

CHRISTIE'S

PRESS RELEASE | LONDON

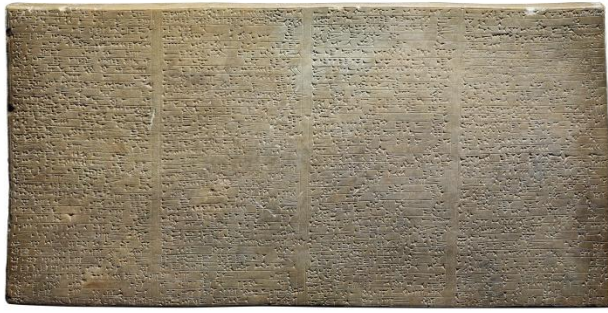
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Monday, 1 September 2014

RARE DEPICTION OF A REPUBLICAN ROMAN MAN LEADS CHRISTIE'S LONDON SALE OF *ANTIQUITIES* IN OCTOBER



London – The Christie's sale of *Antiquities* in London on 1 October 2014 comprises 189 lots with exceptional provenance which span the ancient world from the 4th Millennium B.C. to the 7th Century A.D. Leading the sale is a rare and arresting portrait of a distinguished Roman man (estimate: £200,000-300,000, *illustrated above*). Further highlights include a Roman marble janiform herm of Dionysus (estimate: £150,000 - 250,000), an Assyrian gypsum cuneiform dedicatory panel, which is believed to be the most detailed Assyrian royal inscription known to date (estimate: £100,000 - 150,000), and property from *The Rudolf Schmidt (1900-1970) Collection*. With estimates ranging from £800 to £200,000 the sale is expected to realise in excess of £2 million.

An arresting portrait of a Roman man encapsulates the naturalistic tradition of the Republican Period of the 1st century B.C. The emphasis on realism is manifest in this sculpture, from the finely carved small lidded eyes to the delicately incised eyebrows and 'crow's feet'. This realism lends an almost photographic quality to the portrait, a snapshot of an otherwise forgotten man from one of the most turbulent times in Roman history. The non-drilled pupils and lack of incised irises, as well as the small patch of plastically rendered hair-locks over the forehead, suggest that it was likely produced in the late 1st century B.C., at the close of the Republican Period and the beginning of the Julio-Claudian Dynasty.



The Assyrian gypsum cuneiform dedicatory panel is a highly important document from the reign of Tukulti-Ninurta I of Assyria, *circa* 1243-1207 B.C. (estimate £100,000 - £150,000, *illustrated left*). Finely engraved on both sides, with 280 lines of text divided into eight columns, the text records

military campaigns, the construction of a new palace complex, blessings on future rulers, and finishes with a 'curse' on those who do not maintain the new building. The goddess Ishtar, 'mistress of chaos and combat,' is invoked: *May she turn his manhood into female [...] may she break his weapon on the battlefield, may she bring him defeat and turmoil [...] and hand him over to his enemies!* The panel is the only complete version of this significant text, known from 18 other fragmentary clay and stone tablets found at Assur, and will form a notable addition to the understanding of the achievements of Tukulti-Ninurta I.

The Roman marble janiform herm of Dionysus, *circa* 2nd century A.D., shows the god with rounded cheeks and cupid-bow lips, his wavy hair swept back from his face and tied in a fillet (estimate: £150,000 - £250,000, *illustrated right*). This depiction of a youthful Dionysus with idealised features is highly unusual on a herm, as more commonly they depict a bearded or older Dionysus. Originally used in Classical Greece and placed at physical boundaries such as crossroads or doorways, by the Roman period herms served a largely decorative purpose. The present work probably would have been commissioned by a wealthy Roman to decorate his villa or gardens, as the association of Dionysus with nature, relaxation and leisure made him a fitting choice in this context.



PROPERTY FROM THE RUDOLF SCHMIDT (1900 – 1970) COLLECTION



Christie's is delighted to be offering property from *The Rudolf Schmidt Collection*. Growing up in the milieu of artists such as Ferdinand Hodler and Giovanni Giacometti, Rudolf Schmidt's passion was directed towards collecting. Beginning in the 1930s and stimulated by his travels in Iran that same decade, he began acquiring Luristan bronzes and Near Eastern seals, encouraged further by his encounter with notable collector Elie Borowski in the mid-1940s. Highlights from the present selection of 57 lots are vessels from the Early Dynastic Period in Egypt, Dynasty I-III (*circa* 3100-2647 B.C.). These vessels, made following the unification of Egypt in 3100 B.C., reflect a time of unity and strength, when quarrying expeditions for unusual and colourful stone were undertaken beyond the Nile Valley. The grey limestone from an unusual Egyptian crystalline limestone jar, *circa* 2750-2600 B.C., was mined in the Eastern desert (estimate: £30,000 - 50,000, *illustrated left*). The prerogative of royalty,

these vases display the honed skill of the master craftsman, which was unsurpassed in later periods.

FURTHER HIGHLIGHTS



A large Cycladic marble reclining female figure, *circa* 2600-2500 B.C.
18 in. (46.4 cm.) high
Estimate: £80,000 - 120,000



An Attic black-figured neck amphora
circa 525-500 B.C.
16 in. (40.6 cm.) high
Estimate: £50,000 - 70,000



A Canaanite bronze deity or worshipper, *circa* 1550-1200 B.C.
11 in. (29.2 cm.) high
Estimate: £120,000 - 180,000

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Please click [here](#) for the complete eCatalogue

PUBLIC EXHIBITION:

Friday 26 September 9.00 am - 4.30 pm
Saturday 27 September 12.00 noon - 5.00 pm
Sunday 28 September 12.00 noon - 5.00 pm
Monday 29 September 9.00 am - 8.00 pm
Tuesday 30 September 9.00 am - 4.30 pm

AUCTION:

Antiquities
Wednesday, 1 October 2014
Lots 1-189 at 2:00 pm
8 King Street, St. James's
London SW1Y 6QT

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in the first half of 2014 that totaled £2.69 / \$4.47 billion, making it the highest half year 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 around 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 & Contemporary, Impressionist & Modern, Old Masters and Jewellery. Private sales in the first half of 2014 totalled £498.9 million (\$828.2 million).

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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