

Press Release

**CHRISTIE'S**

**For Immediate Release**

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## **CHRISTIE'S PRESENTS THE FALL SALE OF JAPANESE AND KOREAN ART**



Toshusai Sharaku (act. 1794-95),  
*The Actor Otani Oniji III as Edobei in the  
Kabuki Play Koi nyobo somewake tazuna*,  
woodcut, *okubi-e*  
Estimate: \$600,000-800,000



A blue and white square bottle with  
landscape, plum and bamboo design  
18<sup>th</sup> century  
Estimate: \$400,000-500,000

**New York** – On September 14, Christie's is pleased to present the Fall Sale of Japanese and Korean Art, which offers over 250 exemplary works of Japanese and Korean art. With over 100 lots, the Japanese section of the sale will feature Intro from the Collection from the Estate Catherine H. Edson, paintings, lacquer wares, and furniture, while the Korean portion includes fine porcelains, as well as traditional and modern paintings by Korean masters. The sale is expected to realize in excess of \$9 million.

## Japanese Art

Leading the Japanese section of the sale is *The Actor Otani Oniji III as Edobei in the Kabuki Play Koi nyobo somewake tazuna (The Beloved Wife's Particolored Reins)* by Toshiusai Sharaku (\$600,000-\$800,000, *illustrated on page 1*). This impressive portrait, along with four other lots in the sale, is among the twenty-eight masterworks of the artist, distinguished by its psychological intensity. Extremely rare, this is the most sought after of Sharaku's portraits. Other known impressions of this are in public institutions and have been highly published and exhibited.



Also available are two exceptional six-panel screens, which depict the Battles of Yashima and Ichinotani from *The Tale of Heike* (\$350,000-400,000, *left screen illustrated above*). Though both dating from the Momoyama or early Edo period of the late 16<sup>th</sup> century, the two screens are the product of very different Kyoto painting ateliers. They have since been joined to create the pairing of the final two battles of the Genpei Wars, fought between the Minamoto (Genji) and Taira (Heike) clans in 1180s. The right screen illustrates the battle in the spring of 1184 at Ichinotani (near present-day Kobe), while the left screen depicts the Taira retreat to Yashima, following their defeat in 1184.



Another highlight is a spectacular lacquer cabinet of the Meiji Period, circa 1900 (\$300,000-350,000, *illustrated left*). The cabinet is ornamented with a design of a famous boating excursion on the Oi River in Saga Arashiyama, the western outskirts of the Heian capital (modern Kyoto). The chest, designed by a painter and signed by three lacquer artists (Kawanobe Itcho, Kawanobe Heiemon and Funabashi Iwajiro), is a virtuoso example of Meiji craftsmanship and collaboration.

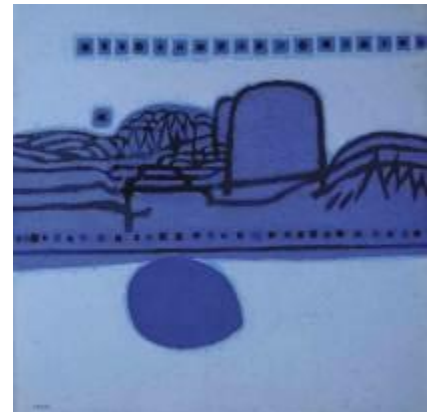


Also of note is a 12<sup>th</sup> century Heian period wood sculpture of Dainichi Nyorai (Mahavairocana) (\$150,000-200,000, *illustrated left*). Presented in princely regalia, the figure forms the gesture known as the “knowledge fist” with his hands. A wooden sculpture of Amida Nyorai, of the Kamakura period of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, is also available (\$150,000-200,000). Forming a different hand gesture, or *mudra*, than the sculpture of Dainichi Nyorai, Amida Nyorai is positioned in the gesture of “welcoming to paradise.” The position signals Amida’s descent from heaven to greet the soul of a faithful devotee at death.

A 19<sup>th</sup> century two-case lacquer inro by Koma Kansai is also available, from the Estate of Catherine H. Edson (\$30,000-50,000). Immortalized in the designs on this inro are scenes from the popular kabuki play, *Kanadehon Chushingura*, first produced in 1748.

### Korean Art

Highlighting the Korean portion of the sale is Kim Whanki’s (1913-1974) *Landscape in Blue* (\$2,000,000-2,200,000, *illustrated right*). Whanki has become a pillar of Korean modern masters by using his unique blend of Eastern and Western influences. In the 1950’s he began to extract imagery from the Korean landscape- a blue moon, a mountain, a forest- a symbolic naturalism in keeping with post-colonial nationalism and the art name he chose, Suhwa, “to speak with the trees.” *Landscape in Blue* is representative of the abstract style with which the artist is so closely associated. This painting was purchased by a private collector directly from the artist.



A splendid oil and mixed media painting by Park Sookeun is also available. *Returning from the Market* (painted in 1965) depicts three women, all in traditional Korean clothing (hanbok), and a boy, returning home from the market (\$400,000-500,000, *illustrated left*). Since Christie’s New York began selling the work of Park Sookeun eighteen years ago, he has

become the most sought-after modern Korean master. *Returning from the Market* has remained in the hands of the same collector, who purchased it directly from Park Sookeun. Twenty-one paintings by Park Sookeun have been sold by Christie's.

Also of note is an 18<sup>th</sup> century large blue and white porcelain bottle, painted with riverscapes and plants (\$400,000-\$500,000, *illustrated on page 1*). The Joseon Dynasty bottle depicts two scenes, both framed by narrow blue lines. One illustrates a scholar and boy attendant on a rock ledge, observing a fisherman poling his boat in an inlet, bordered by willows and grasses, while the other is painted with a fisherman steering his boat in more wind-whipped water between a rocky, pine-studded shore and hills.

Also of the Joseon Dynasty is a blue and white porcelain faceted bowl with the Ten Signs of Long Life (*Shipjangsaeng*) (\$55,000-70,000, *illustrated right*). The exterior of the octagonal bowl is decorated with longevity symbols, including a dragon spewing ether, a peach, a pair of confronted cranes, a pair of leaping deer, and sacred *pulloch'o* fungus and a pine.



**Auction: Japanese and Korean Art**  
**Viewing: Christie's Rockefeller Galleries**

**September 14, 2pm**  
**September 9-13**

#### **About Christie's**

Christie's, the world's leading art business had global auction and private sales in the first half of 2011 that totaled £2.0 billion/US\$3.2 billion. In 2010 it achieved global auction and private sales of £3.3 billion/US\$5.0 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 450 sales annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from US\$200 to over US\$100 million. Christie's has 53 offices in 32 countries and 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Zurich, Dubai and Hong Kong. More 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. 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.*

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*Images available on request*

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