

For Immediate Release

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The Exquisite and the Sumptuous lead Christie's Islamic sales in October

Art of the Islamic and Indian Worlds

Christie's King Street, Tuesday, 23 October 2007

Oriental Rugs and Carpets

Christies King Street, Thursday, 25 October 2007



London - Christie's *Art of the Islamic and Indian Worlds* sale on Tuesday 23 October 2007 offers a rich array of beautiful and rare works. Leading the sale is the most impressive almost complete *Kufic* Qur'an to be offered at auction in decades, dating to the early 10th century (estimate: £400,000-600,000) *illustrated left*. This is from the *Hispanic Society of America, Deaccessioned by Order of the Trustees to Benefit the Acquisitions Fund*. Jewellery highlights include a rare collection of Indian Jewellery and the second part of the impressive Tazi family collection of gem-set Moroccan gold jewellery. 400 lots, crossing the spectrum of books, manuscripts, jewellery, textiles, woodwork, pottery, metalwork and miniatures, will be offered. The sale is expected to

realise in excess of £3.5million. The sale of *Oriental Rugs and Carpets* on Thursday 25 October 2007 will offer over 270 sumptuous pieces, including examples stretching across Asia and the Far East and from the western shores of Turkey to the Northern regions of China. This culminating sale is expected to realise in excess of £2million.

"No art is more purely Islamic than that of a beautifully written and decorated Qur'an. It is with great pride that Christie's offer two superb examples from the renowned Hispanic Society of America, in October. These are deaccessioned by order of the Trustees to benefit the Acquisitions Fund" **William Robinson, Director of Islamic Art and Carpets, Christie's London.**

Exemplifying this is the almost complete *Kufic* Qur'an (estimate: £400,000-600,000), which is from the Near East or Iran, dating from the 10th century, *illustrated above*. With controlled calligraphy and luxuriant gold illumination this is the most impressive *Kufic* Qur'an to appear at

auction in decades. A second highlight is another Qur'an, written in 1203 AD entirely in gold, with marginal notes in silver (estimate: £250,000-350,000). It is the earliest known complete dated Qur'an written in gold in the world.



Following the overwhelming success of *part one* of *The Tazi Family Collection of Moroccan Jewellery* at Christie's London, April 2007, which was 100% sold, Christie's are pleased to present *part two* of this extraordinary collection. Comprising mainly 19th century and several 18th century pieces, these jewels originate from the famous family of Tangier who were given the rank of *Pacha*, as the King's representative, *circa* 1684. Composed of 32 diamond and gem-set gold pieces, featuring stunning enameled backs and intriguing 'secret' compartments, it is rare that such an outstanding collection of Moroccan urban jewellery comes to the market. Leading the collection is a *Moroccan gem-set and enameled gold circular pendant*, late 18th century (estimate: £50,000-£70,000) *illustrated above*. This is delicately set with a dynamically juxtaposing palette of emeralds and rubies.

The Indian jewels, which form the second collection, offer equally vibrant colours and designs, in some cases echoing the forms of the Moroccan jewels. Spanning the 17th and 19th century the 81 pieces are principally from the Deccan and comprise pendants, necklaces, earrings and rings. Highlights include an *Indian diamond, ruby and emerald inset gold double-headed eagle pendant*, 18th century (estimate: £20,000-25,000).

The floor is one of the most important surfaces in an interior and Christie's sale of **Oriental Rugs and Carpets on Thursday, 25 October 2007**, offers an exciting opportunity to decorate and indulge. The selection of over 270 beautiful hand-woven antique carpets offer an exceptional array of colours, designs, textures and sizes. Classical carpets for traditional tastes are contrasted with more contemporary open designs and paler tones that appeal to so many of today's decorators and designers.



One of the many highlights is a 16th century Anatolian *Lotto* rug (estimate: £50,000-70,000) *detail illustrated left*. In a very good state of preservation, this rug would have been woven as an ambassadorial gift for a visiting dignitary or for one of the contemporary wealthy Ottoman patrons of the arts. A further highlight is a wonderful silk Tabriz carpet, woven in North West Persia at the end of the 19th century, which is in exceptional condition (estimate: £30,000-50,000). The subtle colouring combined with the lustrous texture and delicate foliate design epitomise the opulence and technical ability of Persian weaving on a larger than average scale.

A selection of rugs, carpets and fragments from the *Dr. Amir Pakzad Carpet Museum in Hannover, Germany* are an important portion of this sale. The museum holds a variety of 17th, 18th and 19th century carpets and rugs, as well as many Islamic objects and works of art. The examples to be auctioned are mainly Persian in origin, forming an interesting academic overview of Persian carpet weaving predominantly within the Safavid and early Qajar periods. Led by two “Polonaise” pile carpets, the selection also contains one of only nine known Safavid 17th century silk carpets embroidered in the same style (estimate: £15,000-20,000). Further highlights include a Caucasian silk embroidered prayer rug from the late 17th or early 18th century (estimate: £12,000-18,000), an 18th century Ghiordes prayer rug (estimate: £10,000-15,000), a 17th century ‘Lotto’ rug (estimate: £10,000-15,000), a mid 17th century Smyrna rug (estimate: £8,000-12,000) and an 18th century garden carpet fragment (estimate: £6,000-10,000).

Important rugs and carpets from other properties in the sale include a silk and metal-thread Koum Kapi rug, Istanbul, West Anatolia, *circa* 1920 (estimate: £20,000-30,000), an Agra carpet, North India, *circa* 1880 (estimate: £20,000-30,000), and a large Ziegler carpet, Sultanabad district, West Persia, *circa* 1880 (estimate: £40,000-60,000).

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A selection of images is available on request

Public Viewing Dates:

Art of the Islamic and Indian Worlds

Thursday, 18 October: 9.00am- 4.30pm

Friday, 19 October: 9.00am-4.30pm

Sunday, 21 October: 2.00pm- 5.00pm

Monday, 22 October: 9.00am- 4.30pm

Public Viewing Dates:

Oriental Rugs and Carpets

Sunday, 21 October: 2.00pm- 5.00pm

Monday, 22 October: 9.00am- 4.30pm

Tuesday, 23 October: 9.00am- 8.00pm

Wednesday, 24 October: 9.00am- 4.30pm

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