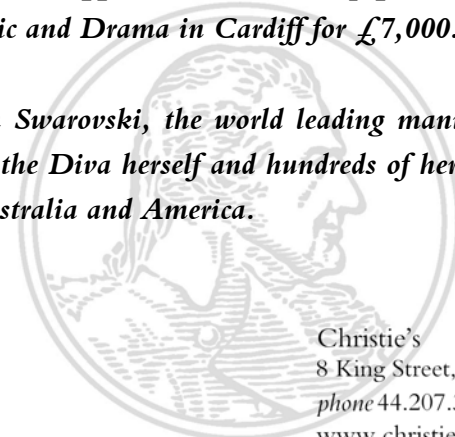
DAME SHIRLEY BASSEY HITS A HIGH NOTE AT CHRISTIE'S TONIGHT

Christie's in Association with Swarovski Gala Charity Auction of Dame Shirley Bassey's Glittering Gowns realizes almost a quarter of a million pounds

London - Dame Shirley Bassey's glittering gowns, which have dazzled audiences around the world for half a century, have been auctioned for charity at Christie's in London tonight. Timed to celebrate Dame Shirley's 50 years in show business, this extraordinary sale far exceeded expectations totalling almost a quarter of a million pounds (£244,300) and featured 50 breathtaking gowns spanning her entire career. Dame Shirley attended this historic sale and prior to the start of the auction made an emotional speech before treating the packed saleroom to renditions of many of her big hits including Big Spender, Goldfinger and Diamonds are Forever. She continued to entertain the assembled crowd throughout the auction, regularly bursting into song climaxing in a grand finale from the rostrum of The Party's Over.

The proceeds from this unique charity auction will be generously donated by Dame Shirley to the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama to establish an annual scholarship in her name and to the Cardiff-based Noah's Ark Children's Hospital Appeal. Dame Shirley purchased the Welsh flag gown as a gift for the Royal College of Music and Drama in Cardiff for £7,000.

The Christie's auction held in association with Swarovski, the world leading manufacturer of cut crystal, was a truly sparkling event attended by the Diva herself and hundreds of her loyal fans and friends, many travelling from as far afield as Australia and America.



A delighted Dame Shirley commented after the sale: “When I walked into the room at Christie’s tonight and saw all the gowns together it brought back wonderful memories of 50 years. It’s been an incredibly exciting evening and I’ve had the most fabulous time.”

Dame Shirley’s preferred designer Douglas Darnell, created the majority of these exquisite gowns, and she personally thanked and applauded him during the Christie’s auction.

Christie’s Deputy Chairman Jussi Pylkkanen and tonight’s auctioneer commented: “It was a great honour for Christie’s to be involved in this memorable event. Tonight’s sale made five times its original estimate and was 100% sold. It was a huge success for the charities and the greatest possible tribute to Dame Shirley Bassey.”

The highlight of the sale was undoubtedly the astounding price paid for the Diamond Dress, which fetched a staggering £35,000. The star lot was bought by Swarovski, who purchased a number of significant lots and plan’s to display them in its Crystal Worlds Museum in Austria. The second highest price was for the Goldfinger dress, which realized £18,000. It was bought by a friend of the Swarovski family who intends to display it in one of their stores.

Nadja Swarovski, Vice President, Swarovski said: “Dame Shirley Bassey’s collection of gowns represent a wonderful integration of Swarovski crystal and demonstrate how well our product lends itself to anyone who wants to shine. Swarovski have been thrilled to work with Dame Shirley and Christie’s and are happy that our liaison will contribute to the two benefiting charities.”

Following the sale, Lyn Jones, Chairman of the Noah’s Ark Appeal said: “We are extremely grateful that such a wonderful ambassador for Wales has been so generous to the Noah’s Ark Appeal. The first phase of the new hospital is going to be finished by the end of next year and Dame Shirley’s contribution has given us a real boost as we raise the additional £1.5 million to provide state of the art equipment for the new building”.

Edmond Fivet, Principal of the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama said: “We have had the most wonderful evening at Christie’s, watching the auction proceed and seeing the enthusiasm and excitement of Dame Shirley’s fans. The result is extraordinary and means that we will be able to reward annual scholarships to young people of outstanding talent who seek to train at the College. This is such a generous and thoughtful gesture by Dame Shirley who shows great awareness of the need to nurture and support young talent.”

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