

For Immediate Release

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RICHTER'S MASTERPIECE *ZWEI LIEBESPAARE* TO BE OFFERED AT CHRISTIE'S IN FEBRUARY 2008

**Post-War and Contemporary Art Evening Sale
6 February 2008, King Street**

London – Christie's announce that they will offer *Zwei Liebespaare*, a masterpiece by Gerhard Richter (b. 1932), at the evening auction of *Post-War and Contemporary Art* on Wednesday 6 February 2008.



Painted in 1966, and acquired from the artist by the mother of the present owner, the picture dates from the highpoint of Richter's Pop period, and is expected to realise in the region of £6 million / \$12 million. At Christie's recent auction of *Post-War and Contemporary Art* in New York on 13 November 2007, Richter's *Düsenjäger (JetFighter)*, 1963, sold for \$11,241,000 / £5,430,435, setting a world record price for the artist at auction.

Pilar Ordovas, Director and Head of Post-War and Contemporary Art at Christie's, London: "*Christie's have continued to lead the market for Post-War and Contemporary Art in 2007, with exceptional results realised in our major sales in London and New York, as well as in Paris, Hong Kong and Dubai. Following the success of Gerhard Richter's 'Düsenjäger (JetFighter)' which sold in New York in November for a record price of \$11.2 million, we are pleased to present to the market this exceptional masterpiece by the German artist, which could re-establish the record price for his work at auction. We look forward to exhibiting this painting to international collectors in Hong Kong, Palm Beach and London before it is offered at auction at the Evening sale on 6 February 2008.*"

Zwei Liebespaare was acquired directly from the artist by the mother of the present owner in the 1960s, and has been on long-term loan to the Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus in Munich. Recently, it has been presented at the most important exhibitions of the artist's work, including the Gerhard Richter Retrospective in Dusseldorf and Munich in 2005. It was painted in 1966 at the height of Richter's involvement with the Pop movement. As was fitting for an artist schooled in East Germany, Richter's interpretation of the Pop movement steered away from the bold, vivid themes championed by the Pop artists of America; while Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein presented colourful, bold, and often cartoon-like interpretations of contemporary subjects, Richter's works tend to hold a darker undercurrent.

The present picture depicts two couples frolicking in the countryside, an apparently joyous and escapist scene. However, the manner with which the artist has painted this scene, having rendered a photograph in oils, painstakingly painting it with precise shades of grey and then blurring the image with combing brushstrokes, lends the painting a subversive quality.. Richter's own early life saw him subjected to a range of political ideologies; Nazism, Socialism and then Capitalism. He escaped from East Germany to West Germany just two months before the construction of the Berlin Wall. These experiences contributed to the artist's anti-establishment attacks on notions of High Art and good taste, resulting in his unique take of the Pop movement exemplified by the present work. Richter's ability as a draftsman, and his highly controlled use of paint at a time when many artists were looking to Abstract Expressionism or to alternative mediums, has seen him establish himself as one of the most important artists of the Post-War era.

Further highlights confirmed for the auction include *Palm Springs Jump* by Jean-Michel Basquiat (1960-1988), an exceptional and electrifying work painted in 1982, shortly after the artist had broken through to star status, which is expected to realise in excess of £5 million; and Andy Warhol's (1928-1987) *Judy Garland*, executed in 1979, a synthetic polymer paint and silkscreen ink on canvas in two parts (estimate: £2,000,000-3,000,000).

Christie's is the leading marketplace internationally for Post-War and Contemporary Art with global sales for the first half of 2007 totalling £459 million / \$914 million. In June 2007, the highest ever European sale total for *Post-War and Contemporary Art* was achieved at Christie's London when the evening sale realised £74.1 million / \$147.3 million, and more recently, in November 2007, Christie's evening auction of *Post-War and Contemporary Art* in New York totaled \$325,006,000, the second highest ever total for the category.

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Images available on request
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Notes to editors:

- *Zwei Liebespaare* measures 45.1/4 x 63in. (115 x 160cm.)

- **Auction** - Christie's, 8 King Street, St. James's, London SW1Y 6QT

Post-War and Contemporary Art Evening Sale
Wednesday, 6 February 2008

Viewing

Christie's, Hong Kong	23 to 25 November 2007
Brazilian Court, Palm Beach	21 to 23 January 2008
Christie's, London	1 to 6 February 2008

About Christie's

Christie's is the world's leading art business with global auction sales in 2006 that totalled £2.51 billion / \$4.67 billion. Worldwide sales for the first half of 2007 totalled £1.63 billion / \$3.25 billion, an increase of 32% by £ and 45% by \$ from the same period last year and highest half year sales ever in art market history. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service, and 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 \$600 to over \$80 million*. Christie's has 85 offices in 43 countries and 14 salerooms around the world including London, New York, Los Angeles, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Tel Aviv, Dubai and Hong Kong. Most recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in emerging markets such as China, India and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Dubai, Mumbai and Russia. Christie's also offers its clients worldwide access to its sales through Christie's LIVE™, its unique, real-time online bidding service. *Estimates do not include buyer's premium.