

CHRISTIE'S

佳士得香港有限公司

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**CHRISTIE'S PAINTINGS AUCTIONS TOTAL HK\$112.7 MILLION
BIGGEST SEASON OF PAINTINGS SALES IN HONG KONG HISTORY**

Hong Kong – The paintings sales on the first day of Christie's Hong Kong Autumn Auctions (26 October) achieved fantastic results, realizing a total of over HK\$112.7 million (US\$14.65 million), the biggest season of paintings sales in the history of Hong Kong. Five world auction record prices for the artists were established in the sales. The 20th Century Chinese Art sale also achieved the highest ever total in the category.

A very rare and extremely important handscroll of correspondence by eight high-ranking scholar officials of the Northern Song Dynasty (11th –12th century) achieved HK\$4,543,750 (US\$590,687) in the Fine Classical Chinese Paintings and Calligraphy sale. It sold to an Asian private collector in the saleroom after spirited bidding. The officials include Wang Anli, Su Song, Fan Zuyu, Li Shiyong, Ye Qingchen, Zeng Bu, Zhang Shunmin, and Kong Wuzhong. Apart from one or two pieces of calligraphy by each of Ye Qingcheng, Zeng Bu and Zhang Shunmin, all housed in the Taipei Palace Museum, the calligraphy in this scroll may be the only extant examples of works by the other five scholars.

An important album of six round fan leaves, Historical Personages, from the Yuan Dynasty (13th – 14th century) achieved HK\$3,983,750 (US\$517,887), doubling its pre-sale estimate. It sold to a private collector from Mainland China bidding on the telephone. There are another four such fan leaves housed in the Palace Museum, Beijing, which form part of this set. Other highlights include a 13th century handscroll, Breezes Along a Mountain Stream, selling for a spectacular price of HK\$3,199,750 (US\$415,967), eight times the pre-estimate after fierce bidding. A pair of very rare and impressive six panelled screens, Cranes of Longevity, Deer of Prosperity, painted by Shen Quan (1682 – after 1762) realized HK\$1,295,750 (US\$168,447), setting a new world auction record for the artist.

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In the Fine Modern and Contemporary Chinese Paintings sale, a magnificent album, Flowers and Insects by master Qi Baishi (1863–1957), achieved HK\$3,199,750 (US\$415,967). 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.

Mr Ma Cheng Ming, International Director of Christie's Chinese Paintings Department, said: "We saw a packed saleroom and competitive bidding at all levels with many works selling above their pre-sale estimates to an international mix of clients with strong participation by Mainland Chinese buyers."

In the 20th Century Chinese Art sale, 7.4.61 by Zhao Wuji (Zao Wou-Ki, born 1921) sold for HK\$4,319,750 (US\$561,567), doubling its pre-sale estimate. The buyer is an Asian private collector bidding on the telephone. Leopard by Chang Yu (San Yu, 1901–1966) realized HK\$4,207,750 (US\$547,007), selling to an Asian dealer in the saleroom. This work is considered Chang's most definitive work from the 1930s. Amid Thousand Green Spots, on Red, by Zhu Dequn (Chu Teh-Chun, born 1920) realized HK\$956,000 (US\$124,280), setting a world auction record for the artist. The 20th Century Chinese Art sale realized HK\$29,007,110 (US\$3,770,924), the highest total ever achieved in this category.

Eric Chang, Head of the 20th Century Chinese Art Department at Christie's, commented: "We are very delighted that the sale achieved the highest ever total in the category which confirms the strength of the market for contemporary Chinese art. We saw enormous interest among collectors from throughout the world with a strong presence of buyers from Mainland China and Indonesia. We are also very pleased that there are so many first time buyers entering the market."

Fantastic prices were achieved in the Southeast Asian Pictures sale. Temple Service by Rudolf Bonnet (The Netherlands, 1895–1978) realized a staggering HK\$4,879,750 (US\$634,367), eight times its pre-sale estimate. It sold to an Asian private buyer and established a new world auction record for the artist. The painting depicts a sacred moment in a temple ceremony of receiving the holy water after prayer.

Atelier de Tissage, a superb example by Adrien-Jean Le Mayeur de Merprès (Belgium, 1880–1958) depicting the beautiful island of Bali, realized HK\$2,975,750 (US\$386,847). World auction record prices were also established for works by two Indonesian artists – The Loving Gaze by Abdul Aziz (1928–2002) sold for HK\$1,239,750 (US\$161,167) and Barong Dance by Dullah (1919–1996) realized HK\$776,750 (US\$100,977).

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Ruoh-Ling Keong, Head of Christie's Southeast Asian Pictures Department, said: "Strong bidding throughout today's sale by enthusiastic buyers both in the saleroom and on the telephone resulted in most works selling well above their pre-sale estimates. We are particularly delighted that the top lot sold to a new collector of Southeast Asian Pictures for eight times the estimate. There was strong bidding from a variety of Southeast Asian countries, and it is encouraging to see cross-over buying in both directions – with traditional Chinese painting buyers bidding on the Southeast Asian Pictures, and Indonesian collectors buying Chinese paintings as well."

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Images available on request

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