

# CHRISTIE'S

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## OF DEVILS AND ANGELS

Old Master Prints  
at Christie's London in December



**London** - Christie's is pleased to announce the annual sale of *Old Master Prints* taking place at King Street on Tuesday, 3 December, to coincide with the sale of Old Master & British Paintings. Beginning with an anonymous metalcut from around 1480 and concluding with a lithograph printed in 1801, the sale comprises 103 lots that span four centuries of printmaking in Europe. Each period, from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, is represented by the defining printmakers of their time, from **Martin Schongauer** to **Albrecht Dürer**, **Rembrandt** and **Giovanni Battista Tiepolo**. With estimates ranging from £1,000 up to £220,000, the sale offers exceptional opportunities for established and new collectors to acquire rare, celebrated and unusual prints by great masters of the medium.

**Martin Schongauer** (1450-1491), the first engraver known to us by name and the most important printmaker before Dürer, is strongly represented in the sale by a group of six lots, that range from a small and quietly beautiful *Virgin and Child on a grassy Bench*, circa 1474 (estimate: £ 7,000 – 10,000) to the dramatic *Tribulations of Saint Anthony*, circa 1496-73 (estimate: £ 80,000 – 120,000, *illustrated above*). This engraving of the hermit saint being carried into mid-air and harassed and tormented by a host of fanciful demons predates the

nightmarish fantasies of Bosch and Bruegel. It is one of the most influential – and most eccentric - prints in the history of European art, and a great rarity. Quite different in character, yet equally haunting is Schongauer's *The Virgin and Child in a Courtyard*, circa 1470-82 (estimate: £60,000 – 80,000), showing the mother and child-group seated in an austere courtyard – one of the first three-dimensional spaces depicted in European printmaking.

The section of engravings, woodcuts and etchings by **Albrecht Dürer** is led by two of his most famous and complex prints: a rich and dark impression of *Adam and Eve*, 1504 (estimate £120,000 – 220,000, *illustrated right*) and a silvery impression of that most intellectual of all Renaissance prints, *Melencolia I*, 1514 (estimate: £120,000 – 180,000). Christie's is proud to have been chosen by the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, Massachusetts, to sell these two fine impressions, which have recently been de-accessioned from the institute's collection. Together with other duplicate prints by Dürer, both prints have been selected for sale to benefit the Clark Art Institute's fund for future acquisitions.



While Dürer has always been admired for his technical and conceptual brilliance as a printmaker, **Rembrandt** is unparalleled in his ability to create atmosphere and sentiment with only the use of a copper plate, black ink and paper. Three landscape prints offered in this sale in very fine, early impressions – all from the same anonymous collection - exemplify his stupendous skill and sensibility. His large etching *The Three Trees*, 1643 (estimate: 150,000 – 200,000, *illustrated left*), is perhaps the greatest print depicting a landscape ever made. The present, superb impression displays the most dramatic and most subtle effects of this summer

landscape under the approaching storm clouds in equal measure. On a smaller scale and by different means, the two other landscapes convey an equally strong sense of a place and a moment in time: the small *Landscape with a Milkman*, circa 1650 (estimate: £30,000 – 50,000) on Japan paper; and the rapidly sketched *Six's Bridge*, 1645 (estimate: £50,000 – 70,000), both rare and in remarkably good condition.

An unusual selection of prints of the 18<sup>th</sup> century includes fine prints by a variety of artists at an accessible price level, from **Canaletto** and **Piranesi** to the French printmakers **Saint-Aubin** and **Debucourt**. **Giovanni Battista Tiepolo** is particularly well represented with an outstanding group of early impressions from *Scherzi*, circa 1740, a series of whimsical and utterly charming fantasies of a lost, magical world. Estimates start from £2,000 to £3,000.

The sale concludes with one of the earliest lithographs ever printed by an artist, **Benjamin West**'s *The Angel of the Resurrection*, 1801 (estimate 4,000 – 6,000, *illustrated right*). Printed only one year after lithography had been patented, it was



part of an album called ‘Specimen of Polyautography’, meant to promote the new technique when it was still in its infancy. When Benjamin West drew this devious-looking angel with crayon onto a flat stone, he could hardly have guessed that this would become the printing process of the industrial age.

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**PUBLIC EXHIBITION:**

Friday, 29 November: 9:00am – 4:30pm  
Saturday, 30 November: 10:00am – 5:00pm  
Sunday, 1 December: 10:00am – 5:00pm  
Monday, 2 December: 9:00am – 4:30pm

**AUCTION:**

*Old Master Prints*  
Tuesday, 3 December 2013  
2:00pm

**PUBLIC EXHIBITION:**

Saturday, 30 November: 10:00am – 5:00pm  
Sunday, 1 December: 10:00am – 5:00pm  
Monday, 2 December: 9:00am – 7.30pm  
Tuesday, 3 December: 9:00am – 5:00pm

**AUCTION:**

*500 Years of Printmaking- South Kensington*  
Wednesday, 4 December 2013  
10:30am & 2:00pm

**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 12 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Mumbai. 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.*

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