

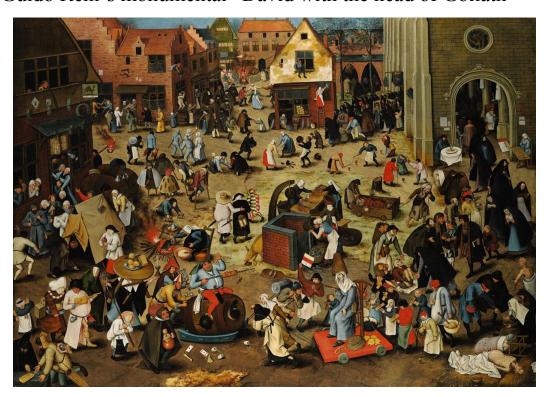
## Press Release London

For Immediate Release

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## SOTHEBY'S LONDON PRESENTS A RARE AND IMPORTANT OFFERING OF OLD MASTER AND BRITISH PAINTINGS

--- Highlights of the 4<sup>th</sup> July Evening Sale Will Include Three Remarkable Works By Pieter Brueghel the Younger, Two Masterpieces of the German Renaissance and Guido Reni's monumental "David with the head of Goliath" ---



Pieter Brueghel the Younger, The Battle between Carnival and Lent, Est. £4-6 million\*

Sotheby's London will present an outstanding selection of rare and important masterpieces in its Old Master and British Paintings Evening Sale on July 4<sup>th</sup> 2012. The sale will, notably, feature no less than three large paintings by Pieter Brueghel the Younger, led by the monumental *Battle between Carnival and Lent*, one of his most accomplished works. Other highlights include two early 16<sup>th</sup> century masterpieces of the German Renaissance - Lucas Cranach the Elder's *Feilitzsch Altarpiece* and Hans Baldung Grien's jewel-like *Virgin as Queen of Heaven* - as well as Guido Reni's monumental *David with the Head of Goliath*. The sale comprises 44 works with a combined estimate in excess of £26 million.

Alex Bell, Sotheby's Co-Chairman and Head of Old Master Paintings Worldwide commented: "This is a particularly rich and varied sale, offering collectors the opportunity to acquire some extraordinarily rare works. Lucas Cranach the Elder's Feilitzsch Altarpiece is the last intact multi-panelled altarpiece by Cranach left in private ownership and comes to auction with a sparkling provenance we can trace back to its commission in 1511. The sale features some superb works from the Dutch Golden Age, a spectacular pair of Venetian vedute by Francesco Guardi which have been unseen for over a century and Guido Reni's David with the head of Goliath, acquired directly from the artist in 1633 by the Duke of Modena."

Pieter Brueghel the Younger's *The Battle Between Carnival and Lent*, (illustrated on page one) estimated at £4-6 million, is the artist's most accomplished work to come to the market in recent memory. Depicting one of the greatest Breughelian themes, the work is a semi-encyclopaedic exploration of the folklore and customs associated with the Shrovetide festival and the contrasts and contradictions of human nature. The composition is derived from the celebrated painting of 1559 by Pieter Bruegel the Elder in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna. This is the finest of five versions of the subject by Brueghel the Younger but the exceptional state of preservation of this early painting on panel, singles it out as the finest.

The Tower of Babel, estimated at £2-3 million is another of the artist's most monumental and imposing works. Dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, this is one of his earliest works and one of his rarest subjects, known only in this, and one other painting. The superb condition of <u>Saint John the Baptist Preaching to the Masses in the Wilderness</u>, circa 1607, marks it out as the finest of all his treatments of this theme. Estimated at £1-1.5 million, the extraordinary survival of its pigments allows us a unique glimpse into Brueghel's original glittering



interplay of primary colours. All three works are from private collections.



<u>Feilitzsch Altarpiece</u> was almost certainly commissioned in 1511 by the sons of Jobst von Feilitzsch (depicted as the donor figure in the left panel) in their father's memory. Estimated to realise £4-6 million, there can be few works of art which trumpet so proudly the fully-fledged Renaissance in

Germany. The altarpiece which depicts some of the greatest examples of Cranach's portraiture, lends new understanding to the artist's practices at a key moment in his career, when he was creating his most vivid and brilliant masterpieces at the court of Saxony. The work has belonged to only three families in its 500-year-old history, which may account for its extraordinary survival.

Appearing at auction for the first time in more than 30 years, another highlight of the German Renaissance is **Hans Baldung Grien's** jewel-like panel depicting **The Virgin as Queen of Heaven Suckling the Infant Christ** estimated at £1-1.5 million. The work, by Albrecht Dürer's foremost pupil was executed circa 1515-18, either at the end of Baldung's period in Freiburg or shortly after he returned to Strasbourg. The Virgin's unusually large imperial crown features the Strasbourg lilies. The work is almost as notable for the extraordinarily beautiful under-drawing by the great draughtsman as it is for the sumptuous finish of its painted surface. The painting was previously in the collection of the Electors of Hohenzollern and Robert



Von Hirsch, one of the greatest collectors of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



Guido Reni's dramatic <u>David with the head of Goliath</u>, acquired directly from the artist in 1633 by the Duke of Modena, is estimated at £3-5 million. The work, as much a towering monument to the Italian baroque as it is to Reni's art itself, was executed at a pivotal moment in the artist's stylistic development. An earlier version of the same subject by Reni is held in the collection of The Louvre. Previously considered lost, this intensely expressive work, discovered in 1985 in a private collection in Scotland, displays the looser brushwork and more subdued colour palette of Reni's mature work in 1630s Bologna.

Depicting one of the key moments in Dutch naval history, Willem van Younger's Velde the masterpiece The Surrender of the Royal Prince during the Four Days' Battle, 1st-4th June 1666 is estimated at £1.5-2.5 million. Van de Velde the Younger, considered the greatest marine painter of the Dutch Golden Age, and his father, Van de Velde the Elder, were early artists who went war



extraordinary lengths to depict the battles raging in European waters, sailing alongside the Dutch fleets to sketch the warships in the heat of battle. This particular painting depicts the capture of the English flagship *The Royal Prince* during The Four Days

Battle, fought off the coast of Flanders between the Dutch and English fleets in 1666. Van de Velde has, remarkably, depicted his father in a galliot, sketching the scene at the height of battle. The work was in the collection of Jan Gildemeester, who assembled one of the greatest collections of Dutch 17<sup>th</sup> Century paintings and drawings ever known. At his sale in 1800 the recently established Nationale Konstagllerij (predecessor of the Rijksmuseum) attempted to acquire the painting, which was even then considered a work of outstanding national importance. It has been owned by just three families in the ensuing two centuries.

Travellers Halted at a Country Inn is a rare collaborative work by the Ostade brothers, Adriaen and Isack (est. £1.8-2.5 million). With the landscape and most of the architecture attributable to Isack van Ostade and the large figure group in the foreground typical of Adriaen van Ostade's work, this is most likely a unique example of the brothers working in collaboration. On grounds of style, this painting can be dated to the



late 1640s, probably not long before Isack's untimely death in 1649.

The Evening Sale also comprises a pair of Venetian views by <u>Francesco Guardi</u> (est. £1.2–1.8 million): <u>Venice, A View of the Entrance to the Grand Canal and Venice, A View of the Church of San Giorgio Maggiore</u>. Beautiful as individual works, when the paintings are hung together they merge to form one expansive panorama of Venice, reaching across the Grand Canal from the island of San Giorgio Maggiore in the east, to the church of Santa Maria della Salute. These mature works, probably from the 1780s, are among Guardi's best representations of this familiar scene. Part of the collection of a French noble family since the late 19th century, the pair come to auction for the first time in over a century.





A rare example of a painting by the 16<sup>th</sup> century Italian artist <u>Orazio Borgianni</u>, <u>Christ Amongst the Doctors</u>, is estimated to realise £400,000 - £600,000. Born in Rome in 1574, Borgianni, the son of a wood-painter, rose to become an artist favoured by the European aristocracy, naming some of the most powerful men in Rome among his patrons. *Christ Amongst the Doctors* has a remarkable early provenance. Listed in the inventory of the Spanish diplomat Juan de Lezcano in 1631, alongside at least eleven other works by Borgianni, the painting is believed to have been commissioned directly from the artist *circa* 1609.



\*Estimates do not include buyer's premium

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