

**CHRISTIE'S**

佳士得香港有限公司

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***SUPERB WORKS BY CONTEMPORARY CHINESE MASTERS TO  
BE OFFERED AT CHRISTIE'S 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY CHINESE ART SALE IN  
HONG KONG***

*20<sup>th</sup> Century Chinese Art  
25 April 2004*

*Hong Kong – Christie's Hong Kong Spring sale of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Chinese Art sale on 25 April at the JW Marriott will offer an unparalleled selection of works of some of the leading contemporary Chinese masters, including Zhao Wuji, Lin Fengmian, Chang Yu, Liao Jichun, and Fang Junbi. Also on offer are three exquisite sculptures by Zu Ming from the artist's famous Taichi series.*

*Property from the Estate of Gladys A. Tillett*

*Three important works by Liao Jichun (1902–1976) from the Estate of Gladys A. Tillett will be featured in the sale. Born in 1896, Mrs Tillett was active in the women's rights movement in the United States, and between 1940 and 1950, she was vice-chairman of the National Committee of the Democratic Party. In 1961, President Kennedy appointed her as US delegate of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, and in this capacity she travelled to Taiwan to hold conferences with the representatives of Women in Taiwan. During the visit, she met artist Liao Jichun (1902–1976) and purchased three paintings from him which became the most cherished works of her collection.*

*These works are outstanding examples of Liao during his creative peak in the 1960s, using gorgeous colours, primarily red or green, to express his bold, fervent feelings: Still Life in Green (estimate: HK\$1,400,000–1,600,000/ US\$179,500–205,100); View of Kwan Yin Shan (estimate: HK\$1,200,000–1,400,000/ US\$153,800–179,500); and Street Scene (estimate: HK\$1,000,000–1,500,000/ US\$128,200–192,300).*

## *Early Masters*

*Lin Fengmian (1900–1991) was among the first group of Chinese artists to study in France after World War I, and two works by Lin depicting scenes from Beijing opera are offered in the sale. Lin saw Chinese opera as a kind of dance that combined expression of feelings with a sense of primitive mystery, plus the age-old drama of virtue and vice rewarded. The intense colours and cubist-like structure of the figures and costumes of two famous Chinese-opera scenes, The Madame Snake White and Farewell My Concubine (each estimated at HK\$1,000,000–1,500,000/ US\$128,200–192,300) were the elements he used to compose his own operatic world.*

*Zhao Wuji (Zao Wou-Ki, born 1921) derived inspiration for his abstract works from Chinese calligraphy and landscape painting; the graceful lines of calligraphy and the poetic atmosphere of the landscape genre form a perfect counterpoint to Zao's vigorous brushwork and his concern with style and form. Voie Lactée - 9.11.1956, offered in the sale is one of Zhao's finest large-scale works (estimate: HK\$2,200,000–3,200,000/ US\$284,600–410,300). It is also one of very few abstract works by Zhao with such an expressive title, and the entire canvas echoes its name in the majestic and elegant sweep of the composition*

*Although Chang Yu (San Yu, 1901–1966) had lived in Paris for a long time, he developed a unique personal style. He always kept his own individual kind of Chinese humanist tradition, while remaining open to outside Western influence. By the beginning of the 1930s he had reached a high degree of maturity. In White and pink chrysanthemum in a navy-black Background, the use of minimal colours and line creates an impressionistic space of great complexity and depth (estimate: HK\$2,000,000–3,000,000/ US\$256,400–384,600). Here Chang reinterprets the tradition and spirit of Chinese ink-washing painting for one of his most characteristically Eastern-flavoured works of the 1930s.*

*A Cat on the Balcony by Wu Dayu (1903–1988) is a visual interpretation of the written poetic form, showing great attention to the interactions between colours and the impressionistic and abstract modes of expression (estimate: HK\$450,000–550,000 /US\$57,700–70,500). Two representative works by Fang Jubi (1898–1986) are featured in the sale: Peonies, and Cat and Flower which successfully blends the color of Western oils with the fine, exquisite character of Chinese painting (each estimated at HK\$280,000–360,000/ US\$35,900–46,200).*

*Zhu Ming's (born 1938) Taiji series reflects both the artist's great ingenuity and a unique spatial aesthetic tailored to fit his own individuality. In this series, the bold, powerful, confident strokes hint at cosmic power beyond the human realm. Two exquisite from this series are offered in the sale:*

*Thrust* (estimate: HK\$600,000–800,000/ US\$76,900–102,600), and *Taiji Arch* (estimate: HK\$200,000–300,000/ US\$25,600–38,500) which demonstrates Zhu's genius in creating works with fresh and lively appeal.

## *Contemporary Artists*

*Book from the Sky* by Xu Bing (born 1955) is a set of four hand-printed books (estimate: HK\$250,000–300,000/ US\$32,100–38,500) which took the artist over three years to complete. It comprised of printed volumes and scrolls containing four thousand characters individually "invented," designed and cut into wood blocks by the artist. The materials used for this production follow the tradition of classical Chinese printing, scroll-design and book-binding.

Luo Zhongli (born 1948) focuses on the portrayal of interesting characters and situations. From the mid-1980s, a valuable feeling for the lives of the native folk was preserved in his work, as he attempted to find the essence of beauty in the ordinary and in daily life. *River Crossing #1* from Luo's famous *River Crossing* series is offered in the sale (estimate: HK\$200,000–300,000/ US\$25,600–38,500)

Also on offer is *Scroll of Guo Xi's Early Spring - van Gogh* by Zhang Hongtu (born 1943) (estimate: HK\$150,000–250,000/ US\$19,200–32,100) which a fusion of the Eastern and Western painting styles.

## *Notes to Editors*

### *Pre-sale Exhibitions*

|           |             |                               |
|-----------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| Taichung  | 3–4 April   | New Age Art Gallery           |
| Shanghai  | 10–11 April | The Westin Shanghai           |
| Beijing   | 13–14 April | The St. Regis Beijing         |
| Taipei    | 17–18 April | Fubon Life Assurance Building |
| Hong Kong | 23–24 April | JW Marriott Hotel             |

*Auction: 20<sup>th</sup> Century Chinese Art, 25 April at 5:00 pm at JW Marriott Hotel, Hong Kong*

More information about Christie's sale of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Chinese Art 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*

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