

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Exceptional Chinese 20th Century Masterpieces
Presented at Christie's Hong Kong in May**

**Evening & Day Sales to offer Collectors over 140 works
Valued at a Total of HK\$190 million/US\$24.4 million**

Chinese 20th Century Art
Christie's Hong Kong
Evening Sale – Saturday, May 24th, 8:30 pm
Day Sale – Sunday, May 25th, 10:00 am

Hong Kong - Christie's, the world's leading art business, will hold two sales of Chinese 20th Century Art on May 24th and 25th. The sales will open with an Evening Sale on May 24th, showcasing 26 masterpieces of Chinese 20th Century Art, followed by a Day Sale on May 25 presenting choice works from the most desirable names in the category. Together, these sales will offer collectors 142 works from the most celebrated modern Chinese artists with a combined estimate in the region of HK\$190 million/US\$24.4 million.



Leading the sales is ***Garden*** by **Liao Chi-Ch'un** (*illustrated left, estimate upon request*). Liao Chi-Ch'un's work displays the fine use of colour native to eastern art. In his paintings, brilliant, dense colours – often in primary greens, reds, and blues – are paired with highly saturated complementary hues. Liao's colour choices spark the imagination and pull viewers into his imaginative world. From ancient times, Chinese painting has emphasized the work's conception, and it is this factor that appears most powerfully in Liao's

works of the late 1960s and the 1970s, with their strong abstracting tendencies, their pure and simple colours, and their elegant feel. In *Garden*, circa 1970, he handles a familiar subject with very different patterns of colour, producing adroit shifts in line and form that create a perspective and sense of beauty significantly different from other works on this theme. The concrete forms of garden scenery undergo complete abstraction, which generates a new, abstracted sense of space and light on the canvas. The colour application and brush technique of this work go beyond traditional Fauve expressiveness, drawing the viewer into a serene and tranquil imaginative space. This work is a

leading example of Liao's search for an ultimate harmony of colour balance; it conveys a sense of grace and ease, and beautifully embodies the radiance and splendour that are seen in Liao Chi-Ch'un's paintings, all combined to make it among the most highly-coveted works in the sale.



A legendary master of Chinese art, **Zao Wou-Ki** is renowned for fearlessly adopting a distinctive painting technique. Zao promotes the notion that the brush exists to create life from chaos with his arbitrary style of expressively casting paint onto the canvas. Several grand works from the artists will be offered. Of particular note

is **26-4-62**, a work that perfectly exemplifies Zao's poetic approach to art (*illustrated left*, estimate: HK\$ 7,000,000 – 9,000,000/ US\$ 897,400 – 1,153,800).

From **Sanyu** comes **Pink Flowers** (*illustrated right*, estimate: HK\$10,000,000 – 15,000,000/ US\$1,282,100 – 1,923,100). Sanyu's floral still life paintings are particularly rich in symbolic significance and this work is an exceptional example and one of only a few paintings representative of the artist's work in the early 1930s. A fine and ingeniously crafted work, here Sanyu naturally blends color, line and space into a bright and harmonious whole to create a peaceful yet powerful image.



Few artists played bigger role in the direction of modern Chinese painting than **Chen Cheng-Po**. Along with Xu Beihong and Lin Fenmian, he must be counted as one of the most unique and masterful stylists to work in the oil medium during this period in China. In the large-scale work **Spring in the West Lake** (*illustrated left, estimate upon request*), Chen Cheng-Po accentuates the harmony of the natural space and creates an expansive scene that allows him to display his great facility in his handling

of space, line and colour. This work is a grand example of the artist's understanding and study of the natural environment. His influences are clear: his fondness of the arching brushstrokes seen throughout this work reflects the dynamic line found in Renoir's works, while the 'framing' technique is reminiscent of Cézanne. This work's inspired format, perspective, juxtaposition of form and idealized technique combine underscore a new chapter in Chinese paintings, one that Chen Cheng-Po in particular helped to introduce.



The Modernist movement and the oil painting movement were the central trends that characterized artistic development in the greater China region in the 20th century. Taiwanese artists, though geographically close to China, developed a markedly different style during this time. Perhaps the greatest difference between the two regions was been the ability of Taiwanese artists to escape the restrictive influences of traditional Chinese culture, enabling them to examine a broad range of issues of self, nation, and ethnicity from the

perspective of cultural detachment. One artist who embodies these features was **Guo Bochuan**.

The Forbidden City is an extraordinary example of Guo's distinctive style (*illustrated left*, estimate: HK\$5,000,000 – 7,000,000 / US\$ 641,000-897,400). Presented from an almost vertical position, Guo creates a vivid, nostalgic scene. The work depicts a traditional, though poignant landscape with an eye-opening panorama of the imperial majesty beneath clear skies and rolling clouds. One of a number of works in which Guo depicted the Imperial Palace, *The Forbidden City* is finest in the series in terms of his handling of light and its effects within the scene.

Wang Yidong was a pioneering force of China's social realist painting school of the 1980's.

His works are rich, moving depictions of daily life and they examine with a humanitarian eye the unaffected simplicity and beauty of local scenes. The dignity and warmth of his portrayals return the focus of modern Chinese realist painting to the basic elements of nature and human spheres of activity. *Spring Fan* (estimate: HK\$800,000 – 1,200,000 /



US\$102,600 – 205,100) is among the leading works from the artist presented in the Day Sale.

Though at first appearing quiet and demure, the Chinese beauty depicted begins to take on a mystical and captivating appearance as she enchants the viewer with a fan dance.

High resolution images and top lot information can be downloaded from the following link:

<http://cshk.myftp.org/Chinese%2020th%20Century%20Art/>

Pre-sale Exhibitions:

Singapore	St. Regis Hotel	May 10-11
Taipei	Fubon Life Insurance Building	May 17-18
Hong Kong	Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre	May 22-23

Auction:

<i>Chinese 20th Century Art Evening Sale</i>	May 24, 8:30 pm
<i>Chinese 20th Century Art Day Sale</i>	May 25, 10:00 am
Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre	

About Christie's

Christie's is the world's leading art business with global auction sales in 2007 that totalled £3.1 billion/US\$6.3 billion. This marks the highest total in company and in art auction history. 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 conducted the greatest auctions of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, and today remains a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 600 sales annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from US\$200 to over US\$80 million. Christie's has 85 offices in 43 countries and 14 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Los Angeles, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Tel Aviv, Dubai and Hong Kong. Most recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in emerging and new markets such as Russia, China, India and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Mumbai and Dubai. In Asia Pacific, Christie's has 10 offices: Hong Kong, which also functions as a regional hub, Taipei, Shanghai, Beijing, Tokyo, Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta, Singapore, Sydney and Seoul.

**Estimates do not include buyer's premium
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