

For Immediate Release

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CRAFTY WOOD

Treen for the Table

Christie's South Kensington

Wednesday, 8 November 2006 at 2.00pm



A collection of four English lignum vitae coffee grinders
17th century (estimates range £1,000-4,000)

South Kensington – A magnificent and comprehensive collection of treen, domestic objects turned and hewn from wood, gathered by the late Jonathan Levi will be offered in a fascinating single owner sale, *Treen for the Table*, on Wednesday, 8 November 2006 at Christie's South Kensington. With estimates ranging from £200 upwards, this extraordinary collection of over 200 lots is estimated to fetch in excess of £200,000.

The term treen literally means *made of tree*. It is possibly also derived from the old English term for being turned on a lathe which is *tyrn*. The exquisite Levi treen collection includes English and European examples, dating from the medieval period to the early 19th century, with the majority relating to eating and drinking, each with a glorious rich patina. It also includes the best collection of drinking vessels ever to come to the market.

This superb collection was built up over a ten year period by Jonathan Levi, a widely respected gastroenterologist. His initial fascination with trees and woodlands led to his discovery and enthusiasm for these antique wooden objects. Together with his wife Mary, he would regularly trawl every market, auction, antiques fair and shop looking for interesting objects. Levi was a discerning and discriminating collector, with an eye for unusual and interesting styles, rare forms and early examples. In 1998, he published a book on the subject, *Treen for the Table*, which is now accepted and frequently quoted as a standard reference work.

Treen objects are seen by many as the true 'folk art' heritage of the British Isles, conveying ingenious versatility and charming naïve craftsmanship. The examples offered are now extremely

rare survivors, and as such are very highly prized by collectors. In the drinking section are early goblets including an English fruitwood goblet, *circa* 1620 (estimate: £5,000-8,000) and a pair of English decorated pear-wood goblets, *circa* 1730 (estimate: £8,000-12,000) together with a superbly detailed English engine-turned 'York' tankard, *circa* 1650 (estimate: £10,000-15,000), in addition to punch ladles, wassail bowls, Scottish quaiches, and Irish lamhogs.

Occasionally items were whittled as tokens of love as can be seen in the example of a large Welsh beech wood love token spoon, early 19th century (estimate: £4,000-6,000). Further examples in the collection include a Scottish cedar wood and silver mounted quaich, 1707 (estimate: £5,000-8,000), a collection of three English treen mufineers, late 17th century (estimates range from £2,000-4,000) and a collection of four English lignum vitae coffee grinders, 17th century (estimates range from £1,000-4,000).

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Images available on request
Visit Christie's website at www.christies.com

CHRISTIE'S SOUTH KENSINGTON

85 Old Brompton Road, SW7 3LD

Nearest Underground: South Kensington

Public Enquiries: 020 7930 6074

Public Viewing:

Saturday 4 November: 10am – 4.00pm

Sunday 5 November: 10am – 4.00pm

Monday 6 November: 9am – 7.30pm

Tuesday 7 November: 9am – 5.00pm

Sale: Wednesday, 8 November 2006, 2.00pm

Christie's South Kensington is open seven days a week with monthly sales for the home on Sundays. Throughout 2006, Christie's South Kensington will hold 22 weeks of Interior Sales which bundle together all the regular home furnishing auctions over one week in the single easy, magazine-style catalogue.

The UK's busiest auction house, Christie's South Kensington offers more sales in more categories than any other auction house. Prices range from £200 to over £20,000, with the average price at just under £1,000. For those contemplating selling, Christie's expertise is also available 7 days a week, free of charge, at the Valuation Counter to advise you on the current market value for your works of art.

Established in 1975 on the Old Brompton Road, Christie's South Kensington offers over 50,000 objects a year including works of art, furniture, paintings, prints and drawings, glass, ceramics, lighting, modern design, fashion, jewellery and silver. There is something for everyone and all you need to decorate your home or start a collection.