

CHRISTIE'S

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RELEASE

PETER DOIG'S *SWAMPED* (1990) WILL HIGHLIGHT CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK 21ST CENTURY ART EVENING SALE

- *Record-breaking work has set a world auction record for Doig each time it has come to auction*



PETER DOIG (B. 1959)

Swamped

oil on canvas

77 ½ x 95 in. (197 x 241 cm.)

Painted in 1990.

Estimate on request

New York – Peter Doig's 1990 masterpiece *Swamped* (estimate on request) will be a leading highlight of Christie's New York Marquee Week this November, featured in the auction house's 21st Century Art Evening Sale. The painting stands as the most important of Doig's canoe series, considered the pinnacle of his oeuvre, and has established a world auction record every time it has appeared at auction. It was last sold at Christie's New York in 2015 for \$25.9 million, a new

record at the time. It is now poised to break the artist's current record of \$28.8 million. The painting will be exhibited in Christie's London galleries 9th – 16th October and in Christie's Los Angeles galleries 20th – 23rd October before returning to New York ahead of the sale.

Peter Doig's canoe paintings have come to be icons of contemporary art, and *Swamped* is among the earliest and most exquisitely rendered of the works in the series. *Swamped* has stood as an important touchstone for Doig in scores of major exhibitions, including the 1998 touring retrospective at Kunsthalle Kiel, Kunsthalle Nürnberg and Whitechapel Art Gallery, London; Kunstausschuss Glarus, Switzerland, 1999; Le Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Tate Britain, London and Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt 2008-2009; and Fondation Beyeler, Basel 2015.

Ana Maria Celis, Senior Vice President, Senior Specialist, 21st Century Art, remarks, *"Standing as a leading work within his highly celebrated canoe series, Swamped brilliantly showcases Peter Doig's singular and unique ability to manipulate the materiality of oil paint to render masterful compositions that exist on the border of figuration and abstraction. We are thrilled to present this masterpiece this November in Christie's New York Evening Sale, poised to yet again set an auction world record for Doig, a truly seminal artist of the 21st century."*

Painted in 1990, *Swamped* marks a pivotal moment in Doig's career, just prior to his graduation from the Chelsea College of Art and Design and his winning of the prestigious Whitechapel Artist Prize. This award would culminate in a solo exhibition for Doig at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in 1991. The prospect of this major institutional show, which took place at a formative stage in the artist's career, spurred an intense bout of creativity in the period leading up to the exhibition. As a result, during this time Doig produced a small number of large format canvases, including *Swamped*, which he now recognizes as the thematic matrix of his oeuvre.

With *Swamped*, Doig demonstrates a unique ability that has led him to become one of the greatest painters of his generation through creating a harmonious friction between figurative atmosphere, dense abstraction, and painterly meaning. The work portrays a solitary boat floating silently in a swamp. The curve of the white canoe's hull meets the open water and casts a perfect reflection, like an image in a looking glass, with a color-filled, wild and mysterious inverted universe stretched out beneath.

The origin of the series of canoe paintings was born out of a dream sequence in the 1980 film, *Friday 13th*; specifically from the famous scene where protagonist Jason Voorhees shoots out of the water to grab his only survivor from behind, dragging her into the icy water, and she wakes up in a hospital to find it was just a dream. Doig has continued to return to this film still and its image of the solitary canoe over time. The subsequent paintings are now widely recognized to be his most accomplished, including *Swamped* (1990), *Canoe Lake* (1997-1998), *Ghost Canoe* (1991), *White Canoe* (1991), *100 Years Ago* (2000) and *100 years ago Carrera* (2001) (Centre Georges Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne, Paris). Doig stands apart from any other painter in history in his ability to embody landscape in the brushstroke. Each painting from this group showcases his masterful technical skill and ability to manipulate paint in a way that is a simultaneously figurative and abstract celebration of the physical properties of nature.

Pre-sale exhibitions:

Preview in London: 9 – 16 October

Preview in Los Angeles: 20 – 23 October

Note to editors:

Christie's currently holds the top three world auction records for living artists, with the 2019 sale of Jeff Koon, *Rabbit* for \$91.1 million, the 2018 sale of David Hockney's *Portrait of an Artist (Pool with Two Figures)* for \$90.3 million, and most recently the March 2021 sale of Beeple's *Everydays — The First 5000 Days* for \$69 million.

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