

CHRISTIE'S

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EXCEPTIONAL NEW GUINEA WORKS OF ART FROM THE *JOLIKA COLLECTION* AT THE FINE ARTS MUSEUMS OF SAN FRANCISCO TO BE SOLD AT CHRISTIE'S PARIS



Paris – On December 11, Christie's is pleased to present *les Micromégas*, a superb collection of New Guinea miniature masterpieces from the Jolika Collection of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, which will be featured at the ***African and Oceanic Art*** auction in Paris. *Les Micromégas* – in a nod to the philosophical tale by Voltaire, reveal the bold virtuosity of New Guinea artists distilled into enchanting forms, which fit in the palm of one's hand.

The Jolika Collection is housed since 2005 at the de Young Museum of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco in a vast museum space. It represents one of the single greatest private collecting achievements in the world. The Jolika Collection, named for the first letters of John and Marcia Friede's three children (John, Lisa and Karen), represents the hundreds of clans and art-producing villages throughout the island of New Guinea. This exceptional collection, which comprises over 300 works, is acknowledged to be the most important in both quality and depth in a United States art museum. Proceeds from the sale will benefit the Fine Arts Museums acquisition fund.

"These objects from the Jolika Collection have been brilliantly cultivated over four decades by collectors John and Marcia Friede. It is a rare opportunity for works of such exceptional artistic power and distinguished provenance to come to market," stated Susan Kroman, International director of the department.

Highlights of the selection in the December auction includes a headrest from Tami Islands in the Huon Gulf region. The two highly stylized figures, realized as mirror images through the dynamic use of negative

space and line, demonstrate the love of Tami artists for visual puns, as different views reveal faces of animals and transformed anthropomorphic imagery (*pictured right on page 1*, estimate: €100,000-150,000). This headrest was one of the earliest New Guinea works of art seen in Europe, and was collected by the Hungarian anthropologist Lajos Biró in 1898-1899. Another highlight is, Head, probably *Mi Baba* (*pictured left on page 1*, estimate: €20,000-30,000), beautifully realized in three-dimensional form, whereas most Abelam sculpture tends to be in high-relief or in three-quarters without a fully formed back.

Notes to the editors:

Sale: Tuesday, December 11 at 4pm

Exhibition: December 7- 10 from 10 am to 6 pm.

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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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