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Press Release

CHRISTIE'S

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ANDREW WYLD: CONNOISSEUR DEALER

EARLY BRITISH DRAWINGS, WATERCOLOURS & PAINTINGS FROM THE GOLDEN AGE AT CHRISTIE'S LONDON IN JULY

Superb examples of British art from the Mayfair Gallery of one of the finest dealers in the field



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London – Christie's is proud to announce the sale of *Andrew Wyld: Connoisseur Dealer*, the collection and stock of W/S Fine Art and Andrew Wyld (1949 - 2011). This fine single-owner collection celebrates the Golden Age of British Watercolours and will be offered in two parts. Part one will take place in King Street on 10 July 2012 and Part two will take place in South Kensington on 18 July. Highlights will be on view during Master Paintings & Drawings Week from 29 June - 6 July 2012. The sale comprises around 400 lots and is expected to realise between £1.5 million and £2 million.

Wyld, one of the finest dealers in his field, was renowned for his discerning eye and this sale is a roll call of the greatest artists of the Golden Age: John Constable, David Cox, John Robert Cozens, Peter de Wint, Thomas Gainsborough, and J.M.W Turner among others. The sale will offer vibrant and immediate topographical views of many regions in the British Isles from London and its environs, to East Anglia, Yorkshire and Northumberland to Scotland and Wales. It also encompasses superb views of France, Germany, and Italy as well as Egypt, Greece and Turkey. Estimates range between £500 and £250,000 with no reserve on lots estimated below £1,000.

Comment: Harriet Drummond, Director, International Head British Drawings & Watercolours:

“Andrew Wyld was the finest dealer in the field of British Drawings and Watercolours and it is a great honour to be presenting this exceptional collection at auction. This group of superb works by the greatest artists of the Golden Age is a tribute to Wyld’s meticulous and focused approach, which set him apart as a connoisseur of the genre.”

The Golden Age encompasses the great age of landscape watercolour painting in Britain from 1750 to 1850. Until the second half of the 18th century, watercolour painting was linked to topographical surveys. The collection of Andrew Wyld includes examples of works by John Robert Cozens (1752-1799) and Thomas Gainsborough, R.A. (1727 – 1788), two artists who in contrasting ways helped to liberate landscape painting. Both artists preferred idealised landscapes, with Gainsborough executing drawings of landscapes composed in his studio using coal, sand, moss, twigs and even broccoli, imaginatively rearranging the natural world. One highlight of the sale is a watercolour landscape by Cozens, *Rome from the Villa Mellini* (estimate: £100,000 –150,000), *illustrated above*. Cozens travelled to Italy with his patron, the collector, writer and builder of Fonthill Abbey, William Beckford. His distinctive style of painting, with its deliberate limited palette and mood, and his choice of subjects mark him out as a precursor of the Romantic movement in British art.



An extraordinarily rich drawing by Gainsborough is a further highlight of the sale. *Travellers passing through a Village* (estimate: £60,000 – 80,000), *illustrated left*, was completed at a time when Gainsborough was using combinations of inks and watercolour, as well as chalks and varnishes. Measuring just over eight by twelve inches it is one of a number of drawings of this size executed at the time. The central group of figures in this work echo the group in his famous oil painting *The Harvest Wagon* of the mid-1760s.

A number of works by John Constable, R.A. (1776-1837) will also be on offer. Although he is known best for his landscape paintings of Dedham Vale, Constable was also a very sensitive and able portraitist. *A Girl Reading* (estimate: £20,000 – 30,000), *illustrated right*, is one of a number of pencil drawings made by Constable in or around 1806. The subjects are taken from his close circle of friends. In 1806 he visited the Cobbold, Hobson and Gubbins families; he also painted portraits of members of the Harden and Lloyd families. The majority of these intimate studies are of women and children. In several cases the sitters are shown curled up with a book, or playing with a baby, seemingly unconscious of the fact that they are being observed.





Andrew Wyld was famous for his passion for the work of David Cox Senior, O.W.S. (1783-1859) and this sale contains a wonderful group of his watercolours, chalk, pencil, and ink drawings. In his last twenty years Cox achieved a freedom of expression that some see as a direct forerunner of impressionism. In 1826 Cox embarked on a tour to Belgium in the company of his brother-in-law Mr Gardener and his son David, a trip he subsequently extended into Holland. While travelling Cox made

studies of the waterways; *On the Scheldt, Holland*, 1826, (estimate: £5,000 – 8,000), shows sailing vessels drifting in the wide mouth of the river on a calm summer's day, *illustrated left*. The ship at the centre of the composition flies the national flag of the Netherlands. Further works by Cox in the sale include *Dudley Castle from the Birmingham Road* which is expected to realise between £2,500 and £3,500. Wyld was also very well associated with the work of Peter De Wint (1784-1849) and there are several fine examples of works by the artist on offer including *A Westmorland Mill* (estimate: £12,000-18,000, *illustrated right*), *Matlock, Derbyshire* (estimate: £5,000-8,000) and *Bolsover Castle*, (estimate: £6,000-10,000).



Another notable group in this auction is a number of works by George Romney (1734-1802) including an oil portrait *A Mother and Child Reading* (possibly Mrs Cumberland and her son) (£100,000-150,000), *illustrated left*. A charming pencil portrait of *The Revd William Atkinson* (1724-1764) wearing a broad-brimmed Hat is expected to realise £5,000-8,000; portraits on paper by Romney are very rare and the present work is thought to have been completed during the artist's stay in Kendal between 1757 and 1762. During his time in Kendal Romney's sitters seem to have been mainly middle-class professional men and clergymen. Further works by Romney include a striking drawing, *Macbeth Confronts Banquo's Ghost* which is estimated to realise between £10,000 and £15,000.

For the collector of watercolours, the crowning glory of any collection is a work by J.M.W. Turner, R.A. (1775-1851). In Turner, the British watercolour school found its master and its perennial inspiration; most of the painters who lived in his time or afterward were to some degree influenced by his skill and imagination. *Storm at Sea*, (estimate: £150,000-250,000), *illustrated right*, appears to be the first idea for Turner's major oil painting *Staffa, Fingal's Cave* which was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1832.





Part two of the sale will take place in a dedicated section of the *Interiors* sale in Christie's South Kensington on 18 July 2012. With estimates starting at £500 and no reserve on lots below £1,000, Part two will offer the opportunity to acquire works hand-picked by a consummate connoisseur of British drawings and watercolours at a wide range of different price points. Highlights from Part two include *Wayside plants at Arriccia* by Thomas Hartley Cromek (1809-1873) which is estimated at £500-800, *illustrated left*, and *The Old Treasury Lisbon* by James Holland (1799-1870) which is estimated at £700-1000. Demonstrating the diversity of Wyld's

collection, alongside these prolific artists of the 19th Century, Part two will also include a number of 20th Century Drawings including *Study for Limestone Quarries*, 1943, by Graham Sutherland O.M. (1903-1980) which is estimated between £10,000 and £15,000, and *The Oast at Owley, Kent* by Paul Nash (1889-1946) which is expected to fetch between £5,000 and £8,000.

Coming directly from the stock of W/S Fine Art, the majority of the watercolours and paintings have been conserved, mounted in hand-washed mounts and presented in frames ready to hang.

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