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**EXTRAORDINARY MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY SOUTHEAST ASIAN
ART TO BE OFFERED AT CHRISTIE'S HONG KONG SPRING SALE**



Modern and Contemporary Southeast Asian Art: Recreating an Asian Relevance

28 May 2006

The Asian art scene, led by Christie's International, has enjoyed huge success in recent years. In conjunction with the 20th Anniversary of Christie's sales in Hong Kong, the *Modern and Contemporary Southeast Asian Art* sale will be held on 28 May. The Southeast Asian region, made up of a mosaic of cultural groups, is also invigorated by the energy brought to it by the influence of its neighbours. The works offered in the sale are of a correspondingly diverse visual aesthetic, representative of the myriad of cultures within the region: the impressionistic palette of Adrien-Jean Le Mayeur de Merprès, for example, is juxtaposed with Indonesian native subjects. A contemporary visual language is also rapidly developing, in which artists are constantly exploring and creating their own unique visual vocabulary across disciplines, challenging aesthetic principles, making for an interesting comparison with their counterparts in other parts of Asia.

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Ruoh-Ling Keong, Vice President and Head of Christie's Southeast Asian Pictures Department, says: "Our recent sale in November 2005 totalled HK\$42,968,200/US\$5,585,866, the highest total of any sale at Christie's in this category. The success of the sale demonstrates the consistency and strength of the modern and contemporary Southeast Asian art market. We are delighted to see new buyers continuing to enter the market and an ever growing international interest in this category."

Taking pride of place this season is a special selection of artworks from a **PRISTINE COLLECTION OF A GENTLEMAN, INDONESIA**. The collection encompasses the most important names of modern Indonesian art history. From the earliest known native Old Master, Raden Sarief Bustaman Saleh (Indonesia 1807-1880) - *The Dutch colonial troops patrolling Mt. Merapi & Merbabu, Central Java* (Estimate: HK\$2,000,000-2,800,000/US\$256,400-359,000), through the beautiful classic images from the Indo-European category in the works of artists Walter Spies (Russia 1895-Indonesia 1942) - *The night festival in Djogja* (Estimate: HK\$950,000-1,400,000/US\$121,800-179,500) and Adrien-Jean Le Mayeur de Merprès (Belgium 1880-1958) - *Two beauties on Tabitian beach* (Estimate: HK\$2,000,000-2,400,000/US\$256,400-307,700); through to the early modernists like people's artists Affandi (Indonesia 1907-1990) - *Piodalan festival in Bali* (Estimate: HK\$650,000-800,000/US\$83,300-102,600), S. Sudjojono (Indonesia 1914-1986) - *The indestructible desert* (Estimate: HK\$800,000-1,200,000/US\$102,600-153,800) and Hendra Gunawan (Indonesia 1918-1983) - *Reclining nude* (Estimate: HK\$800,000-1,200,000/US\$102,600-153,800). This stunning collection was amassed over a period of 30-40 years with works from artists of the 19th Century to modern times. Almost all the more recent works were acquired directly from the artists, a testament to the collector's close relations with the artists and his passion for his paintings.

From various owners are two large and exquisite works by Adrien-Jean Le Mayeur de Merprès and by Hendra Gunawan. *Terrace affording a view of the sea with Pollok under an umbrella and several figures* (Estimate: HK\$8,000,000-10,000,000/US\$1,025,600-1,282,000) is a classic example of Adrien-Jean Le Mayeur de Merprès' style, depicting his inspiration and his muse. This is the principal work from the Maison des Palmes corporate collection which premiered in the sale of Christie's Singapore in March 1999, achieving a then record price of S\$1.4 million. Hendra Gunawan's *Washing by the stream* (Estimate: HK\$1,600,000-2,400,000/US\$205,100-307,700) is a sizeable, beautiful, brightly coloured work that is a captivating example of his domestic scenes. Complementing the collection from Indonesia are extraordinary pieces by Filipino Bencab (b. The Philippines 1942), whose *Woman with basket* (Estimate: HK\$140,000-200,000/US\$17,900-25,600) is a resurgence of his beloved *Larawan* series making its first appearance in the market; an exceptional work by Vietnamese master Le Pho (Vietnam 1907-France 2001) in an early unique oil scroll titled *Femme assise, 1934 (Woman sitting)* (Estimate: HK\$550,000-750,000/US\$70,500-96,200), and from his peer Mai Trung Thu (Vietnam 1906-1980) a pristine work *Le pont (The bridge)* (Estimate: HK\$160,000-240,000/US\$20,500-30,800) which is in the original frame designed by the artist.

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Born of current times, these contemporary artists have created their own distinct identity while still being relevant to the Asian entity as a whole. Movers and shakers of the region's contemporary art scene presented include young established artists Heri Dono (b. Indonesia 1960) – *Fighting to create a new hero* (Estimate: HK\$120,000-160,000/US\$15,400-20,500), Handiwirman Sahputra (b. Indonesia 1975) – *Object no. 2: mental series* (Estimate: HK\$20,000-30,000/US\$2,600-3,800), Ahmad Zakii Anwar (b. Malaysia 1955) – *Mantra* (Estimate: HK\$50,000-65,000/US\$6,400-8,300), Gabriel Barredo (b. The Philippines 1958) – *Tree of life* (Estimate: HK\$45,000-65,000/US\$5,800-8,300) and Russel Wong (b. Singapore 1961) – *Bamboo raft on Yu Long river, Yangshuo, China* (Estimate: HK\$24,000-35,000/US\$3,100-4,500). Each artist is well represented in their local art scene and their works are gems that will be highly sought after in this auction.

Pre-sale Exhibitions:

Singapore	Grand Hyatt Singapore	14 – 15 April
Taipei	Fubon Life Assurance Building	20 – 21 May
Hong Kong	Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre	26 – 27 May

Auction: *Modern and Contemporary Southeast Asian Art*, 28 May, 10:00am
Convention Hall, Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre

More information about Christie's sale of Modern and Contemporary 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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Images available on request

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