

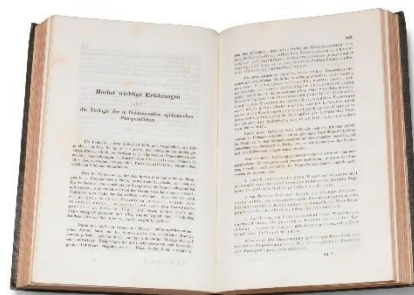
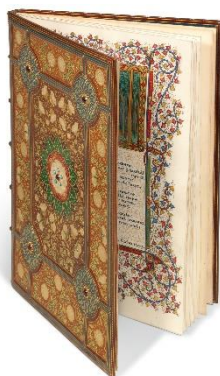
# CHRISTIE'S

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## Christie's *Books, Manuscripts, Photographs: From the Middle Ages to the Moon*

Featuring Important Medical Breakthroughs, a Fine Jewelled Binding  
and Original Illustrations by Sir Quentin Blake

Online | 14 - 28 April



**Left:** A jewelled binding set with garnets and turquoise on a manuscript on vellum, written, illuminated and bound by Francis Sangorski and George Sutcliffe, Estimate £10,000-15,000

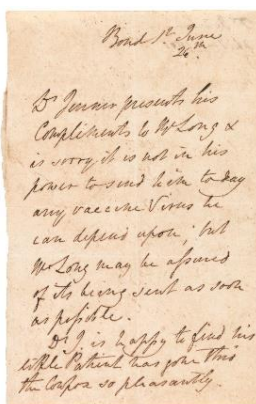
**Centre:** Quentin Blake (B. 1932), *Cinderella & Prince Charming*, Estimate: £4,000-6,000

**Right:** First edition, journal issue, containing the first announcement of Semmelweis's epoch-making discovery of the source and means of preventing puerperal fever. Estimate: £12,000-18,000

**LONDON:** From 14 to 28 April, Christie's presents [Books, Manuscripts, Photographs: From the Middle Ages to the Moon](#), a wide-ranging online auction encompassing works from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This sale features a diversity of categories including medieval manuscripts, autograph letters, incunabula and early printing, travel and cartography, fine bindings, important scientific books and manuscripts, and NASA photographs. The auction also includes charming original artworks by Sir Quentin Blake, which will be sold to benefit Comic Relief.

A selection of important medical works will be presented including a first edition, journal issue, containing the first announcement of Ignaz Semmelweis's epoch-making treatise on the importance of hand-washing in medical practice (estimate: £12,000-18,000). In 1847, Semmelweis, a house officer of the First Obstetrical Clinic of the Vienna General Hospital, the teaching institute of the University of

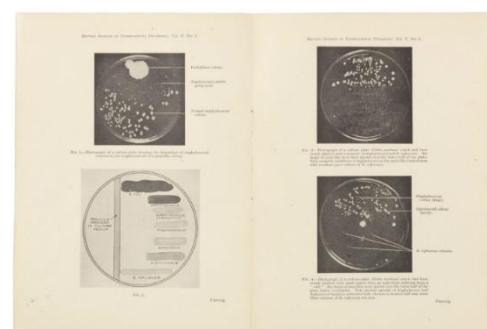
Vienna, was presented with a remarkable situation: in the Hospital's two maternity wards his First Clinic was faced by extremely high mortality in the order of 13 percent, while the other Second Clinic, enjoyed a low mortality rate of only 2 percent. The only discernible difference between the two clinics was that the First was used as a teaching facility for medical students, while the Second was used to teach midwives. Semmelweis deduced that the prevalence of fatal disease in the first clinic was caused by an infective agent carried by the medical students directly from the autopsy rooms to the delivery rooms. He immediately instituted a strict policy of prophylactic hand-washing using chlorinated limewater in his ward, which, despite initial resistance from the staff, brought about a dramatic drop in the mortality rate.



Edward Jenner (1749-1823), Autograph letter to a 'Mr. Long', 'Bond Street', 26 June [1801]. Estimate: £4,000-6,000

An autograph letter from Edward Jenner (1749-1823), the 'father of immunology', who coined the term 'vaccine' to describe his technique of inoculating against smallpox, writes to apologise for a delay in sending vital supplies (estimate: £4,000-6,000). In the letter Dr Jenner sends his compliments to the recipient, and apologises for being unable to send any vaccine virus, while assuring it would be sent as soon as possible. Edward Jenner carried out his first experiment to inoculate against smallpox in May 1796; following the successful immunisation of James Phipps, he proceeded to inoculate more than two dozen children and adults with cowpox, witnessing the same protective effect thereafter.

Also included in the sale is a limited edition first announcement of the discovery of penicillin, which Fleming commissioned to be reprinted in 1944 (estimate: £2,500-3,500). It is one of only 250 copies which details Fleming's findings while working at St. Mary's Hospital in London in 1929. Fleming discovered the antibacterial properties of penicillium mould were effective in destroying scarlet fever, pneumonia, meningitis and diphtheria infections. In 1929 he published his findings in a paper titled *On the Antibacterial Action of Cultures of a Penicillium, with Special Reference to Their Use in the Isolation of B. Influenzae*. Unfortunately the scientific community was slow to respond, and by 1931 a despondent Fleming had turned his attention elsewhere. In 1938, however, two researchers at the University of Oxford, Howard Florey and



Alexander Fleming (1881-1955), *On the Antibacterial Action of Cultures of a Penicillium, with Special Reference to Their Use in the Isolation of B. Influenzae*. Estimate: £2,500-3,500

Ernst Chain, unearthed Fleming's research while thumbing through old papers. Realising its importance, the pair managed, in the space of three years, to turn his findings into an injectable medicine. The discovery couldn't have come at a better time. As the world descended into conflict, the antibiotic was used to treat millions of soldiers with injuries that were vulnerable to infection.

A further highlight of the auction is a beautiful jewelled binding adorned with garnets and turquoise on a manuscript on vellum, written, illuminated and bound by Francis Sangorski and George Sutcliffe (estimate: £10,000–15,000). Inside, comprising 24 stanzas, is Edmund Spenser's poem recalling every hour of his wedding day to Elizabeth Boyle in 1594. Sangorski and Sutcliffe founded their bindery in 1901 and were the first to 'create the art of jewelled leather binding'. Their first jewelled binding covered an edition of Spenser's *Epithalamion* (now at the British Library) and many of its design elements are found on the present manuscript of the same Spenser poem. Sangorski and Sutcliffe's greatest masterpiece – the Great Omar, created in 1910 – famously went down with the Titanic.



Quentin Blake (b. 1932), *Palace Ballroom - Major Domo announces the guests*. Estimate: £4,000-6,000

The sale will also present 16 original illustrations completed by Sir Quentin Blake for a virtual production of *Cinderella*, which will be sold to benefit Comic Relief. The series of illustrations were created for the 2020 *Cinderella: A Comic Relief Pantomime for Christmas* – a virtual Christmas pantomime retelling of the timeless classic, with a star-studded cast assembling online for this very special version of the fairy-tale. Money raised by the auction of Sir Quentin

Blake's illustrations will go to charities in the UK and around the world that help tackle child poverty, homelessness, domestic abuse and mental health stigma.

**Christie's Features:** ['Dr Jenner is sorry it is not in his power to send today any vaccine' — Edward Jenner, 1801](#)

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#### About Christie's

Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and international expertise. Founded in 1766 by James Christie, Christie's has conducted the greatest and most celebrated auctions through the centuries providing a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. 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 clients and online sales are offered year-round across all categories. Christie's global presence is spread across a network of international salerooms and 61 representatives and offices. Christies.com provides detailed articles and videos on the objects offered for sale alongside the latest advances in digital viewing tools to make Christie's accessible to all.

*\*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.*

### **About Comic Relief**

*Comic Relief raises money to support people living incredibly tough lives. Through humour and stories of hope, we've shown that people can make a massive difference. We fund hundreds of amazing organisations who are working on the ground to support the most vulnerable people and communities in society including many of those hardest hit by the coronavirus crisis. This includes vulnerable children and young people, people who are homeless or who have been forced to flee their homes, women and families at risk of domestic abuse and those struggling with existing or new mental health problems.*

*For more info visit [www.comicrelief.com](http://www.comicrelief.com).*

*Comic Relief is the operating name of Charity Projects, registered charity 326568 (England/Wales); SC039730 (Scotland)*

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