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PETER DOIG'S *CABIN ESSENCE* TO LEAD CHRISTIE'S AUCTIONS IN FRIEZE WEEK



Peter Doig, *Cabin Essence* (1993-4)
90 x 137 ¾ in. (230 x 350 cm.)

London - Christie's is delighted to present Peter Doig's *Cabin Essence* as a highlight of the Post War and Contemporary Evening Auction on 16 October 2015. A crystalline vision of Le Corbusier's *Unité d'Habitation*, one of the most important modernist buildings of all time, the painting was executed between 1993 and 1994 and is the largest work within Doig's celebrated sequence of *Concrete Cabins*. The property of a private American collector, a significant portion of the proceeds of the sale will be given to benefit The World Justice Project. Following the record-breaking performance of Doig's *Swamped* (1990) at Christie's New York in May of this year, *Cabin*

Essence will lead a week of Post War and Contemporary auctions at Christie's London and will be on view at Christie's New York from 26 to 29 September and Christie's London from 10 October.

'At the heart of Tate Britain's retrospective of Peter Doig is a room of paintings for which the artist is perhaps most known: the "Concrete Cabin" series of 1991-96, comprising views of a modernist building seen through thick, dark trees. Among these works, Cabin Essence, 1993-94, is one of the best ... [It] is a great lyrical work that, although telling no particular story, distills the striking format of a strong inner structure held within a field of floating organic and decorative elements ... the image is one of rationality submerged in mystery.' Artforum, April 2008.

Debuted as part of the original suite of *Concrete Cabins*, at Victoria Miro Gallery, London in 1994, *Cabin Essence* was then shown at the Tate's Turner Prize exhibition that same year. The *Concrete Cabins* series, created between 1991 and 1998, is of central significance to Doig's practice; *Concrete Cabin* (1991-1992) – the first in the series – is currently housed in the Leicester Arts and Museum Service and *Boiler House* (1994) is a promised gift to the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Most recently, *Cabin Essence* was shown as part of Foundation Beyeler's (Basel) Peter Doig retrospective that took place 2014-2015.

A monumentally scaled investigation into the mechanics of vision and memory, *Cabin Essence* is Doig's portrayal of his experience when he travelled to take part in the restoration of Le Corbusier's abandoned *Unité d'Habitation* at Briey-en-Forêt in northern France. Doig first visited Le Corbusier's *Unité d'Habitation* in 1991. As a recent graduate living in London, he was part of a group of artists, architects and designers involved in the building's restoration. Built in 1957, and abandoned less than twenty years later, the *Unité* was one of the structures that proposed a new form of democratic living in post-War Europe. This forsaken temple of Modernist aspiration – an impeccable architectural grid subsumed by the chaos of nature – had a profound impact upon Doig.

Doig has recalled: *'The building took me by surprise as a piece of architecture. But it was not until I saw the photograph I had taken of the building through the trees that it became interesting. That made me go back and look at it again. I was surprised by the way the building transformed itself from a piece of architecture into a feeling. It was all emotion suddenly.'* This encounter with this derelict Modernist utopia, seen through dense layers of trees, gave rise to a cycle of paintings based on his recollection of the event. Doig was only able to capture the sublime quality of this encounter by transforming original colour video footage, which was taken on location, into a sequence of black and white stills that were in turn photocopied into a book of blurred vignettes and only then finally translated into paint.

Rendered in tones of russet, green, yellow and blue that intermingle in shimmering, translucent bands, the painting is inscribed with thick passages of streaked impasto and bejewelled beads of

colour that rain down upon this unearthly paradise. The visual splendour of the work is finely balanced with an intricate web of reference and association that Doig has continued to employ throughout his oeuvre; recalling the Canadian pine forests of his youth at the same time as anticipating the Caribbean jungles to which he would turn his attention the following decade, as well as establishing a dialogue with the work of Richter and Bonnard, Munch, Mondrian and Cézanne.

Francis Outred Chairman and Head of Post-War and Contemporary Art EMERI said: *'At Christie's we have been privileged to present some of Peter Doig's greatest works in recent years, yet we have never had a work like this. One of the largest works made by Doig in the 1990s, it conjures an atmosphere that you could walk right into. There is such a wealth of art history referenced in the process and technique of the painting but ultimately it represents an entirely new means of figurative painting. Quite simply the holy grail of Doig's 'Concrete Cabins'; acquired by the present owner from the Turner Prize in 1994 it comes to auction for the first time with an outstanding museum exhibition history.'*

As the leading auction house for Post War and Contemporary art, Christie's brings together a lineup of world-class auctions during Frieze week. Together the Post War and Contemporary Evening Auction, Italian Sale and the Day Sale, bring the highest quality of art from 1945 to the present day and are an integral part of the most important week in London for the art world's calendar.

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About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in the first half of 2015 that totalled £2.9 billion / \$4.5 billion. In 2014, Christie's had global auction and private sales that totalled £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, 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.

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 Beijing, 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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About The World Justice Project

The World Justice Project is an independent multi-disciplinary organization devoted to advancing the rule of law (defined as: accountability of public and private actors under just laws; open governmental processes and dispute resolution rendered by competent, ethical and independent representatives and neutrals) around the world. The Work Justice Project believes that adherence to this universal sense of the rule of law is the foundation of communities of peace, equity and opportunity. Their work focuses on three areas: research and scholarship; measurement of adherence by means of a comprehensive index covering more than 100 countries and incubation of practical on the ground programs that in some fashion advance the rule of law. Funding for The World Justice Project comes from an array of sources, including private foundations, businesses, individuals and governments. To learn more please visit our website. <http://worldjusticeproject.org/>
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