

## **For Immediate Release**

September 28, 2007

Contact: Bendetta Roux

212.636.2680

[broux@christies.com](mailto:broux@christies.com)

### **THE ULTIMATE COLLECTOR CHRISTIE'S TO OFFER SELECTIONS FROM THE ALLAN STONE COLLECTION**

*“It was like being set free. But freedom had its price. I was totally an art junkie.”  
Allan Stone*

#### **Selections from the Allan Stone Collection November 12, 2007**

**New York** – On the night of Monday, November 12, Christie’s will pay tribute to one of the most zealous, passionate and erudite collector/dealers of modern-day New York, Allan Stone. An addictive passion for art is what drove this man, while a sincere and deep interest in the people creating it and those living with it, structured his business. For decades, Allan Stone and the Allan Stone Gallery were beacons of inspiration and trust for innumerable artists and collectors. The exhibition *Selections from the Allan Stone Collection* to open at Christie’s in late October will offer a window into the fascinating, invigorating and highly eclectic universe of which Allan Stone was the epicenter. The evening sale on November 12 will subsequently offer the opportunity to acquire part of the artistic habitat of a collector whose existence was guided by three qualities – an unerring sense of quality, an unshakable belief in the importance of art and an unequalled largesse.

Allan Stone had an unfailing eye which encompassed not only the giants of Contemporary 20<sup>th</sup> Century Art, but tribal and folk art, Art Deco, urban artifacts and almost anything which aroused his

visual senses. Long before they became famous, Stone had his eye set on the artists that evoked and later constituted Abstract Expressionism including Graham, de Kooning, Gorky, Kline, Newman, and Cornell, all of which were amply represented in his extraordinary collection. He had a broad-reaching eye, oftentimes unpredictable but always on mark and his passion could as easily well up for a cast zinc trade sign in the form of a larger-than-life bullock as for a superbly delicate de Kooning drawing. Only in his gallery could the dense, complex, steel sculptures of John Chamberlain have an equally vibrant and resonant presence as the lush paintings of dessert, delicatessen counters and landscapes by Wayne Thiebaud. Stone always had time to share his knowledge and passion and every visit to the gallery introduced one to a new artist, some whose careers never reached the heights of others, or a new, exquisite example of a non-gallery artist. David Smith, Motherwell and Morris Louis come to mind although Stone's name will forever be linked with re-discovering and understanding the genius of Graham and for introducing and energetically supporting the work of Wayne Thiebaud. His infectious enthusiasm formed the spark and the foundation of some of the most important collections of the last fifty years.

## **Post-War and Contemporary Art**

***"...a great painter whose magical touch is exceeded only by his genuine modesty and humility..."***

Allan Stone on Wayne Thiebaud

The Allan Stone Gallery gave Wayne Thiebaud his first one-man show in 1962. The success of this auspicious first show led to the artist's first one-artist museum exhibition, just a few short months later, at the M. H. de Young Museum in San Francisco. Thiebaud certainly rose to fame on the wave of appreciation for vernacular, popular or advertising content. He is, however, a superb painter, who uses his colorful and idiosyncratic palette and signature juicy impasto to enliven the atmosphere and animate cakes and candy but also to reveal an amazing intensity of color, texture and volume in the landscapes which he started in 1966. Thiebaud highlights in the sale are *Seven Suckers*, 1970 (estimate: \$1.4 – 1.8 million); *Tie Rack*, 1969 (estimate: \$1.4 – 1.8 million) and *Blue Hill*, 1967 (estimate: \$1.5 – 2 million), an exquisite landscape painting which could easily set a new price level for this type of work rarely seen on the market.

***"Art is man reaching above himself, reaching for the angels. This quest is exemplified in the body of Willem de Kooning's work."*** Allan Stone on Willem de Kooning

One of the important changes in Willem de Kooning's art occurred in 1963, when the artist left New York for a studio on the light-filled eastern end of Long Island. The dense, impacted space of de Kooning's mid-century masterwork *Excavation* was seemingly aired out by the move. In his new studio, de Kooning painted a series of atmospheric canvases of figures and landscapes, pastorals that, forty-five years later, remain startlingly lush and sexual. *Man* (estimate: \$5 – 7 million) is such a

work. With it, de Kooning combines two of the strains of his art up till that time: the bravura landscapes of the late 1950s and the celebrated *Women* of a decade before. Other works by de Kooning include *Study for Marsbes*, 1945-46 (estimate: \$4 – 6 million) and several drawings such as *Fallen Angels*, 1964-65 (estimate: \$500,000-700,000) and *Woman and Abstract*, 1952 (estimate: \$800,000-1,200,000)

***“But one day something ... pops out at you, and you pick it up, and you take it over, and you put it somewhere else and it fits, it’s just the right thing at the right moment.”*** John Chamberlain  
Chamberlain has spent a lifetime recycling modern materials into compositions that embody the spirit of their former life and simultaneously instill a feeling of awe and fear. In Chamberlain’s hands the modern-day steel horse becomes raw material for a violent and uncanny manipulation of industrial material into enigmatic objects, or rather totems of a modern secular culture hooked on speed. Chamberlain took the known visible world and transformed it into something new, something unique, and did so with glistening chrome and a full spectrum of brilliant coloration. His early sculptural work was heavily informed by the work of David Smith. This is evident in the linear compositions of his early welded steel works, their humble scale and nearly two-dimensional, frontal aspect. However, while Smith’s works aspire to the archetypal and transcend time and place, each element in Chamberlain’s early works retain their particular markings and often include bits of printed brand labels or industrial coloring. The sale offers several quintessential works by Chamberlain, including *Hatband*, 1960 (estimate: \$2.5 – 3.5 million), a seminal work created during the first year he began making his larger car metal sculptures and *Ballantine*, 1957 (estimate: \$800,000-1,200,000).

***“Was he an architect, a calligrapher, a mystic, a Zen master, or merely a superb, disciplined draftsman who learned to give vent to his frustration...”*** Allan Stone on Franz Kline  
In the late 1940s as Kline moved from small representational work to abstraction, his paintings became much larger in format, his forms simpler, and he began to paint out color with large areas of black and white. Kline's use of black and white does more than simply show contrast of high tonal values; he plays with the illusions of depth and surface, negative and positive space. *Untitled*, 1951 (estimate: \$2 – 3 million) is a splendid example and marks the beginning of the bold, daring black and white paintings.

***“Great artists can not stop creating though they know all the sorrows that follow.”*** John Graham  
John Graham, a born and bred European who moved from Kiev to New York in the early 1920s only to find himself at the heart of New York bohemia with artists like de Kooning, Gottlieb, Gorky and Newman in his most intimate circle, moved on to become the true catalyst and departure point for the Abstract Expressionists. Hugely under-appreciated in the 1960s, when his classically inspired works failed to resonate in a world revamped by abstraction, it took a true connoisseur like Allan

Stone to detect the importance of Graham's role in the birth of one of America's most significant art movements. *Woman with Dodecahedron*, 1959 (estimate: \$500,000-700,000) is a tour de force within the group of neo-classical figurative works which Graham begun in the 1940s and which became part of his signature series of women. Depicted is a woman sitting in a black full dress, hands clasped and framed within a subtle palette of bold blacks, ashy grays and muted blues. The sitter's flat décolletage, arms, and hands appear unfinished and are demarcated simply by bold, dark scribbles. Whether an intentional artistic device or not, this contradictory effect serves to press the figure against the background, vivifying the interplay of dimensional space and showing Graham's allegiance to drawing.

The sale will further include works by Arshile Gorky, Joseph Cornell, Lee Bontecou and Alfred Leslie.

### **Tribal Art**

Allan Stone was fascinated by the magical quality of tribal art and ritual artifacts. Highlights in the tribal art field feature a Sepik large male figure (estimate: \$120,000-180,000); a Songye power figure with small figure attached (estimate: \$150,000-200,000) and an Urhobo male figure (estimate: \$300,000-500,000).

### **Folk Art**

The formalized and puritanical lines of American Folk Art bore a perennial fascination for Allan Stone. This section of the sale will offer a Swift Meat Packing Company trade sign, circa 1900 in the form of a larger-than-life cast zinc bullock (estimate: \$300,000-500,000); a very rare pair of native American trade signs (estimate: \$200,000-300,000) and an Alpha locomotive (estimate: \$30,000-50,000).

### **20<sup>th</sup> Century Decorative Arts**

Celebrated for his highly personal interpretation of Art Nouveau, Antoni Gaudí (1852- 1926) stands as one of the most original architects and sculptors of the early twentieth century. His fluid, plastic forms in both architecture and furniture designs are uniquely his own and set him apart on the international artistic scene around the turn of the century. The appearance of works by the Spanish master on the market is an extremely rare occasion in itself, but having creations that were specifically designed for one of his most renowned and spellbinding buildings, La Pedrera, is a true once-in-a-lifetime event. Casa Milà or La Pedrera, built in 1906/1910 and a superbly organic and imaginative architectural creation is one of Barcelona's most striking and eye-catching landmark buildings. Its undulating façade and sculpted interior rooms flow and meander without the presence of one angular form. The elaborate wrought-iron balconies were the design of José Maria Jujol,

Gaudí's frequent collaborator. The sale will offer a pair of magnificent carved wood screens (estimate: \$1.5 – 2.5 million), whose sinuous, elegant curves delicately echo the exterior waves of stone and wrought-iron. This pair of screens is the last one in private hands and was one of the center pieces of *Barcelona and Modernity: Gaudí to Dalí*, a sumptuous exhibition that took place at the Metropolitan Museum in New York in the spring of 2007. The sale will also include a carved gilt-wood and plaster frame and plaque (estimate: \$300,000-500,000), which Gaudí, in collaboration with Joseph Llimonica, designed for the chapel of Casa Milà.

Carlo Bugatti, the pre-eminent Italian designer from the early years of the twentieth century, created extravagantly exotic furniture and interiors. Intensely personal, his designs typify the search for a new artistic expression around 1900. The sale will present a metal-inlaid stained wood and painted parchment double-sided partner's desk, circa 1902 (estimate: \$100,000-150,000) as well as a metal-inlaid, copper and stained wood cabinet, circa 1902 (estimate: \$80,000-100,000).

**Auction: Selections from the Allan Stone Collection**  
**Viewing: Christie's Galleries at Rockefeller Center**

**November 12 at 7 p.m.**  
**Late October – November 11**

#### **About Christie's**

Christie's is the world's leading art business with global auction sales in 2006 that totalled £2.51 billion / \$4.67 billion. Worldwide sales for the first half of 2007 totalled £1.63 billion / \$3.25 billion, an increase of 32% by £ and 45% by \$ from the same period last year and highest half year sales ever in art market history. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service, and international glamour. Founded in 1766 by James Christie, Christie's conducted the greatest auctions of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, and today remains a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 600 sales annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from \$200 to over \$80 million. Christie's has 85 offices in 43 countries and 14 salerooms around the world including London, New York, Los Angeles, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Tel Aviv, Dubai and Hong Kong. Most recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in emerging markets such as China, India and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Dubai, Mumbai and Russia. Christie's also offers its clients worldwide access to its sales through Christie's LIVE™, its unique, real-time online bidding service.

# # #

*Images available on request*

*Visit Christie's Web site at [www.christies.com](http://www.christies.com)*

More information about this Christie's sale can be found on [www.christies.com](http://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](http://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.