

Press Release

For Immediate Release

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CHRISTIE'S

ADELSON GALLERIES

Contact: Sara Fox sfox@christies.com tel +1 212 636 2680

FREEDOM:
The Art of Stephen Scott Young
A Selection of Works by an American Watercolor Master

**CHRISTIE'S PRIVATE SALES AND ADELSON GALLERIES JOIN
FORCES IN A UNIQUE SELLING EXHIBITION**



Freedom
STEPHEN SCOTT YOUNG (b. 1957)

Exhibition: *May 14 – June 11, 2012, Christie's Private Sales Galleries, 20th Floor, 1230 Avenue of the Americas*

New York – Christie's Private Sales and Adelson Galleries are pleased to present a special exhibition and sale of 40 works on paper by the American artist Stephen Scott Young (b. 1957) at Christie's. The show will open May 14, coinciding with the publication of a new book, *Once Upon an Island: Stephen Scott Young in the*

Bahamas, by Dr. William H. Gerdts, professor emeritus of art history at City University of New York, and author of more than 25 books on American art. The exhibition spans more than 20 years of Young's career and a range of subjects and sizes, with 28 works on paper in watercolor and dry brush, as well as six drawings and six watercolor studies. Mr. Young and Dr. Gerdts will attend the opening reception on Monday, May 14, and will sign copies of the new book. The exhibition is open to the public through June 11 at Christie's Private Sales Galleries on the 20th floor at 1230 Avenue of the Americas.

Eric Widing, Deputy Chairman, at Christie's, said, *"We are very pleased to host this major retrospective exhibition and sale for Stephen Scott Young. Celebrated for his brilliant technique and the touching charm of his subjects, the artist's reputation as one of America's great Realist masters is assured."*

Warren Adelson, Adelson Galleries, said, *"Since first meeting him about 25 years ago, I have had the great good fortune to get to know Scott and become more familiar with his work. Over the years, he has become even more skillful, and his remarkable technique as a draftsman and painter is now unsurpassed. His work has 'wall power' and unequivocal resonance."*

STEPHEN SCOTT YOUNG: AMERICAN REALIST MASTER

A contemporary painter best known for luminous, meticulously rendered watercolors of the people, landscape and architecture of the Bahamas, Florida, and coastal South Carolina, Stephen Scott Young often invites comparisons to Winslow Homer. According to Dr. Gerdts, Scott was barely out of high school when he painted his first watercolor in 1976 in St. Augustine. Young has said, *"It was not until the Winslow Homer Watercolors exhibition at the National Gallery in 1986 that I fully appreciated just how great an artist Homer was...In 1981, when I first visited Nassau, I was aware of his legacy of tropical watercolors, yet I had only seen the works in books. Seeing the originals completely changed my life, my paintings."*

Young's ability to convey character and psychological insight in his portraits and figural works has also earned him frequent comparisons to Thomas Eakins and Andrew Wyeth. He is self-taught in watercolor, using oil brushes to build up successive layers of pigment in his watercolor and dry brush paintings, only using watercolor brushes to wet the paper. Working from dark areas to light to achieve a depth and intensity akin to that of oil painting, Young has developed a careful, deliberate working method, often executing an extensive series of preparatory studies for each of the 20 or so finished artworks he completes per year.

Before concentrating on the medium of watercolor, Young was trained as a printmaker. On his first day at college, upon learning that a Rembrandt self-portrait was an etching, not a pen-and-ink



Bahamian Youth

drawing as he had first thought, he dedicated himself to the art of etching. He realized the medium had afforded the Dutch master a level of depth and detail that could not be achieved with pen and ink. That training prepared him later to take up the medium of silverpoint, to which he was drawn after seeing works by Leo Dee (1931–2004), in a 1985 show called *The Fine Line* at the Norton Museum of Art in West Palm Beach. He studied and mastered the exacting medium, which was first developed during the Renaissance. The silverpoint needle is an instrument of precision that leaves no room for error or erasure. But for Young, the advantage of silverpoint over etching is that the artist can see his or her progress as the work develops.

Young, who was born in Honolulu, now lives in south Florida and spends substantial stretches of time each year in the Bahamas, where his wife's family has deep roots. Many of his paintings feature local people he



Handline Hook

has gotten to know over a period of time—there is a connection and he feels an affinity towards them. He generally works from sketches executed outdoors, in his models' natural settings, and finishes the paintings in his studio, without the use of photography. He captures his subjects in the context of their daily lives.

A highlight of the exhibition is the painting, *Freedom* (pictured on page 1), which was painted last year in anticipation of the book and exhibition, at the request of Dr. Gerdts. Largely apolitical in his work, Young pointedly chose to frame his subject, a young Haitian girl named Closma Rosa, standing in profile in front of a large, unfurled American flag, which fills the entire center of the composition. Dr. Gerdts says that Young is passionately attached to his native country, a true American, and the flag of the United States represents freedom to him. Young brought the flag with him to Eleuthera with a specific purpose in mind: To paint it as a symbol announcing the unjust treatment of the Haitians living in the Bahamas.

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in 2011 that totaled £3.6 billion/\$5.7 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 £502 million / \$808.6m in 2011, an increase of 44% 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.*

About Adelson Galleries

For over 40 years, Adelson Galleries has handled some of the finest American paintings to come to market, placing works in major private collections as well as leading public institutions. Distinguished for his expertise in the fields of American Impressionism, Realism and Modernism, the gallery was founded in 1965 by Warren Adelson.

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