

*For Immediate Release*

*March 1, 2004*

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***POWER, BEAUTY AND ENLIGHTENED BEINGS***

*Indian and Southeast Asian Art*

*March 25, 2004*

*New York – On March 25, the Indian and Southeast Asian Art sale will round off the trilogy of Asian Art sales taking place at Christie’s in Rockefeller Center this spring. Besides offering rare and important examples of sculpture, paintings, ritual objects and works of art from Gandhara, India, Tibet, Nepal and Southeast Asia, the spring sale will now also include a section dedicated to 20<sup>th</sup> century Indian paintings.*

*The sale commences with a fine group of Buddhist sculpture from the ancient kingdom of Gandhara, present-day Afghanistan and Pakistan, at the crossroads of East and West. Included are an impressive figure of Buddha (estimate: \$120,000–180,000); a finely carved representation of a Bodhisattva (estimate: \$80,000–120,000); a life-size head of a Bodhisattva (estimate: \$35,000–50,000), formerly in the collection of Nelson A. Rockefeller, and a sensitively carved face of Buddha (estimate: \$15,000–20,000), all executed in gray schist.*

*Many of the sculptures in the sale come from renowned collections and were highlighted in major exhibitions and catalogue essays. One of the most outstanding works of art to be offered this season is an important bronze figure of Parvati (estimate: \$500,000–700,000), South India, Chola Period, 12<sup>th</sup> century. The representation of the Hindu Goddess Parvati is a celebration of womanhood and a glorious tribute to Indian beauty. This magnificent sculpture belonged to Comte Hadelin de Meeûs d’Argenteuil, ‘Ambassadeur Extraordinaire’ in Brussels, Belgium.*

*Moving from Hindu to Jain, the sale offers a splendid bronze shrine of Rishabhanatha, India, possibly Madhya Pradesh, dated 973 (estimate: \$100,000–150,000). Rishabhanatha was the first of*

*24 jinas, revered by the followers of the Jain faith, the central tenet of which is a strict adherence to non-violence. The present altarpiece is exceptional for its fine casting, detail, condition and age and was thus included in the seminal 1994 exhibition of Jain art, The Peaceful Liberators at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.*

*The cover of the catalogue reveals a detail of another Indian highlight of the sale: an important lampas weave canopy, India, Assam, 16<sup>th</sup> century (estimate: \$120,000–180,000). Produced for the Tibetan market, this textile is extremely rare and combines Indian, Eastern Iranian, Central Asian and Chinese aspects in technique and style.*

*The Tibetan section includes a superb group of thangkas or paintings for meditation. Particularly impressive is the thangka of Sitatapatra, Gyantse Style, 15<sup>th</sup> century (estimate: \$250,000–350,000). The fierce protector goddess is represented within an aureole of gold flames. The exceptionally large format of the thangka, executed in vibrant colors and with utmost attention to detail, instills a magnificent and powerful aura. Another 15<sup>th</sup> century thangka depicts Virupa (estimate: \$100,000–150,000), the dark-skinned Mahasiddha with his left hand raised, parting the waters of the Ganges. An inscription on the back revealed that the painting was offered by a fully ordained monk in memory of his teacher.*

*A private European collection forms the core of the Tibetan ritual objects section. Amongst its highlights figures an 18<sup>th</sup> century silver ritual vessel with Chitipati (estimate: \$20,000–30,000). Exhibited in several major shows, this extraordinary vase is decorated with dancing skeletons and flaming skulls, surrounded by garlands. From another source, but equally compelling, is a silver repoussé bowl, circa 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> century (estimate: \$40,000–60,000), combining various stylistic and technical aspects. The central dragon element is Chinese in style, whereas the ‘flaming jewel’ motif at the back of the dragon’s head is distinctly Tibetan.*

*A strong sense of refinement and graceful presence is detectable in a group of Khmer sculptures from the 10<sup>th</sup> through the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Featured are two sandstone torsos of a four-armed deity and of Uma (estimate: \$40,000–60,000 for each), previously with William H. Wolff, the renowned former New York Asian art dealer, as well as a stone figure of Buddha Muchalinda, Angkor period, Angkor Watt style, 12<sup>th</sup> century (estimate: \$30,000–50,000), depicting a finely carved Buddha seated on a coiled seven-headed cobra that rises to form a hood. Also offered is an important gilt bronze figure of Vajrasattva, Angkor period, Bayon style, late 12<sup>th</sup>/early 13<sup>th</sup> century (estimate: \$80,000–100,000) symbolizing the triumph of Buddhist wisdom over human ignorance.*

*The afternoon session offers a selection of 20<sup>th</sup> century Indian paintings. Highlights from the sale include a group of seven works from the Estate of Mr. Henning Holck-Larsen. These include a rare*

*Pieta by Krishen Khanna (estimate: \$25,000 – 30,000) and an early Tyeb Mehta canvas (estimate: \$30,000 – 40,000). Complementing Tyeb Mehta's painting from the 1960s is a later example of a Drummer from 1987 (estimate: \$70,000 – 80,000).*

*M. F. Husain is represented with a strong group of early canvases. These include Musicians from 1962 (estimate: \$30,000– 35,000), a wonderful example of a Wedding Procession (estimate: \$25,000 – 30,000), and a small but enchanting example of his Horses (estimate: \$9,000 – 12,000), both from the 1960s. Other early works include an iconic Christ Head by Akbar Padamsee from 1952 (estimate: \$24,000 – 28,000) and a monumental figurative work of a woman by Ram Kumar from the 1950s (estimate: \$60,000 – 80,000). Also on offer is a work by Jagdish Swaminathan from the Collection of the Times of India Group (estimate: \$50,000– 60,000). This work is one of a series done in 1992 as part of a commission for the corporate headquarters of the Group.*

*Auction: Indian and Southeast Asian Art*

*Including 20<sup>th</sup> Century Indian Paintings*

*March 23 at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.*

*Viewing: Christie's Galleries at Rockefeller Center*

*March 18 – 22*

*You are cordially invited to a private press viewing on Wednesday, March 17 at 4 p.m. in Christie's Galleries*

*RSVP Christie's Public Relations department on 212 636 2680*

*More information about Christie's sale of Indian and Southeast Asian Art Including 20<sup>th</sup> Century Indian Paintings can be found on [www.christies.com](http://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](http://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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*Images available on request ~ Visit Christie's Web site at [www.christies.com](http://www.christies.com)*