

Press Release

CHRISTIE'S

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EXCEPTIONAL PRIVATE COLLECTIONS HIGHLIGHT CHRISTIE'S SPRING SALE OF 500 YEARS: DECORATIVE ARTS EUROPE, INCLUDING ORIENTAL CARPETS

New York – On 18-19 April, Christie's is pleased to present the sale of ***500 Years: Decorative Arts Europe, including Oriental Carpets***. Nearly 600 remarkable lots spanning five categories will be offered, with the sale expected to realize in excess of \$6 million. Works of exceptional and royal provenance will be offered, as the sale features property from multiple private collections. *Property from the Collection of Dr. and Mrs. Francis D. Fowler, Property from the Collection of Dr. Larry Ayres, and Property from the Collection of Gep Durenberger* are particularly notable.



Prominent in the Collection of Dr. and Mrs. Francis D. Fowler are two pairs of George II walnut side chairs (estimate: \$80,000-120,000 per pair). The chairs were likely made by renowned cabinet maker Giles Grendey, as the characteristic hipped front legs with dimpled shell and pendant husk and pearls, as well as the elaborate scallop panel, are features that appear on a set which bears his label. While Grendey supplied a number of walnut and mahogany pieces to notable houses, he is probably best known for the extensive suite of scarlet japanned furniture he executed for the Duke of Infantado's castle at Lazcano, Spain, many pieces of which are now in public collections throughout the world.



Also on offer in the sale is a selection of furniture and ceramics from the charming personal collection of Gep Durenberger, long-term dealer and founder of the Decorative Arts Study Center in Southern California who has been featured in magazines such as *House and Garden* and *Town and Country*. Among these is a late 17th/early 18th century English allegorical tapestry (*pictured left*, estimate: \$5,000-8,000). The tapestry depicts *November*, from the series of *The Months*, which was one of the most successful sets by the individual workshops founded after the great Mortlake Tapestry Workshop was dissolved. Representative of the month, a peasant couple is seen beating flax with mallets.

The Dr. Larry Ayres connoisseur collection of early 18th century Imari and Kakiemon decorated Meissen porcelain includes an impressive 'Red Dragon' charger from the Royal Court Pantry of Augustus the Strong, circa 1735-1740 (*pictured right*, estimate: \$6,000 – 8,000). The 'Red Dragon Service' was one of the first major dinner-services produced for the Saxon court.



An impressive Georgian overmantle mirror, which dramatically combines elements of Chinese, rococo and classical elements, was undoubtedly made by one of London's pre-eminent cabinet-makers such as Thomas Chippendale, John Linnell or the partnership of Samuel Norman and James Whittle (*detail pictured on page 1*, estimate: \$200,000-300,000). The frame incorporates a selection of Chinese export mirror paintings that reflect the continued fascination in England for exotic objects imported by the East India Company. As impressive as the mirror itself is its provenance, having once been owned by Alice Frederica Keppel, wife to Hon. George Keppel, and favorite mistress of King Edward VII.

A diverse selection of rugs and carpets will also be featured, including a Kazak rug, woven in the early 20th century in South Caucasus (*detail pictured on page 4*, estimate: \$15,000-25,000) and a Heriz carpet of late 19th century Northwestern Persia (estimate: \$15,000-25,000). Highlighting the category, however, is a 19th century northern Indian Agra carpet (*detail pictured below*, estimate: \$100,000-150,000). The flawless quality of weave, design, and rich coloration in this example parallels the exquisite carpets woven during the golden age of carpet weaving. Displaying artistic integrity, in both design and material quality, it is reminiscent of Safavid and Mughal carpets from the 17th century.



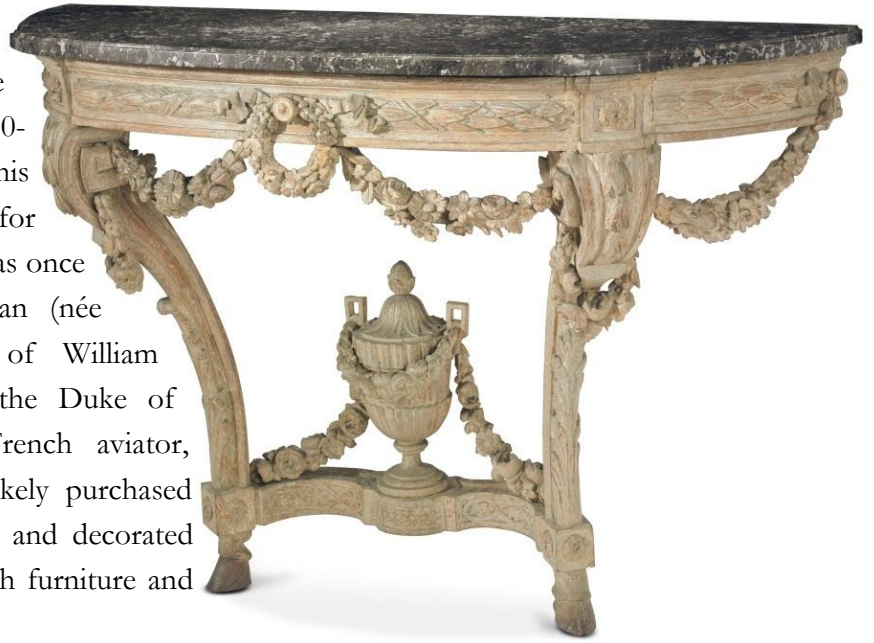


A remarkable and potentially unique Meissen porcelain *pâte-sur-pâte* “jeweled” cobalt-blue three-piece clock garniture is a focal point in the sale (*pictured left*, estimate: \$200,000-300,000). The clock is flanked by two baluster vases and was completed circa 1880, when Ludwig Sturm, the Art Director at Meissen, began to encourage a “more lively and spirited” approach to classicism. The intricate enamel “jewel” decoration is attributed to Albert Georg Eras.

Also featured is a highly important *piano à queue*, a collaboration between masters François Linke and Léon Messagé (*pictured below*, estimate: \$400,000-600,000). The *tour de force* of Rococo-inspired splendor, this piano simultaneously celebrates the combined genius of François Linke’s superior craftsmanship with Léon Messagé’s Art Nouveau-infused designs. Messagé triumphantly embraced the asymmetry characterized by Rococo designers and eventually his designs became synonymous with Linke’s *oeuvre*.



A late Louis XV grey-painted console table is notable in the sale (*pictured right*, estimate: \$15,000-25,000). Executed in the 1760s, this marble-top table is also significant for its distinguished provenance, as it was once owned by Madame Jacques Balsan (née Consuelo Vanderbilt), daughter of William Kissam Vanderbilt and wife of the Duke of Marlborough and later famed French aviator, Jacques Balsan. The table was likely purchased when the couple settled in France and decorated their homes with exceptional French furniture and works of art from the *ancien regime*.



A monumental pair of ormolu-mounted white and portor marble herm figures by Edward F. Caldwell & Co., one of the leading American designers of lighting fixtures and architectural decorations during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, will also be offered (*pictured left*, estimate: \$120,000-180,000). The pair, presumably ordered for Samuel Zemurray, was completed in 1917 to adorn Zemurray's Beaux Arts mansion in New Orleans, LA. Modeled as a Bacchante and satyr, each holding a putto, the torchères reflect the proficiency and taste of the firm, as evidenced by the excellent modeling and gilt-bronze chasing.



Auction: 500 Years: Decorative Arts, Europe, including Oriental Carpets

April 18-19

Viewing: Christie's Rockefeller Galleries

April 14-17

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**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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