

For Immediate Release

Monday 11 December 2006

Contact Zoë Schoon 020.7752.3121 zschoon@christies.com

THE WORLD IN A BOX AT CHRISTIE'S SOUTH KENSINGTON

The Thomas Ganz Collection of Magic Lanterns, Optical Toys and Pre-Cinema

Monday 22 January 2007, 12noon

Christie's South Kensington

ON VIEW: From Saturday 20 January, 10am



*A Triunial magic lantern
Estimate: £10,000-15,000 and
a Pair of Phantasmagoria Lanterns
Estimate: £600-800*

South Kensington - Christie's is to offer the collection of prominent Swiss collector Thomas Ganz in a single owner sale on Monday 22 January 2007. The collection consists of magic lanterns and lantern slides, optical toys, selected cameras and photographs as well as prints and engravings representing the entire history of the moving and static image. The 350 lots on offer were collected by Ganz over the past forty years, and are expected to realise in excess of £300,000. His collection is thought to be one of the most significant collections of its type in private hands.

Thomas Ganz is the great grandson of the founder of the Zürich firm of J Ganz which started business in 1844 and still trades today as Ganz A.G. The firm has been a pioneer and market leader in the fields of photography and projection for more than 150 years, and in the 1870s produced its own range of magic lanterns. Today, the firm specialises in digital audio-visual systems and conference facilities and is managed by Thomas's daughter Catherine.

This sale provides the opportunity for enthusiasts to acquire rare and wonderful slides for future slide-shows, for collectors to add specialist pieces to their collections, and for museums to obtain significant pieces of pre-cinema history.

Particular highlights include:

- A biunial magic lantern (estimate: £8,000-12,000)
- A pagoda lantern (estimate: £2,000-3,000)
- A zoetrope, phenistiscope, and praxinoscopes (estimates from £300-4,000)
- A rare early peep box (estimate: £4,000-6,000)
- A number 1 Kodak camera from 1889 (estimate: £600-900)
- An early (pre-1900) French movie camera (estimate: £1,000-1,500)
- Stereoscopic views (estimates from £300)

- An early reflex camera obscura circa 1820 (estimate: £1,200-1,800)
- A large quantity of original prints and engravings showing lanterns and related subjects including Daumier's classic engraving of Nadar photographing from a balloon (estimate £6,000-9,000)

The world of pre-cinema is a fairly new collecting category, only really coming to light in the 1950s, when a post-war affluent society had disposable income to spend and invest, and there was a greater awareness of cinema heritage. Magic Lanterns, the pre-cursor of modern day slide projectors, and other pre-cinema pieces started to appear at auctions across the world and a new field of collecting had begun. Thomas Ganz was one of this new breed of collectors, building on the memory of a Pathé-Baby given to him at Christmas in 1927. This period saw the re-emergence of slideshows on social occasions. Interest grew, and by the 1970s academic interest in the history of the cinema encouraged university courses covering the history of the cinema. In the late 1980s the Museum of the Moving Image opened in London as the quest for knowledge and information showed no sign of abating.

In 1994, at the age of 74, Thomas published *Die Welt Im Kasten (The World in the Box)*, which chronicles the history of the projected image from the camera obscura to the audio-visual systems of the late 20th century. This wonderfully written and illustrated book quickly became one of the standard works of reference for students of the history of the cinema and many of the pieces illustrated are included in this sale.

###

Images available on request

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

CHRISTIE'S SOUTH KENSINGTON

85 Old Brompton Road

London SW7 3LD

Nearest Underground: South Kensington

Public Enquiries:

020 7930 6074 / www.christies.com

Opening Hours:

Monday: 9am – 7.30pm, Tuesday – Friday: 9am – 5pm

Weekends: 10am – 4pm

Notes to Editors:

Christie's South Kensington is the first international auction house in London to offer regular weekend auctions.

The camera department's annual sales comprise of over 2,000 lots and feature a wide variety of collectible and usable still and movie cameras, optical toys and viewers from the 1840s to the present. Held since 1972, these sales have established Christie's as the pre-eminent auction house in an increasingly popular collecting field.