

Press Release

CHRISTIE'S

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**SUPERB JAPANESE AND KOREAN ART TO BE OFFERED AT
CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK FALL SALE**



Kitagawa Utamaro

Reflective Love

Estimate: \$1,000,000-1,500,000



Sookeun Park

Figures in a Landscape

Estimate: \$400,000-500,000

**Japanese and Korean Art
18 September 2008**

New York – The last auction of Christie's Asian Art Week, *Japanese and Korean Art* takes place on September 18. Following last season's record-breaking sale, the Fall auction again presents a well-balanced selection of Japanese and Korean works of art, offering exceptional paintings, traditional hanging scrolls, ceramics, and sculpture. The sale is expected to realize in excess of \$7 million.

Japanese Art

One of the most revered names in Japanese print-making, Kitagawa Utamaro, is featured with *Mono omon koi* (*Reflective Love*) (above left image- estimate: \$1,000,000-1,500,000). With very few of Utamaro's

prints still in excellent condition, this work will offer an opportunity to see and own one of the masters's most sought-after works. This superb example illustrates a woman resting her head on her hand, lost in a daydream on a backdrop of luminous pink mica. This particular print comes from a series of five entitled *Kasen koi no bu* (*Anthology of Poems: The Love Section*), circa 1793-1794.

The sale boasts a fine selection in screens and scrolls. Among the highlights is a 17th century pair of six-panel screens, *In and around the capital* (*Rakuchu rakugai*), by an anonymous artist (estimate:



\$800,000-1,200,000). The screens depict panoramic views of Kyoto, filled with endlessly fascinating details of the city. The lavish use of gold, high-quality pigments indicate that the screen was a special commission of the highest order. A splendid hanging scroll *Hawk on a blossoming plum branch*, by Ito Jakuchu (1716-1800) (*image left*- estimate: \$300,000-400,000), is a well-known silk painting that has been thoroughly published and exhibited. Hawks are traditionally a symbol of power and the elite of Japan; however, scholars noted Jakuchu's hawk might symbol the lonely and isolated. An important handscroll transcribed by Jokan (16th century) is also included illustrating *Kabiden: Mon'ami kadensho* (*Secret text of Rikka flower decoration created by Mon'ami*) (estimate: \$100,000-150,000). This colorful silk scroll is a type of manual for displaying art and flower arrangements for guests on formal occasions.

Korean Art

The Korean section of the sale shines with a superb group of ceramics. The highlight of this group is a white porcelain square bottle of the Choson period (19th century) (estimate: \$350,000-400,000). The very attractive and well-proportioned bottle has an overall transparent glaze, making it delicate and precious in appearance. Also of the Chosun period is a blue and white square porcelain bottle (*image right*- estimate: \$250,000-300,000). This bottle is beautifully painted with four different scenes on each side: two scholars on a tree-lined shore, a bamboo and plum, a pavilion on a rocky terrain with a boat below, and bamboo interspersed with a branch of a flowering plum.



Park Sookeun, Korea's most famous modern artist, will be represented in the sale with *Figures in a landscape* (*right image on page 1*- estimate: \$400,000-500,000) painted in 1964. Often only consisting of a few lines or shapes, some more geometric, some more figurative, his paintings have a charm all of

their own. Modest in size, the roughly textured painting depicts a mother and son and two women in traditional Korean clothing returning home from a market.

Following the world auction record Christie's set last season for Kim Whanki, this sale again offers one of his paintings: *Untitled*, an abstract of geometric and spherical shapes (estimate: \$30,000-50,000). Whanki has become a pillar of Korean modern masters by using his unique blend of Eastern and Western influences. The sale will also include an attractive painting of *Lilacs in a white vase* by To Sang-Bong (estimate: \$30,000-40,000). He was one of the most figurative painters in Korea and well known for still-life of flowers and white porcelain jars.



Contemporary Korean art has experienced rapidly increasing prices and a wide appeal with young collectors over the past years. The sale offers a good selection including Kang Ik-Joong's *Happy Buddha*, a colorful mixed media on wood executed in 2007 (*image left*- estimate: \$20,000-30,000) and *Untitled (Tea Bowls)*, an oil on canvas, by Hoon Kwak (estimate: \$40,000-50,000).

Auction: Japanese and Korean Art
Viewing: Christie's Rockefeller Galleries

18 September
12-17 September

About Christie's

Christie's is the world's leading art business with global art sales in 2007 that totalled £3.1 billion/\$6.3 billion. This marks the highest total in company and in art auction history. For the first half of 2008, art sales totalled £1.8 million / \$3.5 billion. 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

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Images available on request

