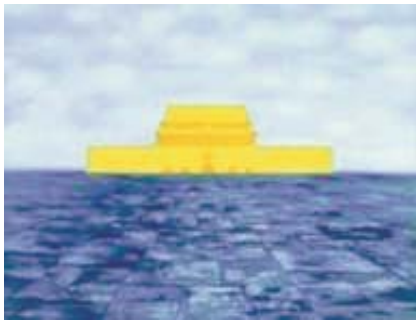


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**SUPERB ASIAN CONTEMPORARY ART UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT
AT CHRISTIE'S HONG KONG AUTUMN SALES**



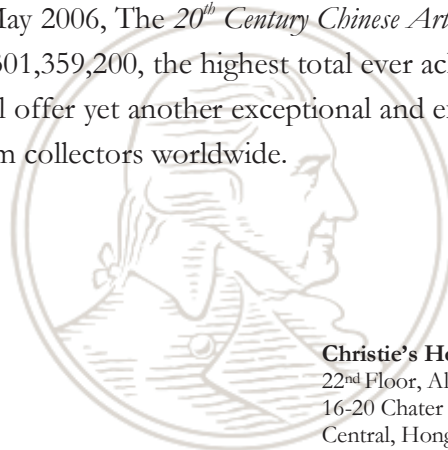
Zhang Xiaogang (Born in 1958)
Tiananmen Square
oil on canvas
150 x 188.5 cm.
painted *circa* 1993
estimate: HK\$2,000,000-3,000,000 (US\$256,400-384,600)

Asian Contemporary Art

26 November 2006

Hong Kong - In conjunction with the 20th anniversary of Christie's Hong Kong in 2006, the *Asian Contemporary Art* auction to be held on 26 November will bring together an array of superb works by some of the most celebrated and promising contemporary Chinese, Korean, Japanese and Indian artists.

Christie's Hong Kong launched the *Asian Contemporary Art* sale in November 2005, the first of its kind in the world solely devoted to cutting-edge Chinese, Korean and Japanese art. The overwhelming enthusiasm from collectors worldwide for this sale has led an international audience to an understanding of the concepts and the diverse artistic ideals of Asian avant-garde art. In May 2006, 'The 20th Century Chinese Art and *Asian Contemporary Art* Spring sales realized a combined total of HK\$301,359,200, the highest total ever achieved anywhere in the world. The forthcoming autumn auction series will offer yet another exceptional and exciting selection of art which is expected to draw tremendous interest from collectors worldwide.



CONTEMPORARY CHINESE ART SECTION:

Zhang Xiaogang (Born in 1958)

Taking the centre-stage is *Tiananmen Square* (estimate: HK\$2,000,000-3,000,000/ US\$256,400-384,600) by Zhang Xiaogang, a rare early masterwork and of great significance. Zhang is currently known to have only produced only a few works that take on the theme of the Tiananmen. The current work is the one which is most deeply conceived and fully realized in terms of composition and artistic implication.

Tiananmen Square manifests the power of this symbolic landmark at the heart of China's political structure, and the blood-links between the country, the nation and the people hinted at by the red lines painted in the foreground. It was produced in 1993, a defining year during which Zhang came to realize the need for a more personalized artistic stance in the wake of the swelling movement of political Pop Art and 'Cynical Realism' in China. *Tiananmen Square* brilliantly exemplifies Zhang's belief that art should not be a mere pre-conceived expression, but a vital visual means for the artist to reveal his personal thoughts on contemporary life, culture and people. This important work became a cornerstone for the artist's future career and is expected to trigger furious bidding in the saleroom.

Cai Guoqiang (Born in 1957)

Cai Guoqiang is always committed to expanding the boundaries of contemporary art through both his traditional works and outdoor projects. *Ascending Dragon: Project for Extraterrestrials No.2* (estimate: HK\$2,000,000-3,000,000/ US\$256,400-384,600) is a preliminary sketch for a large-scale blast project carried out in 1989 for a French exhibition. It is a rare and valuable example of the sketches produced by Cai for his huge gunpowder blast projects.



Fireworks, invented by ancient China, produce visual excitement that suggests the elusive power of the universe. The concept behind *The Ascending Dragon: Project for Extraterrestrials No.2* derives from dragons, in Chinese culture, representing the power of Mother Nature and speaking metaphorically of man's desire to fly free from the earth. Through setting off a few fleeting seconds of fire and explosions, Cai sends an enraged dragon into the sky to carry the aspiration for contact between mankind and minds from the beyond.

Yue Minjun (Born in 1962)

The most startling aspect of Yue's work is the use of classical aesthetic elements - such as beauty, nobility, and poetic sentiments - in critiquing and reflecting upon modern society. By meticulously altering and rearranging the original scene depicted, Yue succeeds in creating art that reveals the sense of helplessness about the current social environment that he feels deep in his heart. *Kites* (estimate: HK\$1,500,000-2,000,000/ US\$192,300-256,400), painted in 1993, is one of many excellent examples.

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Wang Guangyi (Born in 1957)

Wang is the chief icon of the Political Pop movement in China that emerged during the late 80s and early 90s. His *Great Criticism* series juxtaposes two antagonistic sets of symbols –propaganda images from the Cultural Revolution’s and commercial logos of Western consumer products. While sharing some common ground with the Political Pop artists from the West, Wang has created his own language by focusing on the clashes between Western culture and Socialist ideology in China. The work *Coca-Cola* on offer is at the heart of this concept of the ideological conflict (estimate: HK\$700,000-900,000/ US\$89,700-115,400).

CONTEMPORARY KOREAN ART SECTION:

Choe U-Ram (Born in 1970)

Of particular interest is a ‘cybernetic’ art work by Choe U-Ram, who is celebrated for his technological creations resembling living animals and microorganisms. *Urbanus (Male)* (estimate: HK\$300,000-450,000/ US\$38,500-57,700) – with a Latin-sounding scientific name ‘Anmopista Volaticus Floris Uram’ – is a creature that lives 200 meters above the metropolis. It exists by photosynthesizing ‘urban energy’ in the city and is sustained with breath and movement by electronic motors.



At the pinnacle of today’s technological development in Korea, Choe’s works reflect on the rapidly-shifting relations between humans and the modern techno universe. Sophisticated machines and robots, developed by human being ourselves, begin to take on a complex life on their own. The artist intends to draw the viewer’s attention to the adverse and alarming consequences that such abuse of technology has on nature.

Yi Hwan-Kwon (Born in 1974)

Yi’s sculptural works stand out with their creative forms and figures. By compressing or distorting the original image of the subject through a computer, Yi recreates visually-striking shapes and graphics that resemble the casts of shadows or the frozen remnants of a moment. Among his compelling works are *Children of my next door* (estimate: HK\$60,000-80,000/ US\$7,700-10,300) and *back-hyun* (estimate: HK\$90,000-150,000/ US\$11,500-19,200). The elongated proportions and the children’s upturned faces in the former work are in stark contrast with the dark hunched figure with flattened proportions in the latter piece. In both cases, the figures’ distorted proportions catch us unaware and lead the viewers to re-examine the characters within their everyday lives.



Byen Ung-Pil (Born in 1970)

Byen has created numerous self-portraits which do not depict hair and clothing. In *Self-portrait as a man - long 2* and *Self-portrait as a man - long 3* (estimate: HK\$60,000-80,000/ US\$7,700-10,300), there is only a malleable face stretching across the canvas. The subtle differences in each facial expression, however, highlight the different

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personal characters of each individual, in the light of a mass culture dominated by collective consciousness. At the same time, the squeezing hand symbolizes the search for one's self-identity and existence on earth. The focused view of the face in the work confronts viewers by positioning them as mirrors reflecting the artist's questions into human individuality.

CONTEMPORARY JAPANESE ART SECTION:

Ryuki Yamamoto (Born in 1976)

One of the leading pieces in the Japanese section of the sale is *Aimless* by Ryuki Yamamoto (estimate: HK\$120,000-240,000/ US\$15,400-30,800). Viewers are first struck by the wide range of emotions conveyed through the artist's multiple naked self-portraits with various facial expressions. These self-portraits are interposed with pictorial elements from both the past and present - such as religious painting and warplanes – representing the transition of old society and the new world.



Caught in transition and facing rapidly-evolving social values, today's youth feel ambiguity and uncertainty. Yamamoto seeks to re-establish a connection with our estranged surroundings through continuous self-portraits, believing that one needs to understand oneself before understanding the environment.

Makoto Aida (Born in 1965)

The inspiration for Makoto Aida's *The member of the giant Ico Chan VS King Gidora* (estimate: HK\$150,000-250,000/ US\$19,200-32,100) stems from a work by Katsushika Hokusai, an important painter from the Edo period. Borrowing his theme from this work, Makoto injects his individual standpoint to exhibit a blend of past artistry and modern social phenomena. The artist believes that Japan has slipped from the control of the post-war industrialists into the hands of the new generation. He also aims to reveal in this work that comics have now become an indispensable part of the new global culture of consumption and ideology that dominates people's minds.

Ikki Miyake (Born in 1973)

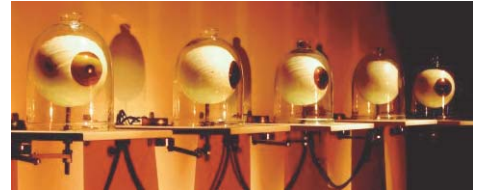
Ikki Miyake's works apply Western sculptural forms while exploring an Eastern standard of beauty. Exaggerating the subtle grace and delicate lines unique to the Asian female body, Miyake also focuses on a particular part of the body. *Yoga – Relaxation (Savasana)* (estimate: HK\$65,000-85,000/ US\$8,300-10,900) and *Lost in thought, through my hand* (estimate: HK\$150,000-250,000/ US\$19,200-32,100) are two exceptional works from different phases of the artist's career. In *Yoga – Relaxation (Savasana)*, the girl's contented smile and relaxed gesture leave the viewers with a profound sense of contentment. This is in great contrast to the latter piece in which the man is gazing meditatively into his hand, thinking and reflecting deeply.



CONTEMPORARY INDIAN ART SECTION:

Sudarshan Shetty (Born in 1961)

Sudarshan Shetty plays with both childlike innocence and macabre elements in his artwork. One of the outstanding examples is the *Consanguinity* series executed in 2003, which means 'related or connected by blood'. This implies not only the inferential relationship between the viewer and object, but also the literal relationship between the eye and corporeal body. *Untitled* from this series (estimate: HK\$140,000-160,000/ US\$17,900-20,500) consists of a row of mechanized eyeballs which rotate eerily within their glass case. This concept of a row of disembodied organs 'watching' their audience is quite unsettling. The work also shows an ironic reversal of role between the viewer and the object.



N. Pushpamala (Born in 1956)

Using her own likeness as a canvas, N. Pushpamala portrays a multitude of female characters in her work in order to draw attention to cultural stereotypes and gender roles. In *Native Women of South India: Manners & Customs* (estimate: HK\$65,000-95,000/ US\$8,300-12,200), Pushpamala delves into the documentary aspects of photography and its role as an ethnographic tool. Recreating popular images from art history and mass media, she dramatizes and over-sentimentalizes them by exaggerating not only the expression but the colour as well.

Subodh Gupta (Born in 1964)

In his work Subodh Gupta casts traditional elements of Indian culture in contemporary media and contexts, constantly referencing the idiosyncrasies of his life in Delhi.

Familiar to both the rural and urban strata of Indian society, the stainless steel containers are a ubiquitous element in the trousseau of newly married women. In *Feast for Hundred and Eight Gods 3* (estimate: HK\$400,000-600,000/US\$51,300-76,900), Gupta stacks vessel upon vessel to construct a gleaming stainless steel structure in the shape of a temple roof or household shrine. In this way, he ironically comments on the veneration given to the products of industrialization and the convenience afforded by mass production. With a more capitalistic culture developing in India, perhaps the artist is presenting this temple of the ordinary as a warning to those who too quickly embrace Western consumerism.



Previews:

Singapore	Copthorne King's Hotel	23-24 October
Shanghai	Portman Ritz Carlton Hotel	1-2 November
Hangzhou	Hyatt Regency Hangzhou	5-6 November
Beijing	St. Regis	8-9 November
Taipei	Fubon Life Assurance Building	18-19 November
Hong Kong	Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre	24-25 November

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Auction:

Asian Contemporary Art, 26 November 2006, 5:00pm

Grand Hall, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre

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More information about Christie's sale of Asian Contemporary 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