

Press Release

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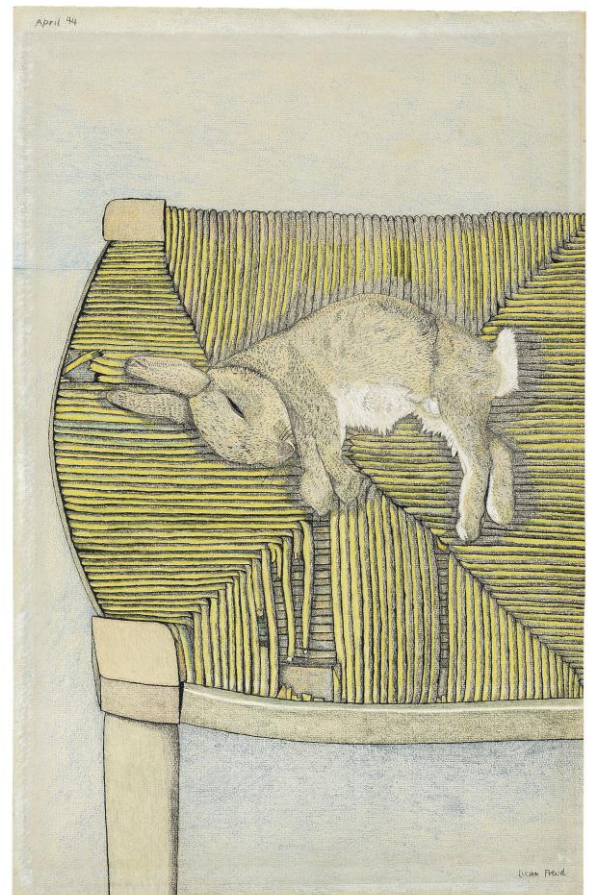
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SELECTED WORKS FROM THE COLLECTION OF KAY SAATCHI TO BE OFFERED AT CHRISTIE'S IN JUNE 2011

Highlights include the most outstanding group of Lucian Freud drawings to come to auction, Ron Mueck's spectacular *Big Baby* and a moving masterpiece by Paula Rego



Ron Mueck, *Big Baby*, 1996



Lucian Freud, *Rabbit on a chair*, 1944

London – Christie's will offer a selection of works from the collection of Kay Saatchi at the Post-War and Contemporary art auctions in London in June 2011. The collection features an outstanding and rare group of early works on paper by Lucian Freud, executed in the 1940s, Ron Mueck's *Big Baby*, the first work in the artist's catalogue raisonné and Paula Rego's masterpiece, *Looking Back*. These works represent

the most important of their kind ever to appear at auction and are testament to Kay Saatchi's extraordinary discernment and foresight as a collector. The works will be offered at the *Post-War and Contemporary Art Evening Auction* on 28 June.

Francis Outred, Head of Post-War and Contemporary Art, Christie's Europe: *"Kay Saatchi has been supporting young artists in the UK since the 1980s, and she played a key role in the YBA movement that completely transformed the contemporary art landscape in Britain at the end of the 1990s. We are delighted to be able to present a selection of works from her collection at Christie's in June which represent the canon of British contemporary art from the 1940's to the present day. Common to all the forthcoming works by Freud, Rego and Mueck is an extraordinary sense of vulnerability in their depiction of humanity. From life to death, each work displays an insight and sensitivity to its subject. Freud's works on paper, a unique constellation of this very rare period of his work, display the intricate detail and skill of a young artist who was to become one of the most important European painters of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Ron Mueck's Big Baby is the artist's first documented work and a mesmerizing sculpture due to the tension between the extraordinary lifelike detail and its astonishing scale. Paula Rego's acknowledged masterpiece, Looking Back is a work from her most sought-after period, painted at a time of deep personal tragedy. It is an exceptional occasion to be able to offer all of these magnificent pieces together – an event which is sure to excite collectors from around the world."*

Kay Saatchi: *"After twenty five years in London, I have decided to move my base to Los Angeles and to offer a selection of works from my art collection, partly for practical reasons and partly for the excitement and challenge of building a new collection in a new environment. It was a privilege to be in London at such a significant moment in the development of contemporary British art, and to be a part of that process, meeting and working with some of the most gifted artists, curators and collectors to emerge at that time, as well as others who were already well established. It was also a privilege to be able to live with such exceptional works of art and to get to know them all so intimately. Inevitably there is sadness in leaving a city I love and in parting with works of art I treasure. But my hope is that the move to Los Angeles will be not so much a departure as a new beginning in which I can help foster broader artistic links between London and the West Coast whilst exploring fresh opportunities as a collector and curator."*

The works to be offered at the *Post-War and Contemporary Art Evening Auction* on 28 June:

- *Big Baby*, 1996, by Ron Mueck (estimate: £600,000 to £800,000) is the number one work in the artist's catalogue raisonné being his first documented work as an artist. Kay and Charles Saatchi were Ron Mueck's most important early patrons, having been introduced to the artist by his mother-in-law, Paula Rego, and acquired 7 of his earliest works of which 3 went on to be shown at the *Sensation: Young British Artists from the Saatchi Collection* exhibition at the Royal Academy in 1997.



Lucian Freud, *Dead Monkey*, circa 1944

- Five exquisitely rendered drawings by Lucian Freud dating from the 1940's, represent the most important group of works on paper by the artist ever to come to auction: *Rabbit on a Chair*, 1944 (estimate: £300,000 to £400,000); *Dead Bird*, 1943 (estimate: £220,000 to £280,000); *Dead Monkey*, circa 1944 (estimate: £150,000 to £200,000), *The Sleeping Cat*, circa 1943-44

(estimate: £100,000 to £150,000) and *Boy with a Pipe*, 1943 (estimate: £80,000 to £120,000). Drawing, in its many forms, was Lucian Freud's predominant medium in the 1940's but very few of these works ever come to auction, making this collection exceptionally rare.

- At the now pivotal exhibition of Paula Rego's paintings at the Serpentine Gallery in 1988, Kay and Charles Saatchi immediately recognized the sea change that had taken place in her work and purchased several pieces including *Looking Back*, 1987 (estimate: £600,000 to £800,000). In this large scale masterpiece, Rego introduces the monumentality and chiaroscuro that marked a turning point in her oeuvre. The work has particular emotional resonance having been painted soon after the tragic death of Rego's beloved husband and mentor, the towering British artist Victor Willing.



Paula Rego, *Looking Back*, 1987

24 further works from the collection will be offered at the *Post-War and Contemporary Art Day Auction* on 29 June. These include works by both established and contemporary artists including Lucian Freud, Man Ray, Martha Rosler, Jodie Carey, Martin Maloney, Sam Taylor-Wood, Gregory Crewdson and Andy Warhol together with a selection of ceramics by Pablo Picasso. Estimates range from £5,000 to £40,000.

Kay Saatchi

A pioneering curator and collector who played a key role in the emergence and development of the Young British Artists (YBA) in the 1990s, Kay Saatchi continues to champion young artistic talent, most recently co-curating 'ANTICIPATION' – an annual exhibition showcasing the best talent from London's art school graduates. Kay Saatchi moved to London from New York in the 1980s on the suggestion of her mentor, the renowned art dealer Leo Castelli. She helped to establish a contemporary art gallery in the British capital before moving to the contemporary art department at Waddington's. Soon after moving to the United Kingdom, she met Charles Saatchi with whom she shared a mutual love and appreciation of contemporary art; they spent the next 15 years together in a relationship that was as much an art collaboration as a marriage.

Kay Saatchi is moving to Los Angeles where she will continue to promote the work of young, talented artists. She will continue to spend time in London.

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Images available on request
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