

CHRISTIE'S

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THE WINKWORTH COLLECTION - A TREASURE HOUSE OF CANADIANA IN LONDON

1 April 2015



Peter Winkworth was there ... Surely you know Peter. Has a house like an art museum in London. Youngish, about 35. Spends his life jetting around the world from art auction to art auction. Scads of money. Terribly hard to please. "If Peter comes to your auction," confided a nice lady from Christie's, the auction people, "then it's made." Brian McKenna reporting on Christie's (Canada) sale, Montreal, 22 May 1969

South Kensington, London - Christie's is pleased to announce the auction of the remaining contents of 2 Campden Hill Place, W11, the home of the late Peter Winkworth (1929-2005), the celebrated *bon viveur* and collector of early Canadian art. The sale will include all of the remaining Canadiana which dressed the walls of the house in Kensington following the private sales of 5,200 works from the collection to Canada in 2002 and 2005. The auction, by the Trustees of the collection, follows the death of Peter Winkworth's widow, Franca, in 2013, and marks the end of the Winkworth family's 50-year residence in Kensington, which culminated in four generations of the family, ranging from Franca to her great-grandson Brando, residing together at the house last year.

Born in 1929, the son of a Canadian mother and an English father, Peter Winkworth was educated in Montreal and read History at Wadham College, Oxford before embarking on a career in the City of London with a firm of Canadian stockbrokers. His career was curtailed when he lost a leg in a boating accident off Monte Carlo, and he began collecting Canadiana in earnest during his year of convalescence. While still in his wheelchair, he married Franca Lombardi, the daughter of the Italian First World War fighter ace and pioneer aviator “Francis” Lombardi, in New York. He quickly mastered his artificial leg and embarked on a six-week tour of Europe with New York print dealer Harry Shaw Newman who introduced him to key contacts and destinations in the print and antiquarian collecting world. In the ensuing years, Peter, who struck a remarkable figure with his gold tipped cane, would become a familiar character to the printselling trade and a fixture on the auction circuit in London and Montreal. It was he, rather than the auction Christie’s held at the Ritz Carlton in Montreal in 1969, who stole the show for the local saleroom columnist Brian McKenna: *Peter Winkworth was there ... Surely you know Peter. Has a house like an art museum in London. Youngish, about 35. Spends his life jetting around the world from art auction to art auction. Scads of money. Terribly hard to please. “If Peter comes to your auction,” confided a nice lady from Christie’s, the auction people, “then it’s made.”*



Winkworth’s own collecting of Canadiana had been kindled in the 1940s when his uncle John Bernard sold him a set of Cockburn’s Canadian views. His English grandfather Henry and English uncle Bill had both collected Chinese porcelain on a grand scale, with the dispersal of Stephen’s collections in week-long auctions in London in the 1920s and ’30s, so serious collecting was in the blood, and true to his forebears Peter Winkworth began to put together what would become arguably the most extensive private collection of Canadiana ever assembled. The collection adorned the walls of the Winkworth’s

elegant London home, the Colefax & Fowler decorated house at 2 Campden Hill Place in Kensington, with rooms dressed with rare complete suites of the great early prints describing the scenery and towns of Upper and Lower Canada. The large Niagara Falls prints were hung in the dining room (*illustrated on page one*), Quebec and Montreal in the billiard room, the Maritimes on the landing, Krieghoff’s large canvas, *Quebec Farm, Montreal* (estimate £60,000-80,000), in the master bedroom, General Wolfe memorabilia, from sculpted portraits to commemorative pottery, along with great pictures of Quebec and New Brunswick scenery, in the drawing room. Here and there hung works which illustrate J. Russell Harper’s seminal *Painting in Canada: a History*: a rare early 18th century votive panel from Quebec and William Raphael’s *Bonsecours Market, Montreal* (estimate £20,000-30,000, *illustrated above left*). Two early 19th century companion paintings of Mi’qmaks (estimate £30,000 – 50,000, *one illustrated right*), which markedly improve on a famous related canvas by the same hand in the National Gallery of Canada, straddled the fireplace in the drawing room, and thousands of works on paper - prints, photographs, manuscripts and maps - filled the large plan chests and drawers lining the old billiard room.



Following a visit from Jim Burant of the then National Archives of Canada, who described his visit to Campden Hill Place in 1996 as *'the most fabulous day of my life'*, a conversation began about the destiny of the collection, and in 2002 the National Archives acquired 4,000 items from the collection for 6 million Canadian dollars. After Peter Winkworth's death in 2005, a further 1,200 items went to the by then re-named Library and Archives, Canada, in association with the National Gallery of Canada and the Canadian Museum of Civilisation. Following the second acquisition in 2008, the Friends of the LAC described the Winkworth Collection as *'a treasure of paintings, prints, drawings, photographs, maps and other documents of incomparable beauty and breadth, depicting landscapes in every part of Canada and scenes of almost every aspect of life in Canada over four centuries.'*



The balance of the Canadiana which has remained in London, the majority of the pictures, watercolours, drawings and prints which dressed the walls of the Winkworth home, are included in this sale. These two hundred-plus remaining items make up an exceptional collection in their own right, and they alone still range wide enough to present an extensive prospect of early Canada. Their sale will present collectors and institutions with further little-known treasures, in a variety of media, among which the exceptionally rare mezzotints of the First Nations leaders who visited England in the early 18th

century and Captain Thomas Davies's 1762 watercolour, *An East View of the Great Cataract of Niagara* (estimate £40,000-60,000, *illustrated left*), one of the very first accurate views of the Falls taken on the spot. The sale also includes a collection of Wolfe-iana, ranging from posthumous portraiture to Josiah Wedgwood's commemorative Liverpool transfer-printed pitchers and jugs, Joseph Légaré's fine pair of 1830s canvases of the picturesque Chaudière and Montmorency Falls, stereoscope photographs from Notman's studio, two characteristic little sheets by Heriot of Quebec scenery (from a little over two centuries ago, and still as fresh as the day they were painted), straw-work views of Quebec, a handful of early Canadian imprints, a manuscript journal of travels through British North America in the 1830s, Mi'qmaq birch-bark trays and boxes (aboriginal souvenir objects), and early tourist wares from Niagara Falls ranging from printed guides to a pair of painted curling stones.

The crowning glories of the collection, complete framed suites of the great early views of Canada, which include John Elliott Woolford's pioneering *First Series of a Selection of Views illustrating Nova Scotia Scenery* (1819) – the first such set to be printed and published in Canada – Richard Short's *Twelve Views of the Principal Buildings in Quebec* (1761), and *Six views of the town and harbour of Halifax in Nova Scotia* (1777), George Bulteel Fisher's *Six Views in North America* (1795-6), Niagara views by William James Bennett (1829-31), Niagara views (estimate £15,000-25,000, *illustrated right*), and the "Quebec set" by James Pattison Cockburn (both 1833), and John Murray's early Montreal views (c.1843-4).



The sale will be divided into sections which include the Canadiana (First Nations and Native Americans; La Nouvelle France (1534-1763); The Seven Years' War (1756-1763); The Death of Wolfe; Niagara Falls; Ontario and the War of 1812; Quebec; Montreal; The Maritimes: Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland; Krieghoff and his followers; Printed Canadiana from the library) as well as a selection of furniture and decorative arts from the Winkworth household in Kensington.

Highlights from The Winkworth Collection will be exhibited in Toronto 3 to 5 March ahead of the sale of the collection in London at Christie's South Kensington on Wednesday 1 April 2015.

PRESS OFFICE ENQUIRIES: +44 207 389 2664

Public Exhibition:

Saturday, 28 March 2015: 11:00am - 5:00pm

Sunday, 29 March 2015: 11:00am - 5:00pm

Monday, 30 March 2015: 9:00am - 7:30pm

Tuesday, 31 March 2015: 9:00am - 5:00pm

Auction:

The Winkworth Collection

Wednesday 1 April 2015

2:00pm

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Christie's South Kensington

Open seven days a week, Christie's South Kensington is one of the busiest salerooms in the UK attracting over 200,000 visitors each year. With over 100 sales and offering more than 20,000 lots annually, estimates start from under £1,000. Interiors sales dedicated to home furnishings are held three times a month alongside regular Sunday sales of single-owner collections. Specialised sales for the avid collector are scheduled throughout the year according to category, and include Popular Culture Memorabilia, Vintage Couture, Islamic Art, Jewellery, 20th Century British Art and Chinese Works of Art, amongst others. In 2012 Christie's South Kensington realised the highest ever total for the third consecutive year with sales of £139.4 million / \$223.1 million having welcomed a 10% growth in registered bidders and a 20% increase (£ / \$) in total sales.

About Christie's

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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 and Contemporary, Impressionist and Modern, Old Masters and Jewellery.

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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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