555.55 Carat Black Diamond to Make Auction Debut
– The Largest Faceted Diamond of Any Kind to Appear at Auction –
– One of the Largest Cut Diamonds Gubelin & the GIA Have Ever Reported –
– Listed in the Guinness World Records 2006 –

Unveiled at Sotheby’s Dubai Today & On View in the DIFC from 17-20 January
Exclusive View at the Dubai Diamond Exchange on 18 January from 1.30-3pm*

Set to Travel to LA (24-26 January) & London (2-9 February)
Ahead of a Single-Lot Online Auction from 3 – 9 February
When it Will Be Offered Without Reserve
With Purchase accepted in Cryptocurrency

“Named ‘The Enigma’ this diamond is a true natural phenomenon. Much more than a jewel, it is a unique and precious object of curiosity. Weighing a staggering 555.55 carats and presenting exactly 55 facets, The Enigma is a marvel of rarity and size, and its brilliance and high polish are a testament to the delicate and highly skilled undertaking of diamond cutting. This diamond has been treasured for over two decades by the owner, and the diamond itself has never been exhibited publicly or offered on the open market, so we are thrilled to have the opportunity to tell its story to the world. Its sale represents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to acquire one of the rarest, billion-year-old cosmic wonders known to humankind.”

Nikita Binani, Sotheby’s Jewellery Specialist & Head of Sale, London

“We are honoured that Dubai has been chosen as the first stop for this exceptional rarity and are thrilled to play a part in its journey, which began so many millions of years ago. This is the first time we are introducing our cryptocurrency offering in the UAE, a move that is in line with the government’s own commitment to exploring new digital, technological and scientific advances. Unveiling this one-of-a-kind stone - both in our DIFC gallery and at the unparalleled Dubai Diamond Exchange - is a clear continuation of our dedication to showcasing the best of the best in the UAE.”

Katia Nounou Boueiz, Head of Sotheby’s UAE

DUBAI, 17 January 2022 – A treasure from interstellar space, “The Enigma”, weighing 555.55 carats, is an exquisite and extremely rare black diamond. The largest Fancy Black Natural Colour diamond in the world, reported by Gubelin and the GIA as of 2004, it was listed as the largest cut diamond in the world in the 2006 Guinness Book of World Records. To have a natural faceted black diamond of this size is an extremely rare occurrence and its origins are shrouded in mystery – thought to have been created either from a meteoric impact or having actually emerged from a diamond-bearing asteroid that collided with Earth.

The design of the diamond is imbued with significance, its shape inspired by the Middle Eastern palm-shaped symbol, the Hamsa – a sign of protection, power and strength. The Hamsa is associated with
the number five, which is imbued with symbolic meaning, and the diamond is not only 555.55 carats in size, but it also contains exactly 55 facets - a technical feat for one of the toughest diamonds in existence.

Previously unseen on the market, and never before exhibited to the public, “The Enigma” will now be the star of a dedicated auction, open for bidding online from 3-9 February. Cryptocurrency will be accepted as payment on the diamond, in a move that reflects the fact that cryptocurrency has started to make its mark in the world of physical art and objects. Sotheby’s leads the way in the jewellry market, and last year The Key 10138 diamond - another rare treasure - was purchased with cryptocurrency for a record price. This diamond will be offered ‘without reserve’, meaning that the winning bid is the highest bid, regardless of its amount or the intrinsic value of the diamond itself.

Prior to the auction, the diamond will be exhibited in Dubai, Los Angeles and London.

*Email Sophie.Stevens@Sothebys.com to register for the exclusive viewing at the Dubai Diamond Exchange, the largest diamond tenden facility in the world and a worldwide hub for the diamond trade.

**Carbonado Diamonds**

Dating from around 2.6 to 3.8 billion years ago, carbonado black diamonds are an extremely rare natural occurrence, containing traces of nitrogen and hydrogen abundant in interstellar space, as well as osbornite, a mineral uniquely present in meteors. Only known to exist in Brazil and The Central Republic of Africa - two regions which were once connected as part of the supercontinent, Rodinia, and an area believed to have been struck by meteorites, the exclusive presence of carbonados in these locations adds further weight to the theory that these stones are indeed treasures originating from interstellar space.

One of the hardest materials known to man and near impossible to cut and polish, diamonds with a black coloration have typically been reserved for industrial uses, with gem-quality natural coloured stones being extremely scarce on the market. The Enigma – a natural faceted stone of record-breaking size and quality is therefore truly unique, marking an important moment for black diamonds at auction.

**About Sotheby’s**

Established in 1744, Sotheby’s is the world’s premier destination for art and luxury. Sotheby’s promotes access, connoisseurship and preservation of fine art and rare objects through auctions and buy-now channels including private sales, e-commerce and retail. Our trusted global marketplace is supported by an industry-leading technology platform and a network of specialists spanning 40 countries and 50 categories, which include Contemporary Art, Modern and Impressionist Art, Old Masters, Chinese Works of Art, Jewelry, Watches, Wine and Spirits, and Interiors, among many others.

Sotheby’s Dubai was officially launched by the global auction house in March 2017. The gallery is located in the heart of the Dubai International Financial Centre, at Gate Village Building 3. The company hosts a programme of year-round events, including selling and non-selling exhibitions, events and talks reflecting the spectrum of Sotheby’s international sales and extensive client services.

*Estimates do not include buyer’s premium or overhead premium. Prices achieved include the hammer price plus buyer’s premium and overhead premium and are net of any fees paid to the purchaser where the purchaser provided an irrevocable bid.

Images are available upon request

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