

CHRISTIE'S

PRESS RELEASE | GENEVA | 21 SEPTEMBER 2012
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A DIAMOND FIT FOR A QUEEN

Christie's is Proud to Present
THE ARCHDUKE JOSEPH DIAMOND
76.02 carat D, IF *Golconda* Diamond
AUCTION IN GENEVA ON NOVEMBER 13, 2012



Estimate upon request

Geneva – Christie's is honoured to announce that the legendary **Archduke Joseph Diamond** will be offered at auction in Geneva on 13 November 2012. Undoubtedly one of the rarest and most famous diamonds in the world, this magnificent gem combines an impressive size of 76.02 carats, perfect colour, and internally flawless clarity. Its origin is traced to the ancient Golconda mines in India, the source of the world's most coveted historical diamonds. As the star lot of the fall jewelry auction season, this spectacular diamond presents an unprecedented opportunity for both new and established collectors to own an incomparable jewel of historical and gemological significance. While the auction estimate is available only upon request, the Archduke Joseph Diamond is expected to achieve well in excess of US\$15 million.

François Curiel, International Head of Christie's Jewellery Department, noted: *"The magic of auction sometimes brings back great gems to our salerooms more than once. The Archduke Joseph Diamond created a sensation when Christie's Geneva offered it for sale the first time in November 1993 where it realized CHF 9.7 million (US\$ 6.5 million) – the equivalent of \$10.5 million today. This November we have the privilege to give both new and established collectors the opportunity to own a piece of history once again."*

PROVENANCE OF THE ARCHDUKE JOSEPH DIAMOND

Although it is not known exactly when the diamond entered the House of Habsburg, it has been officially recorded as the property of the Archduke Joseph August of Austria, Palatine of Hungary (1872-1962), and was subsequently named after him. As the first son of Archduke Joseph Carl of Austria (1833-1905) and Princess Clothilde of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha (1846-1927), Archduke Joseph August Viktor Klemens Maria was born in Alcsút (Hungary), on 9 November 1872. He was the great grandson of Emperor Leopold II through his father and the great grandson of King Louis Philippe of France through his mother.

In 1893, he married Princess Augusta of Bavaria, the granddaughter of Empress Elisabeth of Austria and Emperor Franz Joseph. He began a distinguished military career in 1890 and attained the rank of Field Marshal of the Austro-Hungarian Army in 1918 and was later named first Regent of Hungary. At the end of World War II, when Hungary was occupied by the Soviet Union, he emigrated for a few years to America but later returned to Germany where he died in 1962.



Portrait of Archduke Joseph August of Austria, c.1916
Oil on canvas, Nedomansky Studio, Vienna (fl.1914-18)
©Museo della Guerra di Rovereto, Trento, Italy
The Bridgeman Art Library

It is believed that the Archduke passed on the diamond to his son, the Archduke Joseph Francis (1895-1957), as records show that he deposited it in the vault of the Hungarian General Credit Bank on 1 June 1933. The diamond was sold three years later to an anonymous buyer who left it in a safe during World War II, fortunately escaping the attention of the Nazis. After decades of mystery, the diamond re-appeared on 22 June 1961 at auction in London, and was finally re-offered for sale in November 1993 at Christie's Geneva. Slightly recut to 76.02 carats, the diamond is now Internally Flawless in clarity, and exhibits the characteristic limpid transparency for which Golconda diamonds are so celebrated.

Rahul Kadakia, Head of Jewellery, Christie's Americas and Switzerland, commented: *"The Archduke Joseph Diamond is the finest and largest perfect Golconda diamond ever to appear at auction. It is comparable in its noble lineage and superb quality to the legendary Koh-i-Noor diamond that forms part of the crown jewels of Great Britain. It is particularly fortuitous to bring this historic gem back to market in the year of Her Majesty the Queen's Diamond Jubilee."*

GOLCONDA ORIGINS

The Archduke Joseph Diamond shares its Golconda origins with the most beautiful and illustrious diamonds in the world, including the *Koh-i-noor*, in the Royal Collection at the Tower of London; the *Regent*, considered the finest diamond in the French Crown Jewels, at the Musée du Louvre in Paris; and the *Hope*, gifted by Harry Winston to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C. Located in South Central India, the Golconda diamond fields were an ancient source that traces its roots back to 400 B.C. Up until about 1725, when diamonds were discovered in Brazil, Golconda and a small mine in Borneo were the world's only sources of these precious gems. Universally esteemed as the world's finest diamonds, Golconda diamonds have a special whiteness often described as soft, watery, and pure, so that light appears to pass through the stone completely unimpeded.

Prior to the auction of The Archduke Joseph Diamond in Geneva, Christie's will tour this exceptional stone to its major client centers around the world. For details on press preview dates and times, please contact the press office in each city.

International Tour:

New York

Christie's New York, 20 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10020

October 13 10am-6pm

October 14 10am-6pm

October 15 10am-5pm

Hong Kong

Christie's Hong Kong, 22nd Floor Alexandra House, 18 Chater Road

October 19 10am-6pm

October 20 10am-6pm

October 22 10am-5:30pm

Geneva

Four Seasons Hotel des Bergues, 33 quai des Bergues, Geneva

November 9 10am-6pm

November 10 10am-7pm

November 11 10am-6pm

November 12 10am-6pm

November 13 10am-1pm

Auction:

Christie's Geneva, *Magnificent Jewels*

Four Seasons Hotel des Bergues, Geneva

13 November 2012

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About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in the first half of 2012 that totaled £2.2 billion/\$3.5 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. Founded in 1766 by James Christie, Christie's has since conducted the greatest and most celebrated auctions through the centuries providing a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 450 auctions annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from \$200 to over \$100 million. Christie's also has a long and successful history conducting private sales for its clients in all categories, with emphasis on Post-War and Contemporary, Impressionist and Modern, Old Masters and Jewellery. Private sales totaled £413.4 million/ \$661.5 million in the first half of 2012, an increase of 53% on the previous year.

Christie's has a global presence with 53 offices in 32 countries and 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, and Hong Kong. More recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in growth markets such as Russia, China, India and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Mumbai and Dubai.

**Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and do not reflect costs, financing fees or application of buyer's or seller's credits.*

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Images of The Archduke Joseph Diamond available on request

NOTES TO EDITORS

CHRISTIE'S AND THE WORLD'S FINEST DIAMONDS

During the past years some of the world's finest diamonds have experienced a surge in demand at auction. Christie's holds the world auction records for the most valuable Golconda diamonds, including for blue, pink and colourless diamonds. Interestingly enough, the latter was set by the Archduke Joseph diamond when it sold at Christie's Geneva in 1993.

- In 2008, Christie's London sold ***The Wittelsbach Diamond***, an historic 17th Century cushion-shaped deep grayish blue, VS2 diamond for £16.4 million (US\$24.3 million).
- In May 2011, Christie's Hong Kong sold a spectacular pair of cushion-shaped Golconda diamond ear pendants for HK\$72.3 million (US\$9.3 million).
- In December 2011, Christie's New York sold the spectacular D-color, 33.19 carat ***Elizabeth Taylor Diamond*** ring that the star wore virtually every day since receiving it as a gift from Richard Burton in 1968. This extraordinary jewel fetched US\$8.8 million, setting a new record price-per-carat of \$240,000.

CHRISTIE'S AND ROYAL COLLECTIONS

Since 1766, Christie's has been synonymous with auctions of Royal and Aristocratic collections. From the sale of Madame du Barry's jewels in 1795, to that of the Russian Crown Jewels in 1927, and more recently the Private Collection of H.R.H. The Princess Margaret in 2006, these events have created worldwide interest and are remembered as legendary moments in auction history. In April 2008, the Louvre Museum was able to acquire the Empress Eugénie Diamond Brooch through Christie's, thereby allowing its return to the French Crown Jewels.

Royal Jewellery Collections auctioned at Christie's Geneva include:

- 1967 Queen Victoria Eugenia of Spain
- 1969 Queen Marie-Jose of Italy
- 1979 Queen Victoria Eugenia of Spain
- 1980 Egyptian Royal family
- 1980 Queen Maria-Cristina of Spain
- 1984 Queen Victoria Eugenia of Spain
- 1988 The Aga Khan III
- 1990 Princess Irene of Greece & Denmark
- 1995 Princess Salimah Aga Khan
- 1999 Princess Marie José of Belgium, later Queen of Italy
- 1999 Queen Marie-Antoinette of France
- 2005 Archduchess Marie-Valerie of Austria
- 2006 Princess Olga of Yugoslavia
- 2006 Property of a Royal House
- 2007 Princess Katharina Henckel von Donnersmarck
- 2007 H.S.H. Amelia von Furstenberg

THE DIAMONDS OF THE HOUSE OF HABSBURG

The House of Habsburg was, without a doubt, one of the most powerful dynasties of Europe, ruling over the monarchies of Austria, Bohemia and Hungary for more than five centuries. Among the glorious ancestors of Archduke Joseph of Austria are some of the great diamond owners of their time. The legendary *Florentine Diamond*, an Indian yellow diamond weighing 137.27 carats, now lost, was once the property of Empress Maria-Theresa (1717-1780), wife of Emperor Francis (1708-1765). Another illustrious example is the *Emperor Maximilian Diamond*, a 41.94 carat cushion-shaped diamond purchased by Emperor Maximilian I (1832-1867) in the 19th Century and sold in 1982 and again in 2010 at Christie's New York.

GENEALOGY OF ARCHDUKE JOSEPH AUGUST VIKTOR KLEMENS MARIA

Emperor Francis I (1708-1765)	Empress Maria-Theresa (1717-1780)		Charles III of Spain (1716-1788)	Maria Amalia of Saxony (1724-1760)		Friedrich II Eugen Duke of Württemberg (1732-1797)	Sophia Dorothea of Brandenburg Schwedt (1736-1798)		Prince Charles Christian Duke of Nassau-Weilburg (1735-1788)	Carolina of Orange-Nassau (1743-1787)
Leopold II Holy Roman Emperor (1747-1792)			Maria Luisa of Spain (1745-1792)			Duke Louis of Württemberg (1756-1817)			Princess Henriette of Nassau-Weilburg (1780-1857)	
	Archduke Joseph, Palatine of Hungary (1776-1847)						Duchess Maria Dorothea of Württemberg (1797-1855)			
				Archduke Joseph Karl of Austria (1833-1905)						
				Father of Archduke Joseph August of Austria owner of the <i>Archduke Joseph diamond</i>						