

Press Release

CHRISTIE'S

佳士得香港有限公司

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CHRISTIE'S HONG KONG AUTUMN JEWELLERY AUCTION HIGHLIGHTS SUPERB JADEITE, PRECIOUS GEMSTONES AND COLOURED DIAMONDS

The most important piece of carved jadeite ever to appear at a jewellery auction



Magnificent Jewellery and Jadeite Jewellery 29 November 2005

Hong Kong – Christie's Hong Kong *Magnificent Jewellery and Jadeite Jewellery* auction on 29 November will present an impressive array of superb jadeite pieces, stunning gemstones, flawless and coloured diamonds, and exquisite signed pieces by the world's most renowned jewellers including **Graff**, **Boucheron** and **Harry Winston**. Taking the centre-stage is a jadeite plaque by China's foremost jade-carving master Wang Shu Sen, the most important piece of carved jadeite by a 20th century jade carver ever to appear at a jewellery auction.

A Spectacular Jadeite Plaque by Master Wang Shu Sen

Jade has been at the centre of Chinese civilization for more than 5,000 years and has been used as a material for carvings since the Han Dynasty (206BC-220AD). Jade is highly treasured by the Chinese not only for its elusive

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purity and beauty, but it is believed that this stone is imbued with magical protective powers. Jadeite from Burma was introduced to China only in the late 18th century and the glass-like translucency of the emerald green jadeite became the favourite material used for carvings and jewellery by the Imperial Court of the Qing dynasty.

The star lot is a **spectacular and beautifully carved jadeite plaque made of highly translucent glass-like material of vitreous emerald green colour by Wang Shu Sen (1917 – 1989)**, one of China's foremost jade carving masters (Estimate: HK\$8,000,000-12,000,000/ US\$1,000,000-1,500,000).

Wang started his jade carving career at the age of thirteen when he became an apprentice to his father. In 1937, at the age of twenty, he already became one of China's four top jade workers. In 1955, he was named a Veteran Jade Carving Master, the highest honour of the time for his work. Wang's masterpieces include four huge jadeite carvings declared as National Treasures by the Chinese Government in 1990.

When Wang was presented with the jadeite rough in 1979, he was enthralled by its translucency and vivid emerald green colour but was dismayed by the many black spots in the stone. Desiring perfection, Wang took more than a month to pick out the impurities before proceeding to carve the stone.

The result is this magnificent plaque, measuring 74.19 x 33.75 x 8.18 mm., which depicts vividly a festive scene of *qun xian zhu shou* or "Wishes of longevity from a group of immortals". Due to the complexity of the subject matter, it is exceptional to find this traditional Chinese legend portrayed on such a small scale. When viewed under a magnifying glass, the two sides reveal a microcosm inhabited by the Eight Immortals and other deities, personifying opposing stages in life and society such as old age and youth, nobility and proletariat and are revered as a symbol of eternal life. The background, composed of sea, mountains, clouds and mythical animals, is no less alluring. Epitomizing perfection in jadeite material, craftsmanship and subject matter, this is unquestionably one of the greatest masterpieces by Wang, and the first work ever by the master to appear at an international auction.

A jadeite saddle ring from the 'Seventy Four Thousand' rough

Another noteworthy piece is a magnificent **jadeite saddle ring** cut from the legendary rough boulder 'Seventy Four Thousand', named after the amount of silver taels used for its purchase. In the 1930s, so perfect were the qualities of this boulder that it became the standard by which dealers and connoisseurs in Shanghai and Beijing measured all other jadeite roughs (Estimate: HK\$3,200,000-4,800,000/ US\$400,000-600,000).

The saddle ring on offer possesses all the unique characteristics of the famous boulder with its density and purity of colour combined with a vitreous, fine-textured body. Unlike many other saddle rings that have a green top and white shank, this ring has a consistent vivid green colour throughout, the shank being identical to the face, making it truly unique and exceptional.

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A suite of jadeite cabochon jewellery

Equally splendid is a set of **jadeite cabochon and diamond jewellery** comprising a ring and pair of earrings, carved from the finest quality Burmese jadeite. The cabochons display a high level of translucency and a vivid emerald green colour which greatly appeal to Asian collectors (Estimate: HK\$4,500,000-6,500,000/ US\$565,000-815,000).

Gemstones of Asia

Asia is famed for producing some of the world's most beautiful gemstones, and Christie's Hong Kong is privileged to showcase the richness of these stones in their November sale.

Burmese rubies

The best rubies originate from Burma, and fine Burmese rubies of over 10 carats without any thermal enhancement are extremely unusual. An exceptional **18.83 carat Burmese star ruby ring** will be highly coveted by jewellery collectors. This exquisite star ruby exhibiting a brilliant purplish red hue typical of Burmese rubies, is further enhanced by an exquisite surround of tourmaline inlaid with pear-shaped rose-cut diamonds (Estimate: HK\$5,500,000-8,000,000/ US\$700,000-1,000,000).

Sapphires

The spectacular array of sapphires featured in the sale includes examples from all three famous sapphire mining areas in Asia – Kashmir, Burma and Sri Lanka. **Kashmir sapphires** are ranked among the most beautiful coloured gemstones in the world. The fact that mines have been depleted over the years makes Kashmir sapphires increasingly rare. The **25.71 carat cut-cornered rectangular-cut sapphire** in a ring by **Boucheron** displays a bright, yet strongly saturated and homogenous blue, representing the best quality of Kashmir sapphires (Estimate: HK\$2,750,000-3,500,000/ US\$350,000-440,000).

Of equal rarity is an unmounted **sugarloaf sapphire of 113.11 carats from Burma**, possessing a richly saturated violetish blue colour, a high degree of transparency and a finely proportioned cut. With its extraordinary size, unique colour, ideal cut and shape, this sapphire is one of the finest ever to be seen at auction (Lot 2191, Estimate: HK\$4,500,000-5,500,000/ US\$570,000-690,000).

Also of Burmese origin is a **41.19 carat cut-cornered rectangular-cut sapphire** of a charming violetish blue colour which forms the centre piece of a diamond necklace by **Graff** from a private collection. This necklace is a perfect example of Graff's unique talent of masterfully combining superb craftsmanship and elegant designs with the finest quality gemstones (Estimate: HK\$3,200,000-4,000,000/ US\$400,000-500,000).

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Sri Lanka, formerly Ceylon, is distinguished for producing sapphires with a unique soft, transparent colour. A beautiful pair of ear pendants is created by harmonizing a **splendid 22.55 carat modified circular-cut sapphire of Ceylon origin with a superb 20.79 carat modified circular-cut fancy yellow diamond**. Matching two such perfect stones is no common feat and the beauty of the ear pendants is further accentuated by its simply elegant design (Estimate: HK\$2,000,000-2,800,000/ US\$250,000-350,000).

Dazzling Diamonds and Coloured Diamonds

Christie's Hong Kong has established a reputation for selling some of the world's most important diamonds. The auction on 29 November once again features a magnificent selection of diamonds and coloured diamonds.

Leading the selection of coloured diamonds is a fancy intense yellow diamond and diamond ring, by **Harry Winston**, set with a **modified cut-cornered rectangular-cut fancy intense yellow diamond of 83.48 carats** (Estimate: HK\$11,000,000-15,000,000/ US\$1,400,000-1,900,000). The beauty of this large stone is attributed to its exceptional cut which shows off the brilliance of its colour and clarity in full. Coloured diamonds are frequently imbued with impurities and internally flawless coloured diamonds are rare as in this 6.88 carat pear-shaped internally flawless **fancy purplish pink diamond ring** (Estimate: HK\$7,200,000-9,600,000/ US\$900,000-1,200,000).

Among the dazzling diamonds on offer, the most splendid example is an **18.02 carat D-Flawless Type IIa square-cut diamond ring**, with excellent polish and symmetry. It is exceedingly rare to find in the present market a diamond of this superior type and size (Estimate: HK\$9,200,000-12,000,000/ US\$1,150,000-1,500,000).

The President Vargas Diamond No. 6, weighing 25.33 carats by Harry Winston is a highly important rectangular-cut diamond (Estimate: HK\$2,000,000-3,000,000/US\$250,000-380,000). It is cut from the "President Vargas Diamond", weighing 726.60 carats and ranked the third largest diamond rough in the world. This rough was first discovered on 13 August 1938 in the alluvial mines of the San Antonio River in the Coromandel district of Minas Gerais, the principal source of diamonds in Brazil. It was named "President Vargas" in honour of the then President of Brazil, Getulio Dornelles Vargas. The rough was then purchased by the legendary Harry Winston in 1941 and cut into 29 stones weighing a total of 411.06 carats. This Vargas Diamond No. 6 offered at Christie's Hong Kong is one of the sixteen rectangular-cut diamonds and is unique by its desirable qualities in colour and purity as well as its remarkable provenance.

Signed Jewellery Pieces

In addition to creations by **Graff** and **Boucheron**, jewellery designed by other world-renowned jewellers such as **Harry Winston**, **Cartier**, **Van Cleef & Arpels** and **Bulgari** are prominently featured in the sale.

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Carvin French is widely acclaimed for his technical brilliance in the creation of extraordinary and highly original jewellery pieces. Totally adorable is this **pink diamond pig clip brooch** on offer with its onyx eyes and pavé-set pink diamond body, enhanced by carved emerald leaves (Estimate: HK\$160,000-240,000/ US\$20,000-30,000). Also by Carvin French is a **pair of coloured diamond and diamond flower clip brooches**, each designed as a pavé-set diamond and pink and yellow diamond rose with exquisitely crafted petals and stem (Estimate: HK\$550,000-800,000/ US\$70,000-100,000).

Many pieces of signed jewellery from several private collections and jewellery without reserve will also be included in the *Magnificent Jewellery and Jadeite Jewellery* sale.

Pre-sale Exhibitions:

Singapore	Grand Hyatt Singapore	October 7–8
New York	Christie's	October 17–18
Hong Kong	Mandarin Oriental	October 22–23
Bangkok	Four Seasons Hotel	October 27–28
Beijing	St. Regis Beijing	November 5–6
Shanghai	The Westin Shanghai	November 8–9
Tokyo	Christie's	November 11–12
Jakarta	Christie's	November 15–16
Taipei	Fubon Life Assurance Building	November 19–20
Hong Kong	Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre	November 25–28

Auction:

Magnificent Jewellery and Jadeite Jewellery, 29 November at 12 noon
Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre

More information about Christie's sales of Magnificent Jewellery and Jadeite Jewellery can be found on www.christies.com. All lots from the sale can be viewed online along with full catalogue descriptions on Lotfinder®, which also allows clients to leave absentee bids. www.christies.com provides information on more than 80 sale categories, buying and selling at auction, complete auction results, and Christie's international auction calendar.

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