

Press Release

CHRISTIE'S

For Immediate Release

15 August 2008

Contact: Sung-Hee Park

212.636.2680

spark@christies.com

MASTERPIECES OF INDIAN AND SOUTHEAST ASIAN ART AT CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK



Masterpieces from the Zimmerman Family Collection

Masterpieces of Himalayan Bronzes

Indian and Southeast Asian Art

15-16 September 2008

New York – Launching Asian Art Week at Christie's New York, the Indian and Southeast Asian Art Department presents the September 15th evening auctions of *Masterpieces from the Zimmerman Family Collection* and *Masterpieces of Himalayan Bronzes*, and on September 16th, the sale of *Indian and Southeast Asian Art*. Combined, the sales will offer over 330 works of great quality, rarity, and provenance, with a pre- estimate in excess of \$17 million.

Masterpieces from the Zimmerman Family Collection

Following the huge success of March's sale of *Masterpieces of Southeast Asian Art*, Christie's New York will offer the sale of *Masterpieces from the Zimmerman Family Collection* highlighting the incredible importance and richness of Tibetan and Nepalese works of art, including eight paintings known as thangkas, and one gilt-copper figure. Jack and Muriel Zimmerman have amassed one of the largest

and well-known private collections. Many works from their collection and including these paintings have been featured in multiple exhibitions and publications. The sale is expected to realize an excess of \$2.5 million.

The sale begins with a gilt copper figure of Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara, Nepal, 14th century (estimate: \$250,000-350,000). The figure is exceptional for its fine casting, condition, and detail. The tiara, jeweled belt, flowing hems, and armlets display a strong Nepalese influence.

Particularly impressive is the thangka of the Life of the Buddha Shakyamuni, Central Tibet, 12th century (*right image on page 1*- estimate: \$600,000-800,000). This early painting illustrates Buddha seated in *bhumisparsa mudra* on a lotus throne surrounded by eight scenes from his life, showing a strong Indian Pala influence. Another highlight is a thangka of the Surya Mandala, painted by Kitaharasa of Nepal circa 1379 (*image right*- estimate: \$400,000-600,000). It depicts the Sun God seated in his chariot surrounded by other deities of the Hindu pantheon. An inscription on the back reveals that the thangka was painted by Kitaharasa to commemorate the occasion when the donor Bishnudevashvara performed the *Bhimaratha* rite.



Masterpieces of Himalayan Bronzes

The sale of *Masterpieces of Himalayan Bronzes* will feature eight exceptional sculptures from modern day Nepal, Tibet, and Kashmir.



Two of the most prominent sculptures come from the Kashmir School in Western Tibet. The first one is a large and important gilt bronze figure of Avalokiteshvara, 9th/10th century (*image left*- estimate: \$1,200,000-1,800,000). This figure is exceptional in its casting, and the intricate detail of jewelry adorning his body exists on only a few examples of gilt bronzes from Tibet. The second figure is a rare silver inlaid bronze figure of Avalokiteshvara, 10th century (estimate: \$300,000-500,000). With a deep chocolate brown patina, the deity is shown holding a lotus stem of an eight petal lotus and meticulously incised with bands of floral scrolls.

An important and monumental gilt bronze figure of Buddha, Tibet, 14th century (*left image on page 1*- estimate on request) is seated in *dhyanasana*, with large eyes and smiling lips. The large figure has a powerful presence due to its exceptional size while still retaining a high level of refinement.

Indian and Southeast Asian Art

On September 16th, Christie's New York will offer selected works from India, Himalaya and Southeast Asian in the sale of *Indian and Southeast Asian Art*, including exceptional bronzes, stone sculpture and Indian miniatures. A selection from the Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul E. Manheim will lead the sale along with property from various other private collections.

Paul E. Manheim (1906–99), a former partner at Lehman Brothers and trustee of the Brooklyn Museum, was one of those rare early collectors who developed a great appreciation of Asian Art. He shared his passion with his sister, Alice Kaplan, from whose collection Christie's was honored to offer two sculptures in our Masterpieces auction on March 21, 2008. His collection, especially from India and Nepal, is extraordinary for its sophistication, great rarity and exceptional beauty.

The Manheim collection includes a highly important bronze figure of Shiva Nataraja (*center image on page 1*- estimate: \$1,000,000-1,500,000), from Tamilnadu in South India and dated to circa 975 during the Chola period. The Shiva Nataraja is an iconic form of Indian sculpture and has had great influence on dance and other artistic forms. This example is particularly rare in that his flaming halo



forms an arch, as opposed to a circle, few examples of which are known in either private or public collections. Another highlight from the Manheim collection is a large gray schist figure of a standing Buddha, Gandhara, 2nd/3rd century (*image left*- estimate: 400,000-600,000). The superbly carved figure is extremely detailed, from the voluminous robes with cascading folds to his strands of hair and curls of the topknot. Other notable pieces from the collection are a finely carved black granite figure of Nandi, South India, Chola Period 13th century (estimate: \$200,000-300,000) and a large gray schist figure of Maitreya, Gandhara, 2nd/3rd century (estimate: \$150,000-200,000).

The sale also features an exceptional collection of Indian paintings. Already holding the world auction record for Indian painting set in March 2008, Christie's is honored to offer another work by master painter Nainsukh of Guler, *Raja Bahwant Dev Singh on a Lion Shikaar*, circa 1750 (*image right*- estimate: \$80,000-120,000). This work is another major discovery for the field as its whereabouts since it was sold at auction in 1931 in London was unknown until now.



Aside from the Nainsukh painting, the sale also offers four folios from the Polier Album, including *Layla and Majnun*, 1770-1780, (estimate: \$80,000-120,000). Born in Lausanne, Switzerland, Antoine

Louis Henri Polier (1741-1795) was an officer of the British East India Company, an architect, and a collector of exceptional taste. During his time in India, he collected Indian antiques and commissioned new work after receiving a gift of three albums from the Mughal prince, Dara Shikoh. After Polier's death, William Beckford, the English novelist, visited Lausanne and acquired many of Polier's albums from his family.

Auction: Masterpieces of Himalayan Bronzes

Masterpieces from the Zimmerman Family Collection

Indian and Southeast Asian Art

September 15 at 5pm

September 15 at 5:30pm

September 16 at 2pm

Viewing: Christie's Rockefeller Galleries

September 12-15

About Christie's

Christie's is the world's leading art business with global auction sales in 2007 that totaled £3.1 billion/\$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 \$200 to over \$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, Hong Kong and Zurich. 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.

*Estimates do not include buyer's premium

#

Images available on request

Visit Christie's Web site at www.christies.com

