

Press Release

CHRISTIE'S

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THE SPECTACULAR ARTS OF ANCIENT AND IMPERIAL CHINA AT CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK



Important Chinese Snuff Bottles from the J&J Collection, Part V

Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art

Masterworks of Ancient and Imperial China

17 September 2008

New York- On September 17, Christie's New York will start its spectacular trilogy of Chinese Art sales with the single-owner sale *Important Chinese Snuff Bottles from the J&J Collection, Part V* followed by *Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art* and an evening session will be devoted to *Masterworks of Ancient and Imperial China*, offering extraordinary works of art from various periods. The three sales of over 500 lots, include superb sculptures, bronzes, ceramics, jade objects and furniture, and are expected to realize in excess of \$21,000,000.

Joe-Hynn Yang, Head of Christie's Chinese Works of Art, New York, comments, "We are honored to present three exceptional sales for Christie's Asian Art Week this Fall. We are particularly pleased to offer a select group of 51 works, *Masterworks of Ancient and Imperial China*, which includes many pieces that are not only fresh to the field but also with exceptional provenance and publication history. The fifth installment of *Important Chinese Snuff Bottles from the J&J Collection* will include superbly crafted snuff bottles ranging from classic stylized motifs to traditional mythical symbols. *Fine Chinese Ceramics & Works of Art* offers magnificent works of art from all major dynasties in China and also features Property of the Ping Y. Tai Foundation. All three sales provide an excellent opportunity for collectors to acquire works from significant private collections."

Important Chinese Snuff Bottles from the J&J Collection, Part V

10am

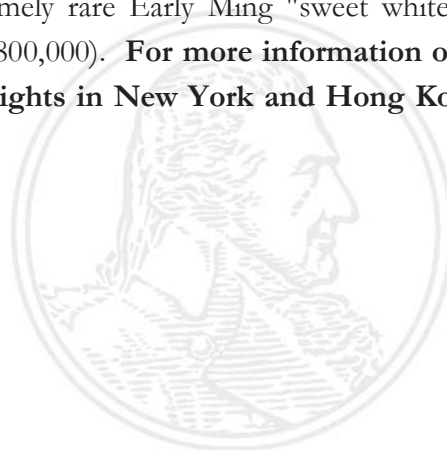
After the successful results of The J&J Collection Part IV in March 2007, which realized \$2.9 million, Christie's New York will present Part V on 17 September, offering 88 superb examples of this charming miniature art form from this well-established and exceptionally fine collection. Highlights include a very rare rose enamelled double-gourd glass bottle (estimate: \$400,000-500,000), attributed to the Palace workshops in Beijing (1736-1780); an exceptional Imperial Beijing enamel snuff bottle decorated with a woman and child (*left image on page one*- estimate: \$220,000-300,000) and an exquisite and unusual jade pebble snuff bottle of the Suzhou School (1680-1780) (estimate: \$90,000-120,000).

Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art

11am & 2:30pm

Christie's New York continues the day with *Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art* in two sale sessions. The sale features over 350 objects of Chinese art from different periods, styles and techniques as well as a fine group of ceramics and bronzes from the *Property of the Ping Y. Tai Foundation*.

Property of the Ping Y. Tai Foundation will offer a selection of 35 archaic bronzes and ceramics which date from the Shang Dynasty (c.1600 to 1100 BC) through the 20th century. The exceptional lot from the Ping Y. Tai Foundation is the extremely rare Early Ming "sweet white" vase, *Meiping*, Yongle period (1403-1425) (estimate: \$600,000-800,000). **For more information on the *Property of the Ping Y. Tai Foundation* and its highlights in New York and Hong Kong, a separate press release is available.**





Leading the rest of the sale is an extraordinary yellow-ground green enameled 'Dragon' vase from a New England Collection (*image left*-estimate: \$600,000-800,000). The vase, one of the fewer than six vases known worldwide, has the distinctive Qianlong six-character sealmark (1736-1795) and is executed in rich color tones featuring a lively five-clawed dragon, enameled in emerald-green and egg-yolk yellow colors. Also with the Qianlong six-character seal mark is a cloisonné enamel tripod censer and cover (*right image on page 1*- estimate: \$120,000-150,000). This large imperial incense burner is particularly noteworthy with its delicate design of gilt-copper lion masks, large and small flowers and for bearing the mark of the Qianlong Emperor.

Sculpture plays an important part in the sales this season, with rare limestone and bronze examples made with extraordinary craftsmanship. Of distinct note is gilt-bronze model of a pagoda, from Yunnan, Dali Kingdom (12-13th Century) (estimate: \$120,000-150,000). It is a striking twelve-story pagoda with a figure of a seated Buddha positioned between the four guardian figures representing the Four Heavenly Kings. Two limestone items from the Tang Dynasty (618-907) include a very dark grey limestone relief carving of *Lokapala* - a powerful, muscular guardian (estimate: \$40,000-60,000), and a limestone head of Buddha possibly from the Longmen Caves (estimate: \$30,000-50,000). A centerpiece of the furniture section is an imperial zitan incense stand, *Fangxiangji*, of the 18th Century (*image right*-estimate: \$150,000-180,000). The purple-toned stand is beautifully carved along the edges with floral scroll and lotus petals throughout the body and legs. Zitan is an extremely rare and expensive wood and it is prized for its hard, dense, and tight-grained quality.



The sale also features an exceptionally rare blue and white moonflask with the Yongzheng six-character seal mark (1723-1736) (*image left*-estimate: \$300,000-400,000). The unusual moonflask shape is well painted in early Ming style along with a gorgeous design of three fruiting and flowering branches. Also, a fine pair of white jade bowls of the 18th century (estimate: \$120,000-150,000) present an example of the meticulous selection of highly transparent, even, and flawless white jade. With recent heightened interest in white jade, this fine pair should attract keen bidding, particularly given their provenance from a French private collection circa 1990s.

Masterworks of Ancient and Imperial China

6:30pm

The day will conclude with an evening session of 51 outstanding lots, *Masterworks of Ancient and Imperial China*, which offers archaic bronzes, exceptional jades, and stone sculptures, and is expected to realize in excess of \$8 million.



Highlighting the archaic bronzes section is an exquisite bronze ritual wine vessel, *Zun*, Shang Dynasty, 14-13th Century BC (estimate: \$500,000-700,000). This *Zun* is a fine example of its type, with elegant proportions and a unified decorative scheme. Unusual and intriguing is a magnificent painted bronze goose-form lamp, western Han Dynasty, 2nd Century BC (*image left*- estimate: \$400,000-600,000). “Smokeless” lamps such as this one were supported within the outer depression of the oil holder with a short central pricket that opens into the back of the goose. Smoke would have risen up the goose’s head through the neck and into cool water held in the body.

The auction also features a strong group of jades from several private collections, such as Property from the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul E. Manheim and an Important Asian Collection including a rare and important pair of imperial white jade boxes and covers, Qianlong period (1736-1795) (*image right*- estimate: \$800,000-1,200,000). The covers are finely carved with large flower heads and the boxes are raised on enameled gilt bronze stands formed by six stylized dragons on the end. Equally distinctive is a magnificent imperial white jade table screen, Qianlong Period (1736-1795) (estimate: \$500,000-700,000). The rectangular panel is carved with great detail in high relief, of a scholar set in the mountains by a lake and a large gnarled pine tree, all beneath an incised imperial poem.



In the stone sculpture section, the sale boasts sculptures from famous caves such as Yungang and Tianlongshan. A beautiful highlight of this group is a magnificent sandstone head of Buddha of the Yungang caves, Shanxi Province, Northern Wei Dynasty (386-534) (*image left*- estimate: \$250,000-350,000). With a well carved face detailing a dimpled chin and a gentle smile, it was exhibited by Yamanaka & Company in Osaka, Japan, as early as 1934. A rare and important sandstone head of Buddha, Northern Qi Dynasty (549-577), from the

Tianlongshan Caves of Shanxi Province (*center image on page 1*- estimate: \$200,000-300,000) can be traced back to its original location in the west wall of cave 10, and has an impressive provenance. It was sold from Yamanaka & Company in New York in 1943, and has been in the famous collection of Walter and Molly Bareiss, Connecticut, since the 1960s.

An outstanding Cizhou green-glazed painted baluster vase is a testament to the craftsmanship of the potters during the Song/Jin Dynasty, 12th Century (*image right*- estimate: \$600,000-800,000). The shape, richness of the green glaze, and the decorative scheme of two leafy peony sprays with incised details all add to its overall beauty. It was formerly in a private Japanese collection since the 1980s. An important and very significant pair of imperial bronze altar vases provides an example of the



outstanding quality achieved at the Imperial Foundry Workshops, *Zaobanchu*, in Beijing, during the Qianlong reign (549-577) (estimate: \$500,000-700,000). Each vase is very heavily and crisply cast in relief with a dense pattern of archaizing dragons. The sale also features an important and unique



large gilt-copper dragon plaque of the Liao dynasty (907-1125) (*image left*- estimate: \$250,000-350,000). The powerful yet elegant dragon is cast with a roaring open mouth, a pair of sweptback horns, a windblown mane, and short spines along the backbone leading to the long tail, and may represent the Green Dragon of the East.

Auction:

17 September, 10am

- *Important Chinese Snuff Bottles from The J&J Collection of Chinese Snuff Bottles, Part V*

17 September, 11am and 2:30pm

- *Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art*

17 September- 6:30pm

- *Masterworks of Imperial and Ancient China*

Viewing: Christie's Rockefeller Galleries

12-16 September

Note: \$ denotes U.S. dollars



About Christie's

Christie's is the world's leading art business with global art sales in 2007 that totalled £3.1 billion/\$6.3 billion. This marks the highest total in company and in art auction history. For the first half of 2008, art sales totalled £1.8 million / \$3.5 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. Founded in 1766 by James Christie, Christie's conducted the greatest auctions of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, and today remains a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 600 sales annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from \$200 to over \$80 million. Christie's has 85 offices in 43 countries and 14 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Los Angeles, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Tel Aviv, Dubai, Hong Kong and Zurich. Most recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in emerging and new markets such as Russia, China, India and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Mumbai and Dubai.

*Estimates do not include buyer's premium

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Images available on request

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