

CHRISTIE'S

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Christie's London Presents:

THOMAS CHIPPENDALE 300 YEARS

**Celebrating the
Genius of Chippendale's Designs & the Perfection of His Execution
5 July 2018**



'The Shakespeare of English Furniture makers'
Christopher Gilbert

London – On 5 July, Christie's landmark sale *Thomas Chippendale 300 Years* will celebrate the genius of Chippendale's designs and the perfection of his execution, in the 300th anniversary year of his birth. Taking place during Christie's *Classic Week*, the dedicated London auction will present 22 lots with estimates ranging from £5,000 to £5 million. A selection of works will be on public view at Christie's London headquarters until 25 May, with the full pre-sale exhibition opening from 30 June to 5 July.

Collectively, the sale encompasses some of the grandest pieces of 18th century furniture ever created, including Sir Rowland Winn's Commode (estimate: £3-5million) and The Dundas Sofas (each sofa with an estimate of £2-3million). Remembered as 'The Shakespeare of English Furniture makers', Chippendale was the master of many mediums. This is highlighted by the breadth of works being offered, including his game-changing book which made his name *The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director*, first published in 1754, which astutely promoted his designs to the most affluent potential clients of the day (the expanded 1762 3rd edition, estimate: £5,000-8,000) alongside works executed in giltwood, mahogany, marquetry and lacquer.

Orlando Rock, Christie's UK Chairman and Co Chairman of Decorative Arts: *"This auction will present arguably the greatest neo-classical masterpieces by Thomas Chippendale that will ever come to market, providing unique opportunities to buy the very best at comparatively accessible price levels. It will be a fitting*

celebration of Chippendale's remarkable designs and craftsmanship and also Christie's longstanding connections with him, dating back to when James Christie first opened his doors for business in 1766. Tradition has it that Chippendale designed Christie's original rostrum for his friend James Christie, the model of which is still in use to this day in our salerooms around the globe. We look forward to welcoming connoisseurs, collectors, admirers and anyone who wants to learn more about Chippendale's genius, building upon the momentum of the Chippendale exhibition in Leeds (9 Feb to 9 June)."

Robert Copley, Christie's International Head of Furniture: *"Thomas Chippendale (1718-1779) is without question Britain's greatest cabinet-maker. He excelled in every style and medium he worked in, from the whimsical rococo and the fashion for all things Chinese in his early career, to the neo-classical with its straight lines derived from the ancient world. His reputation spread far beyond the shores of his homeland, and his genius is reflected in the number of beautifully designed and executed pieces of furniture that survive in excellent condition nearly 250 years after his death, a remarkable selection of which we are proud to be bringing to the market in this sale."*

The sale includes:

SIR ROWLAND WINN'S COMMODOE: A George III mahogany and Indian ebony commode by Thomas Chippendale, supplied to Sir Rowland Winn of Nostell Priory, for his London house, 11 St James's Square, between 1766 and 1769 (estimate: £3-5million). A true masterpiece of English furniture, this lavish neoclassical commode broke the world auction record for his work at that time when it sold from the Messer Collection at Christie's in 1991.



Charles Cator, Deputy Chairman, Christie's International: *"The sale of the Messer Collection was a landmark event for English furniture and this commode was the sensation of the sale, setting a new benchmark for collectors to aspire to. This is, quite simply, the greatest single piece of Chippendale furniture that I have had the privilege to sell in my 45 years at Christie's."*



THE DUNDAS SOFAS: A pair of George III giltwood sofas from the suite of four sofas and eight armchairs designed by Robert Adam and executed by Thomas Chippendale (*illustrated page 1, the design by Robert Adam illustrated left*, each sofa with an estimate of £2-3million). The suite was supplied in 1765 to Sir Lawrence Dundas for the Great Room at 19 Arlington Street, London at the enormous cost of £410.4 shillings excluding the crimson silk damask. It is the only known instance of Chippendale working to a design by Adam. When this pair of sofas and a pair of chairs were sold at Christie's in 1997 they became the most expensive pieces of Chippendale ever sold at auction, at that time.



THE BROCKET HALL TORCHERES: A pair of George III giltwood torchères by Thomas Chippendale, supplied to Sir Peniston Lamb, 1st Viscount Melbourne, circa 1773 for the Saloon at Brocket Hall, Hertfordshire. Originally a set of four, the design is unique to this commission; they stand 60 ½ in. (154 cm.) high (estimate: £350,000 – 500,000).

A set of twelve George III parcel-gilt and white-painted armchairs by Thomas Chippendale, supplied to Edwin Lascelles, 1st Baron Harewood, circa 1770-2 for the family rooms at Harewood House, Yorkshire, sold at Christie's in 1951 (estimate: £300,000 – 500,000, *detail illustrated right*). **The Harewood commission was the most**



important and valuable of Chippendale's career, spanning twelve years and exceeding £10,000, it includes many of his most celebrated works that remain there to this day.



Coming to the market for the first time is a George III Indian rosewood, fustic, tulipwood and marquetry dressing bureau by Thomas Chippendale, *circa* 1772 (estimate: £300,000-500,000). This is virtually identical to one supplied to Edwin Lascelles, 1st Baron Harewood, for Harewood House, Yorkshire, and now in the Victoria & Albert Museum, London. The present bureau is believed to have possibly been supplied originally to Robert Child for Osterley Park, and has descended through inheritance to the current owner.

A George III mahogany cabinet by Thomas Chippendale, is **a superb example from his neoclassical mahogany period**, *circa* 1765-70 (estimate: £300,000–500,000). This is typified by the classical design and high quality carved ornament coupled with well-chosen figured timber. The overall form, with broken triangular pediment, relates to Chippendale's designs for Library and secretaire-bookcases in his *The Gentleman and Cabinet-Maker's Director*, 1754.



Many other great English houses are represented by lots including a pair of stools from **Nostell Priory in Yorkshire**, *circa* 1765-70, possibly supplied under the direction of Thomas Chippendale, (estimate: £10,000-15,000); a pair of giltwood bergères by Thomas Chippendale, 1765-70 from **Mentmore Towers in Buckinghamshire**, which was built for the Rothschild family (estimate: £70,000-100,000) and a Chinese lacquer and japanned small piano forté attributed to Thomas Chippendale, with movement attributed to John Pohlman, *circa* 1775, from **Northumberland House**, the London residence of the Percy family, who were the Earls and later the Dukes of Northumberland (estimate: £70,000 -100,000).

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Find out more:

Christie's International Head of Furniture Robert Copley and Ann Sumner, Historic Collections Adviser to Harewood House Trust, discuss the life and legacy of the legendary cabinet-maker and furniture designer: www.christies.com/features/A-guide-to-Thomas-Chippendale-Senior

Among Thomas Chippendale's earliest commissions, the most famous was for the Earl of Dumfries in 1759. In 2007, Christie's played a pivotal role when the interiors were saved for the nation by The Prince of Wales and other generous benefactors.

All the pieces of English Furniture which have sold for over £2million have been by Thomas Chippendale.

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction, private and digital sales in 2017 that totalled £5.1 billion / \$6.6 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and international expertise. 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.

**Please note when quoting estimates above that other fees will apply in addition to the hammer price - see Section D of the Conditions of Sale at the back of the sale catalogue.*

**Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and are reported net of applicable fees.*
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