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For Immediate Release

20 April 2006

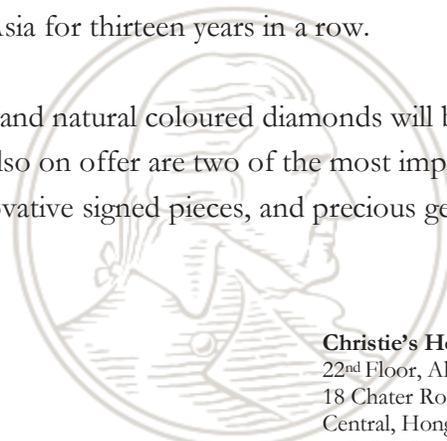
CHRISTIE'S HONG KONG JEWELLERY AUCTION FEATURES FLAWLESS DIAMONDS, GEMSTONES AND EXCEPTIONAL JADEITE



Magnificent Jewellery and Jadeite Jewellery
1 June 2006

Hong Kong – To celebrate Christie's Hong Kong's 20th anniversary this year, the *Magnificent Jewellery and Jadeite Jewellery* Spring auction to take place on 1 June promises to be the best opportunity for collectors to view and acquire an extraordinary array of exquisite jewels. Since its first stand-alone sales of Western jewellery and jadeite jewellery in 1994, Christie's Hong Kong has gained an outstanding reputation and consolidated its position as the market leader of jewellery sales in Asia for thirteen years in a row.

In the forthcoming Spring sale, flawless diamonds and natural coloured diamonds will be featured alongside alluring gemstones and superb jadeite jewellery. Also on offer are two of the most important private collections ever auctioned in Asia featuring exclusive and innovative signed pieces, and precious gemstones.



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A Superb 13.53 Carat 'Golconda' Diamond

Among the flawless diamonds offered in the sale, the most important piece is a superb 13.53 carat pear-shaped D colour, internally flawless diamond ring from the legendary 'Golconda' mines of Eastern India (Lot 2584, estimate: HK\$7,500,000– 9,500,000/ US\$950,000–1,200,000).

Diamond mining in India started as early as 400BC and for about 2,000 years, India was almost the only source of precious gems in the world. 'Golconda' mines are famed for diamonds of superb luminousness and transparency. In the 17th century, mining activities in the Golconda mines reached its climax and these mines were almost depleted by the mid 18th-century.

Today, it is extremely difficult to find in the market a diamond which possesses the superior quality to be considered worthy of the 'Golconda' attribution. Even though there are modern stones which exhibit similar qualities, they can only be certified as 'Type IIa'.

The extraordinary stone offered in this Christie's sale is however an exceptional one displaying an unparalleled level of clarity and purity, subtle luminous quality and a water-clear transparency reminiscent of diamonds from the 'Golconda' mines. It also exhibits an antique cutting and is graded by the authoritative Gübelin Gemmological Laboratory as a 'Golconda' diamond, an honour that no other diamond in the world has gained in the last two years. This highly-anticipated star lot is expected to create huge interest and enthusiasm in the market.

A Magnificent 5.34 Carat Fancy Intense Blue Diamond

Another undisputed star of the sale is a spectacular oval-shaped fancy intense blue diamond ring of 5.34 carats (Lot 2535, Estimate on request). A coloured diamond is nature's rarest expression of beauty. The superb quality and the sensational colour of this exceptional piece place it among one of the most beautiful blue diamonds ever seen in the market. The sumptuous beauty of this ring is enhanced by the pear-shaped pink coloured diamonds flanked on each side.

An Extremely Rare 9.25 Carat Burmese Ruby

Among all the valuable gemstones in the world, Burmese rubies are most treasured and sought after. Even rarer today are those over 5 carats – and particularly, ones that show no indications of thermal enhancement – owing to the rapidly decreasing yields of stones from the reputed Mogok Stone Tract ruby.

Christie's stunned the market this February by selling *The Graff Ruby*, an 8.62 carat unheated cushion-cut Burmese ruby ring by Bulgari in St. Moritz for a staggering US\$3,637,480, or US\$425,000 per carat, setting a world record per carat for a ruby.

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In the forthcoming June sale, Christie's Hong Kong is privileged to offer a 9.25 carat cushion-shaped ruby ring of a comparable exceptional quality. Spared of any thermal treatment, this breathtaking ruby displays a richly saturated and a vivid bright red colour typical of old Burmese material, coupled with a strong fluorescence which adds the effect of an internal glow to the stone. Its high degree of transparency, together with the ideal cut, shape and size, make it one of the rarest and most desirable gems in the market. It will be offered at an attractive estimate of HK\$7,300,000–9,500,000/ US\$930,000–1,200,000 (Lot 2590).

Two Important Private Collections

Christie's will present in the Spring sale two important and splendid collections of jewellery ever to appear at auctions in Asia, showcasing a spectacular array of signed jewellery, precious gemstones and flawless diamonds.

Signed Jewellery from an Asian Lady

The first collection, assembled by an Asian lady, comprises 18 signed pieces by world renowned jewelers including Cartier, Chaumet, Harry Winston and Van Cleef and Arpels featuring the highest quality workmanship and timeless design. The artistic creativity of every piece in the collection reflects her passion, taste and eye for rare and demure jewellery.

Leading the collection is an elegant Art Deco emerald and diamond necklace by Chaumet, *circa* 1930, which was especially designed and made by Chaumet for a member of the French aristocracy (Lot 2583, estimate: HK\$3,200,000–4,800,000/ US\$400,000–600,000). Composed of geometrical diamond links spaced by cushion-cut diamonds and suspending a stunning emerald drop of over 40 carats, the necklace is a quintessential example of the distinct and creative design of the Art Deco period.

The collector's love for innovative design and exceptional craftsmanship is exemplified in a group of masterpieces by Cartier that is rarely seen at auction. Of particular interest is a highly unusual 'Panther' bangle wristwatch designed as a pavé-set diamond panther with its head resting on a crystal prism revealing the diamond dial of a quartz movement watch (Lot 2581, estimate: HK\$2,000,000–3,200,000/ US\$250,000–400,000). Also of the 'Panther' design is a spectacular diamond and onyx necklace with a crouching panther in the centre (Lot 2582, estimate: HK\$2,400,000-4,000,000/ US\$300,000-500,000). Equally striking is a unique and exquisite rock crystal and diamond necklace by Cartier with the front ingeniously designed as an articulated line of rock crystal cylinders with brilliant-cut diamond borders (Lot 2580, estimate: HK\$1,600,000–2,400,000/ US\$200,000-300,000).

Gemstones and Diamonds from a Private Collection

The second private collection, garnered by several Asian collectors, is distinguished by its exceptional diversity and superlative quality. It presents a splendid selection of 40 gemstones ranging from diamonds, sapphires, rubies, emeralds to opals and South Sea pearls. The majority of the stones have been certified as having no indications of thermal treatment or colour enhancement, rendering them highly coveted by collectors worldwide.

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Sapphires of various colours are well represented in the collection including a highly transparent square-cut sapphire of 31.97 carats that exhibits a rare and captivating royal blue colour typical of the finest sapphires (Lot 2474, estimate: HK\$800,000–1,200,000/ US\$100,000–150,000). Another notable piece is a Sri Lankan oval-shaped pink sapphire ring of 21.97 carats possessing a stunning and attractive pink colour and large size rarely seen in the market (Lot 2467, estimate: HK\$480,000–640,000/ US\$60,000–80,000).

Also from Sri Lanka is the rare 'padparadscha' sapphire with a unique orange-pink shade that resembles the colours of a fiery sunset and the lotus flower for which its name actually derives. This oval-shaped 22.43 carat 'padparadscha' sapphire ring from the collection possesses a perfect blend of delicate and pastel orange-pink colour exemplifying the best quality of a 'padparadscha' sapphire (Lot 2468, estimate: HK\$650,000–950,000/ US\$80,000–120,000).

Further rarities include an extremely fine cut-cornered rectangular-cut emerald ring weighing 21.74 carats of a richly saturated bluish green colour and certified to have originated from Colombia (Lot 2472, estimate: HK\$1,250,000–2,000,000/ US\$160,000–250,000). Other interesting stones from the collection include a pendant set with a large cat's eye chrysoberyl weighing 71.90 carats (Lot 2469, estimate: HK\$480,000–650,000/ US\$60,000–80,000); and a rare oval-shaped fire opal ring of 23.49 carats displaying a brilliant reddish orange colour which is most desirable among the opals mined in Mexico (Lot 2465, estimate: HK\$80,000–120,000/ US\$10,000–15,000).

The broad appeal of the collection is completed by a magnificent group of D colour, internally flawless diamonds, including:

- An impressive D colour, internally flawless pear-shaped pendant necklace of 21.11 carats (Lot 2586, estimate: HK\$8,600,000–12,000,000/ US\$1,100,000–1,500,000).
- A 17.80 carat brilliant-cut diamond ring, D colour, internally flawless (Lot 2589, estimate: HK\$7,000,000–10,000,000/ US\$900,000–1,200,000).
- A pair of ear pendants set with D colour, internally flawless pear-shaped diamonds of 10.17 and 10.76 carats (Lot 2587, estimate: HK\$7,800,000–12,000,000/ US\$1,000,000–1,500,000).

Magnificent Jadeite Jewellery

Christie's has created and maintained its reputation as the world's most important auction centre for superb quality jadeite jewellery. Included in the Hong Kong Spring sale is a magnificent array of jadeite jewellery featuring bead necklaces, cabochon rings and earrings, bangles and carvings.

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Carved from the finest jadeite mined from Burma is a single-strand jadeite bead necklace comprising 35 graduated highly translucent bright emerald green beads, measuring approximately 11.94 to 15.68 mm. It is extremely difficult to find a necklace with well-matched beads of very fine texture and a high degree of purity (Lot 2565, estimate: HK\$8,000,000–12,000,000/ US\$1,000,000–1,500,000). The remarkable beauty of this necklace is further enhanced with a diamond clasp of 3.06 carats.

Also of note is a pair of oval vivid emerald green jadeite cabochon and diamond earrings of glassy and very fine-textured material. Cabochons combining such large size, thickness and perfect colour are increasingly rare in the market (Lot 2564, estimate: HK\$2,800,000–3,800,000/ US\$350,000–475,000).

A further highlight is a magnificent jadeite pepper and diamond pendant made of thick, highly translucent material of excellent texture and a vivid emerald green colour. It is perfectly carved with trailing tendrils and an auspicious bat clinging to one side symbolizing ‘welcoming good fortune’ (Lot 2521, estimate: HK\$2,800,000–3,800,000/ US\$350,000–475,000).

The *Magnificent Jewellery and Jadeite Jewellery* sale also offers an interesting selection of jadeite and jewellery, including signed pieces, to be sold without reserve.

Pre-sale Exhibitions:

New York	Christie's	9-10 April
Singapore	Grand Hyatt Singapore	14-15 April
Tokyo	Park Hyatt Tokyo	24-25 April
Jakarta	Christie's	28-29 April
Shanghai	The Westin Shanghai	10-11 May
Beijing	St. Regis Beijing	13-14 May
Bangkok	Plaza Athenee Bangkok	16-17 May
Taipei	Fubon Life Assurance Building	20-21 May
Hong Kong	Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre	26-31 May

Auction:

Magnificent Jewellery and Jadeite Jewellery, 1 June at 11:30 am & 2:00 pm
Convention Hall, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre

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