

# CHRISTIE'S

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## CHRISTIE'S *MODERN BRITISH & IRISH* *ART EVENING SALE* REALISES

£14.8 MILLION / \$23.8 MILLION / €17.6 MILLION

New world record price for the Modern British & Irish Art category set by Stanley Spencer's *Christ Preaching at Cookham Regatta: Conversation Between Punts* realising £6million / \$9.7 million / €7.2 million

3 new world record prices set for  
Sir Stanley Spencer, John Piper and Ivon Hitchens



**London, November 2013** – *The Modern British & Irish Art Evening Sale* realised £14,792,750/\$23,845,913/€17,588,580 selling 76% by lot and 87% by value. The top price was paid for *Christ Preaching at Cookham Regatta: Conversation Between Punts* by Sir Stanley Spencer, R.A. (1891-1959) which realised £6 million/\$9.7 million/€7.2 million (estimate: £3 – 5 million), setting a new world record price for the Modern British & Irish Art category and for the artist at auction.

**André Zlattinger, Senior Director, Head of Modern British Art, Christie's London and Rachel Hilderley, Christie's International Specialist and Director, Modern British Art:** *"The market for British Art has never been stronger. The results achieved in this various owner 'Modern British & Irish Art Evening Sale' confirm that this is the moment for 20<sup>th</sup> century British & Irish Art. The past few weeks have seen the record-breaking \$142.2 million sale of the triptych by Francis Bacon of Lucian Freud at Christie's New York, the success of the 'When Britain Went Pop!' exhibition at Christie's Mayfair, and the reopening of Tate Britain. The sale saw three new auction records set for Sir Stanley Spencer, John Piper and Ivon Hitchens: we are particularly pleased with the result of the outstanding Stanley Spencer, 'Christ Preaching at Cookham Regatta: Conversation between Punts,' which realised over £6 million, setting a new world record price for the Modern British & Irish Art category and for the artist at auction. As well as British clients, we welcomed collectors from around the world including the US and Asia. The combined total for the 'Modern British and Irish Art Evening' sale and the prices realised for works in the category sold in 'The Collection of the Late Mrs T.S. Eliot,' which also took place on 20 November 2013, comes to £17,180,475/\$27,702,089/€20,406,096. We look forward to 'The Modern British & Irish Art Day Sale' on 21 November 2013."*

## Top Lot

- The top price was paid for *Christ Preaching at Cookham Regatta: Conversation Between Punts* by Sir Stanley Spencer, R.A. (1891-1959) which realised £6 million/\$9.7 million/€7.2 million (estimate: £3 – 5 million), setting a record price for the Modern British & Irish Art category and setting a new world record price for the artist at auction. This work is part of Spencer's celebrated series painted in the 1950s, which explores the idea of Christ's presence in his home town of Cookham, Berkshire. This series was the most important in the artist's career and the one he was working on towards the end of his life. Spencer painted imaginative, biblical scenes set in realistic and familiar landscapes and was one of the most original British painters of his generation.

### Further highlights of the Auction:

- *Carved and Pierced Form* by Dame Barbara Hepworth realised £902,500/\$1,454,830/€1,073,073 (estimate: £250,000 – 350,000). In 1959, Hepworth returned to carving in stone, a medium that had been central to her output in the 1930s, but that she had used only sparingly during the previous two decades. Dating from 1964, *Carved and Pierced Form*, demonstrates the mastery Hepworth had achieved in this medium.
- *Painting 1935* by John Piper, C.H. (1903-1992), which was once bought for just 20 guineas, sold for £482,500/\$777,790/€573,693 (estimate: £200,000 - 300,000). One of the most remarkable artistic developments within the 1930s was John Piper's swift move through a series of experiments to a position of central importance within the history of modernism in Britain. Prior to this he had looked inquisitively at many things: at the painterly lyricism associated with 7 & 5 Society painting; at Picasso's teasing use of collage; at Hans Arp's string pictures; and at Braque's habit of letting a line float free of its descriptive role so as to bind into a unity objects and space.
- *Still life with roses in a blue and white vase* by Samuel John Peploe R.S.A. (1871-1935) sold for £662,500/\$1,067,950/€787,713 (estimate: £300,000 – 500,000). This work, which once sold for £500, was painted in the first half of the 1920s at the height of the artist's career, and this wonderful composition is among one of his most sophisticated and beautiful. The soft tones and subtle square brush strokes produce the superbly balanced and harmonious colour which is so typical of his finest works of this period. Throughout Peploe's life he was driven by the ambition to paint the still life, not as is often wrongly believed in a decorative sense, but as an intellectual exercise, combining the analytical and scientific process of pictorial composition

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### **Notes to Editors:**

Previous joint record price at auction for the category:

#### **20TH CENTURY BRITISH & IRISH ART EVENING SALE**

London, King Street

Nov 16, 2011

Sale 8044

Lot 7

Laurence Stephen Lowry, R.A. (1887-1976)

*Piccadilly Circus, London*

Estimate 4,000,000 - 6,000,000 British pounds

Price Realized 5,641,250 British pounds

#### **20TH CENTURY BRITISH & IRISH ART**

London, King Street

May 26, 2011

Sale 7967

Lot 140

Laurence Stephen Lowry, R.A. (1887-1976)

*The Football Match*

Estimate 3,500,000 - 4,500,000 British pounds

Price Realized 5,641,250 British pounds