

CHRISTIE'S

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CHRISTIE'S PRESENTS THE SALE OF *THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC COLLECTION: THE ART OF EXPLORATION* CELEBRATING THE LEGACY OF THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY



Top: Photoglob Company, Zürich, *Panorama von Titlis, 3259 Meter*, c. 1911, \$7,000-9,000. **Bottom Left:** Robert Peary, *Self-Portrait, Cape Sheridan, Canada, 1909*, \$4,000 - 6,000. **Bottom Center, Left:** Charles Bittinger, *Earth as Seen from the Moon*, c. 1937, \$3,000 - 5,000. **Bottom Center, Right:** Steve McCurry, *Afghan Girl*, 1984, \$30,000-50,000. **Bottom Right:** Dick Wolff, *Lion, Kruger National Park, Transvaal, South Africa*, c. 1941, \$1,000-1,500.

New York – Christie's is honored to present *The National Geographic Collection: The Art of Exploration*, an auction of fine art from the archives of the National Geographic Society, celebrating the legacy of National Geographic on the eve of the Society's 125th anniversary. Taking place on 6 December, the sale will encompass a breadth of works that represents the National Geographic's rich history in the fields of geography, archaeology, exploration, science, wildlife and world cultures. Marking the first time that works of art from the National Geographic archive have been presented at auction, the sale will include iconic photographs ranging from the 1800's to the present and paintings by illustrious artists including Newell Convers Wyeth. The collection is expected to realize in excess of \$3,000,000, with all proceeds being dedicated to preserving and disseminating the National Geographic archives as well as nurturing emerging photographers and artists.

Photographs

Polkmar Wentzel, *Atlantic City, NJ, 1958* (estimate: \$4,000-6,000) – pictured right. This vibrant image captures Atlantic City at a time when its nightlife, beaches and iconic boardwalk made it one of the United States' premier resort destinations. In recent weeks, Atlantic City was



among one of the many areas along the east coast that was devastated by Super storm Sandy, which is why both The National Geographic Society and Christie's have generously agreed to donate a portion of the proceeds from this lot to the Red Cross to benefit the Superstorm Sandy Disaster Relief.

Robert Peary, *Self-Portrait, Cape Sheridan, Canada, 1909 [Cape Thomas Hubbard]* (estimate: \$4,000 - 6,000) – pictured above, bottom left. This photograph of Robert Peary was taken aboard the expedition ship *Roosevelt* at Cape Sheridan soon after his return from the Pole in April 1909. The explorer's hooded sheepskin jacket is trimmed with white foxtails, and only the fatigue and nervous tension show in the face of the man who had just found the North Pole.



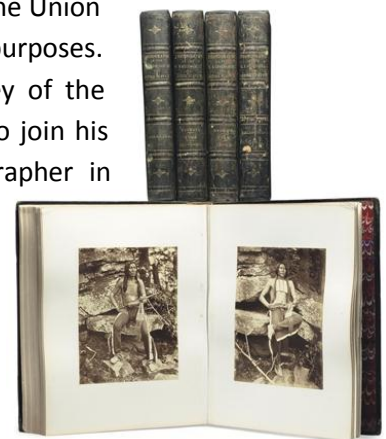
Robert Peary, *June 1906: Robert Peary, His Flag Waves Above Cape Stallworthy* (estimate: \$2,000-3,000) – pictured right. This photograph depicts the historic silk Stars and Stripes made by Robert Peary's wife in 1898. He wore it about his body while in the field, and when he reached five of his objectives toward the Pole, he left behind a remnant of the flag. The flag was presented to the National Geographic Society in 1954. The present lot displays the flag before he cut the fragment he was to leave in the cairn at Cape Thomas Hubbard. In the foreground, Peary's equipment rests on the rock slope. This remnant was later recovered from Cape Thomas Hubbard.



Herbert G. Ponting's *Terra Nova* c. 1911 (estimate: \$3,000-5,000) – pictured left. Herbert Ponting was already an accomplished travel photographer when he was introduced to Captain Robert Scott in 1909. Scott immediately engaged him to join his team on their voyage to the Antarctic, the first official photographer ever to participate in a polar expedition. Scott wrote in his journal that "we shall have a cinematograph and photographic record that will be absolutely new in expeditionary work." Ponting took a number of cameras with him, including two film cameras, and fitted out darkrooms aboard ship *Terra Nova* (lot 104) as well as

in expedition headquarters on Cape Evans. Between December 1910 and March 1912 (when Ponting returned to London), he produced around 2,000 glass-plate negatives - images that have helped sustain the memory of Scott's heroic and ill-fated expedition to the South Pole.

William Henry Jackson, *U.S. Geological and Geographical Survey (Hayden Survey), Volumes I-V, 1869-1874* (estimate: \$300,000-500,000) – pictured right. In 1869 William Henry Jackson won a commission from the Union Pacific Railroad to document the scenery along the various railroad routes for promotional purposes. This project was admired by Ferdinand V. Hayden, director of the U.S. Geological Survey of the Territories for the Department of Interior in the years 1869-1874. Hayden asked Jackson to join his survey of the Yellowstone region in 1870. Jackson participated as the official photographer in subsequent years on the annual multi-disciplinary expeditions to chart the geology, flora, and fauna, as well as identify likely navigational routes, of the then largely unexplored west. Albums from Jackson's 1871 expedition to the still mysterious Yellowstone region were distributed to members of the House and Senate and were instrumental in President U.S. Grant's signing of the bill to create the first national park in March of 1872. Large sets of Jackson's photographs exist only in a few public collections. To date, there is no record of an album of Jackson's photographs having come up for auction.



Hiram Bingham, *Peru, 1912-1915* (estimate: \$6,000-8,000) – pictured on the bottom of the previous page. In 1911, Hiram Bingham directed the Yale Peruvian expedition that discovered the ruins of Machu Picchu. National Geographic Society co-sponsored his second and third expeditions to Peru. He received the Society's Jane M. Smith Award in 1917.

An explorer, scholar, writer, aviator, teacher, and businessman, Bingham also served as governor and U.S. Senator of Connecticut. The present lot was part of Bingham's personal research files used to document progress at his archaeological dig.

Carsten Peter, *Cave of Crystals, Naica, Chihuahua, Mexico, c. 2008* (estimate: \$2,000-3,000) – pictured left. In Peter's remarkable photograph, human explorers look miniscule in comparison to the colossal selenite beams found in the Cave of Crystals located deep below the Chihuahuan Desert. Formed over many thousands of years, the crystals captured in this image are among the largest known to exist on Earth.

Steve McCurry, *Afghan Girl, 1984*, printed in 2012 (estimate: \$30,000-50,000) – pictured on page 1. Presented here is one of the most recognized images of the 20th century. The mesmeric subject, 12-year-old Sharbat Gula, was a refugee in Pakistan at the time of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan when she was photographed by Steve McCurry in 1984. This photograph reached instant notoriety when it graced the June 1985 issue of National Geographic, going to show the power of photography to open eyes—and hearts and minds—with a single image. Inspired by the story of Gula, Steve McCurry founded ImagineAsia to help provide fundamental educational and health care resources to students in Afghan communities. Proceeds from the sale of this image help fund ImagineAsia's educational mission.

Fine Art

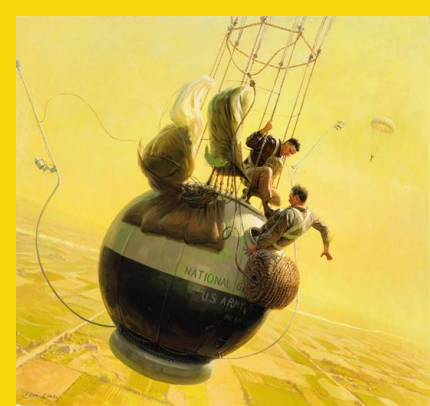
N.C. Wyeth, *The Duel on the Beach, 1926* (estimate: \$800,000-1,200,000) – pictured right. The present lot is a captivating scene that brilliantly demonstrates N.C. Wyeth's gift for narrative and composition. Originally commissioned by Carl G. Fisher for Rafael Sabatini's article of the same title in the September 1931 issue of *Ladies' Home Journal*, the painting was also used as a dust-jacket illustration for Sabatini's book that

expanded on the article, *The Black Swan*. In *The Duel on the Beach*, as in all Wyeth's best works, each figure acts as a unique character, with body position and facial features and expression carefully thought out and marvelously presented to create a thoroughly engaging scene that fuels the viewer's imagination. Christine Podmaniczky writes of the present work, "This painting, commissioned for the entrepreneur and pirate enthusiast Carl G. Fisher, was certainly in Fisher's possession by May 1926. Correspondence at the National Geographic Society makes it clear that John Oliver La Gorce supplied Wyeth with photographs of several of Fisher's friends, whose portraits the artist incorporated into the

picture (for example, the two pirates watching between and behind the duelers are James Allison, president of Allison Motors, Indianapolis, Ind., at left, and John Oliver La Gorce, National Geographic Society, at right)." (N.C. Wyeth, *Catalogue Raisonné of Paintings*, p. 493).

Else Bostelmann, *Two Deep Sea Creatures Swim Around the Bathysphere, 1934* (estimate: \$3,000 - \$5,000) – pictured right. From article, *A Half Mile Down*, these illustrations began as sketches by Bostelmann who accompanied Dr. William Beebe and Otis Barton on their oceanographic expeditions to Bermuda in their bathysphere invention (illustrated here). This 1934 expedition, that set a new depth record of 3,028 feet, was financed and sponsored by members of National Geographic.





Tom Lovell, *Balloonists Struggle to Escape a Doomed Gondola, 1962* (estimate: \$8,000-12,000) – pictured left. On July 28, 1934, the *Explorer I* manned by Major William E. Kepner, Captain Albert W. Stevens, and Captain Orvil A. Anderson, attempted to set the new highest-altitude record, but came short of this goal when the gas bag exploded, forcing the three adventurers to "leap for their lives by parachute." The present lot illustrates this harrowing feat and was both the cover of the 75th anniversary issue of *National Geographic* magazine as well as a feature in the

same issue. **C.O. Dedmore's *Landing of the First Stratosphere Balloon, Near Holdredge Alaska, July 1934* (estimate: \$800-1,200) – pictured right,** illustrates the balloon after its crash landing of the first attempt, surrounded by the survivors.



Charles Bittinger *Earth as Seen from the Moon, c. 1937* (estimate: \$3,000-5,000)

– pictured on page 1. The present lot is one of several paintings that The National Geographic Society commissioned to accompany a story for their July 1939 issue. The painting presents a startlingly realistic vision of Earth as seen from the Moon, based on the scientific knowledge that existed at the time, 30-years before man first landed on the moon. The artist reflected on the commission, saying: "In planning and working out the paintings that accompany this article, I came to feel more than ever that astronomy is the greatest monument to human intelligence, which has explored out into unimaginable depths of space with nothing more tangible than the fragile waves of light."

Alexandre Jacovleff, *Polo Game at Misgar, 1933* (estimate: \$150,000-200,000) – pictured left. In October 1924, a team of army officers, archaeologists, and reporters, including *National Geographic's* Maynard Owen Williams, set off across Africa on an exploratory mission sponsored by the French industrialist André Citroën. Russian émigré Alexandre Jacovleff was recruited as the official artist for both this expedition and its Asian successor, the *Croisière Jaune* of 1931-1932. The expeditions traversed much of the African and Asian continents, resulting in a significant amount of sketches and



paintings that thoroughly documented the various landscapes and customs witnessed by Jacovleff and the team of explorers. These works display not only Jacovleff's masterful artistic talents, but also his skill in producing ethnographic evidence for a larger, Western public that would otherwise have had no exposure to the places he documented, including the present lot.

Auction: *The National Geographic Collection: The Art of Exploration*, December 6, 2012

Viewing: Christie's Rockefeller Galleries December 1-5, 2012

Note: Successful bidders are advised that reproduction rights are not transferred upon sale of any lot. National Geographic Society retains all copyright and reproduction rights it has in the property offered in this sale.

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About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in the first half of 2012 that totaled £2.2 billion/\$3.5 billion. 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 over 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 and Contemporary, Impressionist and Modern, Old Masters and Jewellery. Private sales totaled £413.4 million/ \$661.5 million in the first half of 2012, an increase of 53% on the previous year.

Christie's has a global presence with 53 offices in 32 countries and 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, and Hong Kong. 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.*

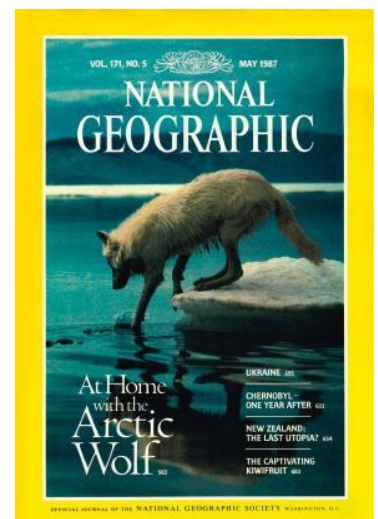
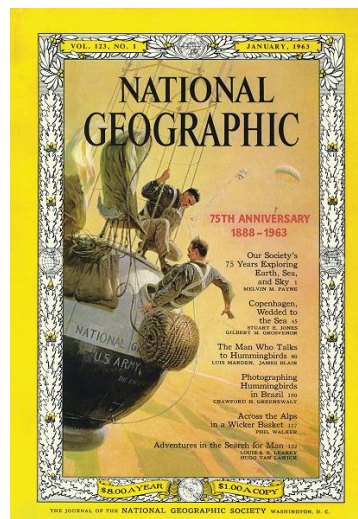
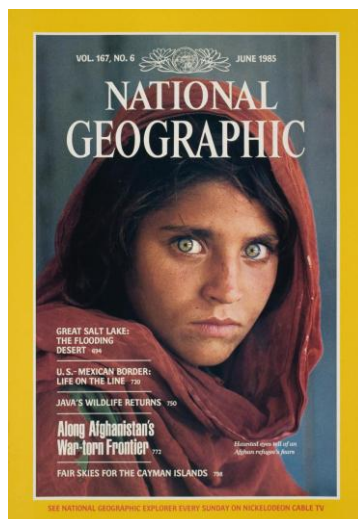
About National Geographic

The National Geographic Society is one of the world's largest nonprofit scientific and educational organizations. Founded in 1888 to "increase and diffuse geographic knowledge," the Society's mission is to inspire people to care about the planet. It reaches more than 400 million people worldwide each month through its official journal, National Geographic, and other magazines; National Geographic Channel; television documentaries; music; radio; films; books; DVDs; maps; exhibitions; live events; school publishing programs; interactive media; and merchandise. National Geographic has funded more than 10,000 scientific research, conservation and exploration projects and supports an education program promoting geographic literacy. For more information, visit www.nationalgeographic.com.

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