

For Immediate Release

Wednesday, 19 November 2008

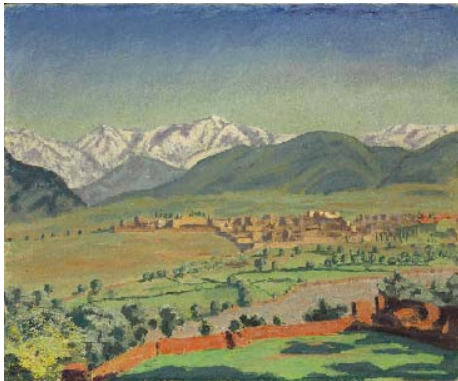
Press Release

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A TREASURE TROVE OF DELIGHTS: 20th Century British Art at Christie's in December



**20th Century British Art
Friday, 12 December at 10.30am**

London – Lovers of *20th Century British Art* will be spoilt for choice at Christie's auction on Friday, 12 December. The final sale of *British Art Week*, winter 2008, it comprises a superb combination of over 140 paintings and sculptures with stellar provenance, by the greatest artists of the century. Headlining the sale is *A view of Marrakech, circa 1950-1*, by the acclaimed British Prime Minister (1940-1945 & 1951-1955) Sir Winston Churchill, O.M., R.A. (1874-1965) (estimate: £400,000-600,000) *illustrated top left*. Originally in the collection of Sarah Churchill, Lady Audley, this work is offered fresh to the market for the first time in over two decades. The sale as a whole is expected to realise in the region of £6.5million.

An internationally respected political figure, Sir Winston Churchill was also an officer in the British Army, a historian, a Nobel Prize-winning writer, and an artist. He is known to have loved Marrakech for its warmth, light and the variety of subjects awaiting his artistic interpretation. Having initially been advised to visit Morocco by artist Sir John Lavery, amongst other friends, Churchill made his first visit in the winter of 1935-6 and proceeded to undertake several lengthy trips to Marrakech during the rest of his lifetime. The Atlas Mountains in the background of this work were a favourite subject; he embraced the artistic challenges of painting the desert outside the city, its green environs and also its walls. This work is very unusual as it combines all of these aspects prominently within one canvas and even bears his initials, which he rarely added to his paintings. All of these factors combine to reflect that this work, which remained in his studio after his death, is likely to have held special meaning.



Two other paintings with notable provenance include a beautiful depiction of *Mughetti (Lily of the Valley), circa 1921-2* (estimate: £60,000-80,000), by Winifred Nicholson (1893-1981). It is a painting which the artist recorded in letters to her husband, the artist Ben Nicholson, as having great personal significance. Painted soon after their marriage, the flowers were a gift from her husband; she recognised it as the first painting in which she found her true style and felt that it expressed all that love holds. This work, with its

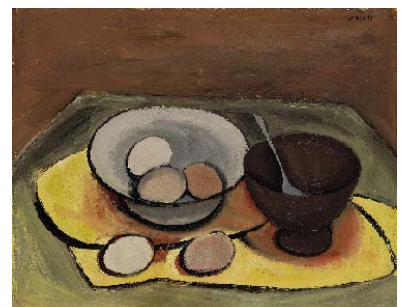
many intimate connections to the artist, was given by Nicholson to her friend Mrs E.J. Hooper (née Jenkinson) who had also studied with her and Ben at Byam Shaw School of Art before the First World War. It has been passed by descent to the present owner and is offered for the first time at auction. *The Dark Pond*, 1915, a watercolour by Paul Nash (1899-1946), was given by the artist to the present owner's mother and passed by descent – again having never before been offered for sale (estimate: £25,000-35,000). The setting for the work is Black Park, a country park in Buckinghamshire which has a large lake surrounded by pine trees and is close to the Nash's family home in Iver Heath. The park, which is next to Pinewood Film Studios, has been used as an outdoor location for many films, including *Casino Royale* (2006), *Sleepy Hollow* (1999) and *Goldfinger* (1964).

Laurence Stephen Lowry, R.A. (1887-1976) is well represented in the sale, which features nine works by the artist, most of which are offered fresh to the market for the first time in two decades or more. Seven paintings include: *A Removal*, 1928 (estimate: £300,000-500,000) illustrated top right page 1; *Man Standing on Steps*, 1964 (estimate: £200,000-300,000); *Going to the Mill*, 1959 (estimate: 200,000-300,000); *Seascape*, 1945 (estimate: £150,000-200,000); *At the Factory Gate*, 1968 (estimate: £120,000-180,000); *Landscape with Figures*, 1957 (estimate: £120,000-180,000) and *River Scene*, 1944 (estimate: £70,000-100,000). There are also two drawings: *Standing Figure, Ormskirk*, 1965 (estimate: £12,000-18,000) and *Seascape*, 1945 (estimate: £6,000-8,000).



Amidst the earliest paintings to be offered in the sale is *Among the London Searchlights*, 1918 (estimate: £100,000-150,000), by Christopher Richard Wynne Nevinson, A.R.A. (1889-1946). This work is remarkable, as it was given as a blank canvas by the artist to be offered at Christie's Red Cross Sale, London, April 1916, where it was purchased by Lady Parsons, for whom it was then specially painted by the artist in 1918. Nevinson executed this work whilst in a hot air balloon, tethered above London Bridge. Painted during the First World War it is one of a group of pictures by Nevinson of searchlights along the Thames, a subject which appealed to his celebration of the modern. An even closer, poignant affinity between the artist and the Red Cross 1916 charity sale at Christie's springs from the fact that in August 1914 Nevinson had been an ambulance driver for the Red Cross in France. He later went on to become an Official War Artist, in 1917; experiencing the war from both the front line in France and from home.

Further painting highlights, which date to Post-War Britain, include *Two Bowls with Eggs*, 1947 (estimate: £250,000-350,000) by William Scott, R.A. (1913-1989), which is offered for sale for the first time in over a decade, illustrated left and *Garden (Sun): 1956 (May)*, by Patrick Heron (1920-1999) (estimate: £250,000-350,000). Scott was enormously inspired by the French still life paintings of Chardin, Cezanne and Braque, the present work is a very rare oil still life which is recognised as being part of the important foundations for Scott's mature work, clarifying the style that he would develop over most of the following three decades.



Heron's work was executed just two months after he completed *Camellia Garden*: March 1956, which set a world auction record for the artist when it sold at Christie's 20th Century British Art sale in June 2008. The present work is also a joyous celebration of colour and the beauty of nature and is set to generate further excitement.

Continuing the strength of the sculpture section offered in Christie's 20th Century British Art auctions in previous seasons, this sale offers a wonderful array of important and beautiful works. Amongst the main highlights are two key works: *Horizontal Form*, 1968 by Dame Barbara Hepworth (1903-1975) (estimate: £150,000-250,000) *illustrated right* and *Janus 1*, a unique work conceived in 1959 by William Turnbull (b.1922) (estimate: £80,000-120,000) *illustrated top middle page 1*.



Hepworth's sculpture was a gift from the artist to her friends Mr and Mrs Henry Gilbert in 1968, from whom it was acquired by the present owner. The architect Henry Gilbert was a well known St. Ives figure who designed several important buildings in the town including *Piazza* and *Barnaloft*, where artists such as Bernard Leach and Wilhelmina Barns-Graham lived. Turnbull's statuesque work references both Giacometti and also Brancusi. The title refers to the Roman god of doors and gates, who symbolises beginnings and endings; a related rosewood and stone sculpture by the artist, *Janus 2*, 1959, is in the Tate's collection.

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Images available on request

Visit Christie's Web site at www.christies.com

Notes to Editors:

Sale date: Christie's London: Friday, 12 December 2008 at 10.30am – 20th Century British Art

Public Viewing dates

Christie's London, 8 King Street, St. James's, London, SW1Y 6QT: Between Sunday 7 and Thursday 11 December 2008.

About Christie's

Christie's is the world's leading art business with global art sales in 2007 that totaled £3.1 billion/\$6.3 billion. This marks the highest total in company and in art auction history. For the first half of 2008, art sales totaled £1.8 billion / \$3.5 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. Founded in 1766 by James Christie, Christie's conducted the greatest auctions of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, and today remains a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 600 sales annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from \$200 to over \$80 million. Christie's has 85 offices in 43 countries and 14 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Los Angeles, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Tel Aviv, Dubai, Hong Kong and Zurich. Most recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in emerging and new markets such as Russia, China, India and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Mumbai and Dubai.