

CHRISTIE'S

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RARE AND UNIQUE TREASURES INCLUDING WORKS WITH **ROYAL PROVENANCE AT CHRISTIE'S**



Centuries of Style: Silver, European Ceramics, Portrait Miniatures and Gold Boxes
Christie's King Street
27 & 28 November 2012

London - Christie's is pleased to announce the forthcoming *Centuries of Style: Silver, European Ceramics, Portrait Miniatures and Gold Boxes* auction which will be held over two days on 27 and 28 November 2012. This sale offers collectors a wonderful opportunity to purchase an array of rare and important treasures, including works of royal provenance from the early 16th century to the 20th century.

SILVER

Over 220 significant works of fine silver, from the 16th to the 21st century, will be on offer, which together are expected to realise in the region of £3 million. The sale is led by a spectacular pair of silver-gilt wine-coolers modelled on the Medici vase (estimate: £250,000 - £350,000, *illustrated right*) which is only one piece from an exceptional group of Regency silver-gilt in the sale. The sale is also led by a soup-tureen by the greatest silver-smith working in London in the 18th





century, Paul de Lamerie. A George II silver soup-tureen and cover (estimate: £100,000 - £150,000, *illustrated left*) is one of several works by de Lamerie in this sale and is believed to be made for Gilbert Jodrell of Derbyshire.

Further features include three important and magnificent Victorian silver-gilt lots by Benjamin Smith, London, 1844 and 1845 with estimates ranging from £7,000 up to £60,000. They form part of a service which was presented by the Great Western Railway to the renowned engineer, Isambard Kingdom Brunel on 17 January 1845. A toast was raised to Sir Isambard Brunel and tribute was given to him for his great achievements in the field of railway construction and engineering. The sale is also highlighted by a 19th century Spanish parcel-gilt silver toilet-mirror from the service of Maria Isabel of Portugal, Queen of Spain (1797-1818) (estimate: £30,000 - £50,000, *illustrated left*). The intricately decorated double-sided mirror formed part of an extensive toilet-service offered by the city of Madrid to the Queen of Spain on her marriage to King Ferdinand VII (1784-1833)



GOLD BOXES & OBJETS DE VERTU



Leading the gold boxes and *objets de vertu* is a rare treasure with exceptional provenance, which is offered at auction for the first time: a German royal jewelled enamelled gold presentation snuff-box, *circa 1860* (estimate: £30,000 - £50,000, *illustrated left*). Displaying a beautifully designed oval glazed watercolour miniature on ivory of Albert Edward, Prince Wales, the initials 'AE' are made of gold-mounted rose-cut diamonds. Engraved with the inscription, 'H.R.H. Albert Edward to Major Gen. Sir S.J.

Browne, Bombay, March 9th 1876', it was originally made in Hanau, Germany, and supplied to the British Royal Family by the Crown jewelers Garrards. This striking box was personally presented by the Prince of Wales at the end of his extensive tour of India, from 1875 to 1876. Browne was an outstanding officer of the Anglo-Indian Army and was awarded the Victoria Cross, the highest and most prestigious award, for his bravery during action in the Indian Mutiny of 1857 in the course of which he lost his arm.

Further important works include a stunning circular gold box by Germany's most famous goldsmith, Johann Christian Neuber (1736–1808), who became a master of the Dresden guild of goldsmiths around 1775 (estimate £80,000 - £120,000, *illustrated right*). This incredibly rare and sought-after box is beautifully inlaid with hard stones that correspond with engraved numbers identifying each unique stone. The sale also features a very fine Louis XV vari-colour gold snuff-box by Jean Formey which is expected to realise between £40,000 and £60,000, *illustrated left*.



Miniatures from the Collection of the Last King of Poland

Christie's is honored to offer eight miniatures, which were previously part of Prince Alexandra Drucki-Lubecki (1861 – 1926) collection, with estimates ranging from £1,000 up to £7,000; recently been discovered to have formed part of the collection of Stanislas II Augustus Poniatowski (1732 – 1798), the last King of Poland. Elected ruler of Poland in 1764, Poniatowski formed an impressive art collection during his reign, including approximately 300 miniatures. Forced to abdicate in 1795, the King was summoned to Russia and left his art collection in Poland, which entered the possession of his nephew, Prince Josef Poniatowski. On his death in 1813, his sister Maria Teresa Tyskiewicz sold most of the group to a collector. The miniatures were then dispersed where several entered the collection of Prince Alexandra Drucki-Lubecki. The group is led by *Stanislas I Leszczyński* (1677 -1766) King of Poland 1704-1709 and 1733-1736, which is expected to realise between £1,000 and £1,500, *illustrated right*.



A further and rare selection of charming portrait miniatures are highlighted by two exceptional examples from the 18th century by the outstanding master of portraiture, John Smart (British, 1742/43-1811), both of which are thought to be offered at auction for the first time. Smart's earliest depiction of the Governor General and commander-in-chief in India, *Charles Cornwallis, 1st Marquess Cornwallis* (1738-1895) (estimate £30,000 - £50,000, *illustrated left*) dates to 1791 and is the earliest portrait of the Marquess. Given to the present owners' ancestors by a lodger in lieu of payment, the miniature has been preserved through generations in its original wood case and is in excellent condition. John Smart lived in India between 1785 and 1795, where he obtained a number of commissions for portrait miniatures.

Further works by Smart include an exquisitely detailed miniature of *Lieutenant George Henry Mason* (1761-1837) (estimate: £20,000 - £30,000, *illustrated right*). Lieutenant Mason served for the British Army in India between 1783 and 1798, before travelling to China where he developed a fascination for Chinese traditions. Mason later published two books between 1800 and 1801; *The Costume of China*, illustrating the dress worn by various craftsmen and *The Punishments of China*, documenting corporal punishments. This miniature has remained in the family and passed by direct descent to the present owner.





The European Ceramics section offers beautiful and interesting pieces from the 16th century to the 19th century highlighted by the Meissen Royal beaker-vase (estimate: 40,000 - £60,000, illustrated left). This elegant and large early beaker-vase is remarkable for its Royal provenance and gilded chinoiserie decoration. It was originally made for Augustus 'the Strong' (1670–1733), the Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, who housed his spectacular porcelain collection in the Japanese Palace in Dresden, where this vase most probably spent the early years of its life. Although polychrome chinoiserie scenes are found on vases of this type, the 'powdered blue' ground around the scenes is gilded with amusing chinoiserie figures, which is very rare. This unusual decorative scheme, and the scale of the main polychrome scene, links it to another Royal vase which is still in Dresden in the State Collection. The Dresden vase is one of the few pieces signed by J.G. Höroldt, the head of the painting workshops at Meissen, and it is also dated 1726, which is almost certainly the date of the vase here.

Further treasures include two dishes that were once part of the legendary Fountaine Collection of maiolica which was sold by Christie's in 1844; an Urbino maiolica dish (estimate £8,000 - £12,000) with fine *groteschi* decoration and an Urbino *istoriato* dish (estimate £15,000 – £20,000, illustrated right), which was last on the market in the 1884 sale, making this, in all probability, the second time that this dish has been offered since the mid-18th century. Also featured is the second part of Mrs Patricia Hart's Collection of 18th century porcelain figures, with estimates ranging from £700 up to £20,000 for this section. Mrs Hart's magnificent collection comprises a fascinating array of figures from various walks of 18th century life including courtiers, artisans, street-sellers and shopkeepers, and they come from an equally diverse number of Continental and English porcelain factories.



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