

Press Release

CHRISTIE'S

For Immediate Release

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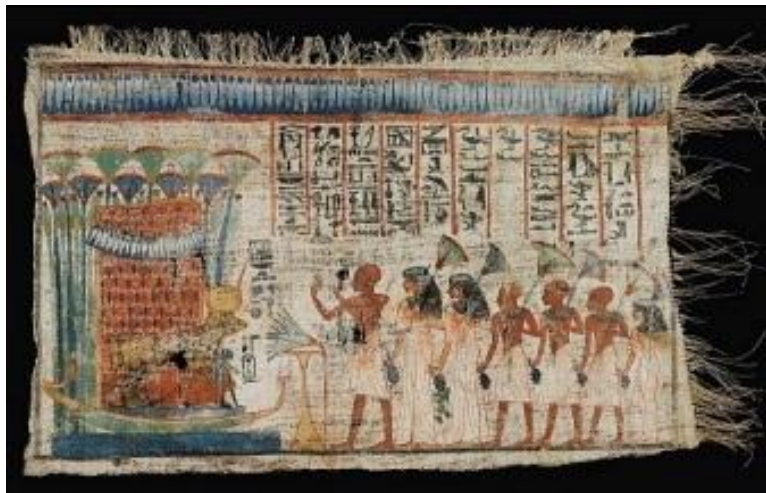
**ONE OF THE OLDEST ARTWORKS EVER OFFERED AT
CHRISTIE'S ANTIQUITIES SALE: A 9,000-YEAR-OLD
NEOLITHIC MASK FROM THE JUDEAN DESERT**

**THE SALE ALSO FEATURES A RARE EGYPTIAN PAINTED
LINEN FROM 18TH – 19TH DYNASTY AND AN EXQUISITE
ROMAN MARBLE SCULPTURE OF VENUS**



**A JUDEAN DESERT LIMESTONE
MASK, PRE-POTTERY NEOLITHIC B**

circa 7th millennium B.C.
Estimate: \$400,000 - 600,000



AN EGYPTIAN PAINTED VOTIVE LINEN

circa 1300-1200 B.C.
Estimate: \$80,000 - 120,000

New York – On June 8, Christie's Antiquities sale will offer a 9,000-year-old limestone mask from the Judean desert that is among the earliest sculptural types to survive from the ancient Near East. Additional highlights among the 260 lots in the sale are an extremely rare Egyptian painted votive linen from the 18th-19th Dynasty (*circa* 1300 – 1200 B.C.), beautiful examples of 2nd century A.D. Roman sculpture—a head of Apollo and a torso of Venus—and one of only four known complete standing figures in marble of a Roman actor wearing the theater mask of the “Old Man of Comedy.” The sale also offers a wide and varied

selection of antiquities from distinguished private collections including Property from the Arthur M. Sackler Collections, Property from the Estate of Ernst Beyeler, and Property from the Collection of Alan Dershowitz and Carolyn Cohen. The sale is estimated to achieve in excess of \$8 million.

The intriguing design of the **Neolithic limestone mask** (pictured on page one, left; estimate: \$400,000-600,000) evokes a skull, although the function of the object remains a mystery. Too heavy to wear, the mask is human-sized, with holes for the eye sockets, a small nose portraying only the nasal bones, and an open, lipless mouth with teeth. Given the skeletal representation, experts believe that masks like this one were related to death rituals or ancestor worship among the cultures of ancient Judea in the Neolithic period, *circa* 7th millennium B.C. Small drill holes along the perimeter suggest that hair might have been affixed, or they might have been used to secure the mask over the face of a deceased person or perhaps to a wall, pillar or statue.

In contrast to the mysterious mask, the **Egyptian painted linen votive** textile (pictured on page one, center, and at right; estimate: \$80,000-120,000) has ten columns of crisp, black hieroglyphics explaining in great detail the image below, rendered in still-vibrant hues of russet, blue, green and gold on a white background. Recovered in 1906 from a shrine in the hills of Western Thebes, the panel depicts a scene of the goddess Hathor in the form of a cow with an earlier Pharaoh, Neb-hepet-Re Mentu-hotep, both being venerated by a priest and his family. The work dates from the New Kingdom, 18th-19th Dynasty (circa 1300-1200 B.C.), and of the surviving textiles from that shrine, the present one is perhaps the finest, both in terms of the quality of the painting and its state of preservation. It has been in the collection of the Heckscher Museum in Huntington, N.Y., since the 1950s, and has been widely published and exhibited. It is being sold to benefit the museum's art acquisition fund.



Among the many classical artifacts in this sale is a remarkably intact standing figure of a **Roman marble actor** (pictured at left; estimate: \$150,000-250,000) wearing the mask of the Old Man of Comedy, created *circa* late 1st century-early 2nd century A.D. The character was still popular in the comedic theater of the day, though based on the “New Comedy” of the Greek playwright Menander and his contemporaries in the 4th century B.C. A number of masks survive depicting the Old Man of Comedy with his stylized beard and hair, exaggerated expression and openings for the eyes and mouth, but only three other complete standing marble figures are known to survive.

Two other Roman works of art include a **marble head of Apollo** (pictured below, right) and a slightly larger than life-size **marble torso of Venus** (pictured below, left; both estimated at \$300,000-500,000). Finely sculpted, this voluptuous Venus torso closely resembles the pose of the famous Venus de Medici, a Roman interpretation of the goddess now in the Uffizi Gallery. The head of Apollo is rendered in an eclectic classicistic style based on the 5th century B.C. In addition to these two gods, the sale includes several marble portrait heads, including one of Emperor Antoninus Pius (pictured next page; estimate: \$150,000-250,000), which is briefly reunited with his daughter Annia Galeria Faustina (pictured next page; estimate: \$100,000-150,000) at Christie's. Additional sale highlights include:

HIGHLIGHTS



A Roman Marble Torso Of Venus

circa 1st-2nd century A.D.
Estimate \$300,000 - \$500,000



A Roman Marble Head Of Apollo

circa 2nd century A.D.
Estimate \$300,000 - 500,000



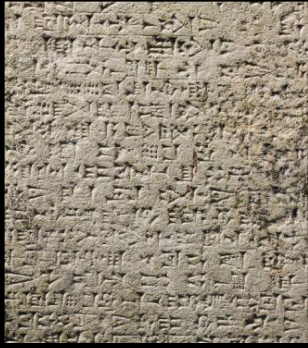
**Two Egyptian Bronze
Headdress Elements**

Late Period, Dynasty XXVI-XXX, 664-332 B.C.
Estimate: \$150,000 - \$250,000



A Syrian Bronze Goddess

Middle Bronze Age IIA, *circa* 1950-1750 B.C.
Estimate: \$200,000 - \$300,000



**A Neo-Babylonian Inscribed
Limestone Block**

Property from the Arthur M. Sackler Collections
Reign of Nebuchadnezzar II, 605-562 B.C.
Estimate: \$70,000 - \$90,000 (detail pictured)



**A Cycladic Marble Reclining
Female Figure**

Property from the Estate of Ernst Beyeler
Early Spedos Variety, *circa* 2600-2500 B.C.
Estimate: \$70,000 - \$90,000



A Greek Bronze Mirror

Late Classical to Early Hellenistic Period,
circa 350-300 B.C.
Estimate: \$600,000 - \$900,000



**A Large East Greek Limestone
Seated Man**

Ionia, Archaic Period, *circa* 530-510 B.C.
Estimate: \$100,000 - \$300,000



**A Roman Marble Portrait Head of the
Emperor Antoninus Pius**

circa 138 - 161 A.D.
Estimate \$150,000 - 250,000



**A Roman Marble Portrait Head of the
Empress Faustina Minor**

circa 162 - 176 A.D.
Estimate \$100,000 - 150,000

Auction: Antiquities

June 8, 2012, 10am and 2pm

Viewing: Christie's Rockefeller Center Galleries

June 2 – 7, 2012

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in 2011 that totaled £3.6 billion/\$5.7 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 £502 million / \$808.6m in 2011, an increase of 44% 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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Images available on request

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