

CHRISTIE'S NOVEMBER IMPORTANT RUSSIAN ART AUCTION HIGHLIGHTED BY AN IMPORTANT COLLECTION OF FABERGÉ MASTERPIECES AND IMPERIAL TREASURES



London – Christie's Important Russian Art sale on 27 November 2017 will be highlighted by an Important Collection of Fabergé Masterpieces and Imperial Treasures as well as significant paintings by Natalia Goncharova, Vasily Vereshchagin, Apollinari Vasnetsov and Marie Vassilieff, among other artists. The Works of Art section will also feature an important monumental vase by the Imperial Porcelain Factory, rare Russian Imperial orders from the Princely Murat Collection and important militaria from the Romanov family. Selected works will be on display at Christie's Moscow Gallery space on November 9, 2017. The London pre-sale exhibition will take place on November 24-26, 2017.

Alexis de Tiesenhausen, International Head of the Russian Department, Christie's: *"Christie's is honoured to offer an important collection of rare Fabergé works with impeccable provenance. This collection was carefully assembled over a period of thirty years by an avid admirer of Fabergé's craftsmanship. Besides Fabergé, the sale also encompasses rare 18th century kovshi, orders of St Alexander Nevskii and St Andrew the First-Called presented to Prince Murat at Tilsit in 1807, as well as an exceptionally rare Caucasian kindjal belonging to Imam Shamil."*

The Works of Art section will be highlighted by an extremely rare and impressive imperial silver rhinoceros automaton by Fabergé (£300,000–500,000). This moving silver rhinoceros is one of only four known examples by Fabergé. It was a gift to Prince Vasili Alexandrovich from his grandmother Dowager Empress Maria Feodorovna circa 1914-1915. Nearly 90 years later it was acquired by the



father of the present owner from the descendants of Prince Vasili Alexandrovich. Another highlight is an exceptional and rare guilloché enamel and varicolour gold miniature model of a sedan chair estimated at £700,000–1,000,000 (*illustrated left*). This miniature sedan chair was purchased by the rubber magnate Maximilian Othmar Neuscheller, an established and important client of Fabergé. Only a handful of such miniature furniture pieces by Fabergé are known, and it is exceptionally rare for one to come to market. The last piece of miniature furniture on the market made \$2,280,000.

Among other pieces with distinguished Imperial provenance, is an exceptionally rare cigarette case given as a wedding gift to Emperor Alexander III from his wife Empress Maria Feodorovna in October 1890 (estimate: £250,000–350,000, *pictured right*). Like the rhinoceros automaton, this cigarette case was acquired by the father of the present owner from the descendants of Prince Vasili Alexandrovich. The collection also includes a cigarette case by Hahn that was given by Emperor Alexander III to Tsesarevich Nicholas II for Christmas in the year of his 25th birthday (estimate: £70,000–90,000). A further highlight is a rare and exquisitely delicate snowflake brooch designed by Alma Pihl, in perfect condition and exceptional to see on the market (estimate: £40,000–60,000). This brooch was initially a gift from Emanuel Nobel to the wife of one of his business associates.



The Russian Paintings section is led by Natalia Goncharova's *Still life with teapot and oranges* (estimate: £500 000–700 000, *illustrated left*). For the past fifty years, the work was misattributed to Mikhail Larionov. However, recent research has revealed that the painting was included in Goncharova's solo show at the Dobychna Art Salon in St Petersburg in 1914. This exciting discovery was purchased by the father of the present owner from Alexandra Larionova-Tomilina in 1966.

Other top works include: *White peonies* by Natalia Goncharova (1881-1962), offered from an important Italian private collection (estimate: £350,000–500,000, *illustrated above*) and exhibited at the Galleria del Levante, Milan in 1964; the magnificent *Old Veliky Novgorod* by Apollinari Vasnetsov, shown at an exhibition of works by 36 artists at the Moscow Imperial Stroganov University in December



1901 and the 30th Itinerant Exhibition of Paintings in 1902-1903 (estimate: £350,000–450,000, *illustrated right*); *The Holy Family* by Vasily Vereshchagin (1842-1904) from the artist's 'Palestine series', inspired by Ernest Renan's *Life of Jesus* (estimate: £300,000–500,000); Marie Vassilieff's (1884-1957) 1921 *Café de la Rotonde* estimated at £180,000–250,000; and a remarkable group of Konstantin Somov's watercolours from The Provatoroff Collection (total estimate: £160,000-220,000).

Sarah Mansfield, International Director, Russian Art at Christie's: *“Over recent seasons, it's become clear that collectors only want the best Russian Art and this November we have sourced a fine selection, particularly strong in works from the early 20th century. A 'rediscovered' Goncharova, exquisite miniatures by Konstantin Somov and an epic work by Apollinari Vasnetsov, harking back to the byliny of ancient Rus' – all of which appear on the market for the first time – will undoubtedly excite serious collectors. Graphic works by Sergei Eisenstein and a comprehensive group of works by Non-Conformists, highlighted by two stand-out Tselkovs – will ensure that the Christie's Important Russian Art sale starts Russian Art Week with a bang.”*

“Malachite Winter Garden” by interior designer Kirill Istomin

Christie's is proud to announce that the renowned interior designer, Kirill Istomin, will be a featured Tastemaker for November's Important Russian Art sale. The Russian-born, American-trained interior designer will create a site-specific Winter Garden inspired by the Malachite Room at the Hermitage Palace in St Petersburg within the London auction gallery, re-imagining traditional and classical works through a contemporary lens.

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Pre-sale exhibitions:

Christie's Moscow (Romanov Lane, 2/6 bld. 13)
November 9, 10 am to 6 pm

Christie's London (8 King Street)
November 24-26, 10 am to 6 pm

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction, private and digital sales in first half of 2017 that totalled £2.35 billion / \$3 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. Christie's offers around 350 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.

Alongside regular sales online, Christie's has a global presence in 46 countries, with 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, Hong Kong, and Shanghai.

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