

CHRISTIE'S

PRESS RELEASE | LONDON | 3 SEPTEMBER 2021

PETER DOIG'S *HILL HOUSES (GREEN VERSION)* AND ALIGHIERO BOETTI'S *MAPPA* WILL BE LEADING HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 20th / 21st CENTURY: EVENING SALE INCLUDING THINKING ITALIAN, LONDON ON 15 OCTOBER 2021

- Peter Doig's *Hill Houses (Green Version)* (1991, estimate: £3,500,000-4,500,000), an early exploration of the artist's celebrated cabin motif, is being sold by the Estate of Donald R. Sobey. Proceeds of the sale will support the promotion and exhibition of contemporary indigenous art from Canada around the world
- Alighiero Boetti's *Mappa* (1988-89, estimate: £1,200,000-1,800,000) has remained in the same collection for more than 20 years
- Following the successful format of Christie's internationally focused Evening Sales in March and June of 2021, Thinking Italian will be presented as a key element of the 20th / 21st Century: Evening Sale, London
- The livestreamed 20th / 21st Century: Evening Sale Including Thinking Italian, London will incorporate Christie's Hong Kong and New York Salerooms



Peter Doig, *Hill Houses (Green Version)* (1991, estimate: £3,500,000-4,500,000) and Alighiero Boetti, *Mappa* (1988-89, estimate: £1,200,000-1,800,000)

LONDON – Christie's 20th / 21st Century: Evening Sale Including Thinking Italian, London will be highlighted by Peter Doig's *Hill Houses (Green Version)* (1991, estimate: £3,500,000-4,500,000), being sold by the Estate of Donald R. Sobey, and Alighiero Boetti's *Mappa* (1988-89, estimate: £1,200,000-1,800,000). Proceeds from Peter Doig's *Hill Houses (Green Version)* will support the promotion and exhibition of contemporary indigenous art from Canada around the world. The 20th / 21st Century: Evening Sale Including Thinking Italian, London, coinciding with Frieze Week, will bring together iconic works by artists from the 20th century whose defining influence can be seen on the artists and artistic movements that subsequently followed in the 21st Century. Together, across the two centuries, these artists radicalised artistic practice, challenging what had come before to continually diversify the trajectory of art throughout the last 140 years. *Hill Houses (Green Version)* is a rare early work that stands among Peter Doig's first explorations of his celebrated cabin motif and was acquired by Donald R. Sobey in 2003. The painting will be unveiled in New York on 7 September, remaining on view until 12 September, before being toured to

Zurich from 18 to 19 September 2021. Held in the same collection since 1998, and on long term loan to MART in Rovereto for more than 20 years, *Mappa* is part of the celebrated series of *Mappe* which occupied Alighiero Boetti for over two decades of his career.

Katharine Arnold, Co-Head of Post-War and Contemporary Art Europe and Mariolina Bassetti, Chairman, Post-War and Contemporary Art, Continental Europe and Chairman Christie's Italy:

"October's Frieze Week in London is defined by the vibrant presentation of artists in dialogue with one another across continents and centuries. This is the ethos that has shaped Christie's 20th / 21st Century: Evening Sale Including Thinking Italian, London and we are thrilled to offer two iconic works by Peter Doig and Alighiero Boetti as leading highlights. We look forward to welcoming clients to the galleries and the saleroom where we will be joined via livestream by our colleagues in Hong Kong and New York."

Hill Houses (Green Version) demonstrates Doig's early dialogue with paint in all its material and historical forms. For him, the medium's malleable, plastic qualities mimicked the way that the mind processes thoughts, images and past events. From hallucinogenic veils of vivid forest green, backlit by luminous yellow, an isolated structure emerges, suspended within the landscape like a watery reflection. An icy pond gleams white in the foreground, while the rising hillside road morphs into a flaming, abstract mirage, charred with vertical streaks of black. Completed in 1991, the year of Doig's first major exhibition at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in London, the work is a visionary counterpart to his iconic *Iron Hill* (1991), as well as the British Council Collection's *Hill Houses* (1990-1991). All three were based on a *National Geographic* photograph of roadside houses in Maine, New England, which reminded Doig of the rural Quebec landscape of his youth. Foreshadowing the spirit of his seminal *Concrete Cabins*, begun during the same period, the work's shifting layers of illusion dramatise the sensation of looking back on the past. Replete with painterly and personal narratives, it sets the stage for the complex synergy between memory, vision and pigment that would come to define Doig's practice.



In Doig's confluence of figurative and abstract techniques, art-historical echoes arise: the deliquescent landscapes of Bonnard and Cézanne, the intense chromatic visions of Emil Nolde and Die Brücke, the atmospheric psycho-dramas of Hopper and Munch, the transcendental surfaces of Abstract Expressionism and the marbled textures of Gerhard Richter. Paint's past and present formations are spliced, dispersed and recombined in manner that speaks directly to the act of remembering. This unique relationship between subject and surface would become a driving force in Doig's practice over the course of the following decade, evolving into a near-cinematic thesis on the way that memories and ideas mutate over time.

Mappa by Alighiero Boetti belongs to the beautiful, hand-embroidered tapestries which were produced by Afghan weavers in Kabul, and later in Peshawar, Pakistan, following Boetti's directions. They show the Earth's landmasses fragmented into various countries, kingdoms and unions, whose flags fill their irregular

outlines to create a dazzling *mélee* of colour, pattern and symbol. More than two metres across, *Mappa* sees the continents adrift in striking pale blue ocean, framed by a multi-coloured border. With chequerboard letters, the border reads in Italian *Alighiero e Boetti / a tempo / in tempo / col tempo / il temporale* ('to time / in time / with time / the storm'), with the date of execution down the right-hand side. Below, Persian script reads *Work of Alighiero Boetti, in the date one thousand three hundred and sixty, in Afghanistan. / Homeland, oh what a beautiful name you have Afghanistan – Your weather is pleasant, your scenery is landscapes*. In tandem with his fascination with time, the map embodies Boetti's dual concept of *ordine e disordine* ('order and disorder'). The landscape is presented as a series of unstable borders, redefined regions and fractured flags, revealing the world as existing in a vibrant state of flux. Indeed, considered together, the *Mappe* can be seen to highlight the arbitrary nature of these divisions, which alter between tapestries in line with political machinations and shifting power structures around the globe.



Boetti first travelled to Kabul in the spring of 1971. Having visited simply out of curiosity, during the 1970s many westerners visited Afghanistan as part of the 'hippy trail', including the artist Sigmar Polke, who found his experiences equally informative, he fell in love with the country. Boetti found there an escape from the fraught political climate of his native Italy, where he had drifted away from the Arte Povera movement among whom he had risen to acclaim.

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