

For Immediate Release
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CHRISTIE'S

Contact: Cristiano De Lorenzo tel. +44 7500 815 344 cdelorenzo@christies.com

I C O N I C

BRITISH SCULPTURES

TO BE SOLD IN FRIEZE WEEK



To Be Offered In The
POST-WAR & CONTEMPORARY ART
EVENING AUCTION
Christie's London
8 King Street
14 October 2011

London - In October, Christie's will unite three great masterpieces of British sculpture: Antony Gormley's *Angel of the North*, one of the most iconic images in contemporary Britain, Damien Hirst's seminal, formaldehyde work on the themes of betrayal and deceit, *Judas Iscariot* from his breakthrough series the *Twelve Disciples* and Ron Mueck's extraordinary, hyperreal *Man Under Cardigan*.

Francis Outred, Christie's Head of Post-War & Contemporary Art, Europe:

"I am delighted that, during Frieze Art week, when the global attention is on London, we have been able to unite three contemporary masterpieces of British sculpture. These include Gormley's iconic Angel of the North, a signature early formaldehyde piece by Damien Hirst and an extraordinary hyperreal figure by Ron Mueck, executed the year after his meteoric rise to national prominence with the presentation of Dead Dad at Sensation. Characteristic of much of the art which positioned Britain at the forefront of creativity in the 1990s, these works use a wide variety of media and depiction to address similar themes of human existence in the early years of the twenty-first century".

With its human height and massive wingspan of more than five metres, *Angel of the North* (estimate: £1,500,000-2,000,000), executed in 1996, is the iconic figurehead of Antony Gormley's internationally acclaimed oeuvre (*illustrated above*). This human scale maquette is one of a series of five sculptures that prefigure the colossal Gateshead project that Gormley completed in 1998.

Rising twenty meters from the ground and spanning fifty-four meters from tip to tip, the Gateshead project was cast out of 200 tonnes of steel and was conceived as a national emblem and beacon for the North of England. The body of the sculpture with its noble, upright posture is positively human in spite of its industrial material and facture. Across the shoulder blades and spanning the torso of the elegant figure grow long, ribbed wings, less biomorphic than aeronautic. *Angel of the North* takes this relationship between man and machine and reflects on the way that the body is extended by technology. At the same time it draws an allegory between the aeroplane and the elevation of the human spirit.



Photography by Stephen White © Damien Hirst and Science Ltd.
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Executed in 1994, **Damien Hirst's** *Judas Iscariot* (estimate: £500,000-700,000) is an important, early example from the artist's *Natural History* series (*illustrated above right.*) The sculpture originally formed part of *The Twelve Disciples*, in which Hirst re-interprets the Last Supper in his own contemporary vernacular of bulls' heads suspended in formaldehyde tanks. While the other works in the series: James the Greater, John, Simon, Thomas, Matthew, Andrew, James the Lesser, Peter, Philip, Judas and Bartholomew are all encased in white edged tanks, *Judas Iscariot* alone is in black, a simple yet profound reference to his role as betrayer of Jesus Christ in the biblical narrative. Along with other seminal early formaldehyde works such as *The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living* (1991), *Away from the Flock* (1993) and *Mother and Child Divided* (1993), *Judas Iscariot* highlights Hirst's continued engagement with issues of life, death and the inescapable solitude that lies at the heart of existence.

Also featured in October is a collection of four important paintings by Damien Hirst that encompass the artist's most celebrated media and motifs over time including the butterfly, the household gloss spot and the manufactured diamond. These are *Vinblastine* (2007), *Midas and the Infinite* (2008), *The Hope* (2006) and *Untitled (Birthday Card)* (2000).



Created in 1998, *Man Under Cardigan* (estimate: £400,000-600,000) is an exceptional sculpture by the consummate observer and flawless imitator of life, **Ron Mueck** (*illustrated left.*) The work is one of the artist's early and pioneering sculptures, showed in his first solo exhibition at the Anthony d'Offay Gallery in 1998. Barely half the height of an ordinary, seated man, *Man Under Cardigan* immediately captivates the viewer with its tiny, but perfectly real frame. Rendered with the greatest of devotion, Mueck has attended to every fine detail, blemish and idiosyncrasy of its human form. The eyes are always the final detail that Mueck carries out. For each, he elaborates all the layers, from transparent lens to coloured iris, to dark pupil. In *Man Under Cardigan* the small man's deep, liquid eyes are somehow sentient, glistening in the light and giving true meaning to the old adage: 'the eyes are the window of the soul'.

CHRISTIE'S

POST-WAR & CONTEMPORARY ART EVENING AUCTION

AUCTION:

Christie's London, *8 King Street*

Friday 14th October 2011, at 6.30 pm - *followed by The Italian Sale*

VIEWINGS:

Christie's London, *8 King Street*

Sunday 9th October 12 noon-5pm

Monday 10th October 9am-8pm

Tuesday 11th October 9am-5pm

Wednesday 12th October 9am-5pm

Thursday 13th October 9am-6pm

Friday 14th October 9am-3.30pm

About Christie's

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