

**BY COURIER & EMAIL**  
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Our Ref: STE/GOLDF.0001/Matters/42716344.1

27 July 2018

Dear Sir

## **The Papadimitriou family**

We are instructed by the Despina, Dimitri, Alexander and Angeliki Papadimitriou ("**the Papadimitriou family**") in relation to statements made by you in the E(5<sup>th</sup>) 3 Member Appeal Penal Court of Athens on 13 February 2018. As you are aware, all evidence that you gave in the Greek Court relating to our clients was given publicly.

We understand that your field of expertise is archaeology instructed by the Ministry of Culture. Accordingly, given that you were providing expertise to the Greek Court, your evidence could only be in relation to your knowledge of archaeology. Any other statements made by you would be at best purely speculative. Any expert giving evidence in any Court has to be most concerned to ensure the accuracy of their evidence, not to step into areas outside their expertise or to argue a case for one side. In giving evidence as an expert in archaeology, you were not giving evidence as a witness would of fact, nor as far as we are aware, were you giving evidence as an expert in human psychology.

We write to raise with you serious issues regarding the content of your "evidence" insofar as it relates to our clients. We do not in this letter intend to comment on your expert evidence on archaeology (the only area upon which you could have properly provided expert evidence) or the "evidence" given in relation to others including Auction Houses and on English law (which again was wrong, at best given recklessly as to the truth of the statement and given only to cause harm to our clients maliciously). We focus in this letter on the "evidence" given in relation to the Papadimitriou family. We use "evidence" in this manner as anything outside your expertise of archaeology could not be evidence in a true manner and you were not able

to give witness evidence on such topics. Witness evidence requires first hand contemporaneous knowledge.

What is readily apparent from the "evidence" that you gave to the Greek Court is that you are obsessed with seeking to injure our clients and that, such is your drive and determination to cause harm, that you will say anything regardless as to whether (i) it is true and (ii) you have any knowledge whatsoever on the topic. As such, your "evidence" was malicious given with the sole intention of causing harm.

By way of example only:

1. You stated that our clients were connoisseurs of the international trade of antiquities. This is not correct. Our clients do not and have never traded in antiquities. It was their deceased brother/uncle Christo Michailidis who was involved in the antiquities business. No doubt you will provide full and complete evidence to support this statement.
2. You stated that, our clients must have known of the trade in antiquities because of their close connection to Christo Michailidis who you said was a criminal and dealing in antiquities with the clear inference that our clients are criminals by your claims that they too trade in antiquities. This is not only wrong, but you could not know whether such a statement was true when you gave it. Please provide all evidence that our clients have traded in antiquities – by which we mean evidence relating to our clients directly, not Christo Michailidis. As you are well aware, the fact that a party may have provided a guarantee for a loan to a business does not impute them with dealing in that business. However, if that is your genuine position please confirm as we will need to raise such statements with the banks who loan to any such business and who will no doubt wish to take such statements up with you directly.
3. You informed the Court that our clients must have known of their obligation to declare antiquities. This is a wholly incorrect statement and a statement that you could not have any genuine belief was true. You have no knowledge of our clients' state of mind at the time the Law came into force and this statement was made purely maliciously to cause damage to our clients. No doubt if you have any evidence (by which we mean proof) as to our clients' state of knowledge you will provide it by return.
4. In relation to the 17 albums, you informed the Court that our clients had knowledge of these albums and of their contents. You have no direct knowledge of this but have simply referred to a journalist – Peter Watson - and what he has said in a book. Not only is what Mr Watson said not correct and evidence was produced to confirm this, but Mr Watson has also stated that he does not know where he got that information from. Your evidence was wrong as our clients did not have knowledge of the albums before they were seized. This was not in your knowledge, not in your area of expertise and not relevant to your evidence therefore but you made statements maliciously with the sole intention of causing harm.
5. Further you informed the Court that the photographs were commissioned by Christo Michailidis and Robin Symes by a professional photographer, that the albums were an important tool for their business for showing clients and marketing their stock and thus the chattels had been handled and traded by them at some point in time. This statement was made to infer that our clients, as relations of Christo Michailidis must be criminals. We believe that you gave this "evidence" without any knowledge as to



whether you were correct as you never interviewed Mr Michaildis about the albums, as to who created them, for what purpose and whether Messrs Michailidis and Symes acquired the albums in completed form. We require you to provide all evidential proof as to these statements. If it remains your position that our clients are criminals based upon these statements we require you to say so unequivocally. If it is not, we require you to withdraw such statement and all inferences attached to it.

6. You stated that you had cross referenced 744 chattels out of the 1314 in the albums and that 95.1% were of illegal origin and the balance of 4.9% you had doubts as to their origin. Please provide a full list of all items where you state that they are of illegal origin with evidence.
7. You further informed the Court that our clients must have known from the albums that they evidenced something illegal. Again, you had and have no knowledge as to the state of mind of our clients and their lack of knowledge of antiquities such that *had* they seen the albums which they had not, what they would have thought. Despite this, and in flagrant disregard for your obligations, the duty to give truthful evidence and not make up statements to suit your quest to harm our clients, you stated that our clients would have known that the albums evidenced illegality. Please provide full and complete evidence for such statements.
8. You stated that auction houses have, since the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, knowingly and systematically been selling objects without proper and legal provenance but with non-existent or forged papers and you further said "especially Christies". As you know, 4 works of art were bought at Christie's which form part of the subject matter before the Greek Court. However, you stated that 3 of these pieces were fine and not illegally acquired. In relation to the Roman Marble Aesculapius you made no comment. For ease the catalogue extract is enclosed. Given your statement about auction houses, please confirm unequivocally whether you are saying that the Roman Marble Aesculapius was illegally acquired, whether its provenance papers were forged, non-existent and/or whether Christie's lied as to this object.
9. Given your statements as to your alleged first-hand knowledge as to our clients' knowledge of the 17 albums and your written statements regarding those albums dated 26 April 2006 and 8 June 2007, please provide all evidence as to the statements made regarding the compilation of those albums by Mr Michailidis.

We are most concerned by your actions against our clients. Your statements made about them and their knowledge were given without regard as to whether you knew their state of mind, were untruthful and you knew you did not have knowledge as to your statements. They were statements solely introduced for your own malicious purposes. Further they were gratuitous and irrelevant.

You are no doubt aware that a witness or expert who gives evidence in Greece and whose statements are false and damaging, and/or who spreads knowingly or recklessly untrue evidence which damages another may be liable for defamation. This clearly applies to statements made by you.

Further, our clients have suffered damage to their reputation in the UK as a consequence of your malicious acts. In circumstances where you have given evidence for your own malicious purposes you may be liable also under English defamation laws.

Under EU Regulations, as you are a resident of England, any claims against you under all and any laws of Member States are to be brought in England. We reserve our clients' position generally in relation to this.

We look forward to receiving your full answers to the above within 7 days. If it is your position that the Ministry of Culture and/or Prosecutor required you to make statements that you knew were false, you were reckless as to whether they were false, we require you to say so unequivocally.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bird & Bird LLP". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Bird & Bird LLP**

enc

# CHRISTIE'S

## A ROMAN MARBLE AESCULAPIUS CIRCA 1ST-2ND CENTURY A.D.

Lot 163 / Sale 1531

### Price Realized

\$4,800

Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and do not reflect costs, financing fees or application of buyer's or seller's credits.

### Estimate

\$5,000 - \$7,000

### Sale Information

Sale 1531

Antiquities

8 June 2005

New York, Rockefeller Plaza



### Lot Description

A ROMAN MARBLE AESCULAPIUS  
CIRCA 1ST-2ND CENTURY A.D.

The healing god standing with his weight on his left leg, his right relaxed and bent at the knee, wearing a mantle over his left shoulder and around his waist, his left arm akimbo, clutching the folds in his hand, his bare right arm angled down and likely once resting on his snake-entwined staff, his son Telesphorus standing to his left, wearing a mantle and a Phrygian cap

8 1/8 in. (20.6 cm.) high

### Provenance

New York Art Market, circa 1997.

### Register to Bid:

Please register online at [www.christies.com](http://www.christies.com)  
or contact the Christie's Bid Department at:

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