London – This Summer, Christie’s London will unveil a stellar selection of artworks formerly in the outstanding private collection of the late Edgar Astaire, which will be offered across four sales at Christie’s in June and July 2015. The group comprises works by revered 20th century British artists, including Mark Gertler, Augustus John, David Bomberg, William Roberts and C.R.W. Nevinson, who all attended the Slade School of Art. Never before seen together in public, the collection provides an evocative window through which viewers can step ‘back in time’ to the hub of creativity surrounding the Slade. The collection also includes works by Alfred Munnings, David Hockney, Noël Coward, John Piper, Graham Sutherland and Edward Lear. The four sales will provide a rich array of opportunities for new and established collectors alike to acquire works at a wide range of price levels, with estimates starting from £3,000 up to £400,000.

André Zlattinger, Senior Director, Head of Modern British Art, Christie’s London: “Christie's is honoured to be handling this important and remarkable collection of paintings and drawings brought together by Edgar Astaire, who combined his passion for the aesthetic of the Slade School and British art with the discerning eye of the connoisseur collector. It is the art of this era, celebrating the arrival of Modernism through its depiction of portraiture, from the monumentality of ‘Carrington’ and ‘The Violinist’ to the draftsmanship of Gertler’s drawings that are testament to the current market’s reappraisal of these artists as some of the most important of the twentieth century.”
It was the work of Mark Gertler (1891–1939) who ignited Edgar Astaire’s aesthetic eye and spurred a lifetime of passionate collecting. The collection is led by Gertler’s striking portrait of Dora de Houghton Carrington (1893–1932), which comes to auction for the first time and is set to potentially reach new heights for the artist (estimate: £400,000–600,000, illustrated page one, left). Carrington was a fellow Slade student, friend, muse, and the object of Gertler’s decade-long, largely unrequited passion. Her love for the homosexual writer Lytton Strachey and her affair with Gertler was explored in the 1995 film Carrington, starring Emma Thompson and Rufus Sewell. This portrait captures the ambitions of the Slade and influential art teacher Henry Tonks, who encouraged his students to look back to the tradition of Western art history. The Italians undoubtedly remained the inspiration for a number of Gertler’s works including the beautiful portrait of Carrington. In his will, Astaire generously bequeathed two Gertler portraits: The Artist’s Brother Harry holding an Apple to Tate and Self-portrait with Fishing Cap to the National Portrait Gallery.

Another museum-quality work by Gertler, among the seven to be offered, is The Violinist (estimate: £300,000–500,000, illustrated left). The striking sitter was a music student and a friend of Gertler’s family, whose distinctive looks captured the artist’s imagination. Boldly framed against a blue Italianate background, this painting exemplifies Gertler’s keen attention to life study and meticulous draftsmanship. She sat for at least four works, including the pencil head study directly related to this oil which won Gertler ‘first prize for drawing of the head’ at the Slade (estimate: £30,000–50,000). Gertler’s careful draftsmanship continued to underpin his figurative work throughout his career, as seen in his 1928 pencil study Supper, Study for Portrait of Natalie Denny, which relates closely to Supper at the National Portrait Gallery (estimate: £20,000–30,000, illustrated right).

Also showcased in the remarkable breadth of talents from the Slade, was David Bomberg (1890–1957). Pool of Hezekiah, Jerusalem (estimate: £80,000–120,000) is one of a series of architectural landscapes documenting the Old City of Jerusalem, as Bomberg embraced the idea of a new increasingly abstract art that explored the drama of the urban world around him. By 1914 Bomberg was producing some of the most dynamic and exciting work in London and he went on to paint Siloam and the Mount of Olives in 1923 (estimate: £300,000–500,000, illustrated left).
The Modern British and Irish Art Day Sale will feature *Still Life (Collage)* by John Piper, previously exhibited at London Tate Gallery in 1984 and the Dulwich Picture Gallery in 2003 (estimate: £40,000–60,000, *illustrated below centre*). Further highlights include a rare self-portrait by Isaac Rosenberg (estimate: £20,000–30,000, *illustrated below right*), and a striking portrait of Edie McNeill by Henry Lamb (estimate: £50,000–80,000, *illustrated below left*), which closely relates to Southampton City Art Gallery’s oil of the same subject.

**Henry Lamb, Portrait of Edie McNeill**  
Estimate: £50,000–80,000

**John Piper, Still Life (Collage)**  
Estimate: £40,000–60,000

**Isaac Rosenberg, Self-portrait**  
Estimate: £20,000–30,000

**OLD MASTER AND BRITISH DRAWINGS AND WATERCOLOURS – 7 JULY 2015**

Works to be offered in the *Old Master and British Drawings and Watercolours* sale comprise a group of three landscapes by Edward Lear, including a watercolour titled *View of Jerusalem from the south* (estimate: £20,000–30,000).