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DRAWINGS FROM THE CHRISTIAN AND ISABELLE ADRIEN COLLECTION



Paris, 11 January 2018 – This Spring, Sotheby's will offer a remarkable selection of Old Master drawings from the esteemed collection of Christian and Isabelle Adrien. The result of a lifetime of passion for painting and drawing, the cherished pieces in the collection together offer one of the most fascinating insights into the act of drawing seen in recent years. The viewer is taken on a special journey – guided by an avid curiosity and demand for the highest calibre of draughtsmanship – from the 15th century to the last luminaries of the 18th century, across the Italian, French, Dutch and Flemish schools. A landmark event in the field of Old Master drawings in Europe, the sale will present collectors with a rare opportunity to acquire such exceptional works. The auction will take place on 22 March in Sotheby's Paris galleries, coinciding with the renowned Salon du Dessin art fair.

In 2012, the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Rennes (Brittany) hosted a major exhibition to showcase the manifold merits of the collection. Eminent scholars from across the globe contributed to the catalogue, with the depth of research reflecting both the quality of the collection and the regular exchanges between the collector, scholars and specialists in the field of Old Master drawings. Indeed, the personal knowledge of Christian Adrien himself led to a number of major, and unexpected, discoveries.

Each work in the auction illustrates the outstanding skill and talent of great masters such as Salviati, Bassano, the Carracci, Poussin, Lemoyne, Le Brun, Boucher and Rubens. Many of the drawings possess prestigious provenances, including the collection of celebrated French art historian and dealer Pierre-Jean Mariette and Sir Thomas Lawrence, the leading British portrait painter of the early 19th century.



The variety of mediums and techniques represented in the collection is also extraordinary. The powerful effect of chalk is revealed in a two-tone study by **Jacopo Bassano** (*Virgin and Child*, **estimate: €25,000-35,000**), and its exquisite delicacy is evident in a magisterial work by **Francesco Salviati** (*Seated nude man in profile*, **estimate: €60,000-80,000**, illustrated on p.1). Elsewhere, the rigorous precision of pen and ink is demonstrated in nude studies by Baccio Bandinelli.



The most noteworthy French drawings in the collection include a major work after the Antique by **Nicolas Poussin**: a magnificent example of the great 17th century painter's classicism in flowing lines (**estimate: €80,000-120,000**). A 1784 study for the painting *Arria et Poetus* by **François André Vincent** is one of the artist's finest and most important drawings (**estimate: €80,000-120,000**). This scene based on a story by Pliny the Younger, using a detailed perspective to depict the nude figures with a singular energy.



The collection also features rare drawings of exceptional quality by **Laurent de La Hyre**, **Charles Le Brun**, **Antoine Coypel** and **François Lemoyne** (*Etude pour la figure d'Hercule assommant Cacus*, **estimate: €50,000-70,000**). A highlight of the group is a striking sanguine study of a draped man's figure by **François Boucher** (**estimate: €12,000-18,000**). One of many other fascinating drawings is *L'Aumône de Saint Charles Borromée* by **Louis Jean Jacques Durameau after Mattia**

Preti: this was commissioned specifically by Mariette, who wanted to own major works from the Roman school "to jog his memory" (**estimate: €8,000-12,000**).

A number of Dutch and Flemish drawings of superb quality accompany the large group of French and Italian drawings including in the collection, including a pen and ink study for St Matthew the Evangelist by **Paul Rubens**, estimated at **€25,000-35,000**.

Works from the Italian School are led by large and impressive drawings by **Baccio Bandinelli**, such as two studies of a man (**estimate: €60,000-80,000**), which are rare to the market. Many other Renaissance drawings in the group take a large format, with the remarkable *modello* by **Andrea Lilio** a unique example of this type of work by the artist (*Two monks warming themselves at a hearth*, **estimate: €15,000-20,000**). In spite of its size, the work expresses a poetic intimacy typical of the style of the School of the Marches, inspired by Federico Barocci. It is this powerful rendering and pictorial quality that reflects Isabelle and Christian Adrien's parallel taste for Old Master paintings, which sets their collection apart from the ordinary.



Further highlights include a double-sided ink study of horses, executed by **Agostino Caracci**: a Bolognese master whose talent influenced generations of draughtsmen (**estimate: €15,000-20,000**). The collection also contains works by major Baroque artists including Mola and Volterrano, as well as a late piece by Luca Giordano hailing from his Spanish period.



*Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Prices achieved include the hammer price plus buyer's premium and are net of any fees paid to the purchaser where the purchaser provided an irrevocable bid.

Images are available upon request

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