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VAN CLEEF & ARPELS: 1906 – 2006

“A CENTENARY OF GLAMOUR AND EXCELLENCE” CELEBRATED AT CHRISTIE’S IN 2006

Geneva/New York – Christie’s International Jewellery Department announces that two special tribute auctions to celebrate 100 years of the famous jewellers, Van Cleef & Arpels, will take place in 2006.

“To celebrate one hundred years of Van Cleef & Arpels extraordinary creativity, Christie’s will present a selection of the very best pieces from all periods of their history in two tribute auctions,” said François Curiel, Deputy Chairman of Christie’s and International Head of Jewellery. *“This special project will provide a superb overview of their history and pay tribute to the unique position the house of Van Cleef & Arpels occupies in the world of jewellery design.”*

The specially curated auctions will be staged in New York in October 2006 and then Geneva in November 2006 in conjunction with the regular *Magnificent Jewels* sales (11 October, New York; 16 November, Geneva).

Fifty jewels will be sold in each location, with a total of 100 pieces covering the 100 years of the firm's existence, and the auction will be presented in a collector's limited edition catalogue.

Offering a superb overview of these historic makers, all pieces will be sold with a special VCA Centenary commemorative certificate to mark the occasion.

Founded in 1906 by Alfred Van Cleef and his brothers-in-law Charles and Julien Arpels on the Place Vendôme in Paris, Van Cleef & Arpels is one of the world's most prestigious and innovative jewellers. They are renowned for their creative designs and techniques, using only the highest quality gemstones, such as the Mystery Setting also known as Invisible Setting, in which the prongs are hidden underneath a gemstone.

The House has always given form to these recurring motifs through inventive, very complex and continuously evolving techniques. The Van Cleef & Arpels touch: asymmetry for a sense of life and movement, metamorphosis as a guiding principle in transformable jewellery, and a mingling of the transparent and the opaque.

Van Cleef & Arpels' immediate success prompted the founders to expand to important seaside resorts in France, as well as abroad. New York City became their first location in the United States in 1939. Maria Callas, Grace Kelly, Audrey Hepburn, Jackie Onassis, the Maharani of Baroda, the Royal family of Egypt, the Shah of Iran, to name just a few, were all devoted clients of the firm and regularly wore their most astonishing creations. Today, the radiant glamour of Julia Roberts, Kristin Scott Thomas, Sharon Stone, Zhang Ziyi and Uma Thurman is lit up by the jeweller. With 49 boutiques all over the world, the firm is still regarded as one of the foremost contemporary jewellers, maintaining the tradition of excellent craftsmanship and original designs.

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Christie's is the world market leader in jewellery with an average of \$230 million of annual sales worldwide. Christie's holds major jewellery sales in Geneva, Hong Kong, London, New York and Paris. Christie's holds many world auction records for jewellery including the record for a natural pearl necklace with a two strand necklace of 88 pearls which sold for \$3.1 million in Geneva in November 2004. Christie's jewellery sales cater to a vast audience of international collectors looking to buy a range of magnificent jewellery, from a single pair of ruby-inlaid cufflinks to a 20 carat diamond ring.