

CHRISTIE'S

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHRISTIE'S EVENING AUCTION OF POST-WAR & CONTEMPORARY ART TOTALS

£117.1million / \$178.4million / € 157.6million

Cy Twombly's *Untitled (New York City)* realises £19.6 million (\$29.9million / €26.4million)

Gerhard Richter's *Vierwaldstätter See* achieves £15.7 million (\$24million / €21.2million)

Francis Bacon's *Study for a Head* sells for £10 million (\$15.3million / €13.5million)

3 Artist Records Achieved for Paolo Scheggi, Howard Hodgkin & Theaster Gates



Cy Twombly's *Untitled (New York City)*

Executed in 1970 it sold for **£19,682,500 / \$29,976,448 / €26,472,963**

London - On 11 February, Christie's *Post-War & Contemporary Art* evening auction realised a **total of £117,142,500 / \$178,408,028 / € 157,556,663** selling 95% by value with outstanding sell-through rates. The top price of the evening was paid for Cy Twombly's *Untitled (New York City)*, which sold for **£19,682,500 / \$29,976,448 / €26,472,963**. This result follows the record-breaking sale of one of Cy Twombly's blackboards which sold for \$69.6 million at Christie's New York in November 2014. 3 record prices were set during tonight's auction including for Paolo Scheggi, Howard Hodgkin and Theaster Gates.

Francis Outred, International Director and Head of Post-War & Contemporary Art, Christie's Europe: London has seen stellar evening sales for Post-War and Contemporary Art in the last few years – the Christie's June 2012 record of £132million in a single night has never been beaten. In that spectrum, our sale stands out as a great result, a huge success. The interest in contemporary art has grown enormously, but at a rate that is sustainable. No bubble produces bidders from 40 countries and six continents for such a diverse range of works. I am particularly proud that in the week of Richter's 83rd birthday, one of his greatest paintings - of Lake Lucerne - a place so close to his heart, was so sought after. After Twombly's record price was set in New York at \$69.6 million in November 2014, the second highest price for

his work was set tonight, here in London. We are looking forward to the Post-War and Contemporary Art Day Auction taking place tomorrow, 12 February, at 1pm.

TOP LOT:

Cy Twombly's *Untitled (New York City)*, 1970, sold for £19,682,500 / \$29,976,448 / €26,472,963 (estimate in the region of £16million). Painted in New York in 1970, this untitled work is one of the last of the famous series of 'blackboard' paintings that Cy Twombly made in a dramatic and distinctive burst of creativity between 1966 and 1971. A large, nearly two metre long, shimmering, grey-ground spatial-field of elegantly liting and layered scrawl 'handwritten' over a highly painterly surface, the picture is a hypnotic and mesmerizing work that intentionally breaks down the borders between painting and drawing. It is also a work that marks the final, climactic phase of this singular period in the artist's career and its fusion into a unique style of painting which, between 1970 and 1971, was to characterize many of the grandest, most ambitious and monumental of all Twombly's paintings.

FURTHER HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SALE:

Gerhard Richter's *Vierwaldstätter See* (1969), sold for £15,762,500 / \$24,006,288 / €21,200,563 (estimate in the region of £10 million). The painting is the largest of a distinct series of four views of the famous Swiss lake painted by Richter in 1969. Purchased from the artist by the present owner in 1973 after its inclusion in the Grand Art Exhibition at the *Haus der Kunst Munich*, it stems from a landmark period in Richter's early oeuvre.

One of the last paintings of Pope Pius XII held in private hands **Francis Bacon's *Study for a Head* from 1955 sold for £10,050,500 / \$15,306,912 / €13,517,923** (estimate in the region of £9million). Whereas previous works had presented the Pope as a screaming, agonised phantom, *Study for a Head* presents a figure submerged in existential contemplation, riddled with the same quiet dignity and introspective tension that was to define Bacon's first self-portrait the following year. Exhibited at Tate, London, in 1962, *Study for a Head* remained unseen by the public for over 40 years, resurfacing in major retrospectives at the *Institut Valencià d'Art Modern*, Valencia, in 2003 and at the *Fondation Beyeler*, Basel, the following year.

Comprising 105 paintings, body paintings, drawings and letters, ***Exorcism of the Last Painting I Ever Made* by Tracey Emin realised £722,500 / \$1,100,368 / €971,763** (£600,000 – 800,000). Following the success of Tracey Emin's iconic *My Bed*, 1998, which achieved a world record price at auction quadrupling its pre-sale estimate to realise £2,546,500 / \$4,351,969 / €3,178,032 (estimate: £800,000-1,200,000) in July 2014, *Exorcism of the Last Painting I Ever Made*, 1996, documents a seminal moment of breakthrough within the artist's oeuvre, witnessing an impassioned re-engagement with her painting and drawing practice after a six-year hiatus. Paying homage to her influences including Edvard Munch, Egon Schiele and Yves Klein, Emin's paintings and drawings have since come to represent one of the most significant strands of her oeuvre, culminating in her appointment as Professor of Drawing at the Royal Academy of Arts, London, in 2011, and will be celebrated in the exhibition *Tracey Emin – Egon Schiele: Where I Want to Go* at the *Leopold Museum*, Vienna, in April this year.

Damien Hirst's iconic pill cabinet *Lullaby Winter*, 2002 fetched £3,050,500 / \$4,645,912 / €4,102,923 (estimate: £2,500,000 – 4,000,000). Another from the series of four cabinets named after the four seasons, *Lullaby Spring*, sold at auction in 2007 for £9.65million, breaking the record for a work by a European living artist at the time of sale. Just as Monet painted the four seasons, Hirst captures the winter atmosphere with his assembly of thousands of beautifully hand-crafted pills. Precisely positioned on razor-sharp shelving and enshrined within a perfect, mirrored surgical steel cabinet, these pills number the amount a single human might expect to consume in a lifetime.

The Post-War & Contemporary Day Auction will take place on 12 February, at 1pm.

ARTIST RECORDS:

Previous record

Lot 3, Theaster Gates, *For Race Riots and Salon Gatherings* - £242,500 / \$369,328 / €326,163

\$173,000, Nov 2014

Lot 20, Howard Hodgkin, *In the Green Room* - £1,202,500 / \$1,831,408 / €1,617,363

\$792,000, Feb 2008

Lot 34, Paolo Scheggi, *Intersuperficie Curva Bianca* - £1,178,500 / \$1,794,856 / €1,585,083

€573,300, May 2014

PRESS CONTACT:

Alexandra Deyzac | +44 207 389 2265 | adeyzac@christies.com