

Success of Jourdan-Barry Collection Propels French Silver to New Heights at Sotheby's

Sale Total: €4.1 million (5.3 million)
(€3m / \$4 m for the Raymond & Pierre Jourdan-Barry Collection)

**– Rare Work by Thomas Germain Clears €500,000
(\$700.000) –**

– 17 lots sell for over €50,000 (\$65.500) –

Paris, 18 April 2012 – With total sales of over €4 million (\$5 million), the two-session silver auction at the Galerie Charpentier here today attracted tremendous interest and yielded **remarkable results – among the finest ever achieved in the history of silver sales at Sotheby's Paris.**

The main focus of the sale was the **Raymond & Pierre Jourdan-Barry Collection**, an elegantly coherent 200-lot ensemble full of rare, top-quality items reflecting a search for ideal beauty.

Thierry de Lachaise, Sotheby's European Head of Silver said : 'A packed saleroom and host of telephone bidders paid high-profile homage to the assured, individual taste of Monsieur Pierre Jourdan-Barry and his father. Numerous lots sold in excess of top-estimate, such as a timelessly elegant basting-spoon by Edme-Pierre Balzac, which brought €144,750 (\$189.861) against a high-estimate of €60,000.' (lot 19)*

The day's top bid of **€540,750 (\$709.275)** rewarded a very rare silver-gilt porringer by **Thomas Germain**, complete with its cover, stand and original case (lot 89). This veritable re-discovery, dating from **1722**, is the **earliest known work by the most famous Paris silversmith of the 18th century**, who introduced the *rocaille* style to France after discovering it during his years in Rome.

Next, at **€156,750 (\$205.601)**, came a soup-tureen with cover, liner and stand by **Jean-Baptiste Chéret (Paris 1784/5)**, topped by a cauliflower knop emerging from celery and turnip leaves, and featuring a coat-of-arms below a ducal coronet, and ringed by the collar of the Order of the Holy Spirit (lot 66, est. €40,000-60,000).

The collection also included hallmarked pieces from the French regions, which produced much fine quality silver during the 17th and 18th centuries. A ewer attributed to **Gérard Le Tourneur (Rheims 1670/1)** cleared top-estimate on **€111,150 (\$145.790)** (lot 142); a ewer and basin by **Pierre I Tudier (Béziers 1745/6)** fetched **€106,350 (\$139.494)** (lot 121); and a silver ewer and basin by **Jean Delane (Bayonne c.1734/5, date letter L)** posted the day's second-highest price of **€186,750 (\$244.951)** (lot 175). Early 19th century hallmarks can be found on the ewer but not on the basin, suggesting the ensemble was separated in the late 18th century and only reunited by Pierre Jourdan-Barry.

The multi-provenance morning session, devoted to **silver, gold boxes and objects of vertu**, yielded **€1.13 million (\$1.49 million)**. German silver, especially from Nuremberg, was in highest demand. A set of four parcel-gilt silver shields (**Nuremberg 1656**), made by **Christoph Ritter III** for members of a Founders' Guild, cleared their €90,000 top-estimate on **€106,350 (\$139.494)** (lot 117); while a large silver-gilt flagon by **Michael Müllner (c.1618)**, and offered as a gift by Holy Roman Emperor Matthias of Austria, climbed to **€84,750 (\$111.162)** (lot 118).

The session's chief surprise was the **€82,350 (\$108.014)** – a sizzling ten times low-estimate – achieved for a parcel-gilt silver tazza from mid-16th century Venice (lot 121).

* estimates do not include buyer's premium