

For Immediate Release

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THE BEAUTY OF GENIUS
Christie's Final Celebrations of Rembrandt's 400th Anniversary



The Rembrandt 400 sale and Old Master Prints: An Important Private Collection
Tuesday, 5 December 2006
Christie's London

London - Christie's is pleased to announce two special Old Master prints sales, *Rembrandt 400* and *Old Master Prints: An Important Private Collection*, which will be held at Christie's London on 5 December 2006.

Following the hugely successful sale of 50 Rembrandt prints in *The Private Collection of G.A.H Buisman JZN*, which was 100% sold at Christie's London in March, a total of 170 works by Rembrandt will be offered in *Rembrandt 400*, 30 of which come from the property of *An Important Private Collection*; estimates range between £3,000 and £300,000. The 170 Rembrandt works to be offered at Christie's provide a rare overview, spanning the breadth and depth of his printmaking oeuvre.

On July 15, 1606, one of the world's most versatile, innovative, and influential artists, Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn, was born in Leiden. Four hundred years later, Christie's join the final celebrations of the anniversary of the master's birth.

Rembrandt acquired international fame not only as painter and draughtsman but also for his graphic works. He explored different techniques, styles and subjects throughout his artistic life, with his first etching dating from *circa* 1626 and his last from 1665. The strength of his reputation as one of the greatest graphic artists remains to this day.

The works to be sold at Christie's reflect the broad range of subjects that Rembrandt addressed, from portraits, and self-portraits, to allegorical and biblical stories, landscapes, animal studies and even features an example of 17th century humour in a pair of prints about the cold weather, *Peasant calling out "tis vinnich bout"* (*it's cold*) with the response from a *Peasant calling out "dats niet"* (*that's nothing*), which is estimated to realise between £7,000 and £10,000.



Amongst the Rembrandt portraits to be offered are a number of intimate family portraits including *Artist's Mother Seated at a Table*, 1631, (estimate: £10,000-15,000); a double portrait of Rembrandt with his wife *Self-Portrait with Saskia* (estimate: £12,000-18,000); *Saskia with Pearls in Her Hair* (estimate: £6,000-8,000) and *A Sick Woman with a Large White Headdress*, circa 1641 (estimate: £4,000-6,000). The woman depicted is believed to be his wife, who died the following year in 1642.

For their time, Rembrandt's portraits were revolutionary. He believed the emotional character of the subject to be as important as the appearance, whilst his use of *chiaroscuro*, contrasting light and dark, is well-known and exemplified in both *A bearded Man in a furred Oriental Cap and Robe: The Artist's Father*, 1631 (estimate £7,000-9,000), illustrated on page one and also his *Self-Portrait drawing at a Window*, 1648 (estimate: £20,000-30,000), illustrated right. This self-portrait is a poignant work, which Rembrandt executed following six troubled years during which his wife died, his finances deteriorated and, notably, he etched no self-portraits. Though this work marks Rembrandt's return to himself as a subject, which he continued to examine for the rest of his life, it is also Rembrandt's last etched self-portrait.



The star lot is Rembrandt's *Christ Crucified between two thieves: The Three Crosses*, circa 1661 (estimate: £200,000-300,000), which is an intensely dramatic and emotionally charged depiction of the Crucifixion at the moment of Christ's physical death. The famous depiction of *Christ healing the Sick*, also known as *The Hundred Guilder Print*, will also be offered (estimate: £20,000-30,000), a fine impression of which attracted fierce bidding in the March sale and realised £58,800. Rembrandt's romantic evocation of *Saint Jerome reading in an Italian landscape*, circa 1653 (estimate: £50,000-70,000) illustrated left, is rendered with such a lightness of touch that it acts as a reminder that, unlike some prints of later periods by other artists, Rembrandt's own hand made each and every sensitive stroke.

Further works include Rembrandt's *The Goldweaver's Field*, 1651 (estimate: £12,000-22,000) and his dramatic landscape with a storm approaching *The Three Trees*, 1643 (estimate: 80,000-120,000). An early depiction of a *Golf Player*, 1654 (estimate: £6,000-8,000), as well as one of his most charming animal studies, *Sleeping Puppy* (estimate: £10,000-15,000), will also be offered.

Important prints by other old masters will also be offered in *Old Master Prints: An Important Private Collection*. Spanning 300 years of printmaking history and representing works by Albrecht Dürer, Hendrik Goltzius, Canaletto and Francisco de Goya, highlights include Dürer's *Apocalypse*, circa 1511 (estimate : £80,000-120,000) and Goya's *Los Desastres de la Guerra*, circa 1810-20 (estimate : 50,000-70,000). Impressions of these works are highly sought after and inspired competitive bidding in the March sale, realising £90,000 and £78,000 respectively.

Visit Christie's website at www.christies.com

Public Viewing:

Saturday, 2 December: 12:00 - 5:00pm

Sunday, 3 December: 12:00 - 5:00pm

Monday, 4 December: 9:00am – 4.30pm

International Tour Dates:

New York: 27 October - 1 November

Paris: 11, 13, 14 and 15 November

Amsterdam: 11 - 15 November

Christie's London established the world auction record for a print at auction when Pablo Picasso's *Le Repas Frugal (Bloch 1; Baer 2 II a2)*, 1904, sold for £657,250/\$1,173,341 on 30 November 2004; Christie's also holds the world auction record for a Rembrandt print at auction with his drypoint *Christ presented to the People; oblong Plate*, 1655 which realized £528,000/\$935,341 on 10 December 1991. Sales of Prints are held ten times a year, four in New York and six in London. Christie's is proud to have pioneered themed sales and print collections, the success of which is reflected in the superb results for the Albrecht Dürer collection of the late Count Antoine Seilern in 1998, which realised £1,211,613/1,984,622 and the Rembrandt collection of Walter J. Johnson in 1997, which realised £1,624,086/\$2,619,495. The current market for prints is very strong, with the September 2006 sale at Christie's King Street of Old Master, Modern and Contemporary Prints realising a total of £4,385,840/\$8,254,150, the highest total realised by the department since June 1990.