

Press Release

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**CHRISTIE'S**

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# ISLAMIC & INDIAN TREASURES ON SALE AT CHRISTIE'S IN APRIL



**Islamic & Indian Manuscripts & Works on Paper** - Monday, 23 April 2012

**Oriental Rugs & Carpets** - Tuesday, 24 April 2012

**A Private Collection donated to benefit the University of Oxford** - Thursday, 26 April 2012

**Art of the Islamic & Indian Worlds** - Thursday, 26 April 2012

**Indian & Islamic Works of Art & Textiles** - Friday 27 April 2012

**London** – Christie's introduce a rich offering for *Islamic Art Week* in April 2012, with five exceptional sales in the King Street and South Kensington salerooms. 2011 saw strong results for the category, particularly for rare pieces of Indian and Turkish origin, illustrating the continuing demand across this market for works of art from the Islamic and Indian worlds. The sale of *Art of the Islamic & Indian Worlds* on 26 April celebrates the exquisite craftsmanship of works of art produced since the 9<sup>th</sup> century with a particular focus on later Islamic art. The sale comprises 300 lots expected to realise a total in the region of £7 million. On the same day, *A Private Collection donated to benefit the University of Oxford* presents works of art on paper that will be offered for sale with all proceeds donated to Oxford University (please see full press release [here](#)). With other dedicated sales for oriental carpets, works on paper and works of art and textiles, this week will offer an extraordinary opportunity for buyers to build a collection or decorate a house.

## ❧ OTTOMAN TURKISH ART ❧

The sale of *Art of the Islamic & Indian Worlds* includes a strong array of Ottoman Turkish works of art, including over 20 pieces of Iznik pottery. The most exceptional lot is an impressive large Iznik pottery dish, *circa* 1585-90, estimated at £80,000 to £120,000 (*illustrated above centre*) which combines floral and arabesque motifs in vivid colours. It was bought at Christie's in 1905 from the collection of Louis Huth and has passed by descent to the present owner, it is now offered for the first time in over a century.

Other highlights are six Iznik pieces from the late Heinz Kuckei of Berlin (estimates range from £1,000 to £50,000), a dish from the collection of Monique Uzielli (estimate: £40,000-60,000) and a rare Iznik Baluster vase with a unique Chinese shape and design originating from 1550 (estimate: £50,000-70,000).

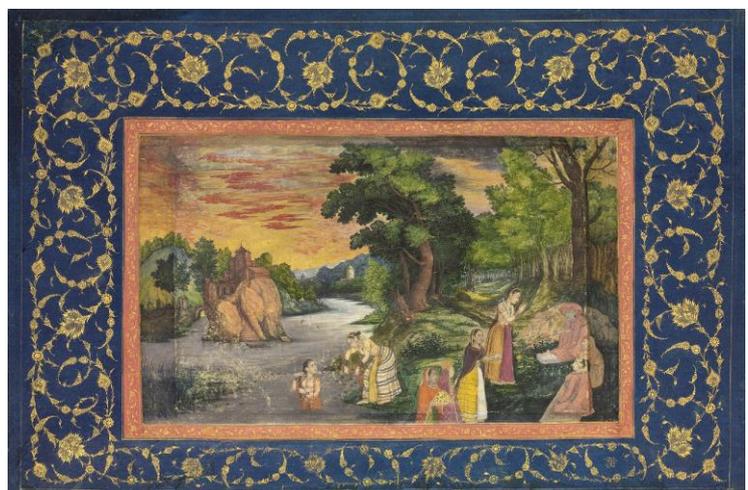
Other Turkish highlights include a number of Qur'ans and calligraphy, such as a Qur'an from Ottoman Turkey, signed Muhammad Al-Wasfi, dated AH 1245/1829-30 AD (estimate: £7,000-10,000 – *illustrated right*).



## ❧ INDIAN ART ❧

Indian art is strongly represented in the sale, notably with a superb Mughal section which includes an exceptional jade-hilted dagger with the original blade. Decorated with gold inlay and encrusted with emeralds and rubies, it originates from early 17<sup>th</sup> century central or northern India (estimate: £100,000-150,000 – *illustrated page 1 right*). A gemset rock crystal bottle is another Mughal treasure from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, decorated with gold and gemstones (estimate: £100,000-150,000 – *illustrated page 1 left*). Other Indian objects include a gun from 1832 given by Ranjit Singh, the “Lion of the Punjab” (estimate: £20,000-30,000) and a 19<sup>th</sup> century Sikh battle flag (estimate: £15,000-25,000).

The Indian miniature section is led by a rediscovered folio of great beauty from the *St Petersburg Muraqqa*, which is amongst the most spectacular albums of miniatures known. *Ladies by a river*, dating from *circa* 1680, is estimated £30,000-50,000. The miniature depicts ladies bathing in a river with detailed Rheinland landscape of a forest, a castle and a dramatic sky. A calligraphy from the same *Muraqqa* is priced at £8,000-12,000.



❧ OTHER HIGHLIGHTS ❧



A great array of other works of art spanning a wide range of geographical areas, materials and time are included in the sale. A leading highlight is an important and rare enameled and gilt glass bottle from 13<sup>th</sup> century Syria decorated with unique bilingual Arabic and Byzantine Greek inscriptions and applied small animal shapes (£600,000-800,000, *illustrated above right*).

The metalwork section is led by a large Mamluk basin made of shiny brass for the last important Mamluk Sultan of Egypt, Qansuh al-Ghuri, in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century (estimate: £40,000-60,000 – *illustrated above left*). Contemporaneous with this are two silver inlaid vessels that clearly demonstrate the trade links between Syria and Europe; one even bears an Italian coat of arms (estimates: £15,000-25,000 and £7,000-10,000).



Highlights from Iran include a remarkable group of evocative and brightly coloured 19<sup>th</sup> century paintings; consisting of a magnificent and impressively detailed portrait of *Nasir al-Din Shah Qajar* by Muhammad Hassan Afshar (estimate: £70,000 -100,000 – *illustrated left*),



*An equestrian portrait of Sepahsalar* by Isma'il Jalayir (estimate: £60,000-80,000) and *A court musician playing the kemanche*, School of Abu'l Qasim (estimate: £70,000-100,000). Another fascinating Iranian object is a rare and large fragment of carved grey stone schist roundel, illustrating combating animals, from 15<sup>th</sup> century Timurid Iran (estimate: £200,000-300,000 – *illustrated above right*).

## SOUTH KENSINGTON HIGHLIGHTS

Christie's South Kensington will present two sales dedicated to Islamic art this season, along with approximately 100 other lots of decorative arts from the Islamic world in the *Interiors* sale on 24 April. The auction of *Islamic & Indian Manuscripts & Works on Paper* on 23 April, the first sale dedicated to Islamic works on paper at Christie's for over twenty years. It includes around 400 lots and is expected to realise in excess of £600,000. Amongst the large selection of Persian & Indian manuscripts,



the highlight is a Qur'an from Sultanate India, 16<sup>th</sup> century (estimate: £3,000-4,000 – *illustrated right*). Other important lots in this sale include an Ottoman prayer book for the days of the week, from the Library of Sultan Bayezid II (r. 1481-1512) from Turkey, second half 15<sup>th</sup> century (estimate: £6,000-8,000) and miniatures from Mughal India by the court painter Anup Chattar, dated 1658-9 AD: *Portrait of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb* and *Portrait of a military officer* (estimates: £7,000-10,000 each).



The sale of *Indian & Islamic Works of Art & Textiles*, on 27 April, comprises approximately 500 lots, with a total in the region of £800,000. The most important pieces are an opulent 18<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman jewelled silver presentation sword (*kiliç*), from Constantinople (estimate: £6,000-8,000 – *illustrated left*) and a fine silver enameled bottle with figural decoration from early 19<sup>th</sup> century Lucknow, India (estimate: £6,000-8,000). Textiles highlights include an Ottoman silk embroidered linen cover dating from the 18<sup>th</sup> century (estimate: £15,000-18,000) and an unusual Susani from Bokhara (estimate: £4,000-5,000).

## ORIENTAL RUGS & CARPETS

The sale of *Oriental Rugs & Carpets* on 24 April will feature approximately 240 carpets, mainly from Persia, including examples by the most famous weavers, along with great Caucasian and Turkish rugs, the sale is expected to realise in the region of £2.5 million. Rare and exceptional examples will delight collectors: highlights include a 13<sup>th</sup> century *Seljuk* carpet fragment from Konya, central Anatolia, which is truly unique: no such carpet has ever been for sale at international auction (estimate: £200,000-300,000); *The Boehringer white ground cintamani prayer rug* from 16<sup>th</sup> century West Anatolia, which was gifted to Geigy Ltd in 1958 by Boehringer & Sohn (estimate: £80,000-120,000); and the outstanding silk, gold and silver thread *Koum Kapi* carpet from Istanbul, Turkey, *circa* 1920 (estimate: £120,000-180,000 – *illustrated right*) are amongst the highlights. Decorators will be equally pleased with several superb pieces coming from British country houses such as the *Amritsar* rug which originates from North India, *circa* 1890 (estimate £30,000-50,000) and an *Ushak* carpet from West Anatolia, *circa* 1900 (estimate £30,000-40,000).



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*Images available on request*

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