

For Immediate Release

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**CHRISTIE'S HONG KONG FALL SALE OF MODERN CHINESE
PAINTINGS SPOTLIGHT MASTERPIECES BY QI BAISHI AND ZHANG
DAQIAN**

Fine Modern and Contemporary Chinese Paintings

26 October 2003

Hong Kong – Christie's sale of Fine Modern and Contemporary Chinese Paintings in Hong Kong on 26 October will offer some 175 paintings and calligraphy, including several private collections of works by Zhang Daqian and other artists, and the Brett Family Collection of Lin Fengmian's paintings.

A Spectacular Album of Twelve Leaves by Qi Baishi

The most spectacular is an album of flowers and insects of the four seasons by Qi Baishi (1863-1957). This album is of twelve leaves, ink and colour on paper. Each insect is painted in Qi's meticulous hand with intricate lines, while the flowers are described by Qi in his usual carefree style with light washes. Painted when Qi was 74, this represents the height of Qi's powers both artistically and physically – when he still had the eye and strength to draw the detailed insects, and when his mind is free and can very competently complete the picture with a few broad strokes (estimate: HK\$3,000,000-4,000,000/ US\$387,100-516,100). A second scroll of the Landscape of Hibiscus Town represents another genre in which Qi was also extremely successful. This painting was painted for and dedicated to Mr. Xiong Xiling, a philanthropist who established the Xiangshan Nursery School for orphans and the poor. Qi's four children were paying boarders at the school, and this painting together with its inscription show Qi Baishi's appreciation of Mr. Xiong's beneficence (estimate: HK\$500,000-600,000/ US\$64,500-77,400).

Zhang Daqian's Masterpieces

There are several private collections of paintings included in the autumn sale. Of note are the five paintings by Zhang Daqian (1899-1983) which previously belonged to Mr. Yu Zhonglie, cousin to

Zhang. The small landscape painted in 1964 was a wedding gift from Zhang to his cousin (estimate: HK\$50,000-70,000/ US\$6,500-9,000), while the larger scroll of Lotus dated in 1967 was a farewell gift after Mr. Yu visited Zhang in California (estimate: HK\$220,000-260,000/ US\$28,400-33,500). The other three paintings include a small landscape in splashed ink style, and a self-portrait of the artist.

There is another massive scroll of Lotus by Zhang Daqian, painted in 1979. This was dedicated to General Chennault's Memorial Hall. Major General Claire L. Chennault was an American volunteer who trained Chinese airmen in their fight against the Japanese invaders during the Sino-Japanese War. He later persuaded President Roosevelt to send American aircraft and volunteer pilots to assist China before the US joined World War II. Dealing with Chiang Kai-Shek and President Roosevelt personally, Chennault trained his volunteer group, the Flying Tigers, before they were absorbed by the US Army Air Forces. For his leadership and personal commitment to China, General Chennault is highly regarded as a hero. Mrs. Chennault, Chen Xiangmei, was from a diplomatic family and has been a journalist her entire life, forging many associations between China, Taiwan, and the US. She was a personal friend of many prominent artists such as Zhang Daqian (estimate: HK\$1,800,000-2,200,000/ US\$232,300-283,900).

Another important Zhang Daqian painting is the landscape, Mist Covered Mountains in splashed ink style, executed in 1970, when Zhang was most successful in using this special technique. His brilliance in controlling the flow of the ink and colour pigments, the many overlapping layers, and the tonal gradations are all phenomenally shown here (estimate: HK\$1,500,000-2,500,000/ US\$193,500-322,600).

The Brett Family Collection of Lin Fengmian's Paintings

Another collection is of Lin Fengmian (1900-1991) paintings from the Brett Family. The Brett's lived in Brazil from 1962 and Mrs. Brett became close friends with Madame Lin, wife of Lin Fengmian. Madame Lin was selling paintings by Lin as a means of income, and Mrs. Brett bought a number of paintings that she personally liked. After Mrs. Brett returned to live in Canada, Mr. Brett remained friends with Madame Lin and continued to buy Lin paintings on behalf of his wife. Several of the landscapes in this collection such as Clouds Amongst Hills (estimate: HK\$200,000-250,000/ US\$25,800-32,300) are truly representative of Lin's painting ideology. Using a Chinese landscape composition, Lin painted this with a mixture of western oil and watercolour painting techniques. There are also paintings by Lin Fengmian in the autumn sale from the daughter of the artist.

Wang Zhen (1866-1938), the famous painter of the Shanghai school in the first part of the 20th century, worked in a Japanese company. After the Great Earthquake in Japan in 1923, Wang put

great efforts in collecting donations for victims of the earthquake and had since then been highly regarded by the Japanese. When Wang visited Japan with a group of artists from China in 1931, he was paid a personal visit by the father-in-law of the Japanese Emperor. At the time, collecting Wang Zhen paintings by Japanese connoisseurs and collectors was of the highest honour. The present private collection from Japan includes six pieces by Wang Zhen, and also a pair of screens of tigers by Zhang Shanzi (1882-1940), brother of Zhang Daqian and most famous for his renditions of tigers (estimate: HK\$100,000-150,000/ US\$12,900-19,400). The six Wang pieces include a pair of six panelled screens, comprising six paintings each with an accompanying poem (estimate: HK\$250,000-350,000/ US\$32,300-45,200). There is also a pair of scrolls, after the Tang poem of Hanshan Temple by Zhang Ji written in running script calligraphy, and an accompany painting inspired by this poem (estimate: HK\$35,000-45,000/ US\$4,500-5,800).

The Private Collection of Singaporean Collector Mr. Tan Tsze Chor

Yet one more collection is from the famous Singaporean collector, Mr. Tan Tsze Chor (Chen Zhichu), and include paintings from important Lingnan school artist Zhao Shao'ang, and also artists from the Shanghai school such as Ren Yi and Yu Fei'an.

Lu Yanshao's Album of Landscapes

The very important album of Landscapes after the poems of Xin Qiji was painted by the artist Lu Yanshao (1909-1993) for his wife, and carries a collector's seal reading Zhu Yan'en (Mrs. Lu). The album is of thirteen leaves of landscape paintings, all inspired by poetry or prose by the Song poet Xin Qiji. While the album is of a small size, the range and scope of the landscapes seen in each painting is quite breathtaking (estimate: HK\$1,200,000-1,500,000/ US\$154,800-193,500).

Pre-sale Exhibitions:

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| <i>Shanghai</i> | <i>9 – 10 October</i> | <i>Portman Ritz-Carlton</i> |
| <i>Beijing</i> | <i>12 – 13 October</i> | <i>The St. Rigis Beijing</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 Hotel</i> |

Auction: Fine Modern and Contemporary Chinese Paintings, 26 October at 10:00 am, JW Marriott Hotel, Hong Kong

More information about Christie's sale of Fine Modern and Contemporary Chinese Paintings 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.

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