

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, April 13, 2010

Media Contacts:

Yvonne So (Hong Kong)

+852 2978 9919

yso@christies.com

Gillian Leung (Hong Kong)

+852 2978 6736

gleung@christies.com

**RARE WORKS FROM THE MASTERS LEAD
CHRISTIE'S HK SPRING 2010
FINE CHINESE CLASSICAL PAINTINGS AND CALLIGRAPHY
& FINE CHINESE MODERN PAINTINGS SALES**

Hong Kong – Christie's Hong Kong will hold its Spring sale of *Fine Chinese Modern Paintings* and *Fine Chinese Classical Paintings and Calligraphy* on May 28th at the Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre, showcasing over 400 rare and exceptional works from the masters, valued in excess of HK\$350 million (US\$45 million).

Steeped in philosophy, religion and literature, Chinese paintings are unique in fusing poetry, calligraphy and art throughout the ages. The *Fine Chinese Classical Paintings & Calligraphy* sale will feature important works by artists active before the late Qing Dynasty (19th Century), including Ming Dynasty painters and calligraphers such as Wen Zhengming, Dong Qichang, Lan Ying and Shen Zhou; important Qing artists such as Hua Yan and Yuan Yao. The *Fine Chinese Modern Paintings* sale will present a body of magnificent works by renowned 19th and 20th Century masters such as Qi Baishi, Xu Beihong, Fu Baoshi, Zhang Daqian, Lin Fengmian, Gao Jianfu, Gao Qifeng. Showcasing a wide range of works by artists of different styles and schools, this sale caters to the variety of palettes of today's discerning collectors.

THE STUDY OF ONE'S UNIVERSE THROUGH ARTISTIC LENSES

Fine Chinese Modern Paintings

28 May 2010, 4pm

The Modern portion offers a fine spectrum of works that dates from late 19th century and 20th century onwards. Artists included in this category are Zhang Daqian, Qi Baishi, Lin Feng Mian, Fu Baoshi and all those who made a significant contribution to the different schools of the Chinese modern art history. The sale offers a rare opportunity for collectors to acquire works created during this age of phenomenal change.

Xu Beihong 徐悲鸿

Xu Beihong is one of the pioneers of the Chinese modern art movement. His artistic innovations functioned as a catalyst between classical and modern; Chinese and Western. He specializes in drawing, oil paintings, and traditional ink and brush paintings. He blended the Western artistic techniques into his Chinese paintings, creating an innovative and unique style; meanwhile, his drawings and oil paintings are infiltrated by a touch of Chinese water-and-ink painting flavor. His broad subjects were all portrayed with much verisimilitude.



Xu Beihong is a master at portrayal of horses, which won him a universal reputation. Xu's horses became a quintessential icon of the Chinese paintings. An expert in the horse's anatomy, Xu's work emphasized a horse's physical structure in kinetic movements. His strong and steady strokes bring out not only the strength of the horse's tendons and bones, which support not only its flesh but also its character. *The Three Stallions* (《三骏图》) (estimate:

HK\$7,000,000 – 9,000,000/US\$903,200-1,161,300, *illustrated left*) by Xu Beihong belongs to the Lufang Studio collection. These three horses are fine examples of modern Chinese paintings' perfect utilization of the Western concept of anatomy and spatial.

ZHANG Daqian 张大千

This season the Fine Chinese Modern Paintings sale presents a selection of Zhang Daqian's oeuvre, taking avid collectors through a journey of the artist's various important landmarks. Starting with his famous lady figures ***Lady Holding Lotus*** (《拈花仕女图》) (Estimate: HK\$ 2,000,000 – 3,000,000 / US\$258,100–387,100, *illustrated right*), painted in the Dunhuang style. This impressive figure painting was done in 1954 when Zhang Daqian was residing in São Paulo, Brazil. In nearly three years of reclusive artistic cultivation in Dunhuang, he had been deeply enlightened by the great art works of ancient painters. Zhang Daqian's work is representative of his absolute dedication in learning from and copying murals at the Dunhuang caves. Taking care to preserve this age old art form and religious dedication, Zhang spent two years at the caves when he was thirty one, and ***Lady Holding Lotus*** (《拈花仕女图》) sees compassionate perceptiveness on top of Zhang's skill.



Another genre of painting that Zhang Daqian was renowned for is his unsurpassable skill and understanding of ancient masters' styles. In his early days, Zhang Daqian adopted the delicate and graceful styles of Wu School in his landscape painting, using blue and green colors in large scale. ***Temple in Autumn Mountains*** (《秋江疊嶂》) (Estimate: HK\$1,200,000 – 2,000,000 /

US\$154,800 – 258,100, *illustrated left*) is a work painted in the style of Guo Xi, a preeminent landscape painter of the late eleventh century. He captured Guo Xi's innovative brushwork and rich use of ink, and identified himself with the values associated with the old master. Zhang Daqian not only was portraying natural landscape, he was also conveying the inner landscape of the heart and mind.

Zhang Daqian from the early 1960s to 1980s perfected his skill in the splash-ink method, further establishing this innovative style of Chinese landscape painting. Zhang Daqian completely broke off the traditional painting technique and put a painting's life and soul into its brushstrokes and lines. Amalgamating traditional methods of landscape painting with splashed-ink and thick coloration, ***Landscape in Splashed Ink Style*** (《晴嵐滴翠》) (Estimate: HK\$3,000,000 – 4,000,000 / US\$387,100-516,100, *illustrated right*) emphasizes both subjective and objective rendition, Zhang Daqian was successful in reaching a balance between realism and romanticism; also between perception and interpretation. In ***Landscape in Splashed Ink Style*** (《晴嵐滴翠》), the landscape forms simultaneously emerge from and recede into a dense moisture-laden atmosphere --- rocks and distant mountains are suggested by outlines, texture strokes, and ink washes that run into one another to create an impression of wet blurry surfaces



QI Baishi 齐白石

Qi Baishi was born into a farmer's family and worked as a carpenter at an early age, thus he was not exposed to the traditional upper-class upbringing and education that demanded restraint and precision in literati painting. As his creativity flowed from inspiration in the field and farms, Qi's works were seen as a type of down to earth folk art, and were very popular. Qi's paintings carried a rich folk flavour that emphasized his interchange with nature – though he was weak as a child and could not participate in farming tasks, tough farm life and his time as a shepherd was heavily imprinted in his mind, one where he heavily drew inspiration from. Qi's painting, distinct from the

detached and relatively calm literati paintings, saw a richness and abundance of vegetable and fruit, giving vitality to the paper and a subject matter to which all people could readily relate.



One of the highlights by Qi Baishi in this sale is ***Lychee and Butterflies*** (《大利迭来》) (Estimate: HK\$800,000–1,000,000/US\$103,200 – 129,000, *illustrated left*). In this painting, one can see that Qi Baishi's still life paintings are uncomplicated, inviting and warm, with a harmony and simplicity that reflects the sincerity of the artist and the subject matter.



Another highlight in this sale by Qi Baishi is ***Home within the Pines*** (《松柏人家》) (Estimate: HK\$1,500,000–2,000,000/US\$193,500–258,100, *illustrated right*), it is noticed that Qi's dedication in careful observation and painting from life not only makes this work of art lively and attractive but shows that Qi's daily life was inseparable to his painting and creation. The brush strokes are free and precise, and the use of ink reflects Qi's calligraphy and seal carving skill in depth and control.

Lin Fengmian 林风眠

Early in the 20th century, as the meeting of Eastern and Western cultures began to impact the 5,000-year tradition of Chinese painting and calligraphy, Chinese artists began exploring means of presenting that tradition in a fresh way and infusing it with new life. The art of Lin Fengmian possesses an honesty and loveliness that reach across all boundaries of language, culture, and nationality. The unfailing appeal of his art is founded on perceptions and interpretations of beauty that indeed imbue the Chinese tradition with new richness and vitality.

In his importance to the recent history of Chinese art, Lin Fengmian can be viewed as the father of Chinese modernism. Lin's vast life experience is reflected in his subtle integration of traditional stylistic techniques with modern



Chinese and western elements. His landscape works ***Into the Woods*** (《幽居图》) (Estimate: HK\$800,000 – 1,000,000/US\$103,200 – 129,000, *illustrated right*) and his



portrait works ***Opera Figures*** (《宝莲灯》) (Estimate: HK\$1,800,000 – 2,000,000/US\$232,300 – 283,900, *illustrated left*) see in this sale reflect Lin's unique synthesis of diverse influences where his distinctive energy becomes immediately apparent.

In the works ***Into the Woods*** (《幽居图》), Lin Fengmian's experience of Western realist art and Chinese brush and ink painting is profoundly revealed. The landscape is rich in texture, emotions and perspective. From his observations of landscapes and through his cultivation of the mind and of his art, Lin Feng Mian presents the genuine beauty of nature with his brush, inspiring truer and more beautiful artistic interpretations.

In another highlight ***Opera Figures*** (《宝莲灯》) by Lin Feng Mian, the upsweep of the girl's white sleeves in Lin's painting captures a sense of motion. Lin's composition employs strong geometrical elements and features two main figures that form overlapping, essentially circular shapes. This painting joins the loveliness of traditional Chinese portraits of female subjects and the Beijing opera themes in which the artist pursued his special exploration of temporal and spatial dynamics.

Private Collection of Mr. He Zhinan 何指南私人收藏:

He Zhinan (1908-1953) hails from Canton, he was in the paint wholesale business, and his business was located in Hong Kong Queen's Road Central. He has an impressive passion in

collecting Chinese paintings, throughout decades, managed to grow his purchases of paintings of the Lingnan School into a hefty collection.

In this spring sale, we are presenting is a group of twenty seven works from his collection, including 5 works which will be sold in our upcoming Fines Chinese Classical Paintings and Calligraphy sale. All of these works were purchased during the period of 1930s to 1950s, and the list of artists in this group comprises of all the prominent Lingnan masters, such as Gao Jianfu, Gao Qifeng and Chen Shuren.

Gao Jian Fu 高剑父

One of the highlights *Fishermen in Snow* (《渔汀暮雪》) (Estimate: HK\$300,000-400,000/US\$38,700-51,600, *illustrated right*) by artist Gao Jianfu (1879-1951) was painted in 1919, later was sent to Ping Ren in India in 1931 and eventually acquired by He Zhinan. The entire painting was created through delicate brush, freely flowing in ink where contrast between lightness and darkness creates a sense of cold detachment and tranquility.



Other highlights in He Zhi Nan's collection also includes Gao Qi Feng's *Twin Pines* (HK\$ 400,000-500,000/US\$51,600– 64,500) . He Zhinan's passion in the art of Chinese calligraphy and painting has been very active since his youth. Ever since his passing away in his 45, his descendants cherished these paintings for nearly six years. This is the first time for these paintings to be put on exhibition and auction so as to allow the collectors the valuable opportunity to share the experiences of the predecessor's collecting career.

Private Collection of Mr. Weng Jingxi 翁景熹先生私人珍藏

This collection is a fine selection of 12 works of Chinese paintings and calligraphy, a collection put together by an official who worked for Taiwan's Central News Agency. After the Sino-Japanese war, he was relocated to station in Hong Kong as a news correspondent, focusing on cultural affairs. This caused Mr. Weng to be affluent in the art and cultural circle in Hong Kong. This collection includes works given to him by renowned artists from Hong Kong and Taiwan at the time, including Zhao Shao'ang, Pu Ru, Yu Youren, Guan Shanyue etc. *Scholar under a Pine Tree* by Fu Baoshi was a gift from Mr. Wang Shangyi, a colleague from the agency.

Fu Baoshi 傅抱石 (1904-1965)

Credited with revolutionizing Chinese ink painting, Fu Bao Shi is considered one of the most important Chinese artists of the last century. Travelling all over China to observe and experience the country's amazing landscapes, Fu built on traditional foundations to add his own innovative brushwork, use of color and subjective perspective in aesthetic composition to create stunning landscape paintings, like his Ming period predecessor Shi Tao, whom he greatly admired.

One of the highlights in this collection is Fu Bao Shi's (1904-1965) *Scholars* (《今古输赢一笑间》) (Estimate: HK\$2,500,000 – 3,000,000/US\$322,600 – 387,100, *illustrated right*) , which is an exceptionally iconic work that promises to be a highlight of the sale.



Fu's artistic philosophy of "painting with bold strokes and refining with details" can be demonstrated amply in this painting. This work sees Fu's deliberate use of freestyle, almost impressionistic strokes and washes as well as a clever use of white space and perspective to depict a myriad of elements in a landscape – the hermit-scholars roamed and chatted under the pine tree.

Christie's Chinese Classical & Modern Paintings department offers paintings and calligraphy by important ink and brush artists. Fine Chinese Paintings and Calligraphy sales are held twice a year at our Hong Kong saleroom, featuring both classical and modern paintings. The Classical section consists mainly of works by artists active before the late Qing Dynasty (19th century). Of the various Chinese art forms, calligraphy and paintings are not only the most fascinating, but also the most culturally rich and meaningful, encapsulating the history of Chinese culture.

Lufang Studio Collection of Chinese Paintings and Calligraphy 露芳阁藏中国书画

The owner of Lufang Studio in the 80s became fast friends with famous scholars and Chinese painting masters such as Qi Gong, Huang Zhou, and Dong Shouping. Influenced by his friends, he developed a tremendous interest in the profound Chinese culture and later started a comprehensive collection of Chinese painting and calligraphy. Most of his collections came from Christie's and Sotheby's auctions in New York and Hong Kong during the 1980s and 90s. In the mid-90s, he consigned and sold at Christie's an amazing series of Wu Guanzhong's masterpieces. The range of works represented in the Lufang Studio's collection encapsulates the broad range of interests of the collector. This collection includes the masterpieces by the masters such as Dong Qichang, Wen Zhengming, Lan Ying, Fu Shan, Shen Zhou, Leng Mei, and Lu Zhi.

Dong Qichang 董其昌

Dong Qichang is a very prominent and famous painter and calligrapher in late Ming Dynasty. He's adept at landscape paintings, pursuing the plain and natural style. Dong's paintings played great influence on the late Ming and early Qing paintings, which even spread to the modern Chinese paintings. Dong Qichang's works have been tightly pursued by established collectors home and abroad.

One of the highlights in this spring sale is Dong Qichang's ***Five Sacred Mountains*** (《五岳图》)(Estimate: HK\$7,000,000-9,000,000/US\$903,200-1,161,200, *illustrated right*). In this painting, the viewer can see clear layers of inks washes, rustic yet elegant strokes; mountains, rocks, trees and clouds that are full of spirits and vitality. ***Five Sacred Mountains***, painted in 1616, is a very rare work of an outstanding quality. This work was once in the collection of a prominent Japanese collector, and was inscribed by Luo Zhenyu (1866-1940). With an impeccable provenance, it was included in publications that dated as far back as 1927.



Lan Ying 藍瑛

Lan Ying, a distinguished painter in Ming dynasty, is renowned for his landscape masterpieces. His landscapes drew the spirits of the Song and Yuan dynasties, yet retaining their unique idiosyncratic style.

Lan Ying enjoyed great reputation in the late Ming dynasty, inheriting the detached and elegant artistic styles of the literati in Yuan dynasty. Given the developed social economy at that time, more drawing techniques and skills were required; therefore we could see a touch of ornamentalism in the works of Lan Ying, sort of a subdued glamour.



One of the highlights in this spring sale is Lan Ying's album ***Landscapes*** (《山水册》)(Estimate: HK\$6,000,000-8,000,000/US\$774,200-1,032,000, *illustrated left*). In this album, his vigorous brushstrokes, and his dense yet delicate lines are profoundly

reflected through the steep cliffs and the wild and angry waves, which smacked on the rocks and stirred layers of spays. The Chinese classical paintings usually are dominated by peaceful themes; works depicting a roaring nature are thus rare finds.

Yuan Yao 袁耀

Jiehua (architectural paintings) depicts architecture, vessels and vehicles as primary thematic materials and has been a very important division in Chinese painting since the Tang dynasty (7-10th century). The *jiehua* discipline demands absolute precision and proportionality in the illustration of subject matter and allows for not even the slightest error. Qiu Ying, a Ming period master painter, was expert in this respect.

The father-and-son---Yuanjiang and Yuanyao of the early Qing dynasty --- were most accomplished in their skills of *jiehua*. In this painting, a bright moon suspends high in the night sky, illuminating magnificent multilevel architecture and delicately crafted rock gardens. Marble, jade, and *hu shi* (scholar rocks) are landscaped to emit a lovely, earthly spirit that is echoed and complimented by deep red leaves atop Autumn-painted trees. *Gongnu*, or “Odalisques”, are beautifully busy: attending to lanterns, carrying zithers, climbing through tiered chambers, or playing the flute, bringing elements of fun and joy to this serene, moon-lit evening.... One may, perhaps, faintly hear those sounds of merry-making music drifting from this picturesque scene.

Yuan Yao's painting in this sale ***Pavilion and the Autumn Moon*** (《露台秋月图》) (Estimate: HK\$6,000,000-8,000,000/US\$774,200-1,032,200, *illustrated right*), with its sentimental, poetic charms, has been a long- hidden antique piece from the private collection of Beijing painter Hu Peiheng during the tumultuous early Republic era (1911-1947). One can only imagine how dearly Hu Peiheng, an accomplished artist himself, had cherished this painting.



Shen Zhou 沈周



Another interesting lot in this category is Shen Zhou's (1427-1509) ***Scholar Travelling in Wintry Mountains*** (《乾坤雪意图》) (Estimate: HK\$3,000,000-4,000,000/US\$387,100-516,100, *illustrated left*)

During the mid-Ming dynasty (14-15th century), the “Wu” (denominating the Suzhou region) school is one of the major artistic and painting style of the period. As a pioneer of this influential school, Shen Zhou attained recognition and accolades despite his steering clear of the political and government path (as were expected of most scholars). Shenzhou's reputation was mainly attributed to his artistic achievements, based upon his integration of painting and drawing styles inherited from preceding dynasties, as well as his pioneering development of the genuine literati painting --- a fusion of poetry, literature, and painting.

For this season's Fine Chinese Classical Paintings Sale, Shenzhou's monumental *shansuibua* (literally meaning "painting of mountains and water"), ***Scholar Travelling in Wintry Mountains*** (《乾坤雪意图》) is noted for its powerful and rugged strokes. Within the painting, the figure stands facing a bridge framed against white-capped mountains and deep black waters, emitting a shivering chill that may virtually be felt by the perceiver. This painting was responsorial to the solicitation of the “Qian An Elder”, and considered to be a work produced per invitation by Yang Xuan. At the time, Yang Xuan assumed the official posts of Investigating Executive Envoy and Judicial Commissioner of the Zhejiang Province. He petitioned to dredge Hangzhou West Lake and Chenghe, “The Citadel River”, and to construct the Yongjin Watergate to irrigate agricultural land in the Hangzhou vicinity. Yang Xuan was deeply loved and revered by the people, yet passed

away before seeing his civil construction projects to completion. Shenzhou most likely painted this *Scholar Travelling in Wintry Mountains* (《乾坤雪意图》) in dedication to Yang Xuan.

Hua Yan 华昉

The most representative artists of the mid Qing dynasty were none other than the “Eight Eccentrics of Yanzhou”. Among “The Eight”, Hua Yan was the well-learned and multi-talented painter. Although he was famous for his *huaniaohua* (flower and bird paintings), he was also good at *shansuibhua* (landscape paintings) by capturing Wang Meng’s style. His landscape paintings were true to nature, using complicated and detailed brushwork to render the lush and heavily foliated mountains and forests of Jiangnan (south of Yangtze River). This sale would also present Hua Yan(1682-1756)’s *Along the River Bank* (《隔岸清泉图》) (Estimate:HK\$800,000-1,000,000/US\$103,200-129,000, *illustrated right*). Soft and graceful, elegant and ethereal, this is an extremely rare and unique creation amongst his works.



###

Visit Christie’s Web site at www.christies.com/chinese

The Songde Tang Collection of Chinese Modern Paintings highlights info and high-reso images are available at:

<http://cshk.myftp.org/Spring%202010%20Christie's%20Hong%20Kong%20Auctions/ChinesePaintings/Songdetang/Images/>

Fine Chinese Modern Paintings highlights info and high-reso images are available at:

<http://cshk.myftp.org/Spring%202010%20Christie's%20Hong%20Kong%20Auctions/ChinesePaintings/CMP/Images/>

Fine Chinese Classical Paintings and Calligraphy highlights info and high-reso images are available at:

<http://cshk.myftp.org/Spring%202010%20Christie's%20Hong%20Kong%20Auctions/ChinesePaintings/CCP/Images/>

Auction

Fine Chinese Classical Paintings and Calligraphy

Friday, 28 May 2010, 10.00am

The Songde Tang Collection of Chinese Modern Paintings

Friday, 28 May 2010, 2.30pm

Fine Chinese Modern Paintings

Friday, 28 May 2010, 4.00pm

Convention Hall, Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre,
No. 1 Expo Drive, Wanchai, Hong Kong

Viewing

Taipei

May 22-23, 10:30am-6:30pm

Fubon Insurance Building

Hong Kong

May 26 – 27, 10.30am-6pm

Conveition Hall, Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre, No. 1 Expo Drive, Wanchai, Hong Kong

About Christie’s

Christie’s, the world’s leading art business had global auction and private sales in 2009 that totalled £2.1 billion/\$3.3 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 \$200 to over \$80 million. Christie’s has 53 offices in 30 countries and 10 salesrooms around the world including 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.

*Estimates do not include buyer’s premium

###