

For Immediate Release

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LIFE'S A PICNIC! TERRIFIC TEDDIES AT CHRISTIE'S FOR CHRISTMAS



Will, a fine Steiff teddy bear
Estimate on request



A rare Steiff 1920s display bear with bending legs
Estimate: £3000-5000

Teddy Bears 1 December 2004

South Kensington – ‘Will’, a fine *Steiff* teddy bear who belonged to one of the world’s leading teddy bear collectors, stars in Christie’s sale of *Teddy Bears* on 1 December in the countdown to Christmas. There are a number of *Steiff* teddy bears included in this impressive sale, many of them rare and unusual, and all of them looking for good homes; ideal for Christmas presents or an addition to a collection. From rare and wonderful teddy bears to rabbits, birds and Mickey Mouse, there is something for everyone’s Christmas wish-list.

‘Will’ was part of the renowned collection of the late Pam Hebbs, one of the world’s first teddy bear dealers, who began collecting in the late 1970s. She was pioneer of the hobby, and is the author of one of the first ever reference books on teddy bears. Will is a beautiful example of a *Steiff* bear from the pre-war period, with similar features to a real bear: long arms, pronounced muzzle, and a humped back (estimate on request).

The sale features a great selection of traditional bears, including a range of *Steiff* bears dating from the early 1900s, and others made by *Chad Valley*, *Merrythought* and *Farnell* among others. A particular treat is a *Farnell* teddy bear, dating from the 1910-20s (estimate: £1,500-2,000). Christopher Robin's original Pooh Bear was manufactured by the same company, *J.K. Farnell* of London and is currently, along with all his chums, in the New York Library.

Another rare and extraordinary bear in the sale is a rare *Steiff* display bear from the 1920s, with unusual bent legs, enabling him to be seated in a chair. It is thought that he was specially made for an exhibition or a shop window, and is one of only two known examples in existence (estimate: £3,000-5,000). Other *Steiff* bears include a delightful cone-nosed teddy bear, complete with the original *Steiff* trademark 'elephant' ear button, expected to realize between £6,000 and £8,000 as well as a large *Steiff* teddy bear with blonde mohair (estimate: £7,000-10,000).

Also featured in the sale is a unique journal written by an American couple whilst on a three-month trip to the UK in 1907. The couple were travelling without their children, so they kept a journal to send back to them, told entirely through the eyes of two bears, 'Snowball' and 'Baby'. The touching journal is presented complete with original illustrations and poems about the bears' adventures (estimate: £800-1,200).

The sale also includes fantastic teddy bear-related items, including four unusual *Schucco* teddy bear compacts and lipstick holders, for the glamorous ladies of the 1930s. Three of these are fabulously brightly coloured and with estimates ranging from £400 to £800 each, they make the ideal Christmas treat. Children can also expect to be glamorous, with a rare *Strunz* teddy bear muff for keeping their little hands warm (estimate: £800-1,200). Other toys include a rare early set of *Steiff* monkey skittles, (estimate: £6,000-8,000), an amusing German felt pull-along duck (estimate £300-500) and hundreds of other toys to treasure for years to come.

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Images available on request

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Notes to Editors:

Christie's is the market leader in Teddy Bear sales and is the only auction house to hold sales devoted entirely to Teddy Bears. Since Christie's Teddy Bear sales were introduced 12 years ago, the demand for bears has increased exponentially in view of the never-ending popularity of these soft toys. Christie's set the world auction record for a Teddy Bear when "Teddy Girl," a cinnamon Steiff teddy bear sold for £110,000 in December 1994. Christie's holds two sales a year in London devoted to teddy bears and soft toys.