

Press Release

**CHRISTIE'S**

**For Immediate Release**

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**CHRISTIE'S PRESENTS AN EXCEPTIONAL SALE OF  
FINE CHINESE CERAMICS AND WORKS OF ART AT ASIAN  
ART WEEK IN MARCH**



***Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art***

**March 22 and 23, 2012**

**New York** – On March 22 and 23, Christie's New York will present *Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art*, which comprises over 650 works across a myriad categories and tastes, including jades, bronzes, sculpture, paintings and furniture. Highlighting the sale is a very rare and important massive gilt-bronze figure of Vairocana from the Ming dynasty (*illustrated above*, estimate: \$2-3 million), which is exceptional for its enormous size, superb casting and fine attention to detail. With estimates ranging from \$4,000 to \$2 million, the sale is expected to realize in the region of \$23 million.

**Highlights include:**



**A Rare Well-Cast Bronze Ritual Wine Vessel, *Zun***

Late Shang dynasty, 11<sup>th</sup> century BC

Estimate: \$200,000-300,000

This impressive ritual wine vessel belongs to a small group of late Shang *zun*, which features two lower registers of *taotie* masks and animal designs in low relief. The rounded middle section is cast in relief on each side with a large mysterious *taotie* mask with large staring oblong eyes, set above two pairs of confronted birds with hooked beaks, crests, taloned feet and long curled tails.



**A Very Rare and Important Large Bronze Ritual Bell, *Nao***

Late Shang/Early Western Zhou dynasty,

11<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> century BC

Estimate: \$800,000-1,200,000

The well-cast decoration, generous proportions and rare pictorial inscriptions distinguish this superb bell as an important example of its type. Lavishly decorated bells were an important component of larger ceremonial functions within Shang and Zhou dynasty ritual culture. Such bells not only provided a serene atmosphere through their melodious sounds, but also served as signifiers of wealth and power.



**A Magnificent Carved Black Limestone Figure of a Lion and Prey**

Tang dynasty (618-907)

Estimate: \$300,000-500,000

The lion is well represented in Buddhist art of the Tang dynasty. In their role as guardian figures, lions can be found not only lining spirit roads which lead to imperial tombs, but also in pairs in tombs. Of all of the published examples, this lion devouring its prey appears to be the largest and most powerfully and sensitively carved.



**A Very Rare and Important Green, Cream and Amber-Glazed Figural Pillow**

Northern Song/Yuan dynasty, 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century

Estimate: \$25,000 – 35,000

This exceptional pillow is rare in both its subject and its decoration. Pillows in the form of adults, as opposed to children, are extremely rare, and human-form pillows decorated in three-color glazes even more so. Although the figure on the current pillow is dressed in adult clothes, the face is full-cheeked and has an expression of innocence, and it may be that the individual is intended to represent an older boy or young man.



**A Rare Molded and Gilt-Decorated Turquoise-Ground Vase, *Hu***

Qianlong molded and gilded seal mark and of the period (1736-1795)

Estimate: \$300,000-500,000

The hundred *shou* characters on this unusual vase suggest that it was likely made for a birthday celebration. Flanked by a pair of lion-mask handles, this vase is highlighted in gilding in contrast to the bright turquoise-enamel ground, which also covers the interior and base.

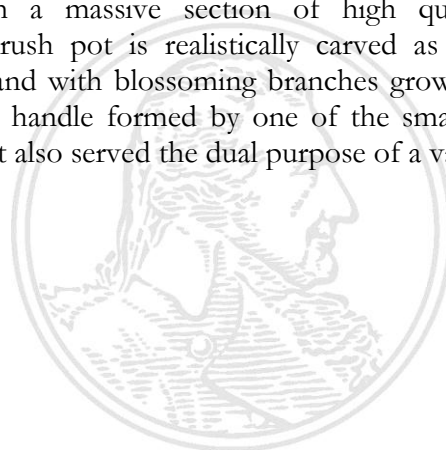


**A Magnificent Large Pale Greenish-White Jade Tree Trunk-Form Brush Pot**

Qing dynasty (1644-1911)

Estimate: \$700,000-900,000

Carved from a massive section of high quality jade, this impressive brush pot is realistically carved as a section of a prunus tree and with blossoming branches growing in different directions. A handle formed by one of the smaller trunks may suggest that it also served the dual purpose of a vase.





### Anonymous (Qing dynasty)

#### Daoist Ritual Paintings

Pair of hanging scrolls, ink and color on silk

Estimate: \$30,000-50,000

Highlighting the Chinese paintings section of the sale is a pair of hanging scrolls from the collection of Philip Wood of San Francisco. Included amongst the many dieties shown are the three gods Fuxing, Luxing, and Shouxing, who are depicted here as Daoist priests. They are gods of popular religion, quite possibly instituted at the imperial level in the early Ming dynasty, and today their images are among the most commonly encountered of any Chinese gods.

### A Fine and Rare Large *Huanghuali* Painting Table, *Hua'an*

17<sup>th</sup> century

Estimate: \$400,000-600,000



This elegantly proportioned table is rare for the generous use of thick, substantial sections of luxurious *huanghuali* for the top, frame, aprons and legs. The basic proportions were adapted to make large painting tables, smaller tables, benches and stools. This form is referred to in the *Classic of Lu Ban* as a 'character one' table, due to its similarity in profile to the single horizontal stroke of the Chinese character for 'one.'

**Auction:** *Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art*

**Viewing:** Christie's Rockefeller Galleries

March 22 and 23

March 16-21

#### About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in 2011 that totaled £3.6 billion/\$5.7 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 has since conducted the greatest and most celebrated auctions through the centuries providing a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 450 auctions 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 \$100 million. Christie's also has a long and successful history conducting private sales for its clients in all categories, with emphasis on Post-War and Contemporary, Impressionist and Modern, Old Masters and Jewellery. Private sales totaled £502 million / \$808.6m in 2011, an increase of 44% on the previous year.

Christie's has a global presence with 53 offices in 32 countries and 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, and Hong Kong. More recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in growth 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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