

# CHRISTIE'S

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## AN IMPORTANT PRIVATE COLLECTION OF 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY SCULPTURE LEADS THE SEPTEMBER SALE OF *THE OPULENT EYE - 500 YEARS: DECORATIVE ARTS EUROPE*



A Belgian lifesize marble figure of a female nude,  
by Jacques De Braekeleer  
Estimate: £40,000 – 60,000



A Belgian 'Art Nouveau' marble long-case clock, 240 cm. high  
Estimate: £50,000 – 100,000



An Italian marble group of a maiden sipping nectar, by Angelo Bertozzi  
Estimate: £30,000 – 50,000

**London** - The sale of *The Opulent Eye - 500 Years: Decorative Arts Europe* which will take place on 20 September 2012 is led by an important private collection of 19<sup>th</sup> century marble sculpture. Comprising twenty lots the collection is expected to realise in excess of £400,000. The group focuses upon *belle époque* marble statuary and genre figures and was assembled by a discerning private collector, who was attracted to marble statuary by the skill of the sculptor in carving such intricately detailed and lifelike figures. Highlights of the collection include a Belgian *art nouveau* marble *regulateur* (estimate: £50,000 – 100,000, *illustrated above centre*). The marble long-case clock is attributed to the Symbolist sculptor Egide Rombaux (d.1942) and is carved in bas-relief with a figure of Atropos, one of three fates from Greek mythology who spin the thread of life, measure and cut it. The lifesize marble figure of a female nude by Jacques de Braekeleer (estimate: £40,000 – 60,000, *illustrated above left*) is entitled '*De Afwachting (The Expectation)*' and is thought to depict a maiden waiting for her lover, a fisherman, to return from sea. Its pendent, depicting the fisherman's wife, and known as '*The Wait*', is in the *Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique*. Characteristic of other pieces from the collection is the marble figure of a maiden sipping nectar, or wood nymph, by Angelo Bertozzi, which is from the Romantic school of 19<sup>th</sup> century Italian sculpture (estimate: £30,000 – 50,000, *illustrated above right*).

## FURTHER HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SALE

'The Opulent Eye' presents the very best furniture, sculpture, clocks and porcelain from the 19th Century; comprising 240 lots, it is expected to realise in excess of £3 million. The only auction sale in Europe devoted to furniture and works of art from the 19<sup>th</sup> century; it showcases the opulent and eclectic response of the decorative arts to this century of unprecedented change. Highlights include a centre table by Charles-Guillaume Diehl, which is a rediscovered addition to his catalogue of remarkable *néo-grec* style furniture, led by pieces shown at the at the 1867 Paris *Exposition Universelle* (estimate: £100,000 – 200,000, *illustrated right*). Similarly prized pieces are today in the collections of the Musée d'Orsay, Paris, and Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Diehl's unique style blends classical ornament, such as the Grecian *hermai* busts to the legs, with highly stylised motifs such as the roaring Corinthian mask to the frieze.



Also on offer is an Important French 'Japonisme' cloisonné enamel, gilt and patinated bronze jardinière-on-stand by Christofle et Cie (estimate: £60,000 – 100,000, *illustrated left*). This jardinière epitomizes the 'style Japonais' which referred to a resurgence of Western interest in the art of Japan and China from the 1860s. The resurgence was driven by the colonisation of East Asia and the export of Japanese works of art following the Meiji restoration and found manifestation most completely in Empress Eugénie's musée Chinois at Fontainebleau. In the West, contact with quality Asian works of art led designers and makers to study their forms and techniques, and inspired them to produce works of art using the stylized vocabulary and balanced asymmetry of the Far East.

This monumental pair of ormolu-mounted white and red marble herm figures come from an Australian Family Collection (estimate: £150,000 – 250,000, *illustrated right*). Their iconography is derived from the *moschophoros* ("calf-bearer") figure of Greek antiquity. They are of French manufacture and date to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century when the composition lent itself naturally to the fashion for sculptural figures supporting candelabra or *torchères*.



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*Images available on request*

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