

For Immediate Release

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CHRISTIE'S LEADS THE RUSSIAN ART MARKET WITH RECORD SALES OF OVER £28 MILLION IN LONDON TODAY

- Highest Ever Total For Russian Art Auction of £28,202,420
- New World Record For Any Russian Painting, included in Russian Sale, For Somov's *Pastorale Russe* £2,696,000 (\$5,251,808/€3,981,992)
- 6 World Auction Records Established
- 9 Works Sell For Over \$1 Million

London – Christie's sales of *Russian Pictures* and *Russian Works of Art* today realized £28,202,420 (\$54,938,314/€41,654,974), the highest combined sales total ever achieved for Russian pictures and Works of Art category worldwide. Six new artist records at auction were established and nine works sold for over \$1 million.

“The results of today's sales, the highest ever achieved at auction worldwide for the Russian Art Category, re-emphasizes Christie's position as the leading global art business and our dominance of the uppermost reaches of the international market,” said Jussi Pylkkanen, President, Christie's Europe and auctioneer of the sales. “They also demonstrate that Christie's Russian strategy has paid dividends.”

“These auction totals are not only a reflection of quality that was offered for sale today, but also as a result of Christie's expanded programme of activities in Russia this season, including a public preview exhibition of the Russian pictures in Samara, Russia (from 9-13 November 2006),” Alexis de Tiesenhausen, International Head of the Russian Department commented after the sale. “The event in Samara was the first of its kind to have been staged in Russia by an international auction house and it included Somov's *Pastorale Russe*, which today became the most expensive Russian painting in the world. This exhibition is a continuation of Christie's commitment to making the most important works of art available in the world accessible to a growing number of new and established private collectors in Russia. The success of this strategy is evident for all to see.”

The total for **Russian Pictures** was £18,353,720 (\$35,753,046/€27,108,444) and was 73% sold by lot and 71% sold by value. Registered buyer activity in the sale was 43% from Russia (including Ukraine), 29% from UK, 16% from Europe excluding the UK and 12% from the Americas.

The most expensive painting sold today was Konstantin Andreevich Somov's *Pastorale Russe* (estimate: £200,000-300,000), which sold for £2,696,000 (\$5,251,808/€3,981,992) establishing a new record for the artist as well as most expensive Russian painting ever sold in a Russian auction. *Pastorale Russe*, an erotic yet strangely innocent composition of young lovers by moonlight, was one of a group of nine works offered by the artist today that collectively sold for more than £4 million. Christie's held the previous record for a work by the artist - £1,296,000; \$2,226,528; €1,886,976), established in November 2005.

The paintings by much celebrated marine artist Ivan Konstantinovich Aivazovskii were in high demand, including *View of Constantinople*, the second most expensive painting sold today, for £1,632,000 (\$3,179,136/€2,410,464) (estimate: £1,500,000-2,500,000)

A double portrait known as *The Children* by Boris Dmitrievich Grigoriev painted in 1922, sold for £960,000 (\$1,870,080/€1,417,920 (estimate: £250,000-350,000), the third highest selling painting today, and establishing a new world record at auction for the artist.

Records were also established today for Pavel Nikolaevich Filonov; *The Adoration of the Magi*, 1913 sold for £904,000 (\$1,760,992/€1,335,208), Lev Samoilovich Bakst, *A dancer in costume*, sold for £624,000 (\$1,215,552/€921,648); Il'ia Ivanovich Mashkov with *Still life with Strawberries, Cherries and a blue Decanter* (estimate: £500,000-700,000), painted in 1923, which sold for £456,000 (\$888,288/€673,512). With the vast majority of Mashkov's *oeuvre* in private collections and Russian Museums, the appearance of this work at auction is an exceptional event. Lastly, Abram Efimovich Arkhipov established a new world record with *At the Market*, which sold for £512,000 (\$997,376/€756,224).

A Portrait of Empress Alexandra Feodorovna, nee Princess Charlotte of Russia (1798-1860), wife of Emperor Nicholas I was purchased by the Tsarskoe Selo Museum (Summer Palace Museum), St Petersburg for £48,000 (\$93,504/€70,896). The portrait will go on public exhibition and will complete the Museum's collection (the other known portrait of the same sitter is in the Winter Palace Museum, St Petersburg).

The total for the **Russian Works of Art** sale was £9,848,700 and was 71% sold by lot and 60 by value. A pair of monumental two-handed porcelain vases by the Imperial Porcelain Factory, St. Petersburg, period of Nicolas I, 1844 were the top lot of the sale, realizing £2,808,000 (\$5,469,984/€4,147,416) (estimate: £1,200,000-1,800,000). During the reign of Nicolas I, the Imperial Porcelain Factory produced a remarkable number of vases, with many of them decorated with copies of old master paintings, of which this pair are a fine example. The vases adorned the Imperial Palaces and, as in this instance, were gifts from the Emperor to members of the Royal and princely families.

An exquisite pair of floral vases again by the Imperial Porcelain Factory during the period of Nicholas I were the second highest selling lot in the sale, fetching £1,352,000 (\$2,633,696/€1,996,904) (estimate: £800,000-1,200,000).

Christie's week of Russian sales continue tomorrow with *Valuable Russian Books and Manuscripts*

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.
- In addition to the record for the most expensive Russian painting, Christie's also holds 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-russki@christies.com**