

For Immediate Release

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**INDIAN AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN SALE FEATURES POWERFUL
EARLY KASHMIRI SCHOOL BRONZE FIGURE OF A BODHISATTVA**

Indian and Southeast Asian Art

March 27, 2003

New York – The auction of Indian and Southeast Asian Art will conclude the Spring Asian sales. Taking place on Thursday morning, March 27, an array of works from ancient Gandhara, India, the Himalayas and Southeast Asia will be offered. Included are various properties from private collections such as the Dorothy and Frank Neustatter collection of mostly Indian art and the fine group of Khmer steles and lingas from the collection of Anthony d’Offay.

The sale begins with a comprehensive selection of Gandharan art, highlighted by an important gray schist figure of a ‘Pensive Bodhisattva’ (estimate: \$200,000–300,000). This figure is a unique iconographic type indigenous to the Gandharan region, and originally represents Prince Siddhartha during his first meditation. Also featured are a stucco figure of Buddha from the Hadda region, circa 3rd century, which is amongst the finest modeled of its type (estimate: \$120,000–150,000), a schist figure of a ‘Teaching Buddha’ (estimate: \$80,000–100,000) and various refined heads and reliefs.

The collection of Dorothy and Frank Neustatter is highlighted by an important Indian bronze figure of the Dancing Shiva, Nataraja, South India, Chola dynasty, 11th /12th century (estimate: \$250,000–350,000). In 1968, returning from an unforgettable journey to India, the Neustatters acquired this bronze from the renowned New York dealer William H. Wolff for \$35,000. As Lord of the Dance, Shiva is an iconic emblem of Indian sculpture, signifying the creation and destruction of the universe.

The cover lot, the impressive bronze figure of a Bodhisattva with powerfully modeled torso, circa 10th century, is a rare and large example of the Kashmir School of sculpture in Western Tibet (estimate: \$450,000-600,000). The figure displays strong Kashmiri influences with the silver inlaid eyes, beaded jewelry and the crescent moon tiara, elements of style and fashion introduced in Western Tibet from the mid 10th century onwards.

A fascinating 18th century 'revival' piece is the gilt-bronze figure of the 'Teaching Buddha', created during the Qianlong period (1736-1795) in the classic Kashmiri style of the 8th century (estimate: \$200,000-300,000). A closely related example likely made in the imperial workshops in Beijing, is recorded to have been donated in 1745 to mark the conversion of Emperor Qianlong's birthplace, Yonghegong, into a Buddhist temple. Beyond its artistic qualities, this figure is an important reflection on the close ties between China, Tibet and India under the Emperor Qianlong.

The gilt-bronze figure of Amitayus, the god of longevity, is another case in point of the cultural exchange between China and Tibet and a rare example of a Tibetan style Buddhist sculpture under the Emperor Kangxi (1662-1722) (estimate: \$100,000-150,000). The figure is superbly detailed and heavily cast.

The Southeast Asian art section features a rare group of incised Khmer steles from the 11th century and pre-Angkor lingas from the collection of Anthony d'Offay. Another striking work from the collection is the 18th century marble relief of a cosmic diagram representing the universe. The essence of Jain cosmology is condensed here into the abstract human form with the circular world of mortals centering heaven and hell arranged in horizontal registers, all finely carved in relief and gilt.

The sale is concluded by a fine selection of Indian miniature paintings.

Auction: Indian and Southeast Asian Art

March 27 at 10 a.m.

Viewing: Christie's Galleries at Rockefeller Center

March 21 - 26

More information about Christie's sale of Indian and Southeast Asian Art 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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