

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 31, 2008

Contact: Kate Swan Malin +852 2978 9966 kmalin@christies.com**CHRISTIE'S PRESENTS TWO SALES OF
ASIAN CONTEMPORARY ART
IN HONG KONG****Over 420 Works Valued in Excess of HK\$230m/ US\$30m
From the Region's Foremost Artists Presented Together in Hong
Kong**

Hong Kong – Christie's Autumn sales of *Asian Contemporary Art* will take place on Sunday November 30th and Monday December 1st at the Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre. From 20th Century Asian masters to avant-garde contemporary art from China, Japan, Korea, India and Pakistan, this season's *Evening Sale* and *Day Sale* offer an incredibly diverse selection of works that together provide a narrative of over a century of artistic development in Asia and a unique commentary on our times.

These sales bring together renowned figures in Asian Contemporary art, including **Zhang Xiaogang**, **Yue Minjun**, **Zeng Fanzhi**, **Wang Guangyi**, **Fang Lijun**, and **Cai Guo-Qiang** from China; **Aida Makoto**, **Hiroshi Sugimoto** and **Tetsuya Ishida** from Japan, **Kim Tschang Yeul** and **Kim Whanki** from Korea; and **Subodh Gupta** and **TV Santhosh** from India. Through painting, sculpture, photography, installations, and a myriad of avant-garde techniques, this selection for sale showcases the pinnacle of Asian Contemporary art and underscores its dynamic cross-cultural dialogue. The *Evening Sale* on November 30 will feature over 30 works valued in excess of HK\$110 million (US\$14 million). The *Day Sale* the following afternoon, featuring 386 works valued in the region of HK\$120 million (US\$15 million), will include many noteworthy emerging talents.

Christie's is pleased to announce that the internationally acclaimed contemporary artist **Takashi Murakami** will be the keynote speaker at Christie's Autumn 2008 Lecture Series, held in support of the Hong Kong Autumn Sales. His lecture, entitled '*Asia's Contemporary Market: The Superflat Market's Risks and Possibilities*' will take place on Friday, November 28 at 5:30pm in the Grand Hall at the Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre. Advance registration is required.

ASIAN CONTEMPORARY ART EVENING SALE

Sunday, November 30, 7pm

The emergence of Asian Contemporary art has become a global phenomenon, launching Asia's outstanding artists onto the international stage. Since presenting the inaugural sale of *Asian Contemporary Art* just two years ago, Christie's has played a leading role in shaping the scope, scale and range of this vibrant market. Following the success of Christie's inaugural *Asian Contemporary Art Evening Sale* in May in Hong Kong – the world's first in this category – Christie's will again present a highly-edited *Evening Sale* featuring a selection of stand-out works by artists from throughout Asia.

CHINESE CONTEMPORARY ART

Highlighting the selection of Chinese Contemporary art offered this fall is a group of works from the collection of **famed American filmmaker Oliver Stone**. The pieces offered from his collection 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.



Of the five high calibre works offered from the collection of Oliver Stone, three will be included in the *Asian Contemporary Art Evening Sale*, including **Zhang Xiaogang's *Bloodline: Big Family No. 2***, an important early work that is strong and representative of the famed ***Big Family*** series the artist began in 1993 (*illustrated left, estimate on request*). Never before offered at auction, this work was included in the exhibition catalogue for the historic "Inside Out: New Chinese Art" exhibition curated by Gao Minglu and organized by the Asia Society Galleries 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. 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.

Also among the *Evening Sale* works offered from the collection of Oliver Stone are two works by Liu Wei, an artist who too explored the notion of family in his work. ***Swimmers 1994*** (estimate: HK\$4,600,000–5,400,000 / US\$589,700–692,300) and ***Revolutionary Family*** (estimate: HK\$3,200,000–4,000,000 / US\$410,300–512,000), are two important examples of the artist's early work that helped to launch his international career.

Full press release on the Oliver Stone collection is available here:

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



Among the star lots this season is **Zeng Fanzhi's *From the Masses, To the Masses***, a pioneering work that pre-dates his famed *Mask* series, and the first masterpiece he created upon his arrival to Beijing in 1993 (illustrated left, estimate upon request). Moving from Wuhan, Zeng saw Beijing as a throbbing metropolis defined not only by rapid change and development, but also by its tumultuous socio-political situation. It was against this backdrop that ***From the Masses, To the Masses***, an obviously deeply political work, was conceived. In this painting one can begin to see the techniques that would later become Zeng's trademarks – most noticeably the dramatic rendition of flesh and muscle as a means for further exploring a character's hidden emotions. The composition and subject matter of the painting are ambitious – the title of the work was a core tenet of Chinese political thought promoted by Mao, and every aspect of the composition highlights the ideals embodied in the phrase: to be among the masses, to learn from them, in order to lead them, forming an endless loop of reciprocity and collective self-improvement meant to guide the country to a utopian future. Showing Mao Zedong among an infinite procession of fellow revolutionaries, this work evokes the mass-produced images from the early years of the 1960s into the Cultural Revolution. The deliberately exaggerated body features, distinctive of Zeng's early works, help to set the atmosphere of the scene. Eyes are relatively larger to accentuate the crowd's fervent gaze, while the disproportionately large hands become a window into the collective emotion of the crowd and further bind this group together.

Full press release on Zeng Fanzhi's *From the Masses, To the Masses* is available here:

<http://cshk.myftp.org/2008%20Christie's%20Hong%20Kong%20Fall%20Auctions/Asian%20Contemporary%20Art/From%20the%20Masses-%20ENG.pdf>



This Autumn's *Evening Sale* includes significant works by **Cai Guo-Qiang**, one of today's most highly recognized and progressive artists. ***Project No. 143 - The Mark of 921*** (illustrated left, estimate: HK\$3,500,000 – 5,500,000/US\$448,700 – 705,200), is composed in his signature medium: gunpowder. The work was inspired by the Chichi earthquake that hit the western part of Taiwan on September 21, 1999 and is known as the '921 Earthquake.' The blasted gunpowder on the twelve-panelled screen makes for a striking image, one in which the artist explores the interconnectivity between powerful Mother Nature and mankind. **The vendor of this work has generously offered to donate fifty percent of the proceeds to two charities benefiting the victims of the Sichuan earthquake disaster.**

In ***Shifting Continents*** (estimate: HK\$2,500,000 – 3,500,000 / US\$320,500 – 448,700), gunpowder represents the chaos and movement of continents. Through this striking image, Cai hints at how gunpowder and similar inventions of war have segregated countries and caused massive catastrophes, yet life is cyclical and as one end, another begins.



From **Liu Ye** comes *Composition in Red, Yellow and Blue* (illustrated left, estimate: HK\$6,500,000 – 9,500,000/US\$833,300 – 1,218,000). Liu Ye's work often wanders into the realm of a fascinating fantasy, while remaining consciously academic and austere at the same time. The present work, painted in 1997, is a classic work from the artist's early period. Liu's use of primary colours and simplified shapes creates an illusory world that we, as spectators, are invited to enter, yet may never

fully grasp. The use of shading within large blocks of colour provides a highly textural sensation and parallels the rectangular colour fields of works by Mark Rothko. At the centre of this work is a floating character often seen throughout Liu's paintings, one whose identity is unclear, but suggestive of Rene Magritte. Here this figure appears as an angel dressed as a priest wearing sunglasses and holding a green balloon that questions his ability to fly, and hence his integrity as an angel. While the Mondrian-esque work appearing in the lower corner of the canvas helps point to an almost mathematically organized composition, the subject matter engages spectators in a delightful guessing game as to what this mysterious scene is all about.

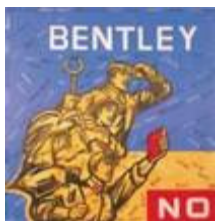


As one of the leaders of the Chinese avant-garde, **Yue Minjun** is best recognized for the signature motif of his works: his stylized self-portrait, with a gaping grin and eyes closed tight, appearing in contorted and absurdist scenarios that point to Yue's satirical and often cynical worldview. Among the most significant works by Yue offered this season is *Backyard Pond* (illustrated left, estimate: HK\$8,000,000 – 12,000,000 /

US\$1,025,600 – 1,538,500). Reclining on a rock are four of Yue's self-images, each clad in black speedo-style bathing suits. As is typical of Yue's large-scale canvases, a deceptively disarming scene is revealed upon closer inspection, one that is intended to confuse the viewer. Several art history references are employed in this work – the subject is reminiscent of American realist painter Thomas Eakin's famous scene of bathers, *The Swimming Hole*, painted in 1884-5; the water is stylized in a manner that reads obviously as that of a swimming pool and in a manner reminiscent of the works of David Hockney. The figures featured here recline atop a rock that resembles that of traditional Chinese scholar's rocks, which were often central forms in private gardens that served as miniaturized visions of nature. This setting calls into question the scale of the work, however, as even at their largest, such rocks were rarely significantly larger than human scale – are we witnessing something on 'life-size' or perhaps something altogether smaller?

Wang Guangyi

The *Great Criticism* series by **Wang Guangyi**, considered one of the central figures of the so-called Political Pop movement, links the propaganda aesthetics of the Cultural Revolution with striking imagery of American pop culture, all the while poking fun at China's globalization efforts.



In *Great Criticism – Bentley* (illustrated left, estimate: HK\$2,400,000 – 3,200,000 / US\$307,700 – 410,300), Wang juxtaposes three heroes of the revolution – an industrial labourer, a soldier in the People’s Liberation Army, and a peasant – with the Bentley logo. The jarring, cropped, bright red highlighted ‘NO’ at the lower-right edge of the canvas corresponds with the Little Red Book held by the soldiers. In this way, Wang simultaneously critiques the legacy of Communism in China and the country’s radical turn towards consumerism in the past two decades. With contrasting images and unique artistic language, Wang not only expresses his own opinion of Chinese society, but also articulates the distinctive social environment of 1990s China.

INDIAN CONTEMPORARY ART

Works from several important Indian Contemporary artists will be offered in the *Evening Sale*, including *Doot (Ambassador Car)* by **Subodh Gupta** (illustrated right, estimate: HK\$4,000,000 – 6,000,000/US\$512,800 – 769,200). This photorealistic depiction of the Ambassador car is a limited series within the artist’s oeuvre that both idolises and provides a social critique of its subject matter: the veritable icon that is ubiquitous on Indian roads, and yet a curious 50s-style relic threatened with extinction as newer imported car become more popular to the burgeoning middle and upper classes. According to the artist, this is one of two paintings he has made with the automobile model as the central focus. Gupta embarked upon this group of works, titled *Doot (Ambassador)* in 2003, presaging his widely known *Saat Samunder Paar (Across seven seas)* works, as well as his series of stainless steel paintings and sculptures. The commonality of all of these works lie in Gupta's uncanny ability to mine the tropes of Indian culture that possess innate dichotomies suggesting both the traditional and modern, the rural and urban, the wealthy and the impoverished. A *tour de force* where the artist achieves a fine balance of conceptual sophistication and banal beauty in the discovery, edification and castigation of his daily world, this work is among the top works of Indian contemporary art offered this season.



KOREAN CONTEMPORARY ART



Among the leading works of Korean contemporary art offered in this sale is *Untitled 15- XII-72 #305* by **Kim Whanki** (illustrated left, estimate: HK\$7,500,000 – 9,500,000/US\$961,500 – 1,217,900) who is widely considered the pillar of Korean modern art. Celebrated in exhibitions throughout the world, Kim's unique blend of Eastern and Western sensibilities has had timeless appeal since he started breaking new ground in the 1930s. Initially he moved to Japan to study European modernism, incorporating elements he admired in the paintings of Klee, Matisse and Braque with traditional Asian motifs. Gradually Kim was drawn to abstraction culminating in his experiments in New York in the '60s and early '70s. Kim synthesized the coloration of his early mentors in Paris and the formalism of the New York School in paintings that have luminosity and rhythm of their own. By early 1970s, Kim exercised the

lyricism of images by composing miniature dots in colourful compositions. The pulsating dots seen in the present work create a mysterious ambiance that features soft, intact patterns, notably unique in the artist's oeuvre during this period.

JAPANESE CONTEMPORARY ART

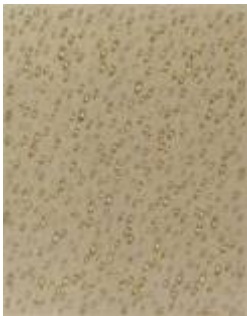


From **Hiroshi Sugimoto** comes *Sea of Japan, Oki II, Oki IV & Oki V* (illustrated left, estimate: HK\$650,000 – 850,000/ US\$83,300 – 109,000). Taken of the Sea of Japan, this work captures the sensation of timelessness that is central to Sugimoto's photography. The seas of his *Seascape* series all carry a tranquil quality; Sugimoto does not seek to photograph the tumultuousness of oceans that is often captured, rather he captures the spirituality that the sea has on him. There is no land in sight in any of these three images, only the deep vastness of the ocean, and us, the viewer.

ASIAN CONTEMPORARY ART DAY SALE

Monday, December 1, 1:30pm

The *Asian Contemporary Art Day Sale* will once again provide a platform for some of the most important works by leading artists from China, Japan, Korea and India. Works from leading artists such as **Liu Ye, Zeng Fanzhi, Cai Guo-Qiang, TV Santhosh, Liu Wei, Hisashi Tenmyouya, Kim Tschang Yeul, Tang Zhigang** and others will be featured.



Kim Tschang Yeul's *Waterdrops* (illustrated left, estimate: HK\$1,500,000 – 2,000,000 / US\$192,300 – 256,400) beautifully captures the illusionary nature of the artist's work during the 1970's. In this work, luscious drops of water appear to sit purposefully on the large smooth canvas, seemingly placed there one by one in a most deliberate, methodical way. The extraordinary complexity of this work is concealed beneath the seemingly straightforward hyper-realistic depiction, creating an immaculate illusion.

Also of note is **Yan Pei-Ming's** *Victime, Juliette C.* (illustrated right, estimate: HK\$1,800,000 – 2,600,000 / US\$230,800 – 333,300). For the majority of his three decade-long career, the Dijon-based artist has returned almost obsessively to the genre of portraiture, developing a style that has roots in both Western and Eastern aesthetic traditions and experiences. Yan draws from a wide range of subjects for his portraits – from self-portraits, portraits of his father, portraits of icons like Chairman Mao, Bruce Lee, Pope John Paul II, and the Buddha, to portraits of strangers, prostitutes, and anonymous victims of crimes and disasters such as the subject of the present work.





The work of **Takashi Murakami** has single-handedly inspired a Pop Art movement in Japan and he is now widely regarded as one of the most influential artists of his generation. Much of Murakami's work derives from Japanese *otaku* or 'geek' culture, typified by males obsessed with the world of comic books, video games and animation, a Japanese pop culture phenomenon. Murakami has managed a visual sensation of images, and has invented a vocabulary of characters that appear often in various forms in his works. Among the many Murakami works offered in the *Asian Contemporary Art Day Sale* is **Miss Ko²-Satoeri, 2004** (illustrated right, estimate: \$80,000 – 120,000 / US\$10,300 – \$15,400), showing the long-legged waitress who has become one of the artist's signature characters. Miss Ko2 is based on a character that Murakami selected from the fighting 'bisyōjo' (Japanese slang for beautiful young girl) game *Variable Geo*, who wore a waitress uniform from the chain restaurant *Anna Millers*. In this video game, *Miss Ko²* is a female character that is a secret agent for the Japanese government.

Auctions

<i>Asian Contemporary Art Evening Sale</i>	November 30, 7:00 pm
<i>Asian Contemporary Art Day Sale</i>	December 1, 1:30 pm
Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre	

Viewing and Tours

SHANGHAI , <i>Four Seasons Hotel Shanghai</i>	November 2-3
TAIYUAN (SHANXI) , <i>World Trade Hotel</i>	November 6-7
BEIJING , <i>Park Hyatt Beijing</i>	November 10-11
TAIPEI , <i>Fubon Life Assurance Building</i>	November 22-23
HONG KONG , <i>Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre</i>	November 27 – November 30

****High-resolution image select sale highlights can be downloaded here:**

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

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.