

For Immediate Release

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FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE...

A Unique Clock by Fabergé, commissioned to celebrate the Silver Wedding Anniversary of Emperor Alexander III and Empress Maria Feodorovna to be sold by Christie's.

Russian Works of Art

29 November 2006



London - A spectacular and unique clock made by Fabergé to celebrate the silver wedding anniversary of Alexander III and Empress Maria Feodorovna, will be sold at Christie's London on 29 November 2006 and is expected to fetch between £4,000,000 and £6,000,000. Astonishingly, the clock escaped the devastation of the Russian Revolution and it is thought that it was sold, along with other confiscated art, by the Soviet Regime in the 1920s or 30s.

The Anniversary Clock is the most important work of art by Fabergé seen at auction since Christie's sold Fabergé's Winter Egg in 1994 for \$9.9million/£4.5 million in 2002, an auction record which still stands for any Russian work of art. It is, arguably, the most important clock that Fabergé ever made.

In 1891 Russia was at the height of her splendour and the court glittered under Emperor Alexander III and his wife, Empress Maria Feodorovna, who celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary that year, as well as the tenth anniversary of their reign. Their love affair began in 1866 after the untimely death of Alexander's brother, Nicholas, to whom Maria was then betrothed. Their marriage, in 1867, resulted in six children.

The clock, given to the Tsar and his wife by 32 members of the Imperial Russian family is a tour de force in silver, onyx and diamonds. Letters concerning the original order exist and show the clock cost over four times the amount paid to Fabergé by the Emperor for the Easter egg he gave his wife that year. The clock was given pride of place in the Blue Room of the Anichkov Palace, the Imperial family's residence in St. Petersburg. It measures 27 inches high and surrounding the green onyx diamond set clock face are 25 superbly cast cherubs each holding the attributes of Love and Music.

The American businessman and dealer, Armand Hammer is known to have purchased works of art formerly in the Anichkov Palace from the Soviets following the Russian Revolution and it seems likely that this is how it reached the US. The clock was exhibited, prior to its sale at Christie's New York in 1996, at the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg in 1993. It was exhibited later that year at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris and in 1994 it was included in the celebrated Fabergé exhibition at the V&A in London.

The names of the members of the household who presented the clock are inscribed on the cartouche-shaped plaque on the back of the clock. They included the Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolaevich, Alexander's uncle and most senior descendent of Nicholas I; the Grand Duchess Olga Nikolaievna, Nicholas I's daughter who became Queen of Wüttemberg, and the Grand Duchess Militsa Nikolaievna, Princess of Montenegro who introduced Rasputin to the last Empress of Russia, Alexandra Feodorovna.

Russian Week at Christie's in London – 27-30 November

28 November	Icons	South Kensington
29 November	Important Russian Pictures	King Street
29 November	Russian Works of Art	King Street
30 November	Valuable Russian Books and Manuscripts	King Street
30 November	19thC European Art including Russian Pictures	South Kensington

Christie's devotes an entire week of sales to Russian Art in London from 27-30 November. Pre sale viewing for the Russian Week sales will take place in London from 27-28 November 2006. (Separate press release available).

Exhibition of Highlights from Russian Art Week in Samara – 9-13 November

From 9-13 November Christie's will stage an exhibition in Samara, the first time an international auction house has held such an event in Russia. The exhibition will feature the most rare and important highlights from the Russian Picture sale, to be staged at Christie's London on 29 November 2006. This exhibition is a continuation of Christie's commitment to bringing the most important works of art available in the international art market to Moscow, a world-class centre of artistic and economic excellence, and is the fifth such exhibition Christie's have organized in Russia in the last decade

Notes to Editors:

- Christie's were the first auction house to devote sales to Russian art although the connection between Russia and the world's leading auction house extends back to the 18th Century when James Christie, the company founder, helped negotiate Robert Walpole's Collection of Pictures to Catherine the Great of Russia, now the core of the Hermitage Collection.
- Christie's have held Russian sales for the last 30 years – starting in Geneva and then in London and New York. Recently we have seen the market grow substantially, from auctions

of £5.6 million worldwide in 2000 to £24.3 million in 2005. The first half of 2006 saw Russian art realize \$15 million in global sales. In addition to these figures, in 2005 over 775 lots of Russian origin were sold in sales other than Russian auctions, generating sales of over £25 million. In 2006 to date we have sold 569 items of Russian origin in auctions other than the Russian sales, collectively totaling over £35 million.

- Christie's Russian department holds world auction records for the top Russian artists, including Nicholas Roerich, Ivan Aivazovsky, Ili'a Repin, Konstantin Somov, Boris Kustodiev, Isaac Levitan and Ivan Shishkin, and the world auction record for any Russian Work of Art (the 2002 sale of Faberge's Imperial Winter Egg for \$9.9 million)

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For further information on any aspect of the international art market, images or interviews please contact Christie's Press Office on 020 7389 2664. Christie's dedicated email address for Russian clients is po-ruski@christies.com