

CHRISTIE'S

THE ART PEOPLE

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THE EXCEPTIONAL SALE 2015

IN LONDON ON 9 JULY



London – Christie's is pleased to announce that *The Exceptional Sale* will take place on the evening of 9 July 2015. Following the successes since the inaugural auction in 2008, this sale platform provides collectors with the opportunity to acquire outstanding sculpture and masterpieces of European furniture and decorative arts, many with celebrated provenance. *The Exceptional Sale* brings together a wide variety of objects which are linked by a common attribute: excellence. From rare antiquities to modern day marvels, this sale is jointly led by an authentic and immaculately restored Vickers Supermarine Spitfire Mk.1A – P9374/G-MK1A (estimate: £1.5-2.5 million, *illustrated above*) (please click [here](#) for the separate press release), and a magnificent Luba ceremonial bowstand, attributed to the Master of Warua (estimate: £1.5-2.5 million, *illustrated above right*). The auction is also highlighted by five items of Napoleonic memorabilia, including the Emperor's black felt bicorne hat (estimate: £300,000-500,000, *illustrated above left*), and a classical Roman torso of an athlete, previously in the collection of Yves Saint Laurent (estimate: £1-1.5 million). *The Exceptional Sale* presents the finest examples of English, French and Italian furniture, ormolu-mounted European and Imperial Russian porcelain, silver, clocks and sculpture. Comprising 61 lots, the sale is expected to realise in excess of £14 million.

Robert Copley, Deputy Chairman Christie's UK, International Head of Furniture: "United by the common themes of rarity, provenance, craftsmanship and beauty, works offered in 'The Exceptional Sale' this year continue to celebrate excellence, while providing collectors with an opportunity to acquire remarkable works of art; from a sinuous and curvaceous pair of George III silver candelabra appearing for the first time at auction, to a Mark 1 Spitfire."

Celebrating the contemporary art of the past, the wealth of classical works at Christie's from 7 to 10 July represent excellence and technical brilliance. They will be offered across the sales of Old Master & British Paintings, Drawings & Watercolours, *The Exceptional Sale*, the *Taste of the Royal Court: Important French Furniture and Works of Art from a*

Private Collection sale, and *The Collection of a Distinguished Swiss Gentleman*. Together, the week of sales at Christie's presents works by many of the most revered artists and craftsmen in history, who have stood the test of time and were ground-breaking and innovative in their day.

NAPOLEONIC MEMORABILIA

A highlight of *The Exceptional Sale* is a collection of Napoleonic relics acquired by Sir Michael Shaw Stewart between 1814 and 1830, and sold by his descendants. Aged 27 at the time of departure in 1814, Shaw Stewart set sail on a Grand Tour, keeping a detailed diary which today provides a vivid portrait of post-Napoleonic Europe. Whilst on this Grand Tour, Shaw Stewart met Napoleon's mother Maria Letizia Bonaparte who, following an earlier encounter, presented him in 1816 with this commanding portrait of the Emperor Napoleon, in coronation robes, before his throne, by Robert Lefèvre (estimate: £400,000-600,000, *illustrated right*).



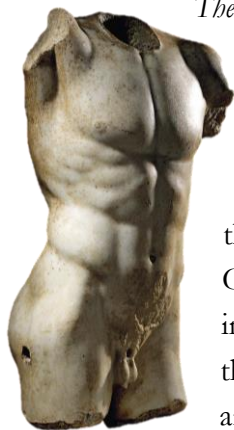
Napoleon's personal style signifier was his hat, which he wore sideways: a black felt bicorne, made by Poupart & Cie.

Poupart is thought to have made a number of hats for Napoleon, and only a minority survive (estimate: £300,000-500,000, *illustrated left*).

Shaw Stewart purchased the hat in 1814 from the Keeper of the Palace of Dresden, into whose safekeeping it had been placed by Napoleon's valet following the battle of Friedland and the treaty of Tilsit in 1807. Shaw Stewart paid 10 thalers, equivalent to just over £2, commenting in his diary that it was "*the most valuable and curious acquisition by far that I have made on my travels...I will not say how much I would have given for it...but having got it...I know no price would tempt me to part with it.*"

Among the other items of Napoleonic memorabilia from the Shaw Stewart family is a playing card (the three of diamonds) inscribed with the words 'L'amiral anglais aux Dardanelles' in Napoleon's hand, and a map of France (estimate: £3,000-5,000). An ivory-coloured lock of mane by tradition from Marengo (estimate: £3,000-5,000) is presented alongside an unopened wine bottle from Napoleon's Waterloo carriage, with the letter 'N' in bold relief at the base of its neck (estimate: £10,000-20,000).

VISIONS OF HUMANITY



The Exceptional Sale comprises four works of art, the *Property of a Distinguished Private Collector*. These works represent very differing visions of humanity, from Antiquity and Africa. A highlight is a classical Roman torso of an athlete from the 1st/2nd century, formerly in the *Collection of Yves Saint Laurent*. It is an example of the sort of magnificent human observation from Ancient Rome which has inspired artists throughout the history of Western art. Also from this private collection is a Chokwe figure of a warrior chief, which shows the hand of the African sculptor in the visible tool marks and the directness in his portrait of a chief, and embodies those characteristics which inspired Picasso and other avant-garde contemporaries around Europe (estimate: £400,000-600,000, *illustrated right*). Similarly, the

magnificent Luba ceremonial bowstand, attributed to the Master of Waruas, is of a deliberately stretched, simplified and energetic form: the type of sculpture that would inspire Max Ernst, Joan Miró and Alberto Giacometti (estimate: £1.5-2.5 million, *illustrated page one, right*).



FRENCH FURNITURE

The rich selection of furniture in *The Exceptional Sale* is highlighted by The Earl of Bridgewater's Boulle Tables, *circa* 1710-1720 (estimate: £1.2-1.8 million, *illustrated right*). These spectacular tables epitomise the creative



genius of André-Charles Boulle, court cabinet-maker to Louis XIV, and widely considered the greatest of all French *Ébénistes*. Another example from the same maker is a spectacular pair of Louis XIV *torchères*, *circa* 1700, veneered in exquisite tortoiseshell and brass marquetry (estimate: £600,000-1,000,000, *illustrated left*). The history of these elegant *torchères* can be traced back to the mid-18th century collection of Randon de Boisset, one of the greatest collectors of his time. Conceived to support candelabra, these further capture the revered creative talents of Boulle.



ITALIAN WORKS OF ART

The Exceptional Sale has a selection of Italian works of art, including a magnificent Louis XV ormolu-mounted Roman porphyry covered vase, of spectacular scale and proportions (estimate: £200,000-400,000, *illustrated left*). Mounted as a magnificent perfume burner, it is also a masterpiece of the 'picturesque' rococo, with its simulated waterfalls and shell-encrusted fountains representing the idealised rococo landscape in miniature. Further highlights include a late Renaissance marble table top, consisting of an



elaborate geometric composition made with a variety of stones (estimate: £250,000-400,000, *illustrated right*). The table top belongs to a distinct group produced at the end of the 16th and beginning of the 17th centuries and conceivably from the same Roman workshop, that include examples in the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Prado in Madrid and the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg.



BRITISH WORKS OF ART

Examples of English furniture include a George III satinwood bookcase, attributed to one of the greatest English cabinet-makers, Thomas Chippendale, *circa* 1773-75 (estimate: £80,000-120,000, *illustrated left*). Created in the advent of neo-Classicism, the bookcase has intriguing provenance and is thought to have been made for Lord Melbourne's London house, and descended to Lady Desborough at Taplow Court.



Appearing for the first time since they were made in 1791 is a pair of George III silver candelabra, 1791, which have extraordinarily fine spiral fluting and timeless neo-classical form (estimate: £300,000-500,000, *illustrated right*). The candelabra are a testament to the skill and virtuosity of the



workshop of silversmiths John Wakelin and William Taylor. They exemplify the progressive taste of Thomas Dawson, 1st Viscount Cremorne, who commissioned them.

This sale also presents The Dundas Mirrors, commissioned by Sir Lawrence Dundas to enrich the walls of his drawing rooms at 19 Arlington Street, where they hung until they were sold at Christie's in 1934 (estimate: £400,000-600,000, *one of the pair illustrated right*). Over six feet in height, these George III giltwood cartouche-shaped mirrors were supplied by France and Bradburn in 1764, at a cost of £97 - 12 shillings. They are alluring for collectors of 18th century decorative art and contemporary design alike.



CLOCKS



Clocks in *The Exceptional Sale* include an important timepiece by England's most celebrated clockmaker Thomas Tompion, made with his then partner Edward Banger, 1707 (estimate: £180,000-250,000, *illustrated left*). From the *Estate of Dr. Peter van Cortlandt Moore*, this rare Queen Anne ormolu-mounted ebony veneered table clock still retains a contemporary wall bracket, and the finely engraved back plate is a particular feature of the best Tompion clocks. The clock strikes the hours and has Tompion's elaborate pull lever method repeating the quarters. The engraving on the present clock has been attributed to Henry Adeane whose work is typified by the use of decorative masks and gargoyles amidst the foliage. Other highlights include a very early architectural table clock by Edward East and five clocks from the *Ancienne Collection de Monsieur et Madame Djahanguir Riabi*, including a Louis XV cartel clock by Jean-Baptiste Baillon, one of France's most revered clockmakers of the 18th century.

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Please click [here](#) for the complete eCatalogue

AUCTION PREVIEW

Saturday, 4 July: 12:00 noon - 5:00 pm
Sunday, 5 July: 12:00 noon - 5:00 pm
Monday, 6 July: 9:00 am - 4:30 pm
Tuesday, 7 July: 9:00 am - 8:00 pm
Wednesday, 8 July: 9:00 am - 4:30 pm
Thursday, 9 July: 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

AUCTION:

The Exceptional Sale
Christie's London
Thursday, 9 July 2015
4:30 pm

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in 2014 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. Private sales totalled £916.1 million (\$1.5 billion). Christie's has a global presence with 53 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, New Delhi, 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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