

For Immediate Release

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£35 MILLION OF CLASSICS AT CHRISTIE'S IN DECEMBER

**Christie's King Street
5 to 8 December 2006**

London – In December 2006 Christie's will host a week of auctions dedicated to the classical collecting categories. Estimated to realise in the region of £35 million and including a number of the most notable names in Western art including Botticelli, Giambologna, Goya, Rembrandt, Riccio, Rubens and Tiepolo, an impressive selection of old master paintings and drawings, European furniture, sculpture, tapestries and important clocks will be on public view before going under the hammer between 5 and 8 December. The auctions of *Important European Furniture*, *Important Old Master Prints* and *Old Master Pictures* (day sale) will be available through Christie's innovative live bidding system **Christie's LIVE®** offering collectors and enthusiasts around the world the opportunity to bid while enjoying the look, sound and feel of the sale from their personal computer.

The sales will be scheduled as follows:

Tuesday, 5 December	<i>Master Drawings from the Oppé Collection</i>
Tuesday, 5 December	<i>The Rembrandt 400 Sale and Important Old Master Prints from a Private European Collection</i>
Wednesday, 6 December	<i>Important Clocks</i>
Thursday, 7 December	<i>Important Old Master Pictures</i>
Thursday, 7 December	<i>Important European Furniture and Sculpture including the Beit Collection of Early Italian Bronzes</i>
Friday, 8 December	<i>Old Master Pictures</i>

Tuesday, 5 December at 11am

Master Drawings from the Oppé Collection (see separate release)



Assembled by renowned scholar and connoisseur Paul Oppé (1878-1957), this group represents one of the last great 20th century collections of old master drawings to remain in private hands and includes a diverse selection of approximately 120 lots with individual estimates ranging from £150 to £600,000. The auction will present a fascinating glimpse of the treasures available on the British Art market in the early 20th century and will offer works by Dutch, Flemish, Italian, British and Spanish artists including Agostino Carracci, Paolo Veronese, J. R. Cozens, Francesco Guardi and the Tiepolo family. The auction is led by *El Toro Mariposa – The Butterfly Bull*, a fantastically surreal drawing by Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes (1746-1828) which is expected to realise £400,000-600,000.

Tuesday, 5 December at 2.30pm

The Rembrandt 400 Sale and Important Old Master Prints from a Private European Collection

The Rembrandt 400 Sale concludes the 400th anniversary celebrations of the artist's birth and offers an in-depth array of works that exemplifies this master's entire oeuvre. With estimates from £3,000 to £300,000, subjects range from intimate family portraits and self-portraits to allegorical and biblical stories, landscapes, and animal studies and an example of 17th century humour in a pair of prints about the cold weather; *Peasant calling out "tis vinnich bout"* (it's cold) and *Peasant calling out "dats niet"* (that's nothing) (estimate: £7,000-£10,000). A total of 170 Rembrandt prints will be offered, including 30 from *Old Master Prints: An Important Private Collection*. The star lot of the sale is Rembrandt's *Christ Crucified between two thieves: The Three Crosses*, circa 1661 (estimate: £200,000-300,000).



Wednesday, 6 December at 2.30pm

Important Clocks



This auction will offer 114 lots, with estimates ranging between £1,000 and £250,000 and is expected to realise in excess of £1 million. Leading the sale is a very rare example of an early long case clock, circa 1665-1670 made by Edward East, clockmaker to the King, and made shortly after the invention of the pendulum. Still keeping excellent time three and half centuries later, the clock is a remarkable survivor of a period which saw the Great Fire of London and the Great Plague sweep through the English capital (estimate: £150,000-250,000). Further highlights include a French musical orrery clock by Raingo, circa 1825-30 (estimate: £80,000-120,000) and a rare marine chronometer, dated 1797, designed by Thomas Mudge, made by Pennington Pendleton and Others and formerly owned by the composer Khatchaturian, who received it as a gift from the Admiral of the Soviet fleet Isakov (estimate: £80,000-120,000).

Thursday, 7 December at 7.00pm

Important Old Master Pictures (see separate release)

This impressive auction will present a diverse offering of pictures including works by a number of Western art's most revered artists including Botticelli, Guardi, Rubens and Tiepolo. Building on the success of this year's international sales of Old Master Pictures which have realised a total of £93 million to date, the December sale is expected to realise £25 million. A leading highlight is *The Madonna and Child* by Sandro di Filipepi, known as Botticelli (circa 1445-1510), one of the most prominent and influential artists of the early Renaissance (estimate: £1,500,000-2,500,000). Further highlights include *The Battle between Carnival and Lent* by Pieter Breughel II (1564/5-1637/8) (estimate: £2,500,000-3,500,000), *The Temple of Antoninus and Faustina in the Roman Forum* and *The Roman Forum with the Temple of Castor and Polux*, an outstanding pair of views by Bernardo Bellotto (1721-1780) which carry an estimate of £3,000,000-4,000,000 and *Saint Michael subduing Lucifer*, a magnificent oil sketch by Sir Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640) which is expected to realise £1,200,000-1,800,000.



Thursday, 7 December at 10.30am

Important European Furniture and Sculpture including the Beit Collection of Early Italian Bronzes (see release)



This auction will offer approximately 300 lots of furniture, sculpture and works of art from the 16th to the 19th century, and is expected to realise in the region of £5 million. The furniture section of the sale includes examples of French, German and Italian craftsmanship of exceptional quality, and is led by a pair of north Italian ivory, stained horn and brass-inlaid ebony, rosewood and fruitwood marquetry and carved walnut console tables by Antonio de Luccio and dating to the last quarter of the 17th century (estimate: £300,000-500,000). Antonio de Luccio is responsible for every known piece of marquetry furniture

produced in Venice during the second half of the 17th century, and the present pair is an outstanding example of his superior craftsmanship. The tops are dated 1686 and exude with bold, pictorial scenes inspired by Netherlandish designs of the 16th century.

Thursday, 7 December at 10.30am

The Beit Collection of Early Italian Bronzes (see separate release)

This collection of 62 Italian bronzes was assembled by renowned philanthropist and Golden Age collector Alfred Beit (1853-1906) and his brother Sir Otto Beit, 1st Bt. (1865-1930) and offers a unique glimpse into one of the most exceptional collections of the 19th and early 20th centuries. It is expected to realise a collective total in the region of £1.5 million. Leading the collection is a bronze figure of a gladiator by one of the leading sculptors of the Renaissance, Andrea del Briosco, called Riccio (1470-1532) who is most famous for casting small bronze figures in an antique style, as in the present example. Measuring 30.8cm in height, the model of a gladiator exemplifies the artist's outstanding ability with its delicate, detailed surface and a figure of bustling, vibrant form (estimate: £700,000-1,000,000).



Friday, 8 December at 11.00am

Old Master Pictures



The day sale of Old Master Pictures will include approximately 150 Dutch, Flemish, French, German, Italian and Spanish paintings from the 14th through to the 19th centuries, with estimates ranging from £5,000 to £80,000. Highlighting the sale is a selection of 31 works from the collection of the late Professor René Küss, a prominent French surgeon and collector of both Old Master and Impressionist paintings, including *A capriccio of an arched bridge in the Venetian lagoon* by Francesco Guardi (1712-1793) *illustrated left* which is expected to realise £60,000-80,000 and *A village landscape* by David Teniers II (1610-1690) (estimate: £30,000-50,000). Elsewhere in the sale, a group of 10 rare *pietra dipinta* works painted onto a variety of stones including slate, lapis lazuli and agate will be offered from a private collection, including *The calling of Saint Peter* by Antonio Tempesta (1555-1630), oil on lapis lazuli, (estimate: £25,000-35,000). A further highlight of the auction is *A poulterer* by Antonius Leemans (1631-1673) which carries an estimate of £10,000 to £15,000.

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Images available on request

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Notes to editors:

- Paintings, furniture, sculpture, clocks and works of art to be sold during this week will be on public view at Christie's, King Street, between 2 and 7 December 2006. See www.christies.com for further details.

- In 2005, Christie's International Old Master Department achieved annual sales of £127.5 million / \$230.8 million, reaffirming their position as market leaders in both the Old Master Picture and Old Master Drawing categories, with a 53% market share over the nearest competitor in the Old Master category as a whole.

- In 2005, Christie's Furniture and Sculpture Sales in London realised a total of £37,200,488 million (\$65,993,666/ €54,870,720) establishing a 70% market share over the nearest rivals.

