

For Immediate Release

8 October 2003

Contact: Victoria Cheung +852 2978 9919 vcheung@christies.com
Nicolette Chou 8862.2736.3356 nchou@christies.com

SUPERB WORKS BY CONTEMPORARY CHINESE MASTERS TO BE OFFERED AT CHRISTIE'S 20TH CENTURY CHINESE ART SALE IN HONG KONG

20th Century Chinese Art

26 October 2003

Hong Kong – A diverse selection of paintings by contemporary Chinese artists will be offered in the 20th Century Chinese Art sale at Christie's Hong Kong on 26 October. Sixty works will be offered representing a harmonious fusion of Eastern and Western painting styles including works by early Chinese artists such as Chang Yu, Zhao Wuji, Wu Guanzhong, Guan Liang, Xiao Ruxong, Wu Dayu, Liao Jichun, and Zhu Dequn. The sale also features paintings by Fang Junbi, Lu Pushi and Zhou Tingxu whose works are rarely seen on the market; as well as important pieces by contemporary artists Chen Yifei, Zhang Hongtu, Cai Guoqiang and Wei Rong.

Early Masters

The sale is led by major works from early masters including Chang Yu, Zhao Wuji and Wu Guanzhong who were influential figures in the development of contemporary Chinese art. Leopard by Chang Yu (San Yu, 1901-1966) is considered his most definitive work from the 1930s and one of his most important works ever to appear at auction (Estimate: HK\$2,800,000-3,200,000/US\$359,000-410,300). In Leopard, San Yu uses broad sweeps of calligraphic black on a clean white background, creating a natural layered effect with minimal color and line.

Another significant work by Chang, Potted Chrysanthemums in a Mandarin Blue Background, circa 1950s, is also offered (Estimate: HK\$1,300,000-2,000,000/US\$166,700-256,400). Using deep

blue instead of the typical Chinese black to express light and texture, Chang skillfully expresses the world of Chinese poetry and painting through simple lines and blocks of colours.

The sale also features several important oils by Wu Guanzhong (b. 1919) including A Large Haul, painted when Wu was at the height of his artist powers (Estimate: HK\$500,000–700,000/ US\$64,100–89,700). This magnificent work exemplifies Wu's superb techniques in combining Western and Chinese styles. Also offered is The Fish by Liao Jichun (Liao Chi-Ch'un, 1902–1976), an important figure in the development of modern Chinese abstract painting (Estimate: HK\$2,500,000–2,800,000/ US\$320,500–359,000) and 7.4.61 by Zhao Wuji (Zao Wou-Ki, born 1921) (Estimate: HK\$1,800,000–3,000,000/ US\$256,400–384,600). Zhao derived inspiration for his abstract works from Chinese calligraphy and landscape paintings.

Two important paintings by Guan Liang (1900–1986) are offered in the sale – Harbour of Shanghai (Estimate: HK\$350,000–450,000/ US\$44,900–57,700), and The Drunken Princess (Estimate: HK\$60,000–80,000/ US\$7,700–10,300) together with watercolours from Xiao Rusong (1922–1992). In Scene of the Windows, Rusong depicts glass windows, flowers and a vase in a style which reflects the artist's neutral and low-key outlook of life (Estimate: HK\$400,000–500,000/ US\$51,300–64,100).

The sale also features paintings by Fang Junbi, Lu Pushi and Zhou Tingxu whose works are rarely seen on the market, including Still Life by Lu Pushi (1911–1989) (Estimate: 260,000/300,000/ US\$33,300–38,500); Portrait of a Lady in Pink by Fang Junbi (1898–1986) (Estimate: HK\$650,000–850,000/ US\$83,300–109,000); and Red Barn Vermont by Zhou Tingxu (Estimate: HK\$75,000–95,000/ US\$9,600–12,200).

Contemporary Chinese Artists

Among important works offered in the contemporary section is Canal in Venice, 1988 by Chen Yifei (born 1946), a leader of the Chinese modern classical–realist style (Estimate: HK\$280,000–360,000/US\$35,900–46,200). The painting depicts the red tile of the walls of the canal-side and is from one of the most distinctive of his series depicting life on the water.

Project for the Year of the Dragon No.2 by Cai Quoqiang (born 1957) (Estimate: HK\$280,000–360,000/ US\$35,900–46,200), is a superb example in which he uses the traces left from gunpowder explosions as a medium for painting. Other highlights include One-way Ticket by Guo Wei-Guo (born 1960) (Estimate : HK\$32,000–42,000/US\$4,100–5,400); Shen Zhou–Monet #4 by Zhang Hongtu (Estimate: HK\$100,000–200,000/ US\$12,800–15,400); and Enjoying Opera by Wei Rong (born 1963) (Estimate: HK\$30,000–40,000/ US\$3,800–5,100).

CHRISTIE'S

An additional highlight is the wood sculpture, Taiji-Preparation for Underarm Strike by Zhu Ming (born 1938) from the artist's famous series of Taichi sculptures (Estimate: HK\$300,000-400,000/ US\$38,500-51,300). Each piece in the series has its own character, all representing a metaphysical strength.

Pre-sale Exhibitions:

<i>Taichung</i>	<i>4 - 5 October</i>	<i>New Age Art Gallery</i>
<i>Shanghai</i>	<i>9 - 10 October</i>	<i>Portman Ritz-Carlton</i>
<i>Beijing</i>	<i>12 - 13 October</i>	<i>The St. Regis Beijing</i>
<i>Tainan</i>	<i>15 October</i>	<i>Robert & Li Art Gallery</i>
<i>Taipei</i>	<i>18 - 19 October</i>	<i>Taipei Metro</i>
<i>Hong Kong</i>	<i>24 - 25 October</i>	<i>JW Marriott</i>

Auction: 20th Century Chinese Art, 26 October at 2:00 pm at JW Marriott Hotel, Hong Kong

More information about Christie's sale of 20th Century Chinese 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.

###

Images available on request

Visit Christie's website at www.christies.com