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October 8, 2006

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Christie's to Offer Important Selection of Chinese Contemporary Art from The Collection of Oliver Stone

Property from the Collection of Oliver Stone

Asian Contemporary Art Evening Sale – Sunday, November 30

Asian Contemporary Art Day Sale - Monday, December 1

Christie's Hong Kong

Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre

Hong Kong – Christie's announces it will offer a selection of Chinese Contemporary Art from the collection of famed director Oliver Stone. Five high calibre works with a combined value in the region of HK\$40 million (US\$5.1million) will be offered in the Evening and Day Sales of *Asian Contemporary Art* this fall in Hong Kong. The pieces offered include prime works from **Zhang Xiaogang, Liu Wei, Gu Wenda, and Tang Zhigang**. With analytical and often deconstructive viewpoints on society, culture, and the role of the individual and the nation, these artists placed a distinctive mark on the category of Chinese Contemporary art, making it relevant to an audience beyond Asia. Indeed, the focus of this selection of Mr. Stone's collection is on the early works that were instrumental in elevating the profile of these artists to an international audience. Works offered by Zhang Xiaogang and Liu Wei in particular are those associated with the major exhibitions and catalogs that catapulted their names to the forefront of the international art community, forging pivotal directions for the artists themselves and for the category as a whole.

Headlining the selection of **Property from the Collection of Oliver Stone** is **Zhang Xiaogang's *Bloodline: Big Family No. 2*** (*image right, estimate on request*). Painted in 1995, this work is part of the famed *Big Family* series the artist began in 1993. A strong and representative example of the series, this momentous work stands as one of the top highlights on the market this fall season and as such, it will be presented in the *Evening Sale of Asian Contemporary Art* on November 30. The "big family" concept expresses Zhang's sense of what typifies the Chinese person or family, and through the uniformity of these family portraits



Zhang re-examines the symbolic meanings of portraits and the situations they represent. The present lot is an exceedingly important early example from the series that promoted him to the international arena and elevated him to a household name among collectors. **Never before offered at auction, this work was included in the exhibition catalog for the historic "Inside Out: New Chinese Art" exhibition curated by Gao Minglu and organized by the Asia Society and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the first ever major exhibition organized in North America to present the dynamic art from artists in mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong.** Zhang Xiaogang has since flourished as a spiritual and cultural leader of the Chinese avant-garde movement that came to reflect a national upheaval. His paintings offer a unique and very special vision of modern China and have been immeasurably important in their compassionate revelations of the conscience, desire, and pain of a previously enshrouded nation, and this work is among the most significant from the artist on the market in recent seasons.



Also offered in the *Evening Sale of Asian Contemporary Art* on November 30 are two works from **Liu Wei**, the *enfant terrible* of China's Cynical Realist movement who was deliberately provocative and a notorious non-conformist. For Liu, the exquisiteness of "beauty" cannot exist without the crude and grotesque, and it is in his on-going investigation into these oppositional urges that Liu explores and reveals the crass, poignant and hilarious nature of existence itself. Works by the Cynical Realists often contain figures in scenes of apparently carefree abandonment, but their pleasure is always undermined by a gnawing feeling of dissolute boredom. ***Swimmers 1994*** (*image left*, estimate: HK\$4,600,000-5,400,000 / US\$592,000 – 694,000) was intended to shock, as Liu pursued what he referred to as the "new blasphemy." **This work was exhibited at the 1994 Sao Paulo International Biennale.** It was here that Liu made his first splash outside of China and quickly became a darling of the international art world. ***Revolutionary Family*** (*image right*, estimate: HK\$3,200,000-4,000,000 / US\$412,000-515,000) is another important example of the artist's early work that help launch his international career. Driven by the loss of idealism and psychological malaise experienced by his generation, here Lui provides the deliberately non-conformist view of a "revolutionary family".



The *Asian Contemporary Art Day Sale* on December 1 will include two works from the Collection of Oliver Stone. From **Gu Wenda** comes ***Pseudo Script Series*** (*image left*, estimate: HK\$500,000 -700,000 / US\$64,000 – 90,000). Gu is trained in the traditional Chinese arts of landscape painting, calligraphy and seal scripts, and since the 1980s has been creating "pseudo-characters" and "pseudo-seals" drawn from



Chinese traditional aesthetics. *Pseudo Script Series* displays the artist's highly distinctive style, incorporating landscape and hulk-sized calligraphy, steeped in traditional calligraphy traditions but confounding viewers by representing meaningless scripts of the artist's own invention. From **Tang Zhigang** comes *Children in Meeting Series* (image left, estimate: HK\$1,600,000-2,400,000 / US\$206,000-309,000). Tang Zhigang was exposed to an environment of political bureaucracy from a very tender age: his father was an officer in the Red Army and his childhood was spent at the Kunyang Labor farm where his mother was a prison warden. These unique experiences profoundly developed and influenced his artistic expression. His *Children's Meeting* series are full of humour and innuendo. With children as the subject matter and the added element of humour, the artist is permitted to broach certain topics that would otherwise be considered taboo. The innocence of the joke is in children playing up to be serious, but yet the darker aspect of the satire is in the fact that evidently serious affairs are being handled like child's play.

Works from the Collection of Oliver Stone will tour extensively in the fall, including the following exhibitions:

Hong Kong

The Salons, Grand Hyatt Hong Kong

October 7-8, 10am -6pm

Tokyo

HSBC Building, Enquiries: +813 3571 0668

October 20 - 21

Seoul

Hyundai Department Store, Enquiries: +822 720 5266

October 30-November 2

Taipei

Fubon Life Assurance Building, Enquiries: +8862 2736 3356

November 22 - 23

Hong Kong

Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre

November 27 – November 30

Auction:

Asian Contemporary Art Evening Sale

November 30, 7:00 pm

Asian Contemporary Art Day Sale

December 1, 1:30 pm

Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre

Lecture Series

Details to come on the Christie's lecture series held during the sale week.

****High-resolution images of *Property from the Collection of Oliver Stone* can be downloaded from the following link:**

<http://cshk.myftp.org/2008%20Christie's%20Hong%20Kong%20Fall%20Auctions/Asian%20Contemporary%20Art/Oliver%20Stone%20collection/>

Notes to Editors:

- **Christie's is the market leader for Asian Contemporary Art** with a global market share of 56% in 2007.

- Christie's landmark sales of *Asian Contemporary Art* in May 2008 were the largest, most valuable sales ever presented in the category, totaling HK\$570,568,750/ US\$73,146,914.
- **Christie's holds the record for Chinese Contemporary Art:** Zeng Fanzhi's *Mask Series 1996 No. 6* which sold for HK\$75.4million/US\$9.7million.
- **Christie's has played a leading role in shaping the scope, scale and range of the market for Asian Contemporary Art: Christie's was the first auction house to offer a stand-alone sale of Asian Contemporary** (Hong Kong, November 2005). Since then Christie's maintained pole position in the market, and in May 2008 was the first auction house to offer an Evening Sale of Asian Contemporary Art.

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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 billion / \$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