

CHRISTIE'S

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POST-WAR & CONTEMPORARY ART FRANCIS BACON, PETER DOIG, LUCIAN FREUD

THREE MASTERPIECES OF BRITISH ART

Unveiled in London King Street April 10th-15th
Before being sold in New York on May 11th and 13th



FRANCIS BACON (1909-1992)
Portrait of Henrietta Moraes
oil on canvas
65 x 56 in. (165 x 142 cm.)
Painted in 1963
Estimate in the region of \$35 million



PETER DOIG (B. 1959)
Swamped
oil on canvas
77⁵/₈ x 94⁷/₈ in (197 x 241 cm.)
Painted in 1990.
Estimate: \$20,000,000-30,000,000



LUCIAN FREUD (1922-2011)
Benefits Supervisor Resting
oil on canvas
59 1/4 x 63 1/2 in. (150.5 x 161.2 cm.)
Painted in 1994.
Estimate: \$30,000,000-50,000,000

New York / London – Christie's is proud to present three iconic works by the ultimate British masters of the 20th and 21st centuries, Francis Bacon, Lucian Freud and Peter Doig. These masterpieces will be unveiled this week in London before leading the Post-War and Contemporary Art evening auctions in New York in May. *Portrait of Henrietta Moraes*, one of the most seductive portraits of a woman ever made by Francis Bacon will be presented alongside Lucian Freud's *Benefits Supervisor Resting*, one of the artist's ultimate tour de force and a masterful reworking of the traditional theme of the nude. Together these paintings stand as two of the greatest studies of the human figure ever realized. An icon of contemporary painting, Peter Doig's *Swamped* conjures an extraordinary sense of atmosphere around a single solitary canoe. Rendered using a vast array of painterly techniques and processes, *Swamped* encapsulates the inimitable approach has come to define Doig's contribution to the history of painting. Three masterpieces by three of the greatest British painters of the 20th and 21st centuries, these works unite to offer a unique insight into the human condition.

Francis Outred, International Director, Head of Post-War & Contemporary Art:

"Between them these works define the genius not just of British painting, but of figurative painting in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Executed in the landmark year of 1963, *Portrait of Henrietta Moraes* is one of the most seductive and sexually charged paintings I have ever encountered by Francis Bacon. The carefully constructed mood through colour is forcefully invaded by the extraordinary swipes of the loaded brush, which create the woman's voluptuous figure. A great peer of Bacon, Lucian Freud is an astonishing chronicler of human nature and form. Painted during a nine month period

in 1994 using a coarse hog's hair brush, *Benefit's Supervisor Resting* is a remarkably candid portrait and a stunning essay on Freud's patient painterly practice. In this masterpiece, he undertakes an exhaustive examination of the human form and renders every curve, fold, blemish and contour of Sue Tilley's body with deeply evocative force. One of four large scale paintings that depict Tilley, the market has not seen a painting of this quality since the world record was achieved for *Benefits supervisor sleeping* in 2008. Together these paintings by Francis Bacon and Lucian Freud stand as two of the greatest studies of the female figure ever realized. Peter Doig has defined figurative painting at the turn of the century, inspiring schools of painters worldwide. Obsessively studying the history of painting, Doig creates complex tapestries of painterly technique and process which create dense and highly evocative atmospheres. At the heart of his *oeuvre* is an extremely rare series of paintings of canoes made across the last twenty-five years. *Swamped* is the first fully realized example. It is a phenomenal trip down memory lane for me, having previously fought to get the work into an evening auction in 2002, where it achieved three times the previous world record, at £322,000. Now thirteen years on, Peter Doig's reputation has been fundamentally established as a giant of contemporary painting, celebrated in major museum retrospectives worldwide and collected by a completely global audience".

FRANCIS BACON PORTRAIT OF HENRIETTA MORAES, 1963

Painted towards the end of 1963, *Portrait of Henrietta Moraes* is perhaps the most seductive painting of a female figure ever realised by Francis Bacon. Created the year after his breakthrough retrospective at the Tate Gallery, London in 1962, and the same year as his first major American exhibition at Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, the painting depicts the artist's close friend and model Henrietta Moraes. For many years, the work formed part of a collection of important post-War masterpieces owned by European industrialist, Willy Schniewind. In 1983, a distinguished New York art collector acquired the painting directly from the family; it was to remain in the same collection for the best part of thirty years before being sold in 2012 at Christie's in London for \$33,474,363. Out of seven large-scale paintings the artist created in 1963, three are now housed in major international museums including *Man and Child* (The Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk), *Study for a Self-Portrait* (National Museum of Wales, Cardiff) and *Study for Portrait on Folding Bed* (Tate, London). The turning point came with the artist's powerful and deeply affective *Three Studies for a Crucifixion* (1962) housed in the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. Over the preceding four years, Bacon had devoted himself to investigating the properties of paint, technique and undertaking studies of the human nude; a subject that he had rarely dared consider in his early career. In *Portrait of Henrietta Moraes*, Bacon has perfected the subject's body, carrying it out with a prodigious use of rapid, impulsive brush marks. Standing out proudly from a vivid lilac ground, Henrietta lies undressed in all her voluptuous glory on a simple ticking mattress. Her body undulates in a serpentine from the hilt of her ample bosom, past the narrow cinch of her waist to the sensuous curve of her outstretched leg, just like the sumptuous females of Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres' *Le Bain Turc* (1862). Unflinching and brazenly exposed like an odalisque, Moraes exudes a raw sexuality, her naked body dangerously open to the prying eye. For Bacon, this visceral quality and the sheer physicality of his model's body was a source of constant rapture. Indeed he returned to Moraes as a subject for more than sixteen paintings over the course of his career including *Three Studies for the Portrait of Henrietta Moraes* (1963) held in the Museum of Modern Art, New York. In *Portrait of Henrietta Moraes* Bacon imbues the painting with a striking passion, as if carried over from the intensity of his own personal life. This was the year that Bacon embarked upon his all-consuming love affair with George Dyer, immortalizing his partner in his first painting. Whilst Bacon had often considered the figure of the male nude, his depictions of Moraes were the first to seriously consider the architecture of the female form.

LUCIEN FREUD, BENEFITS SUPERVISOR RESTING, 1994

Benefits Supervisor Resting is regarded as one of Freud's ultimate tour de force, a life-size masterwork of a vast naked woman, depicted with intense scrutiny and disturbing accuracy. This bold and imposing example of the stark power of Lucian Freud's realism reveals his extraordinary ability to capture reality in all its awkwardness, and discomfort. Featured on the cover of the definitive monograph about the artist, *Benefits Supervisor Resting* has been part of every major museum exhibition devoted to the artist, including the Tate Britain, London, The Museum of Modern Art, New York and the recent survey *The Facts and the Truth: Lucian Freud* at the National Portrait Gallery, London. One of three major, large

format paintings to depict the artist's great muse Sue Tilley, *Benefits Supervisor Resting* is poised to break the previous auction record for the artist achieved in 2008 with one of its counterparts, *Benefits Supervisor Sleeping* which was executed one year after and sold for \$33.6 million. Painted during a nine month period in 1994, this remarkably candid portrait is a stunning essay on Freud's patient painterly practice, in which he undertakes an exhaustive examination of the human form and renders every curve, fold, blemish and contour of Tilley's body with a disquieting and deeply evocative force. Freud reworked the traditional theme of the nude, using a strong, uncompromising technique, challenging for the viewer. Presented alone and naked on a sofa set down on a bare wooden floor, this simple nude is both monumental and magnificent. Bruce Bernard, picture editor, photographer and friend of the artist stated: the portraits of Big Sue "*are major contributions to the sum of Western painting of the nude, and may even put the final stop to the classical tradition.*" The undeniable and almost overwhelming physical presence of 'Big Sue's' naked form acts on the viewer like a slap in the face, awakening them to a shared appreciation, with Freud, of the extraordinary depth and apparently infinite richness of cold, simple reality, "*truthfulness as revealing and intrusive, rather than rhyming and soothing*".

PETER DOIG, *SWAMPED*, 1990

Swamped (1990) is an exquisitely rendered masterpiece by Peter Doig, dating from a seminal moment in the artist's career. It was in this year that he from Chelsea School of Arts at the age of 31, was awarded the prestigious Whitechapel Artist Prize. Painted in 1990, it captures the mesmerizing atmosphere of a moonlit lagoon, with a mysterious white canoe situated at its heart. Doig's pictures of canoes have become icons of contemporary painting. One of the earliest works to explore this subject, *Swamped* has stood as an important touchstone for the artist in scores of major exhibitions, including most recently Fondation Beyeler, Basel 2015. In this painting, Doig's solitary boat floats silently in the swamp, carrying a motionless figure. As our eye drifts across the composition, we are greeted by an uncanny yet romantic scene, which is suspended in a perpetual state of uncertainty. Isolating a single frame from the 1980 cult horror classic, *Friday 13th*, Doig builds a shuddering tension in his painting. This atmosphere is only amplified by the artist's rich assimilation of pictorial techniques and influences from across the history of art. In *Swamped*, Doig's intricate and seamlessly woven tapestry of process-based and abstract techniques creates a special friction between figurative atmosphere, and dense abstract and painterly meaning. It is this unique ability that marks Doig as one of the greatest painters of his generation. Estimated \$20-30 million, *Swamped* is poised to break the world auction record for the artist achieved last season in New York with *Pine House (Rooms for Rent)* sold for \$18million.

Note to the Editors:



Christie's holds the top 11 prices for works by the Lucian Freud including the world auction record for a work by the artist at \$33.6 million with *Benefits supervisor sleeping*, 1995 (New York: May 13, 2008).



Christie's hold the top 3 of the top 5 prices for works by Francis Bacon, including the world auction record for the artist with *Three Studies of Lucian Freud*, sold for \$142,405,000 setting the new world auction record for any work of art ever sold at auction. (New York: November 12, 2013)



Christie's holds eight of the ten highest prices for works by Peter Doig, including the world auction record for the artist with *Pine House (Rooms for Rent)*, 1994 sold for \$18 million (New York: November 12, 2014)

Christie's is the leader for Post-War and Contemporary Art worldwide, and holds the highest sale totals:

The Evening sale of Post-War and Contemporary Art, on November 12, 2014, totaled \$852,887,000– the highest auction total in art market history.

Preview:

London: 11-15 April 2015 (Lucian Freud will be on view until April 23rd)
Christie's 8 King Street

Viewing:

New York: 1-13 May 2015

Auction:

New York: 13 May 2015

Christie's 20 Rockefeller Plaza

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About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in 2014 that totaled £5.1 billion / \$8.4 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, jewelry, 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 Jewelry. Private sales totaled £916.1 million (\$1.5 billion) in 2014, an increase of 20% on the previous year.

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*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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