

# CHRISTIE'S

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Unveiled in London, Christie's King Street | April 10<sup>th</sup>  
Exceptional two week preview at Christie's King Street | April 11<sup>th</sup> -23<sup>rd</sup>

## LUCIAN FREUD'S MONUMENTAL MASTERPIECE Highlighting the Evening Sale of Post-War and Contemporary Art at Christie's



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

***'What do I ask of painting? I ask it to astonish, disturb, seduce, convince.'***

(Lucian Freud quoted in *Lucian Freud*, exh. cat., Tate Gallery London, 2002)

Post-War & Contemporary Art Evening Sale  
13 May 2015

**New York** – Building on the success of its record-breaking Lucian Freud sale in 2008, Christie's is proud to announce the auction of one of Lucian Freud's most famous and iconic paintings as the highlight of Christie's Post-War and Contemporary sale on May 13. *Benefits Supervisor Resting* is regarded as Freud's ultimate tour de force, a life-size masterwork in the grand historical tradition of the female nude, painted obsessively with intense scrutiny and abiding truth. This bold and extraordinary example of the stark power of Lucian Freud's realism reveals his unique ability to capture the reality of the human form in all its natural force. Chosen by Freud as the cover of the definitive monograph about the artist, *Benefits Supervisor Resting* was included by the artist in every major museum exhibition devoted to Freud, including 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. *Benefits Supervisor Resting* is poised to break the previous auction record for the artist achieved in 2008 with another portrait of the same sitter, *Benefits Supervisor Sleeping*, which sold for \$33.6 million, setting a record at the time for any living artist.

*"Benefits Supervisor Resting* is recognized internationally as Freud's masterpiece and proclaims him as one of the greatest painters of the human form in history alongside Rembrandt and Rubens," states Brett Gorvy, Chairman and International Head of Post-War and Art at Christie's. "This painting is a triumph of the human spirit, showcasing Freud's love of the human body. The sitter, Sue Tilley, is calm and confident, relaxed and comfortable in her own skin. She is very much in control, taking on the artist and the viewer. A contemporary take on the Odalisque and the fertility goddess, with her head flung back, she exudes an intriguing ambiguity, implying ecstasy, defiance and the deep exhale of peacefulness. Freud described Sue Tilley as an extremely feminine sitter, and he has painted her with an objectivity and sensuality that is brought alive by the incredible use of brushwork and color harmony. He observed every inch of her with an uncritical eye almost daily for more than 9 months. The surface is amazing and almost sculptural in its layering of color."

Lying in resplendent repose in the painter's modest London studio, Lucian Freud's *Benefits Supervisor Resting* is regarded as one of the most remarkable paintings of the human figure ever produced. Featuring Sue Tilley, a local government worker from London and one of the artist's favorite sitters, this extraordinary portrait demonstrates Freud's mastery of the painterly medium as he records the subtle nuances of Tilley's figure with astute observation and technical brilliance. Painted over a grueling nine month period in 1994, with Tilley sitting for long hours four or five times a week, 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 deeply evocative force.

Sue Tilley was introduced to Freud by the performance artist and designer, Leigh Bowery, another of Freud's great subjects. Tilley, the author of Bowery's biography, was nervous on first meeting Freud but like most of his sitters grew more comfortable and confident as she came to know him. After Freud's first picture of her, *Evening in the Studio* of 1993, which was originally to have also included Bowery and for which she was forced to lie on the bare floor in an extremely uncomfortable pose, Freud bought the dilapidated sofa that appears in this painting for her to sit on. *"I am only interested in painting the actual person, in doing a painting of them, not in using them to some ulterior end of art. For me, to use someone doing something not native to them would be wrong. If I am putting someone in a picture I like to feel that they've fallen asleep there or they've elbowed their way: that way they are there not to make the picture easy on the eye or more pleasant, but they are occupying the space of my picture and I am recording them."*

Freud reworked the traditional theme of the nude, using a strong, uncompromising technique. Presented exposed and naked on a sofa set down on a bare wooden floor, this portrait and interior is both monumental and magnificent. Bruce Bernard, picture editor, photographer and friend of the artist stated: the portraits of Sue Tilley *"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 Tilley's relaxed and confident naked form demonstrates Freud's

extraordinary depth and apparently infinite richness of stark reality. Going on to state that it is “*truthfulness as revealing and intrusive, rather than rhyming and soothing.*”

"*The task of the artist,*" Freud once declared, "*is to make the human being uncomfortable, and yet we are drawn to a great work of art by involuntary chemistry, like a hound getting a scent; the dog isn't free, it can't do otherwise, it gets the scent and instinct does the rest.*"

**Note to the Editors:**



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

Christie's is the leader for Post-War and Contemporary Art worldwide, and holds the highest prices for any works of art sold at auction and sale totals:

On November 12, 2013, at Christie's New York, Francis Bacon's *Three Studies of Lucian Freud*, was sold for \$142,405,000 setting the new world auction record for any work of art ever sold at auction.

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:**

Hong Kong: 2-6 April 2015

London: 11-23 April 2015

**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.

Christie's has a global presence with 54 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 Shanghai, New Delhi, 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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