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TREASURES OF FRANCE FROM THE SUN KING TO THE BELLE ÉPOQUE

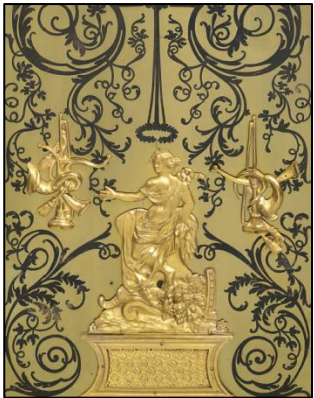


New York - Christie's is pleased to announce the sale of *Treasures of France, From The Sun King To The Belle Époque – Vincennes And Sèvres Porcelain, French Furniture, Old Master Paintings, Books And Textiles From The Collection Of Dr. Bruce Wilson* on October 24 in New York. A noted cardiologist in Memphis, Tennessee, Dr. Wilson has assembled one of the most important private collections of Vincennes and Sèvres porcelain of recent times in America, acquiring an amazing range of pieces from some of the most famous services of the 18th Century. Dr. Wilson became fascinated, not only with the extraordinary level of craftsmanship of French decorative arts, but also with the historic connections these pieces gave him, leading to a truly museum-quality collection. Intricately inlaid Louis XIV marquetry cabinets and lacquer commodes are complemented by paintings by Boucher and Huet and gilt-tooled leather bookbindings made for royal libraries. The sale is expected to realize in excess of \$5 million.

In conjunction with the sale of *Treasures of France*, Christie's will present *Collecting Then & Now – The Timeless Appeal of French Craftsmanship*, a symposium on October 21. Beginning at 2pm on Sunday, the symposium will feature discussions led by renowned experts, including Dame Rosalind Savill, director emeritus of The Wallace Collection, and Ulrich Leben, professor at Bard Graduate Center and associate keeper of furniture at The Rothschild Collection at Waddesdon Manor. Topics will range from *The Relevance of Collecting 18th Century French Works of Art In the 21st Century* to *Fashion Icons & Taste Makers in the Golden Age of French Style*. For more information, please contact Johanna Josefsson at +1 212 636 2215 or jjosefsson@christies.com.



Highlights include a magnificent pair of Sèvres porcelain *bleu nouveau* two-handed vases and covers, circa 1774, which were likely made to commemorate the coronation of Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette as the king and queen of France (*pictured above right*; estimate: \$250,000-350,000). Given that these vases would appear to be the only pair of this form and decoration extant, it is likely that they were either a present to the French monarch or presented by him as a diplomatic gift.



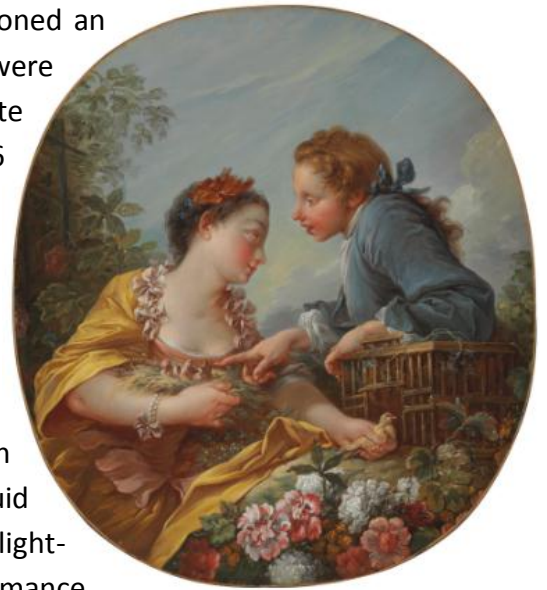
A spectacular Louis XIV *bibliothèque basse* by André-Charles Boulle, cabinet-maker to Louis XIV, is among the furniture highlights of the sale (*pictured page 1, left and detail pictured left*; estimate: \$250,000-350,000). Boulle was perhaps the most famous cabinet maker of the late 17th and early 18th century and the distinctive marquetry techniques he perfected have never gone out of fashion. This model of *bibliothèque basse* appears surprisingly late in his *oeuvre*, probably being first produced *circa* 1700 when the *ébéniste* was already sixty years old. This style of *bas d'armoire*, enriched with figures of Pomona, Ceres, Mars, and Bacchus enjoyed enormous success from 1720, and was again revived during the Neo-Classical movement of the 1770's.

A Sèvres porcelain tureen stand from the *Service De La Reine*, dated 1784, is likely from the service produced specifically for Marie-Antoinette (*pictured right*; estimate: \$40,000-60,000). In 1784, Marie-Antoinette commissioned an elaborate service from the Sèvres manufactory likely to complement her redecorated apartments at the Tuileries. However, instead of being delivered to its intended recipient, the service was pre-empted for use as a diplomatic gift for Gustave III of Sweden (1746-1792) whom Louis XVI (1754-1793) had invited to France.



So pleased was Gustave with this royal gift, that he quickly commissioned an additional 73 pieces in the same pattern from the factory which were delivered on 7 September 1784. Not long to be denied, Marie-Antoinette received her own service in the exact same pattern and design on 26 August 1784 with an additional 24 large oval and round platters.

The Bird Nesters by François Boucher is one of several paintings of nearly identical size, format and genre embraced by the artist upon his return to Paris from Rome in 1731 (*pictured right*; estimate: \$250,000-350,000). The scene depicts a young female bird seller putting chicks in a cage as an eager suitor attempts to engage her in conversation. In true Rococo fashion, *The Bird Nesters* employs a pastel palette and fluid paint-handling in depicting the light-hearted scene of a budding romance.



The Duc De Penthièvre Latz Table à la Bourgogne is a masterpiece of the German-born cabinet-maker Jean-Pierre Latz (*pictured left*; estimate: \$200,000-300,000). The exquisite provenance of the table is particularly noteworthy, as it appears in an inventory drawn up following the death of Louis-Jean-Marie de Bourbon, duc de Penthièvre. Latz's work is characterized by rich floral marquetry in dense clusters. The charming Arcadian trophy of garden implements on this table, however, appears to be unique in Latz's oeuvre. Very few pieces of furniture by Latz have an 18th century French provenance, making this table all the more rare.

A pair of Louis XVI White-Painted and Parcel-Gilt Walnut Fauteuils à la Reine by Adrien-Pierre Dupain, circa 1785, has a remarkable royal provenance. They are part of a larger ensemble by Dupain that was probably delivered to Marie Antoinette for either St. Cloud or to the Trianon at Versailles (*pictured right*; estimate: \$50,000-80,000). St. Cloud was originally intended as the temporary home of the Royal court while Versailles was redeveloped, but these plans were subsequently abandoned and St. Cloud was used as the Queen's personal summer palace. Although Dupain is not recorded in the archives as one of the *menuisiers* employed by the Garde-meuble royal, the presence of his stamp along with the royal marks on a canapé from this suite, now at Versailles, these chairs supports the notion that Dupain worked for a Parisian *tapissier* who then supplied the finished chairs to furnish Marie-Antoinette's private residence.



ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS



Jean-Jacques-François Le Barbier, Called Le Barbier L'ainé
An Allegory on the Occasion of a 50th Wedding Anniversary
 Oil on canvas
 Estimate: \$40,000-60,000



A Pair Of Louis XVI Ormolu And Patinated Bronze Three-Branch
 Wall-Lights Attributed To François Remond, Circa 1785
 Estimate: \$120,000-180,000



A Fine French Ormolu-Mounted Mahogany, Tulipwood,
 Sycamore And Stained Fruitwood Marquetry Bureau Plat
 By Alfred-Emmanuel-Louis Beurdeley, Paris, Circa 1890
 Estimate: \$150,000-250,000



A Vincennes Porcelain Bleu Celeste Oblong Octagonal Dish From
 The First Louis XV Service (Plat A Hors D'oeuvres 'Carre A Cordon'),
 Circa 1753
 Estimate: \$50,000-70,000



A Sèvres Porcelain Bleu Celeste Ground Cup And Saucer From
 The Catherine The Great Service
 (Gobelet Litron Et Soucoupe, 2eme Grandeur)
 Estimate: \$50,000-70,000



A Large Continental Ormolu Thirty-Nine-Light Figural Chandelier
 Italian Or French, Mid-19th Century
 Estimate: \$60,000-90,000

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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.*

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