

Press Release

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CHRISTIE'S

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THE ESTATE OF THE LATE BRUNO GIACOMETTI TO BE SOLD AT AUCTION

TO BENEFIT THE DR BEAT RICHNER FOUNDATION
KANTHA BOPHA CHILDREN'S HOSPITALS



Zurich – Christie's is delighted to offer over 30 lots from the estate of the late Bruno Giacometti (1907-2012), the youngest of the famous Giacometti brothers Alberto and Diego. Bruno Giacometti died at the age of 104 earlier this year in Zürich. His estate has been split into two parts: any painting, preparatory drawing or work of art either by Alberto and Diego Giacometti or befriended artists has been donated to the Kunsthau Zurich, and his private belongings will be sold at auction to benefit the Dr Beat Richner foundation Kantha Bopha Children's hospitals in Cambodia. The estate will be offered in the upcoming *Swiss Art* sale, which will take place on 24 September 2012 in the Kunsthau Zurich, Grosser Vortragssaal. The Kunsthau Zurich was of personal significance to Bruno who sat as a member as well as president on the exhibition committee of the Kunsthau for many years.

The collection is expected to realize in the region of CHF 1 million. Although the two Swiss men never met, Dr Beat Richner's extraordinary charitable work in Cambodia is well-known in Switzerland. Thanks to Bruno's personal interest in charitable work and due to his Cambodian nurse, who looked after him for the last few years, this upcoming sale has been made possible.

"Dr Beat Richner is a man who had a clear vision when he left for Cambodia in 1992: to help as many children as he could. Twenty years later he is 10 million children closer to his vision but is still fighting every single day for donations to be able to offer better medical care, equipment and advice to Cambodian children. Bruno Giacometti, a man who had no children of his own, was fascinated by the charitable work by Dr Beat Richner. All these circumstances, alongside the personal friendship with Bruno, led to this exceptional sale." said **Hans-Peter Keller, Head of Christie's Swiss Art.**

Bruno Giacometti was born in Stampa in 1907 as the youngest of Giovanni and Annetta Giacometti's four children. After studying architecture in Zurich until 1930, Bruno became the celebrated architect of several important buildings across Switzerland as well as of the Swiss Pavilion of the Venice biennale in 1952.



The estate of the late Bruno Giacometti will offer several pieces of furniture designed by his brother Diego, among others a pair of wooden chairs carved by this father Giovanni, and some very unique sculptures made by his wife Odette Giacometti. Also on offer are several pieces made by Bruno's numerous artist friends including a mirror made by Serge Brignoni, the so-called "Louis Sardine" mirror because its frame was made out of sardine cans (estimate: SFr. 3,000-5,000), and a sculpture by Max Bill (estimate: SFr. 8,000-12,000, *illustrated above left*). This sculpture can be considered a co-operation between Bill and Giacometti, where the first one provided an aluminium structure for a large stone from the Val Bregaglia, home to the Giacometti family, found by Bruno. The sculpture can also be dated around 1964, when Max Bill exhibited *Rhythmus im*

Raum at the Expo 64 in Lausanne. Today this sculpture can be admired in front of the town hall of Uster, designed by Bruno Giacometti in 1962.



Further items on offer reflect Bruno Giacometti's personal taste and his interior design vision, mixing elderly, traditional pieces of furniture from his family home in Stampa, with Nordic design from Alvar Aalto of the 1930s, such as the famous tank chair of 1936 (estimate: SFr. 4,000-6,000, *illustrated left*).



Highlighting the sale is a piece which embodies the Giacometti aura; Giovanni Giacometti's artist's stool (estimate: SFr.3,000-5,000, *illustrated left*), which was used in his studio in Stampa, and which can be seen on a photograph showing Alberto Giacometti sitting on that stool in his father's studio while painting his wife, Annette



(*illustrated right*). Other small objects from the Stampa household such as tin plates and bowl as well as ceramics will be part of the estate, of which some can be admired in paintings and drawings by father and son Giacometti.

Alberto Giacometti's final trip was to Chur in early 1966; he came from Paris for a two week stay in the mountains to recover from the hectic life of the city and his stomach cancer operation, which he had three years earlier. He was initially at the Sanatorium before being transferred to the Cantonal hospital of Chur where he died on 11 January 1966. The suitcase Alberto had with him was stored all these years in Bruno's house in Zurich. It will be offered at auction with Alberto's nametag and many labels which trace the artist's decades of travelling (estimate: 4,000-6,000, *illustrated right*).



The revenue of this sale will benefit the Dr Beat Richner's Kantha Bopha Children's hospitals which were founded in 1992, exactly 20 years ago. Today there exist five hospital units and one maternity ward in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap. Between 1974 and 1975 Dr Beat Richner worked at the Kantha Bopha children's hospital until he was forced to leave due to the increasing danger and pressure of the Khmer Rouge. In 1991 during the final phase of the peace negotiations, taking place in Paris, Dr Beat Richner was asked by the Cambodians to rebuild the hospitals he was working in the early '70s.

In the past 20 years the hospitals have provided free healthcare for over 10 million children who otherwise could not afford it as 90% of them are from families earning 0.50 Dollars a day. To date the entire project, including building the hospitals to day-to-day care, comes to a total of 400 million Swiss Francs. Donations have made up 87.5% of this sum, through which 2,400 Cambodians found jobs, and thousands of young lives have been saved.

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