

CHRISTIE'S

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CHRISTIE'S PRESENTS A TWO-DAY SALE OF A PALLADIAN VILLA BY MICHAEL S. SMITH AT CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK ON APRIL 23-24, 2013



Photo Credit: François Halard

New York – Christie's is honored to present the two-day sale of **A Palladian Villa by Michael S. Smith** taking place 23-24 April. Encompassing over 450 lots, the sale will include contemporary art, English furniture, Old Master paintings, Chinese works of art and antiquities from a remarkable private property designed by Michael S. Smith, one of the most venerated figures in interior design. The inspiration for the design, which is the subject of Smith's upcoming book *Building Beauty: The Alchemy of Design**, published by Rizzoli New York, was drawn directly from the architecture of the house, a Palladian villa overlooking the Pacific Ocean. This concept allowed Smith to create a home that was informed by a classical sensibility but within a modern context, filled with extraordinary art and furnishings that span the past 500 years.

[Please click here to view the e-catalogue.](#)



Sean Scully (B. 1945), *Dead Sea*, 1989 (Estimate: \$700,000-900,000)

In *Dead Sea* – pictured, left, Sean Scully paints thick, textured bands of black and pale grey around a central rectangle of deep red. Drawing on Piet Mondrian's architectonic grid and Rothko's luminous chromatic harmonies, Scully's work reconciles architectonic form with expressive gesture, vivid red with subdued grey-scale. The powerful and mystical *Dead Sea*, whose bands of densely painted vertical and horizontal color became Scully's signature motif while on an influential trip to Morocco in 1969. There, the artist found inspiration in the geometric patterns of local, hand-dyed cloth and the faded and fragmented facades of the buildings.

A George II Giltwood Mirror Circa 1740 (Estimate: \$30,000-50,000)

This grand mirror encapsulates the naturalistic, highly individual designs frequently termed the 'French Picturesque Fashion' that prevailed in important commissions at the middle of the 18th Century. Its distinctive combination of reeds embellished with paired dragons and a laurel-crowned mask draws upon the designs of London cabinet-maker Matthias Lock (d.1765).



Alfred Leslie (B. 1927), #62, 1959 (Estimate: \$150,000-200,000)



#62 perfectly exemplifies the vigor and intensity that Alfred Leslie brought to his work. Leslie's direct and gestural abstraction remain arguably beyond the efforts of his senior Abstract Expressionist contemporaries, Pollock, Rothko, and Kline. Leslie's large painted abstract canvases are related to his earlier collage works. Perhaps inspired by his experiences in assembling collages, Leslie often divided his canvases into painted quadrants, imbuing them with diverging colors and painterly gesture. Each one of these compartments of paint stacked next to each other is a lyrical and profound composition in its own right, and together they form an exuberant and timelessness masterpiece.

The De Trafford 'Shrub' Carpet Khorossan, Northeast Persia, Seventeenth Century (Estimate: \$30,000-50,000)

Seventeenth-century carpets from Khorossan are known for their extraordinary quality and beauty. Both the fine materials used in its creation – soft fleecy pile and beautifully dyed wool – and the skill demonstrated in the delicate drawing of the design make this carpet a superb example of its type. The present carpet is an example of the 'shrub-tree' carpets in the shrub carpet group (subtype 1B) with several distinctive features, which include perfectly resolved borders, a distinctive pale orange field color, pointed trees, flowering stem and cypress border and a small central medallion. The carpet in its present state evokes much of its original beauty and exemplifies the faded grandeur of the Persian Empire.



Hubert Robert (Paris 1733-1808), *The Catafalque of Pope Benedict XIV in Saint Peter's, Rome* (Estimate: \$200,000-300,000)

In July 1754, Robert was among the 47 people to arrive in Rome in the entourage of the newly appointed French Ambassador Etienne-François, Comte de Stainville. Robert was given a place as a pensionnaire at the French Academy, then housed in the Palazzo Mancini on the Corso. He would remain in Rome for the next eleven years. *The Catafalque of Pope Benedict XIV in Saint Peter's in Rome* is among the earliest and finest of the paintings that he completed in this time. Its figures are characteristically vivid but abbreviated, with Swiss Guards, exotic tourists, colorfully dressed local peasants, and men of the church making their way beneath a cloud of incense to the funeral bier to pay their final homage to the pontiff. The painting carefully conveys the particular atmosphere and effects of daylight in its specific setting — in this instance, the towering interior of the great Vatican basilica.



A George III Mahogany and Specimen Marble Center Table, Late Eighteenth Century (Estimate: \$40,000-60,000)



In 1783, a young Jonas Brooke embarked on his Grand Tour to Italy accompanied by his tutor, the Reverend John Parkinson. His various 'antique' purchases, almost certainly including this specimen marble slab, were sent to his family seat at Mere Hall, Cheshire, the following year following his untimely death from fever. The marble was set in an elegant Georgian table frame, probably commissioned by Jonas's younger brother, Thomas, who succeeded him at Mere and embarked on various improvements to the house. The table is first identified in an 1840 inventory drawn up after the death of nephew Peter Langford-Brooke.

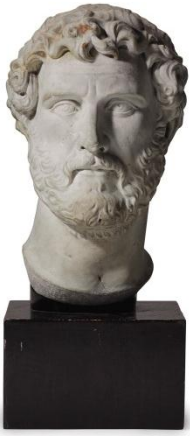
Additional Highlights Include:



Francois-Xavier Lalanne (1927-2008), 'Mouton De Pierre' A Pair Of Sheep
Designed Circa 1979, epoxy stone, patinated
Estimate: \$150,000-250,000



A Phoenician Alabaster Vase,
Circa 5th Century B.C.
Estimate: \$12,000-18,000

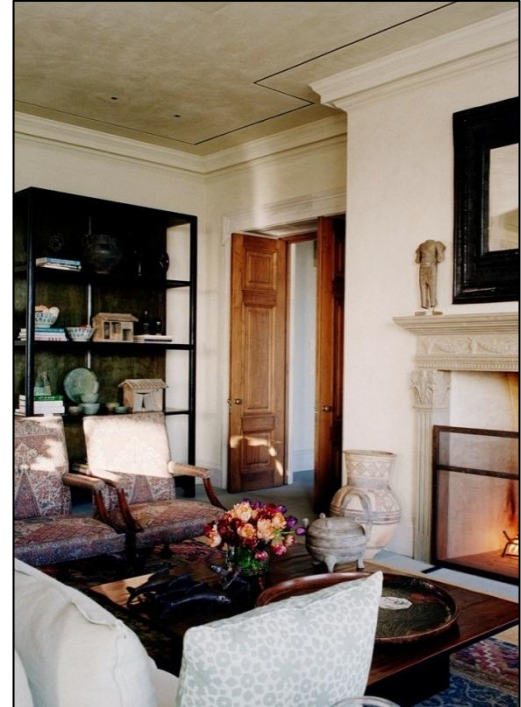


A Carved White Marble Bust Of The Emperor Hadrian
19TH/Early 20TH Century
On a black wooden base
17 ½ in. (44.5 cm) high, the bust; 23 ½ in. (60 cm)
high, overall
Estimate: \$5,000-8,000



A Pair Of Mahogany Library Armchairs
Probably Irish, 19th Century
Estimate: \$15,000-25,000

About Michael S. Smith: Michael S. Smith is considered one of the most original and respected talents in the design industry today. A native of California, Michael studied interior design at Otis College of Art and Design in Los Angeles. In 1984, he continued his studies at The Victoria and Albert Museum in London, then returned to the U.S. to work under the tutelage of legendary antiques dealer Gep Durenberger. His design firm, Michael S. Smith Inc., was launched in 1990 and through the years, Michael has received many prestigious awards. He has been named three times to *Architectural Digest's* "The AD 100," and is the recipient of the Pacific Design Center's West Week "Stars of Design." He has been named Designer of the Year by *Elle Décor* as well as being named to that publication's A-List. Michael serves on the Tate International Council as well as the Global Council for the Studio Museum in Harlem. He is a member of ASID, the American Society of Interior Designers. In 2010, Michael was appointed by President Obama to the Committee for the Preservation of the White House. His work has been celebrated in three beautiful volumes from Rizzoli New York: *Elements of Style* (2005), *Houses* (2008), and *Kitchens and Baths* (2011). His fourth book, *Building Beauty: The Alchemy of Design**, also from Rizzoli, will be released in May 2013.



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***Note to editors:**

Building Beauty: The Alchemy of Design will be released by Rizzoli New York on May 14, 2013, Hardcover, \$55.

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in 2012 that totaled £3.92 billion/\$6.27 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 £631.3 million/\$1 billion in 2012, an increase of 26% on the same period last year.

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