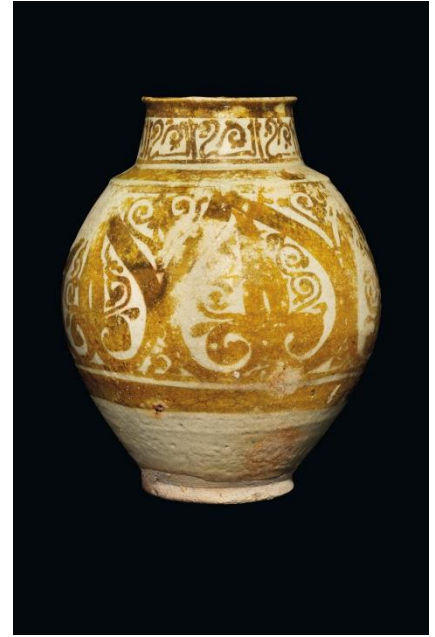


CHRISTIE'S

PRESS RELEASE | LONDON
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ART OF THE ISLAMIC & INDIAN WORLDS

AT CHRISTIE'S LONDON IN APRIL

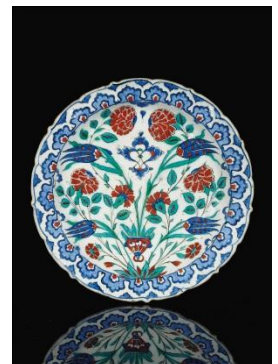


London – Christie's sale of *Art of the Islamic & Indian Worlds* on 25 April 2013 celebrates the exquisite craftsmanship of works of art produced between the 9th and early 20th century. The sale features over 200 lots and is expected to realise in the region of £4 million.

OTTOMAN TURKISH ART

Leading the strong Ottoman Turkish section of the sale is a rare gilt-copper (*tombak*) helmet (*ciçak*) (estimate: £300,000 – 500,000, *illustrated above left*). The fashion for gilt copper, or *tombak*, developed in Ottoman Turkey in the 16th century. Whilst it was used primarily in the mosque and home for objects such as lamps, incense burners, candlesticks, and bowls, it also had an important function in a military context; because of the malleability of the copper, *tombak* armour is unlikely to have been used in battle but rather for parades and other ceremonial use, enhancing the pomp and colour of the Ottoman army. From the same private collection comes an Ottoman steel chamfron dating to the early 16th century; it is a fine example of what is possibly the most sculptural of all pieces of armour known in the Islamic World (estimate: £150,000 – 250,000).

The sale also features an impressive group of Iznik pottery, led by a dish dating to *circa* 1575, which is drawn with extremely delicate floral sprays which betraying the influence of the naturalistic designs favoured by Kara Memi, the chief painter at the Ottoman court in the later part of the 16th century (estimate: £100,000 – 150,000, *illustrated right*); Kara Memi was the main proponent of floral arrangements which were often described as 'blowing in the wind' for their sense of flow and movement.



The sale also includes an impressive group of *Kutahya* pottery from a private collection with estimates ranging from £3,000 – 10,000. In the 18th century, the Armenian potters at *Kutahya* flourished, producing a wide range of vessels as well as the pictorial and decorative tiles in the Armenian Cathedral of St. James in Jerusalem. Highlights include a *Kutahya* pottery bottle which dates to the 18th century (estimate: £6,000 – 8,000), and a *Kutahya* pottery dish, also dating to the 18th century (estimate: £6,000 – 8,000).

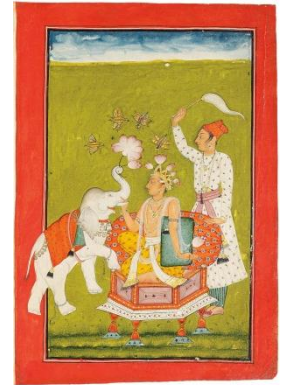
INDIAN ART



A selection of Indian objects and works of art on paper includes a fine portrait of one of the most significant Mughal courtiers of the early 17th century, Mirza Abu'l Hassan Asaf Khan (d.1641) (estimate: £80,000 – 100,000, *illustrated left*). The son of Itimad al-Dawla (Ghyath Beg) and the Head of Jahangir's Treasury, he was also the brother of Jahangir's favourite wife Nur Jahan and the father of Mumtaz Mahal, Shah Jahan's much loved spouse for whom he built the Taj Mahal. As such he was more closely linked to the Imperial family than any other noble. The painting is attributable to Balchand, or a close follower. Balchand was an imperial court painter whose career spanned from the end of the Emperor Akbar's reign, into that of Shah Jahan.

He is known to have painted 'Asaf Khan on a number of occasions – one such portrait is in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Further Indian works on paper include a painting from the Ragmal series, *Shri Raga*, which dates to *circa* 1690, North India (estimate: £10,000 – 15,000, *illustrated right*) and a large illustration from the Ramayana, *Envoys come to pay homage to King Dasaratha*, from North India, *circa* 1800-1820 (estimate: £15,000 – 25,000).



OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

Early Islamic works include a rare and intact Fatimid lustre jar, from 10th/11th-century Egypt, which is decorated with bold fleur de lys on a ground of scrolling vine (estimate: £200,000 – 300,000, *illustrated page one right*). This exceptional jar is an extremely rare intact surviving example of the decorative heights achieved by Fatimid potters. The luxury status of this jar is best typified by its rich golden lustre glaze.

One of the highlights of the sale is the Imperial carved rock crystal seal of Shah Sulayman Safavi (estimate: £200,000 – 300,000, *illustrated page one centre*). This important seal dates to the first year of the reign of the Shah as Shah Suleyman and is a remarkable survival. Whilst they were important tools of administration,



seals were often re-carved or destroyed to ensure that they didn't fall into the wrong hands. Sulayman was a great patron of the arts; he is responsible for directly influencing some of the most impressive works of painters of the late 17th century. His love for art and beauty no doubt has something to do with the elegant work on the seal, which is both a masterpiece of Safavid calligraphy and of the lapidary art.

Later works include an impressive pair of gold damascened forged iron 'Alhambra' vases (estimate: £100,000 – 150,000, *illustrated left*). These elegant vases draw their inspiration from the Nasrid 'Alhambra' vases of the 13th-15th centuries. An inscription in Spanish that runs around the belly of one of the vases states

that they were presented to a Dr. Avelino Gutierrez, on his appointment as Deacon of Anatomy on 16 November 1910. Dr. Avellino Gutierrez was born in Spain in 1864, he had an important professional career in medicine in Argentina and was also a staunch supporter of Spanish culture and education. The vases are attributable to three of the students of Plácido Zuloaga – the artist most commonly associated with the decorative art of damascening. The students established a studio together in 1890, winning prizes for their work exhibited in the Paris exposition of 1897. On the death of one of the three, the others opened a shop in Buenos Aires, where the present pair was probably made. A reference in the inscription to an exhibition in the Spanish Pavilion in 1910 suggests that these were exhibited in the World Exposition, which took place in Buenos Aires that year.

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PUBLIC EXHIBITION:

Friday, 19 April 2013: 9:00 am – 4:30 pm
Saturday, 20 April 2013: 12:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Sunday, 21 April 2013: 11:00 am – 5:00 pm
Monday, 22 April 2013: 9:00 am – 8:00 pm
Tuesday, 23 April 2013: 9:00 am – 4:30 pm
Wednesday, 24 April 2013: 9:00 am – 4:30 pm

AUCTION:

Art of the Islamic & Indian Worlds
Thursday, 25 April 2013
11:30 am

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*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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