

# CHRISTIE'S

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## AN EXCEPTIONAL TILBURY PRODUCED BY VUITTON AND MOREL FOR ECCENTRIC EXPLORER BLANCHE DE CLERMONT-TONNERRE at Christie's Paris - 8 November 2013



Tilbury accompanied by a set of trunks, by Vuitton and V. Morel, Paris 1910  
Commissioned by Countess Blanche de Clermont-Tonnerre to Georges Vuitton  
Estimate: €50,000-80,000

**Paris** - The *Furniture* department is pleased to offer an exceptional Tilbury carriage accompanied by a set of Vuitton trunks, as part of the auction *Le Goût Français*, which will take place on 8 November in Paris. Produced by the renowned luxury good makers Vuitton and V. Morel in 1910, it had been commissioned by the eccentric explorer and adventurer Blanche de Clermont-Tonnerre (1856-1944), who subsequently used the Tilbury in her travels to India, China, Siberia, Iraq and Persia, where she mingled with distinguished royal families from the East as well as hunted tigers and on one occasion, even brought home a polar bear in the hope of domesticating it in her Parisian mansion. In great condition and with excellent provenance, this unique model is easy to disassemble and the three trunks are covered in famous red *Vuittonite* (estimate: €50,000-80,000, *illustrated above*). Exhibited in the Museum of Decorative Arts in Paris in 1987, it has remained in the explorer's family to this date.

**Simon de Monicault, director of the Furniture department says:** *"This is a true masterpiece in the Art of Travel. This Tilbury and its trunks are considered one of the most important commissions of all time for Vuitton and Morel. It evokes the fantastic destiny of one of the most eccentric clients of Georges Vuitton,*

*Blanche de Clermont-Tonnerre, who was equally comfortable exploring the depths of the earth as she was mingling with Parisian high society of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century”.*

This exquisite Tilbury was designed by the prestigious house V. Morel, which was established in 1845 before being acquired in 1880 by Antoine Joseph Grümmer. At the time of Blanche’s commission, in 1910, Morel’s establishment was located on Cambacérés street in Paris, and rapidly became the hotspot to acquire custom made luxury goods. Described by the press as a *Maison de Premier Ordre*, the company specialised in making exceptional harnesses, while collaborating with the biggest institutions such as Hermès for leather, L’écluse for bronzes and Vuitton for trunks.

**Sale: Friday 8 November 2013**

**Public exhibition:** From 4 - 7 November 2013, from 10 am to 6 pm

**Christie’s Paris :** 9 avenue Matignon, 75008 Paris

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***Le Goût Français*** is held twice a year as a showcase for the finest European Decorative Arts from the 13<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Christie’s specialists will present masterpieces of porcelain, silver, furniture, sculpture and works of art. The next sale on 8 November will include exceptional Louis XVI silver, medieval statuary, important furniture from the 18<sup>th</sup> century and sought-after porcelain with Imperial provenance.

**About Christie’s**

Christie’s, the world’s leading art business, had global auction and private sales in the first half of 2013 that totaled £2.4 billion/ \$3.68 billion. In 2012, Christie’s had global auction and private sales that totaled £3.92 billion/\$6.27 billion making it the highest annual total in Christie’s history. 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 £465.2 million (\$711.8 million) in the first half of 2013, an increase of 13% on the previous year, and for the third successive year represents the highest total for the period in both company and art market history.

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 in growth markets such as Russia, China, India and the Middle East, with successful sales, exhibitions and initiatives in Moscow, Baku, Beijing, Mumbai, Delhi, Jeddah, Abu Dhabi, Doha 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.

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