

## **For Immediate Release**

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### **LEGENDARY ROMANCE REMEMBERED IN HIGHLIGHT OF THE LATIN AMERICAN ART SALE**

**Extremely rare set of Simon Bolívar's campaign pistols presented by Doña Manuela Sáenz on behalf of *El Libertador* to be offered at Christie's New York**

#### **Latin American Art**

**November 17, 2004**

**New York** – The Latin American Art sale, traditionally offering works by South America's painters and sculptors, will present a highly unusual, albeit extremely important artifact connected to Latin American history; a fine cased pair of campaign pistols presented in 1830 by Manuela Sáenz on behalf of *El Libertador*, Simon Bolívar. A remarkable survival, the gold-damascened pistols are one of only two pairs of Bolívar's pistols extant and are expected to fetch \$600,000-800,000.

Manufactured by the most celebrated gun-maker of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Nicolas-Noël Boutet, the pistols epitomize 1<sup>st</sup> Empire fashions and sensibilities. The deluxe arms from Boutet's workshop at Versailles are collected today as the finest examples of the gun-maker's art, and his works can be found in many important arms collections in the great museums throughout the world. Bolívar obtained the guns circa 1805 when he was a young man in Paris, during which time he was a witness to the coronation of Napoleon I. He owned and used the pistols throughout the South American Wars for Independence.

It was Bolívar's great love, Manuela Sáenz, who presented the pistols to Ricardo Illingworth, an English émigré, who had come to Bolívar's aid in the aftermath of the 1828 coup, and was later dispatched on a secret mission for the General. The extensively inscribed silver

plaque on the case's lid records Manuela Sáenz' presentation on behalf of *El Libertador* to Illingworth in June 1830, and features intertwined hearts - hers and Bolívar's - Manuela's personal cipher.

One of history's legendary romances, the ardent affair between Simon Bolívar and Manuela Sáenz, commenced in the most romantic of ways: when Bolívar caught a wreath thrown from a balcony by Sáenz during his 1822 victory procession into Quito. As symbolized by the twin heart cipher engraved on the silver plaque, Bolívar and Manuela's lives and fates were connected in a most profound manner; it was she who literally saved Bolívar's life during an assassination attempt in 1828. Sadly, fate did not foretell a happy ending for the famous couple, as Bolívar died in on December 17, 1830 in exile in Santa Marta (just six months after the pistols were presented) just shortly before Manuela was able to join him.

**Auction:** Latin American Art

November 17 at 7 p.m.

**Viewing:** Christie's Galleries at Rockefeller Center

November 13 – 17

Christie's Paris, Avenue Matignon

October 5 – 8

*Additional information about the sale of Christie's Latin American Art can be found on [www.christies.com](http://www.christies.com) closer to the sale date. 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.*

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*Images are available upon request*

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