

## For Immediate Release

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Contact: Christina Freyberg +44 207 389 2117 [cfreyberg@christies.com](mailto:cfreyberg@christies.com)  
Ксения Борисова-Демидова +44 207 389 2547 [xborissova@christies.com](mailto:xborissova@christies.com)

## RUSSIA RULES AT CHRISTIE'S TODAY

Christie's Russian Pictures and Works of Art Sale

Totals £22 Million / US\$38 Million / €32 Million

- **Christie's Groundbreaking Sale Today Realises Highest Ever Combined Total For Russian Pictures and Works of Art**
- **World Auction Records Prices for 6 Artists with 9 Works Selling for Over \$1 Million**

**London** – Christie's sale of *Russian Pictures* and *Russian Works of Art* realised £21,941,320 (\$37,695,186/€31,946,561) today, the highest combined sales total ever achieved for Russian pictures and works of art. Nineteen new artist records were set.

“Christie's are seeing ever increasing buying activity and the results today demonstrate the strength of the core market for Russian pictures and works of art as there is continued demand for well selected and outstanding works of art,” said Alexis de Tiesenhausen, International Director of Russian Art at Christie's. He continued, “Christie's has an unparalleled commitment to developing the international market for Russian works of art, as well as providing the best access to the broader art market to a growing number of Russian clients. Our dedicated teams in London, New York as well as through our representative in Russia have the broadest experience and the very best expertise allowing Christie's to act as the most potent marketplace in this area.”

Registered buyer activity in the *Russian Pictures* sale was 30% from Russia, 23% from UK, 34% from Europe excluding the UK, 12% from the Americas and 1% from other regions, and in the *Russian Works of Art* sale was 30% from Russia, 9% from UK, 34% from Europe excluding the UK, 26% from the Americas and 1% from other regions.

The record prices achieved brings top quality Russian pictures and works of art in line with other European artists from a similar period. The top lot of today's sales was Boris Mikhailovich Kustodiev's *Odalisque*, 1919, which sold for £1,688,000 (\$2,899,984/€2,457,728) (estimate: £180,000-220,000) and set a new world auction record for the artist. Other notable world auction records for artists included Konstantin Andreevich Somov's *Pierrot and a lady*, 1923, which realised £1,296,000 (\$2,226,528/€1,886,976) (estimate: £200,000-250,000), Isaak Il'ich Levitan's *Marsh at evening*, 1882

which sold for £1,240,000 (\$2,130,320/€1,805,440) (estimate: £1,000,000-1,500,000) and Robert Rafailovich Fal'k's *Woman with a pink fan*, 1922, which realized £1,016,000 (\$1,745,488/€1,479,296)(estimate: £220,000-320,000).

A total of six world auction records were established for works by Isaak Il'ich Levitan, Konstantin Andreevich Somov, Robert Rafailovich Fal'k, Boris Mikhailovich Kustodiev, Aleksandr Iakovlev and Nikolai Konstantinovich Roerich.

In the Works of Art section of the sale, a spectacular pair of monumental two-handled Campana vases realised £1,632,000 (\$2,803,776/€2,376,192) (estimate: £1,500,000-2,000,000). Made at the Imperial Porcelain Factory, St Petersburg, circa 1840, during the reign of Nicholas I, they were beautifully painted with Italianate landscapes. Another highlight was a large silver-gilt and enamel presentation dish, 1894, which realised £153,600 (\$263,885/€223,642) (estimate: £30,000-50,000). The top lot among the porcelain produced after the Russian Revolution was a large Soviet propaganda porcelain plate by the Imperial Porcelain Factory, 1921, which sold for £142,400 (\$244,643/€207,334) (estimate: £12,000-18,000).

### **Christie's and Russia**

The ties that link Christie's to Russia go back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In 1778, company founder James Christie valued Sir Robert Walpole's collection of pictures at Houghton, and negotiated their sale on behalf of his grandson, George Walpole, to the Empress of Russia, Catherine the Great. This collection forms the basis of the Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg.

Christie's has had an established presence in Russia for over ten years. Christie's advisor, Anna Belorusova, splits her time between Moscow and St. Petersburg working regularly with the Russian Cultural Authorities, Museums and private individuals. In recent years, Christie's has strengthened its client services to support Russian clients participating in the global art market and now has extensive Russian language capability. The Russian department is supported by Christie's Director, Cornelia Pallavacini with Xenia Borissova-Demidova, Victoria Wolcough and Sandra Nedvetskaia. They assist clients based both in Russia and internationally on the buying and selling of works of art at Christie's.

Earlier this year, Christie's became the first international auction house to support and take part in the Moscow World Art Fair continuing a tradition of select exhibitions in Russia. In April 1997, the firm organized an exhibition of Important Impressionist Art and in 1998 Jewellery at the Moscow Kremlin, and in 2002, it previewed, at the Pushkin Museum, the Imperial "Winter Egg" by Fabergé, which subsequently sold in London for \$9.5 million, which is still the world auction record for any Russian Work of Art.

In September 2005, Christie's Great Estates launched its Russian partner, Kirsanova, specialising in the highest quality residential property both in Russia and further a field.

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*Images available on request*

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