

CHRISTIE'S

PRESS RELEASE | LONDON
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WORKS OF ART RETURNED TO ITALY IN COLLABORATION WITH THE ITALIAN EMBASSY, LONDON

London - A group of eight works of art were returned to Italy today in a project of cooperation facilitated by the Italian Embassy, London, Christie's and the current owners of the objects. The works, that had been acquired in the past in good faith, were more recently identified as not having the required, verifiable title, export or provenance details needed to proceed with a sale and as such were returned voluntarily.

"Our primary goal today is to return these objects and to raise awareness of how vital it is to have access to all information to continue to ensure only legitimate works are offered to the market. Research and its publication is a vital part of our work," said **Stephen Brooks, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Christie's**. *"As custodians of the art that passes through our doors, we have a duty to carefully research the art and objects we handle and sell. There is a well-established, honourable market in the arts of the ancient world. Our processes of due diligence make full use of current, available research and we continue to work closely with organisations, authorities and art loss databases to ensure we have verifiable title and provenance."*

Christie's are fully committed to the elimination of any modern trade in illicit antiquities. In line with company policy, if an object is identified and confirmed as not having the correct export or provenance details, Christie's will work with all parties and authorities to try to facilitate a solution for that work, including in some cases, the restitution of the piece. It remains highly unusual for works to be withdrawn from the sale process, representing less than 0.8% of the hundreds of items offered.

"We would like to thank all parties involved. We are honoured by the presence today of Mr. Alberto Bonisoli, the Minister for Culture and we would like to thank Mr. Raffaele Trombetta, the Italian Ambassador, for his support with this project. With even closer future cooperation, we hope to ensure the required research takes place ahead of catalogue publication to continue to ensure only legitimate objects are offered in our auctions," Mr. Brooks concluded.

Christie's are global auction leaders in sales of Antiquities. While the company remains sensitive to claims for restitution by source countries of cultural property, there is a long-standing and legitimate market for works of antiquity which have been collected for centuries and have had a profound effect on the development of Western culture.

For further information, please visit www.christies.com

Notes to Editors:

Christie's holds bi-annual sales of Antiquities in New York and London offering a variety of objects from Egypt, the Near East and Europe, which date from 2300 B.C to the 7th century A.D. and incorporate objects fashioned from a variety of materials including marble, bronze, glass, gold, pottery and stone. There is continued interest in collecting arts from the ancient worlds and 2018 witnessed strong results including a 3000 year old Assyrian relief which sold for \$30,968,750, achieving the second highest price for any work of ancient art and the world record price for an Assyrian relief (31 October 2018 at Christie's New York). Other noteworthy lots in 2018 included a roman marble torso of Hercules, which achieved \$2,412,500 (also in New York in October). Highlights from collections include the Resandro Collection sold in 2016, objects from Swiss antiquities dealer Elsa Bloch-Diener and works from the Estate of William Kelly Simpson, the eminent Egyptologist.

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About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction, private and digital sales in 2018 that totalled £5.3 billion / \$7 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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Images available on request

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