

## THE ROGER WHITTAKER COLLECTION RAISES OVER £1 MILLION AT SOTHEBY'S COUNTRY HOUSE SALE IN HEREFORDSHIRE

PAINTINGS, furniture and works of art collected by international singing star Roger Whittaker were sold by Sotheby's today (Monday, July 12, 1999) for £1,010,985 in a sale held on the premises of Mr Whittaker's Regency-style country home, Cubberley House, near Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire.

The collection of more than 300 lots, was being sold by Mr Whittaker and his wife Natalie, following their decision to sell the property and its contents and split their time between their home in Florida and a smaller base outside London. The sale attracted buyers from throughout the UK, Europe and America who competed for items both on the telephone and by commission bid against buyers and collectors from the local area in the saleroom marquee on the lawn. James Miller, Sotheby's Deputy Chairman, UK and auctioneer for the sale, said: "The collection was assembled by Mr Whittaker throughout the 35 years of his successful singing career and so did not have a family provenance usually associated with a country house sale. However, buyers clearly appreciated Mr Whittaker's collecting interests and tastes which included fine 18th and early 19th century British portraits, English furniture, sculpture, clocks and rare apostle and seal-top spoons. "High prices were achieved throughout the sale from top estimate pieces such as the George Romney portrait of Lady Forbes, which more than tripled its pre-sale low estimate of £30,000, to a Stourbridge engraved-wine ewer, which sold for £1,995, almost four times its pre-sale low estimate." Speaking from his holiday abroad, Mr Whittaker, said: "I am delighted with the result of the sale, although naturally the day is tinged with a certain amount of sadness - parting with such treasured possessions. I hope that people who have purchased items from the collection will get as much enjoyment out them as I have." The highest price in the sale was achieved for the portrait of Elizabeth, Lady Forbes by George Romney (1734-1802) which sold for £98,300. The oil on canvas of the wife of the eminent Scottish banker, Sir James Hay, was bought by an anonymous telephone bidder. British portraits performed well in the sale, including a portrait of Miss Theodora Fortune by Joseph Wright of Derby which realised £43,300, more than double its pre-sale low estimate, while Sir Thomas Lawrence's portrait of George, 6th Duke of Argyll was bought by a UK private buyer for £35,600 against an estimate of £20,000-30,000. The second most expensive piece in the all-day sale was a Japanese silver Koro in the form of a hawk. It had been estimated at £10,000-15,000, but was bought by a London dealer bidding on the telephone for a staggering £62,000. Made in the Meiji period (1868-1912) and signed by Nobuhisa, the hawk was modelled perched on an elaborately decorated stand. It had been discovered in a cupboard by Sotheby's specialists preparing for the sale who were surprised to see an object of such quality not on prominent display in Mr Whittaker's home Silver pieces performed exceptionally well, including a George III Kings pattern canteen made by William Chawner of London in 1818, which sold for £25,300, more than four times the pre-sale low estimate, and an important Henry VIII silver lion sejant affrontée spoon made by William Simpson in 1530 which overturned a pre-sale estimate of £8,000-12,000 to sell for £20,300.

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