

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
8 November 2010

**Media Contacts:**

|                           |                 |                                                                |
|---------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Kate Malin (Hong Kong)    | +852 2978 9966  | <a href="mailto:kmalin@christies.com">kmalin@christies.com</a> |
| Gillian Leung (Hong Kong) | +852 2978 6736  | <a href="mailto:gleung@christies.com">gleung@christies.com</a> |
| Belinda Chen (Beijing)    | +8610 6500 6517 | <a href="mailto:bchen@christies.com">bchen@christies.com</a>   |

## Large-scale Museum-Quality Asian Contemporary Art Leads Christie's Fall Sales in November

**Asian Contemporary & Chinese 20<sup>th</sup> Century Art Evening Sale**

Saturday, 27 November 2010, 7pm

**Asian Contemporary Art Day Sale**

Sunday, 28 November 2010, 2:30pm

**Hong Kong** – Christie's Evening and Day sales of *Asian Contemporary Art* on 27 and 28 November in Hong Kong will bring together the dynamic worlds of contemporary art from China, Japan and Korea. Christie's continues to offer a platform showcasing the best in Asian contemporary and Chinese 20<sup>th</sup> Century art, and this season will present over 450 works with a pre-sale estimate in excess of HK\$300 million (US\$38 million) across three sales. Diverse in subject matter, styles and techniques, and yet distinctly Asian in artistic temperament, these works present a regional view of contemporary Asia. With the careful and expert selection of Christie's global specialists, the works in this sale cater to the broad tastes of collectors from around the world.

### CONTEMPORARY ART, TRADITIONAL ROOTS

Among the leading works offered in this season's Evening Sale are those from three of today's most dynamic contemporary artists: Cai Guo Qiang, Zeng Fanzhi and Masami Teraoka. Each will be represented by a truly seminal master work that succeeds in uniting their respective contemporary vision and artistic vocabulary with their distinctive cultural background and history.



**Cai Guo Qiang's** (b. 1957) *Search for Extraterrestrials* is one of the finest and most compelling of his famed *Projects for Extraterrestrials* series (*image above, estimate on request*). A monumental work that measures almost 3 metres high and 32 metres wide, here Cai ingeniously combines Chinese ink-wash techniques, smoke and gunpowder in a fusion of art and technology that transcends the cultural gap between East and West and past and present. The result makes for a striking image, one in which the artist explores the interconnectivity between powerful Mother Nature and mankind.



From **Zeng Fanzhi** comes *Mask Series* (*image left, estimate: HK\$12,000,000-18,000,000 / US\$1,538,500-2,307,700*), an important work from a private European collection of Chinese contemporary art that stands as a rare early example reflecting vividly the artist's aesthetic pursuits in the 1990s. The multi-figural composition is emotionally charged, intuitive, and physiologically penetrating, much like the multi-figural portraiture of Francis Bacon or Max Beckman. The uncommon arrangement of the composition establishes a complicated spatial relationship that is not often seen in Zeng's paintings. The three *flâneurs*, with their distinctively oversized raw hands and frozen smiling faces, appear ironically isolated despite their grouping. The unusual ideograms on the vibrant yellow background remind us of the

Chinese ancient aesthetics that Zeng inherited and continually transformed in his paintings in the mid-1990s. Eloquently expressing the mental and emotional strain and pressure in a new urban society, Zeng captures an unsettled tone in a work that will be among the season's most sought-after.

Japanese-American artist **Masami Teraoka's** (b. 1936) works relentlessly point out the fundamental flaws in our handling of taboo subjects and our moralizing views about sexuality. After extensive travel to Europe in the 1990's, Teraoka's work transformed from delicate watercolours and creative interpretations of the Japanese woodblock *ukiyo-e* prints, to large sweeping oil on panel works encased by gold frames of Renaissance flair. In ***Semana Santa/Venus' Security Check*** he purposefully exaggerates his subject in a provocative manner to tackle social issues, but with interjected lightheartedness (*image right*, estimate: HK\$1,200,000-1,800,000 / US\$153,800-230,800). Within imposing frames that rival architectural church murals and altarpieces, Teraoka adapts aspects of Renaissance painting while nevertheless embracing a vigilant integration of his Japanese heritage. Here, the viewer witnesses the ever pure Venus in a situation of racial profiling at an airport security check point. The exaggerated poses and irrational spacing and stylized aesthetics heighten the visual impact, while also exemplifying Teraoka's masterful fusion of artistic and social concerns. A piercing and commanding narrative on the age-old debate on religion and sex, it underscores Teraoka's place as one of the principle artists of Japanese contemporary art.



## Contemporary Chinese Avant-Garde

The distinctive cultural and historical changes of the 1980s – flourishing under the ideals of communism – significantly effected a burgeoning avant-garde art movement. The movement instigated theoretical and philosophical debates, focusing on all aspects of Chinese ideology, its relevance and its effects in the contemporary context. The 1980s saw Chinese artists developing a keen interest in political subjects, as well as a growing curiosity about, and criticism of, the distinctive saturation of Western thought and culture that flooded in as the country slowly began to open its doors to the world. The progressive '85 New Wave Art Movement worked to fully deconstruct the various types of philosophical, artistic, and cultural thought imported from the West, while at the same time challenging the totalitarianism of the Chinese system and outlook. Its critical influence subsequently exerted profound and far-reaching conceptual shifts in art that swept across every region of China. One of the most-watched groups in the movement was the Southwest Art Research Group, established in October 1986, which included artists such as Zhang Xiaogang, Mao Xuhui and Ye Yongqing.



Among the leading works of Chinese Avant-Garde presented this season is a rare triptych from **Mao Xuhui** (b. 1956), **'92 Paternalism** (*image left*, estimate: HK\$3,000,000-5,000,000 / US\$384,600-641,000). Offered in the season's Evening Sale, this work was awarded the honour of "Distinctive Merit" at the First 1990's Biennial Art Fair in Guangzhou. Particularly noteworthy for its exceptionally grand size and composition, it stands as a leading example of artist's celebrated *Parent Series*. Here, the everyday objects depicted – a chair, key and door – take on an awe-inspiring tone and are transformed and elevated by the artist into religious icons.

By the mid-1990s – just one decade later and one that saw such dramatic change – the forms and styles of expression that appeared in China's new art remain deeply and intricately bound to the traditions of Chinese life; Western materials and approaches are only a part of the greater body of expression that emphasizes a strong adherence to Chinese tradition and philosophy. Representative of this vision are the Political Pop and Cynical Realism artists, whose distinct and internationally-recognized images demonstrate the disillusionment with reality evident to artists of the post-1989 generation. 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. The Evening Sale will present ***Boating***, a seminal example of Yue Minjun's work that points to his satirical and often cynical worldview (*image right*, estimate: HK\$3,000,000-5,000,000 / US\$384,600-641,000).



## Korean Contemporary Art

Korean contemporary art finds its roots in the aftermath of Japanese colonialism and the Korean War and the social turmoil that followed. Contemporary artists found themselves contemplating identity and searching for lost traditions, while at the same time revelling in the newfound freedom to absorb the cultural influences that were coming in from the West. Owing to the nation's receptivity to modernization and globalization, a period of rapid development followed, with artists embracing contemporary trends. This openness to experimentation is evident in the unique aesthetic and innovative materials embraced by Korean contemporary artists today.

**Kang Hyung Koo** (b. 1954) strikes a rarefied balance between Surrealism and Hyperrealism with works that are equally provocative and mystifying. The majestic scale of his portraits immediately engulfs the audience with meticulous detailing of the subject. This season, *Warhol in Astonishment* will be offered in the Day Sale (*image right*, estimate: HK\$700,000–1,000,000 / US\$89,700–128,200). Like many of Kang's paintings, the work centres on the eyes of the protagonist, Andy Warhol caught in mid-action. Kang is celebrated for his adroit technical ability, and here the meticulous rendering of the skin, hair and the deep pools of the eyes become the key to understanding the subject's inner psyche.



Korean artists are known not only for their technical proficiency, but also for their unique use of unconventional materials. In **Choi So Young's** (b. 1980) *After the Snow*, a leading highlight in the Day Sale, the artist ingeniously builds up a striking three-dimensional panoramic rendering of the rural and shabby houses of her home city of Busan (*image left*, estimate: HK\$300,000–500,000 / US\$38,500–64,100). Through her meticulous and inventive handling of the denim materials and her quiet and romantic composition, Choi skilfully produces a work with deep and powerful cultural commentaries, including the artist's feelings about consumerist culture in the capitalist world.

###

### IMAGES are available here:

<http://cshk.myftp.org/Fall%202010%20Christie's%20Hong%20Kong%20Auctions/AsianContemp20CCArt/>

For more information about Christie's Hong Kong Fall 2010 Season Highlights go to [www.christies.com/chinese](http://www.christies.com/chinese)

### Touring Schedule:

| Date                     | Location  | Venue                                      |
|--------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------------------|
| 2-8 October              | Hong Kong | Hong Kong Office Gallery                   |
| 24-25 October            | Beijing   | St. Regis Hotel                            |
| 27-28 October            | Shanghai  | Four Seasons Hotel                         |
| 20-21 November           | Taipei    | Fubon Life Assurance Building              |
| 25 November – 1 December | Hong Kong | Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre |

### About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business had global auction and private sales in 2009 that totaled £2.1 billion/ US \$3.3 billion. For the first half of 2010, art sales totalled £1.7 billion/US\$2.57 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 450 sales annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from US \$200 to over US \$80 million. Christie's has 53 offices in 32 countries and 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai and Hong Kong. More 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. For more information, please visit [www.christies.com](http://www.christies.com).

\*Estimates do not include buyer's premium