

CHRISTIE'S

PRESS RELEASE | LONDON

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Friday, 30 May 2014

VAN DYCK HEAD STUDY RECENTLY REDISCOVERED ON *THE ANTIQUES ROADSHOW* TO BE SOLD AT CHRISTIE'S LONDON ON 8 JULY, 2014



London – Christie's is pleased to announce that a striking head study by Sir Anthony van Dyck (1599-1641), which was recently re-discovered on the BBC television programme *The Antiques Roadshow*, will be offered at Christie's *Old Master & British Paintings Evening Sale*, on Tuesday 8 July (estimate: £300,000-500,000, *illustrated above*). This work is a preparatory sketch for van Dyck's full-length group portrait of *The Magistrates of Brussels*, which was painted in Brussels in 1634-35, when the artist was at the height of his powers. The painting was bought 12 years ago by Father Jamie MacLeod from an antiques shop in Cheshire for just £400. The proceeds of the sale will go towards the acquisition of new church bells for Whaley Hall Ecumenical Retreat House in Derbyshire to commemorate the centenary of the end of the First World War. This work will be exhibited for the first time ahead of the sale when it goes on free public view at Christie's New York on 31 May to 3 June; it will also be on view in London ahead of the sale, on 5 to 8 July.

The sketch was largely obscured by later over-paint and, as a result, had been overlooked by van Dyck scholars. Recent cleaning and restoration of the picture has revealed a swiftly executed head study entirely consistent with three other known sketches for the *Magistrates of Brussels* picture, a work that hung in the Brussels Town Hall until it was destroyed during the French bombardment of the city in 1695. The painting can be compared with two other head studies, of almost identical dimensions (52 x 46 cm.), which are now in the *Ashmolean Museum*, Oxford, and a third in a private collection. All share the same unusual priming technique used in the preparation of the canvas, with the application of a grey wash over a red ground.

Freddie de Rougemont, Christie's Specialist: *"We are delighted to present this beautifully observed head study by Sir Anthony van Dyck for sale, particularly after its exciting re-discovery on the Antiques Roadshow. The picture is of great importance as it provides a fascinating insight into van Dyck's working method and also constitutes a significant surviving document for the artist's lost group portrait of The Magistrates of Brussels."*

Father Jamie MacLeod, Whaley Hall Ecumenical Retreat House in Derbyshire: *"It has been a blessing to own this magnificent portrait which has given me great pleasure over the years. I will be sad to part with it, though the proceeds will be put to excellent use, going towards the acquisition of new church bells for Whaley Hall Ecumenical Retreat House in Derbyshire to commemorate the centenary of the end of the First World in 2018."*

PRESS CONTACT: Hannah Schweiger | +44 (0)207 389 2964 | hschweiger@christies.com

NOTES TO EDITORS

About Whaley Hall Ecumenical Retreat House in Derbyshire

The mission of Whaley Hall is Unity and Cohesion, offering a place for people to come on retreats, conferences and for individuals to take time out from this fast moving world.

Companies and individuals can donate towards the completion of the Whaley Hall bells project by contacting Father Jamie MacLeod at frjamie@talktalk.net

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in 2013 that totaled £4.5 billion/ \$7.1 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 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 totaled £760.5 million (\$1.19 billion) in 2013, an increase of 20% on the previous year.

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.

###

Visit Christie's Website at www.christies.com

Complete catalogue available online at www.christies.com or via the Christie's iPhone app