

PRESS RELEASE

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THE GERMAN STATE OF BAVARIA ACQUIRES THE OTTHEINRICH BIBLE FROM THE DUCAL SAXE-COBURG-GOTHA ART FOUNDATION IN A SALE ASSISTED BY SOTHEBY'S

- THE OTTHEINRICH BIBLE HAS BEEN WITHDRAWN FROM
SOTHEBY'S DECEMBER 4, 2007 SALE -



Friday, November 30, 2007 -- Sotheby's announced today that it has assisted with the private sale of The Ottheinrich Bible from the Ducal Saxe-Coburg-Gotha Art Foundation to the German State of Bavaria for an undisclosed sum. As a result, The Ottheinrich Bible will not now be included in Sotheby's sale of Western Manuscripts and Miniatures in London on Tuesday, December 4, 2007.

Last year Sotheby's was engaged by the Ducal Saxe-Coburg-Gotha Art Foundation to advise on a sale of The Ottheinrich Bible. The manuscript was exported to Sotheby's London for valuation, as London is the centre of the trade in important Western Manuscripts, and Sotheby's pursued private sale options. However, when no private sale could be arranged, an auction was decided upon as the preferred course and an announcement was made to this effect in September this year. Since that time, talks between the Ducal Saxe-Coburg-Gotha Art Foundation and the Bavarian Ministry of Science, Research and Art have taken place and they have now resulted in this successful sale agreement.

All parties involved in the private sale are delighted that the five volumes of the Bible - that are included in the private sale agreement - will be reunited with the three volumes of the Bible that were sold by the Ducal Art Foundation to the Bavarian State Library in Munich in 1950. Thus, the Bible will once again be together in its entirety.

Written *circa* 1430 in Bavaria, almost 100 years before the seminal Bible translation by Martin Luther, The Ottheinrich Bible is incomparably the grandest surviving manuscript of the German vernacular Bible, as well as one of the most ambitious books of the northern renaissance.

The Ducal Saxe-Coburg-Gotha Art Foundation is a non-profit foundation. The Foundation was established in 1928 to care for the property which had been formerly owned by the Ducal House, but which became the personal property of the Ducal family after the abolition of the German monarchies in 1919.

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