

For Immediate Release

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**LIONS, TIGERS AND BEARS:
CHRISTIE'S OFFERS LARGEST WILDLIFE ART SALE**

**Sporting Art
November 28, 2007**



New York – Christie's New York is pleased to announce the largest and most important private collection of wildlife art, *The Doug and Ellen Miller Collection*, will be offered in the *Sporting and Wildlife Art Sale* on November 28. This exceptional collection features approximately 60 paintings and sculptures from 19th and 20th century American and European artists including, Bob Kuhn, James Lippett Clarke, Guy Coheleach, Antoine Louis Barye, William R. Leigh, Pierre Jules Mêne and David Shepherd.

Miller Collection

Collected over nearly forty years, Doug and Ellen Miller created one of the largest and most important collections of paintings, sculpture and wood carvings devoted to wildlife art in America. The artists in their collection capture a myriad of scenes of wonder and deep respect for wildlife on all continents. India, Africa and America are vividly captured in inspirational presentations of wildlife and habitat.

A media packaging manufacturer, Doug began collecting in the early 1960s because he was drawn to wildlife art as one of the best means for recording and enjoying the often elusive creatures around us. His passion for protecting the lives of wild species inspired him to collect paintings, sculptures and woodcarvings and to share them with the public. “*We've jeopardized these animals and it's our great responsibility to carve out parcels of the earth where they'll be able to survive. Beautiful art is probably the best way to arouse reverence and awe toward the creatures still living in freedom.*” A keen conservationist, Doug recognized the importance of wildlife art in educating the public on animals and the importance of preserving their habitats which will enable their survival. In 1977 he founded the Wildlife World Art Museum in Monument, Colorado which housed his collection on loan. The major purpose in founding the museum was to preserve through a comprehensive collection of wildlife art exact replicas of all forms of wildlife, particularly the extinct and endangered species, and to make the collection available and accessible to the public for aesthetic, scientific and educational purposes so as to create in everyone a personal commitment to insure the future and well-being of our threatened wildlife and the habitats in which they live.

The Miller collection offered at auction contains seven works by Bob Kuhn - one of the most distinguished contemporary wildlife artists to emerge in the last three decades. A master of vivid animal portrayal, Kuhn's remarkable knowledge of his subjects and his genuine appreciation for them is evident in his painterly and instinctive style. Highlights include, *Leopard in Light and Shade*, which is considered one of his most accomplished works (estimate: \$180,000-250,000); *Fire Storm*, which captures the intensity of movement as the mule and deer run ahead of a forest fire (estimate: \$180,000-220,000); and *Bright Tiger* which exemplifies some of the artist's best work and his belief that it's the painter's job to evoke the essential character of the beasts he portrays (estimate: \$120,000-180,000).

Another important contemporary American wildlife artist, Guy Coheleach, is well represented in the Miller collection. Inspired by a personal experience of being run down by an elephant in Zambia in 1972, Coheleach's *Manchurian Chase* conveys the energy and danger of tigers running towards the viewer (estimate: \$60,000-80,000). Also from this collection is a bronze *Rhinoceros* dating from 1912 by one of the finest wildlife artists in America, James Lippett Clark (estimate: \$20,000-30,000). Clark trained as a taxidermist under Carl Akeley of the Museum of Natural History in New York, and traveled to Africa for the first time in 1908.

Various Owner

The auction offers exciting works by some of the leading British painters of the 19th and 20th centuries. In the collection of Sir Alfred Ackroyd and later owned by Jack Dick who compiled one of the most significant Sporting Art collections of the 20th century, Ben Marshall's *A Light Bay and a*

Brown Hunter in a Paddock (1810) has exceptional provenance (estimate: \$200,000-300,000). This work shows his remarkable ability to imbue his equine subjects with a tactile sculptural quality. The horses' coats are gleaming and he has beautifully rendered the muscles and sinews beneath. A figure in his domain, Marshall's influence on the next generation of sporting artists is evident in the works of Abraham Cooper and John Ferneley.

Such influence can be seen in Ferneley's exceptional *Portrait of Two Mares 'Filagree' and 'Cobweb', and Foals* (estimate: \$200,000-300,000) from the Stoneleigh Chattle's settlement. Commissioned by The Earl of Jersey in 1827, it illustrates the two principle qualities of a portrait by Ferneley: the exquisite drawing of the horses' heads and the sophistication of his landscapes.

When Sir Alfred Munnings visited Pau in the Pyrenees he met the American couple Mr. and Mrs. Harry La Montagne and was commissioned by Baron Robert Rothschild to paint Mrs. La Montagne



on horseback. *Bitter Sweet* is an exceptional study Munnings undertook in 1921, of one of her hunters, and exemplifies the artist's ability to capture both the conformation and character of his subjects (estimate: \$80,000-120,000).

Munnings is further represented by two exquisite hunting scenes — one from 1912 entitled *A Huntsman Unlocking a Gate* (illustrated left, estimate: \$200,000-300,000) and *on the Moors* a study for the 1931 Royal Academy exhibit of the same title (estimate: \$150,000-250,000).

Three outstanding and varied portraits by John Emms are offered: *Hounds and Terriers in a Stable* (estimate: \$250,000-400,000), *Two Foxhounds and a Terrier in a straw bed* (estimate: \$150,000-200,000), and *Hounds in a Kennel* (estimate: \$150,000-200,000). These works demonstrate his unique ability to capture with sensitivity the characters of his subjects with fluid brushstrokes and impromptu compositions.

The sale also includes several American paintings including an impressive early work by Ogden Pleissner entitled *Wyoming Lake* depicting two fishermen struggling to net a fish in the awe-inspiring mountain landscape, probably illustrating Pinto Lake in the Wind River Range (estimate: \$70,000-100,000).

Auction: *Sporting Art* November 28 at 10am
Viewing: Christie's Galleries, 20 Rockefeller Plaza November 24-27

About Christie's

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More information about Christie's sale of *Sporting and Wildlife Art Sale* can be found on www.christies.com. All lots from the sale can be viewed online along with full catalogue descriptions on Lotfinder®, which also allows clients to leave absentee bids. www.christies.com provides information on more than 80 sale categories, buying and selling at auction, complete auction results, and Christie's international auction calendar.