

# Sotheby's

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## SOTHEBY'S SELLS THE WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS STAMP FOR \$9.5 MILLION

### THE BRITISH GUIANA Sets New World Auction Record for Any Stamp For the Fourth Time in Its History

– Nearly 1 Billion Times Its Original Face Value –

**NEW YORK, 17 June 2014** – For the fourth time in its illustrious history, the **British Guiana One-Cent Black on Magenta** set a new world auction record for any stamp tonight at Sotheby's New York\*, achieving \$9,480,000\*\* – nearly 1 billion times its original face value. No stamp is rarer than the sole-surviving example of the British Guiana, a unique yet unassuming penny issue from 1856, which has been heralded as the pinnacle of stamp collecting for more than a century. The stamp was rediscovered by a 12-year-old Scottish boy living in South America in 1873, and from there passed through some of the most important stamp collections ever assembled. Until Sotheby's international exhibitions this spring in Hong Kong, London and New York, the British Guiana had been out of public view since the 1986.

*David Redden, Sotheby's Vice Chairman, commented: "We are thrilled with tonight's extraordinary, record-setting price of \$9.5 million – a truly great moment for the world of stamp collecting. That price will be hard to beat, and likely won't be exceeded unless the British Guiana comes up for sale*

again in the future. I have to say I'm a little sad to see it go – when I was eight years old this was the most precious object in the entire world, and I never dreamed I would have it in my hands.”

For detailed information on the stamp's history, watch:

[VIDEO](#)

#### AUCTION HISTORY OF THE BRITISH GUIANA

1922

ARTHUR HIND, UTICA, NEW YORK

Purchased at the auction for then-record price of \$35,000

1970

IRWIN WEINBERG STAMP CONSORTIUM

Purchased at the auction for then-record price of \$280,000

1980

JOHN E. DU PONT, PENNSYLVANIA

Purchased at auction for then-record price of \$935,000

2014

Purchased at auction for new record price of \$9.48 million

\*The previous auction record for a single stamp was CHF 2,875,000 (approximately US\$2.2 million), set by the *Treskilling Yellow* in 1996.

The previous auction record for any philatelic item was CHF 6,123,750 (approximately US\$4 million), set by *The Bordeaux Cover* in 1993 – the cover including both of the Mauritius “Post Office” stamps.

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Sotheby's has been uniting collectors with world-class works of art since 1744. Sotheby's became the first international auction house when it expanded from London to New York (1955), the first to conduct sales in Hong Kong (1973) and France (2001), and the first international fine art auction house in China (2012). Today, Sotheby's presents auctions in nine different salesrooms, including New York, London, Hong Kong and Paris, and Sotheby's BidNow program allows visitors to view all auctions live online and place bids in real-time from anywhere in the world. Sotheby's offers collectors the resources of Sotheby's Financial Services, the world's only full-service art financing company, as well as private sale opportunities in more than 70 categories, including S|2, the gallery arm of Sotheby's Contemporary Art department, as well as Sotheby's Diamonds and Sotheby's Wine. Sotheby's has a global network of 90 offices in 40 countries and is the oldest company listed on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE).

*\*\*Estimates do not include buyer's premium and prices achieved include the hammer price plus buyer's premium.*

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