

Sotheby's EST. 1744 Diamonds

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To Celebrate the First Anniversary of its London Salon, Sotheby's Diamonds unveils

100 CARAT FLAWLESS PERFECTION

The Rarest White Diamond ever to come to the Market

At 102.34 carats,
The World's Largest-Known Round, D Colour, Flawless Diamond

The only known Round Brilliant Diamond over 100 carats
to have achieved Perfection in all Critical Criteria: Colour, Clarity, Cut & Carat

On view to the public at Sotheby's London, 8-9 February 2018

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*"A rarity in the mythical world of 100-carat diamonds:
A masterpiece of nature, brought to life by human hand"*

London, 8th February 2018 – To celebrate the first anniversary of its New Bond Street salon, Sotheby's Diamonds, a retail boutique specialising in the world's finest diamonds, will unveil a stone of exception – **an extraordinarily rare 102.34 carat white diamond**. The stone is the only known round brilliant-cut diamond over 100 carats perfect according to every critical criterion: in addition to the high number of carats, the stone is also perfect in colour, clarity and cut.

At 102.34 carats, this masterpiece of nature is the rarest white diamond ever to come to the market and the largest, round D colour flawless diamond known to man. The only stone of its kind ever graded by the GIA (Gemological Institute of America), the diamond has achieved the highest rankings under each of the criteria by which



Top Grades in all 4 Cs

Carats: 102.34 Carats

Colour: D Colour

Clarity: Flawless

Cut: Round brilliant-cut

the quality of a stone is judged ('the four Cs'). The diamond is **D colour** (the highest grade for a white diamond); of exceptional clarity (it is completely **flawless**, both internally and externally), and has excellent cut, polish and symmetry. As with the famous Cullinan I and Koh-i-noor diamonds, which are part of the British Crown Jewels, the stone is part of the rare subgroup comprising less than 2% of all gem diamonds, known as **Type IIa***. Diamonds in this group are the most chemically pure type of diamond and often have exceptional optical transparency.

Describing the stone, which is available for private purchase through Sotheby's Diamonds and will be on view to the public in Sotheby's New Bond Street Galleries on 8 and 9 February 2018, **Patti Wong, Founder and Chairman of Sotheby's Diamonds**, said: *"This stone is over 100 carats of flawless perfection. In the course of my long career, which has brought me close to some of the greatest stones the earth has ever yielded, I have not encountered anything quite like this. With its outstanding weight, its perfect colour, clarity and cut, it is a masterpiece of nature brought to life by human hand, blazing with a brilliant firework-like display of almost every colour on the spectrum - mesmerising to behold. It is a huge privilege to mark the first anniversary of our London salon with the exhibition of such a superlative stone."*

A Rarity in the mythical world of 100-carat Diamonds

100 carats has always been a mythical number in the world of diamonds. While only a small number of diamonds weighing over 100 carats have been recorded**, barely any diamonds of that weight are known to possess the same exceptional qualities of purity and perfection as the Sotheby's diamond.

A Masterpiece of nature

Finding a rough diamond that allows the cutter to end up with a stone of over 100 carats is a true and very rare discovery. The 425-carat rough stone which yielded the Sotheby's diamond was mined by De Beers in Botswana and subsequently cut and polished, over a period of six intense months, by Diacore's most experienced artisans, in Johannesburg and New York.



The Perfect Cut



The round shape is the most sought after shape for colourless diamonds as it gives the most light and life to the stone; the proportions are well defined to reflect the optimum fire and dispersion to the eye of the observer. When it comes to stones of significant size, it is very rare to find a round brilliant-cut stone, as the cutter will generally try to keep the maximum of weight from the rough; therefore elongated cushions, emerald-cuts, and pear-shapes are usually more common for large diamonds.

Given that diamonds are the hardest material on earth, great skill and precision is needed to cut them. Most of today's greatest diamond cutters have learnt their trade from their forbears in an industry that – in spite of the advances of modern technology - still relies to a large degree on craftsmanship that has been handed down through families for generations. To cut a stone of this outstanding importance required a level of expertise and craftsmanship possessed by only a small handful of cutters. The Sotheby's diamond is testament to the impeccable *savoir-faire* of the diamond cutter who, in the words of Patti Wong, "approached the task with the precision of Michelangelo".

Notes to editors:

* ON THE RARITY OF TYPE IIA DIAMONDS:

Diamonds are one of the earth's greatest treasures. Formed billions of years ago, they are nearly as old as the earth itself. In terms of their chemical composition, they fall into two main "types" – type I and type II – based on the presence or absence of nitrogen which can replace carbon atoms in a diamond's atomic structure. These two diamond types can be distinguished on the basis of differences in their chemical and physical properties. Type II diamonds contain little if any nitrogen (IIa and IIb) both of which are quite rare (less than 2% of all gem diamonds).

Type IIa diamonds are the most chemically pure type of diamond and often have exceptional optical transparency. They were first identified as originating from India (particularly from the Golconda region) but have since been recovered in all major diamond-producing regions of the world (*Source: Gemological Institute of America*).

** D COLOUR DIAMONDS OVER 100 CARATS AT AUCTION

While this diamond is available for private purchase, a sense of the rarity of diamonds of scale is most easily gleaned by looking at auction prices. **Only seven diamonds** weighing more than 100 carats and with the highest colour for colourless diamonds – D colour – have ever sold at auction. **None of them were of brilliant cut.** Sotheby's has had the privilege of offering five of the seven for sale.

Oval diamond weighing 118.28 carats

D Colour, Flawless, Type IIa
Sotheby's Hong Kong, October 2013
Sold for US\$ 30.8 million
Price per carat US\$ 260,252



The Winston Legacy

Pear-shaped diamond weighing 101.73-carat

D color, flawless, Type IIa
Christie's Geneva, May 2013
Sold for US\$ 26.8 million
Price per carat US\$ 254,400



'The Ultimate Emerald-cut'
Step-cut diamond weighing 100.20 carats
D Colour, Internally Flawless, Type IIa
Sotheby's New York, April 2015
Sold for US\$ 22.1 million
Price per carat US\$ 220,459



Rectangular diamond weighing 163.41 carats
D Colour, Flawless, Type IIa
Christie's Geneva, November 2017
Sold for US\$ 33.7 million
Price per carat US\$ 206,266



'The Star of the Season'
Pear-shaped diamond weighing 100.10 carats
D Colour, Internally Flawless
Sotheby's Geneva, May 1995
Sold for US\$ 16.4 million
Price per carat US\$ 164,223



'The Mouawad Splendour'
Modified pear-shaped diamond weighing 101.84 carats
D Colour, Internally Flawless
Sotheby's Geneva, November 1990
Sold US\$ 12.8 million
Price per carat US\$ 125,295



'The Star of Happiness'
Step-cut diamond weighing 100.36 carats
D Colour, Internally Flawless
Sotheby's Geneva, November 1993
Sold US\$ 11.9 million
Price per carat US\$ 118,397



SOTHEBY'S DIAMONDS

A pioneering venture, [Sotheby's Diamonds](#) brings together the most exceptional and desirable diamonds, cutting-edge design and superlative craftsmanship in a very modern, forward-looking House. Independent of Sotheby's auction business, Sotheby's Diamonds operates purely on a peer-to-peer basis, matching individual diamonds with individual collectors at the highest end outside of the auction arena. Sotheby's Diamonds is marked out by its ability to link the entire chain of supply and creation – sourcing the finest diamonds and working 'with the stones' to produce settings for them that are not only of the highest craftsmanship, but that also, and very importantly, allow the stones to 'speak'.

For this venture, Sotheby's formed a partnership with Diacore, world-leading specialists in sourcing, cutting and polishing extraordinary diamonds. Renowned within the industry, their artisan cutters understand the centuries-old secrets held within a diamond and know just how to unleash the beauty, inner light, life and brilliance of each individual stone. Diacore is committed to making a meaningful contribution to the development of the communities in Botswana and its Corporate Social Responsibility policy encompasses a number of initiatives, including the Gaborone Marathon.

One of the most respected and experienced jewellery specialists, Patti Wong, Chairman of Sotheby's Diamonds, draws on her skill and knowledge as well as instinct and intuition to then select the stones that are always the starting point for a Sotheby's Diamond jewel. She is a true insider with an unerring eye and looks not only for superb quality, colour, clarity and excellent cut but also for charm and character, vitality, vivacity, fire, life and brilliance in each diamond.

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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), India (1992) and France (2001), and the first international fine art auction house in China (2012). Today, Sotheby's presents auctions in 10 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 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 the collection advisory services of its subsidiary, Art Agency, Partners. Sotheby's presents private sale opportunities in more than 70 categories, including S|2, the gallery arm of Sotheby's Global Fine Art Division, and two retail businesses, Sotheby's Diamonds and Sotheby's Wine. Sotheby's has a global network of 80 offices in 40 countries and is the oldest company listed on the New York Stock Exchange (BID).

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PRESS IMAGES

Press images are available for download [here](#)

Caption

The rarest white diamond ever to come to the market

At 102.34 carats, the world's largest-known round, D Colour, Flawless, type IIa Diamond

Available for purchase from Sotheby's Diamonds

Credit: Courtesy of Sotheby's Diamonds

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