



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND SPORTS
GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF ANTIQUITIES
AND CULTURAL HERITAGE
DIRECTORATE FOR THE DOCUMENTATION AND
THE PROTECTION OF CULTURAL GOODS
DEPARTMENT FOR THE DOCUMENTATION AND
THE PROTECTION OF CULTURAL GOODS

URGENT

Address: 33 Ag. Asomaton Str.,
105 53, Athens, Greece
Tel.: +30 210 3238877
Fax: +30 210 3238874
e-mail: dtpa@culture.gr

TO: Sotheby's
1334, York Avenue,
New York NY 10021

CC:

1. Minister's of Culture and Sports Office
2. General Secretary's Office.
3. Embassy of Greece in the USA,
2217, Massachusetts Avenue N.W.
Washington DC 20008,
United States of America.

Subject: Sale of a bronze figurine of a horse (LOT 4/Sale no 9855, Auction in New York, 14th May, 2018).

The Greek Ministry of Culture has become aware of your intention to auction, among other items, a bronze figurine of a horse, dated in the end of the Geometric era, in a session that will take place in New York in 14/05/2018 (Sale no 9855, Lot 4).

We hereby call your attention to the fact that three photos of this specific figurine are included in the Symes-Michailides photo archive, which has been confiscated in Greece. This specific figurine, which you intend to auction, is of Greek origin. **In fact it originates from the region of Thessalia, Greece.** There are no records in the archives of our Service (i.e. an export permit from Greece) to prove that this figurine has left the country in a legal way.

The Greek National Law 5351/1932 on Antiquities and the one following it, Law 3028/2002, on the Protection of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage in General state that **all movable ancient monuments belong to the State in terms of ownership and possession, are imprescriptible and *extra commercium*.** Additionally, according to the Greek Criminal Law (Act 3028/2002, article 55) the illegal acquisition and trading of cultural property of great value (category within which the specific figurine falls) constitutes a serious criminal offence, irrespective of where it takes place. The Greek national legislation is fully in compliance with the relevant international Treaties including the UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, Paris 1970.

In addition we would like to inform you that there is also in force a Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Hellenic Republic and the Government of the United States of America concerning the imposition of import restrictions on categories of Archaeological and Byzantine Ecclesiastical, Ethnological material through the 15th century A.D. of the Hellenic Republic.

For all above reasons and reserving all our rights, WE ASK YOU TO:

- **immediately withdraw the ancient Greek figurine of the list from the items to be auctioned on 14/05/2018**

- **refrain, from today on, from any activity related to any type of delivery of the figurine to any third party**
- **contact us immediately in order to confirm your intention to conform to the above and subsequently cooperate for the repatriation of the coin and its return to the Greek state.**

In any case, Greece reserves the right to take the necessary legal action in the competent courts in order to repatriate the coin.

The Head of the General Directorate
Of Antiquities and Cultural Heritage

Dr. Elena Korka

Exact copy
The Head of the Secretariat