ETTORE SOTTsass:
IMPORTANT WORKS FROM A PRIVATE COLLECTION
CHRISTIE’S PRIVATE SALES INAUGURAL DESIGN EXHIBITION FEATURES THE NEVER BEFORE SEEN PERSONAL COLLECTION OF THE ESTEEMED POST-MODERN ITALIAN DESIGNER AND ARCHITECT

New York – Christie’s Private Sales is pleased to announce its inaugural design exhibition of Ettore Sottsass: Important Works from a Private Collection will be held in New York from December 7-20, 2013. Ettore Sottsass (1917-2007) is regarded as one of the most significant and influential post-war architect-designers, whose idiosyncratic and highly versatile talents have guided a modern understanding of the relevance of Design. Presented to the public for the first time, works are drawn from the personal possessions of the designer and his wife, the pioneering literary agent, Fernanda Pivano (1917-2009), who exposed European audiences to the Beat writers. The collection encompasses more than 80 works of furniture, ceramics, metalwork, textiles and jewelry, alongside artworks, drawings, collages and examples of the self-published artists’ and poets’ books. The exhibition presents many previously unseen works, including furnishings and objects from the couple’s via Manzoni, Milan apartment, once featured in Domus magazine in early 1967.

Simon Andrews, Director of 20th Century Decorative Art & Design, comments, “Viewed in its entirety, the exhibition of the personal collection of Ettore Sottsass offers an unrivalled opportunity for a reassessment and an enriched interpretation of the pioneering figure and profoundly influential architect-designer. The collection is representative of the critical turning point in Ettore’s career, illustrating the transition from experimentation and intuition, towards the establishment of an aesthetic credo that was resolved, defined, and invested with highly personal mythologies.”

Active across all categories of expression, from architecture to craft, Ettore was a unique personality who was able to synthesize seemingly opposed influences, encompassing the authoritative rigor of fin-de-siècle Austrian architecture, American Pop culture, Eastern spirituality and technological progress, to render his own unique, fluent and highly painterly design vocabulary. A grandee of late 20th century Italian design, his is work is in institutions including The Museum of Modern Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Los Angeles County Museum of Art and Centre Georges Pompidou, among others.
Ettore’s life mirrored the international currents of the 20th Century. He was born in Austria at the sunset of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, a student of architecture in 1930s Italy, and briefly active in America during the 1950s, before returning to Italy for many decades of influential and systematic creativity. He established successful alliances not only with serial-production furniture manufacturers such as Poltronova, but also with an intuitive exploration of craft objects, ceramics, metalwork and jewelry, exemplified by his long collaboration with the influential Milanese gallery, Il Sestante. Best known as the founder of the 1980s seminal design collective, Memphis, named after a Bob Dylan song, the Milan group was famous for its brightly colored post-modern furniture, lighting and ceramics that defined that decade. He also designed iconic electronic products for Olivetti, such as the familiar bright red plastic Valentine typewriter, and the Elea mainframe computer.

A critical turning point for Ettore’s creative vision was after a trip to India in 1961 triggered a near-fatal illness that required Ettore to urgently seek medical attention and recovery in the San Francisco area in 1962. Here he and his wife, Fernanda Pivano, were immersed amongst the artists, writers and poets that represented the Beat movement. During their life, he and Fernanda surrounded themselves with the most influential writers, artists and musicians of their time – Allen Ginsberg, Helmut Newton, Carlo Mollino, Ernest Hemingway, Bob Dylan, Chet Baker, Umberto Eco, to name a few.

**Highlights of the Collection Include:**

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<tr>
<td>Executed by Bucci, for Il Sestante</td>
<td>executed by the Manifattura Societa Ceramica Toscana</td>
<td>executed by Bucci, for Il Sestante</td>
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<td>Enamel on copper, slightly concave</td>
<td>ceramic with gloss-glaze</td>
<td>enamel on copper, slightly concave</td>
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<td>Ename painted mark Il Sestante to underside</td>
<td>painted mark Sottsass Italy to underside</td>
<td>stamped mark Il Sestante and applied paper label 341 9000 to underside</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 ¾ in. (30 cm.) diameter</td>
<td>18 ¾ in. (48 cm.) high</td>
<td>8 in. (20.2 cm.) diameter</td>
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ETTORE SOTTSASS
RING, CIRCA 1965
Unique, executed by Walter de Mario, yellow and white 14ct gold
1 ½ in. (3cm.) diameter

ETTORE SOTTSASS
PENDANT AND COLLAR, CIRCA 1960-1965
unique, enamel on copper, with three articulated cylinders, wire suspension unmarked
8 ½ in. (21.5 cm.) overall, 1 ½ in. (4.5 cm.) width each cylinder

ETTORE SOTTSASS
MAUSOLEUM RING, CIRCA 1965
unique, executed by Walter de Mario, silver, yellow 14ct gold and Bangkok jade unmarked
1 3/8 in. (3.4 cm.) at widest

ETTORE SOTTSASS
CABINET, CIRCA 1959-65
Produced by Poltronova, Indian Rosewood, Brazilian Rosewood, painted wood, bronze handles
31 ¼ in. (82 cm.) high, 46 7/8 in. (119 cm.) wide, 18 7/8 in. (48 cm.) deep

ETTORE SOTTSASS
CALIFFO SETTEE, CIRCA 1965
Painted beech, wool upholstery
24 ¾ in. (63 cm.) high, 78 ¼ in. (200 cm.) wide, 31 ½ in. (80 cm.) deep

ETTORE SOTTSASS
TOWER, CIRCA 1965
stained and varnished laminated wood, painted steel, All keys
85 ½ in. (217 cm.) high, 19 ⅝ in. (50.5 cm.) wide, 19 ⅝ in. (50.5 cm.) deep

ETTORE SOTTSASS
STORIA PER NANDA, PALO ALTO, CAMERA 128 EST, 1962
An illustrated and annotated portfolio, 36 pages total

ETTORE SOTTSASS
DRAWING OF A CAT, CIRCA 1965
colored pencil on paper
11 ¾ x 8¾ in. (29 x 20.6 cm.)

ETTORE SOTTSASS & FERNANDA PIVANO
ENCICLOPEDIA PER LA CHI AMA LA VITA – AGURI PER SEMPRE, 1962-1963
An illustrated and annotated portfolio, 19 four –fold pages total
Portfolio overall, approximately 19 ¾ x 15 ¾ in (50 x 40 cm.)
Ettore Sottsass: Important Works from a Private Collection
20 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 10020
7-20 December 2013
Monday-Saturday: 10 am – 5pm
Sunday: 1-5 pm

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Please click here for the complete eCatalogue.

About Christie’s
Christie’s, the world’s leading art business, reached a total of £2.4 billion/$3.68 billion in global auction and private sales in the first six months of 2013. In 2012, global auction and private sales totaled £3.92 billion/$6.27 billion, marking the highest annual revenue ever reached by Christie’s. 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, jewelry, photography, 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 an emphasis on Post-War and Contemporary, Impressionist and Modern, Old Masters and Jewelry. Global private sales totaled £465 million/$711 million in the first half year of 2013, an increase of 13% from the same period last year, breaking the sales record of half year private sales for Christie’s and the art market for three consecutive years.

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