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CHRISTIE'S FACILITATED ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT PRIVATE
SALES IN HISTORY

TWO MASTERPIECES BY REMBRANDT VAN RIJN SECURED FOR
THE LOUVRE & THE RIJKSMUSEUM



'The young husband, with his smooth, almost girlish face, and rich, dandified costume, who advances trippingly towards the spectator, dangling a glove, is a perfect type of the successful courtier, half coxcomb, half adventurer'

'The wife, on the other hand [...], is such an embodiment of distinction as few painters have put on canvas. Arresting her graceful progress for a moment, she gazes at the spectator with a singular expression of reserve.'

(Wilhelm von Bode, 1897)

London –The first ever joint acquisition of two exceptional masterpieces by Rembrandt van Rijn by the French and Dutch States, facilitated through Christie's Private Sale channel has been concluded yesterday. The portraits of Maerten Soolmans and his wife Oopjen Coppit, were executed in 1634, a year after the couple's wedding. It was announced by the two States

that the pair will be always shown together, alternately at the Louvre and the Rijksmuseum but will be owned separately due to French acquisition laws. They are due to be exhibited publically for the first time in 60 years at the Louvre in Paris, in a few weeks. The joint acquisition of the portraits by the two States for allocation to the Museums, in a deal negotiated by Christie's is the first of its kind. The portraits entered the prestigious Rothschild collection in 1878 and were last exhibited publicly in 1956, in the Netherlands. As a result, they are the least known masterpieces in Rembrandt's *oeuvre*.

Patricia Barbizet, Chief Executive Officer, Christie's commented: *"To have played our part in this historic sale of these magnificent masterpieces from such a prestigious private collection is a fitting start to this 250th anniversary year for Christie's. It is a testament to the vision shown by the French Republic, the Louvre, the State of the Netherlands and the Rijksmuseum that these two great Rembrandt van Rijn portraits will now take their place among the greatest works of art, in the heart of Europe, to be appreciated for many generations to come"*.

Notes to Editors:

Rembrandt Van Rijn

Portrait of Oopjen Coppit

Overall canvas size: 210 x 134.5 cm.

Sight size: 207.5 x 132 cm.

Rembrandt Van Rijn

Portrait of Maerten Soolmans

Overall canvas size: 209.5 x 135.5 cm.

Sight size: 207.5 x 132 cm.

In 1634, the year Rembrandt completed the portraits of Maerten Soolmans and Oopjen Coppit, he was, at the age of only twenty eight, the most fashionable portrait painter in Amsterdam, the bustling, industrious and thriving capital of the Dutch United Provinces. In the first decades of the 17th Century, Holland, the small, wind-beaten Republic which was born out of the secession from its Spanish Catholic rulers, experienced a period of unparalleled prosperity, effectively becoming one of the main centres of the Western world.

In a climate of religious tolerance and intellectual freedom, art, literature and science flourished considerably. Emerging from this transformation, a new class of wealthy and affluent citizenry was eager to have its likeness, adorned with the trappings of success, recorded in paint for posterity.

Born to a well-to-do Calvinist family who had fled from Antwerp to Amsterdam during the wars of religion, Maerten Soolmans (1613-1641) became acquainted with Rembrandt during his stay in Leiden from 1628 to 1633, where Soolmans was studying with little success as he is not recorded as being awarded a degree. Furthermore, Soolmans's and Rembrandt's names occur on a document, dated 24 March 1631, found in the archive of a Leiden based solicitor, named Caerl Outerman, who himself was the proud owner of a painting by Rembrandt.

Maerten Soolmans married Oopjen Coppit (1611-1689) in 1633. Two years his elder, she was the orphan daughter of an old and respected Amsterdam family whose circle also included patrons of the young Rembrandt. The wedding proved a glittering match for Soolmans, since his wife, not only brought him the prestige of her ancestry, but also a colossal dowry of 35,000 guilders. This fortune easily provided

the newly-weds with the necessary funds to pay for this grand commission, estimated to have cost 500 guilders for each canvas, a substantial sum at the time. The couple were blessed with their first child in 1633, and marked this happy event with a further purchase from Rembrandt, this time an image of domestic felicity, the intimate *Holy Family*, dating from 1634. Today, the painting is part of the collection of the Alte Pinakothek in Munich.

Rembrandt's portraits of Maerten Soolmans and Oopjen Coppit are among the grandest he ever painted, lasting tributes to their status and the importance of their patronage to the young artist.

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About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction, private and digital sales in 2015 that totalled £4.8 billion / \$7.4 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. 2016 marks Christie's 250th anniversary. 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 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.

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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