

Press Release

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SOTHEBY'S SETS A NEW WORLD RECORD FOR SCULPTURE AT AUCTION

**EXCEEDINGLY RARE AND BEAUTIFUL BRONZE FIGURE OF
ARTEMIS AND THE STAG SELLS FOR \$28,600,000**

PRICE ALSO ESTABLISHES A NEW WORLD RECORD FOR AN ANTIQUITY AT AUCTION

New York, NY - June 7, 2007 - Today at Sotheby's, in a hushed and standing-room only salesroom, auction

history was made when an exquisite bronze figure of **Artemis and the Stag**, circa 1st Century B.C./1st Century A.D., sold for \$28,600,000, immediately becoming the most expensive sculpture ever sold at auction*. "She deserved it!" said Richard M. Keresey, Worldwide Director of Sotheby's Antiquities Department.



That outstanding price also eclipsed the previous record for an Antiquity at auction and quadrupled the pre-sale high estimate of \$7 million**. When auctioneer Hugh Hildesley opened the bidding at \$4.1 million, two bidders immediately began battling for the masterpiece. It appeared that the sculpture was going to sell for just over \$12 million when a new bidder, seated in the rear of the salesroom, entered the contest. The bidding continued for a total of more than 10 minutes, in \$100,000 increments, before the masterpiece was sold to Giuseppe Eskenazi, the premiere connoisseur of Chinese Art, who was bidding on behalf of a private European collector. The rare

bronze, which had been consigned by the Albright Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, New York, was included in a sale of Antiquities which brought a total of \$47,194,020 (est. \$8.3/12.1 million), the highest total ever for an

Antiquities sale. “*Artemis* is certainly the greatest work of art that I have ever sold,” commented Mr. Keresey. “But she is also much more than that. She is among the most beautiful works of art surviving from antiquity.”

Following the auction, Mr. Eskenazi commented, “This is certainly one of the finest, if not the finest, bronze or any sculpture that I have seen in my 50-year career. “On the world scale, it is certainly at the top. It is the height of bronze casting; it is of the highest quality, and it is exceptionally refined. It is comparable to any other sculpture of this size and quality in any museum or any private collection anywhere. I am very proud to be associated with it.”

Among the very finest large classical bronze sculptures and the most splendid to appear on the market in memory, the rare bronze figure of **Artemis and the Stag** is remarkable for its beauty, size, excellent state of preservation, and most notably, its dramatic capture of the split-second moment when the Greek goddess of the hunt has just let fly her arrow. The elegant sculptural group features Artemis standing on a quadrangular base with a stag to her left. Wearing elaborately laced sandals and short *chiton* with drapery billowing at the sides, the goddess’ extended left hand would have held a bow that is now missing. The exquisite detail of this work is apparent in her face: silver-overlaid eyes, incised irises, recessed pupils and her ears pierced for earrings.

Artemis and the Stag was the highlight of today’s sale of Antiquities, which was an overwhelming success totalling \$47,194,020, the highest total ever for sale in this category. The sale was 97.5 % sold by lot and 99.9% sold by value, with 88.8% of the lots exceeding their high estimate.

Other highlights from the afternoon include an Elamite Copper Figure of a Horned Hero, Proto-Literate Period, circa 3000-2800, which commanded \$3,176,000 (lot 80, est. \$150,000/250,000); a Marble Funerary Portrait Statue of a Roman Poet, Late Republican/Augustan, circa 50 B.C./A.D. 14, which brought \$2,056,000 (lot 70, est. \$125/175,000); and a Sumerian Alabaster Figure of a Worshipper, Early Dynastic III, circa 2800-2550 B.C., which realized \$1,720,000 (lot 81, est. \$300/500,000).

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*The previous record for sculpture at auction was \$27,456,000 for Constantin Brancusi’s *Oiseau Dans L’Espace*, May 2005.

**The previous record for an Antiquity was \$11,652,175 for The Jenkins Venus, June 2002
Estimates do not include buyer’s premium