

For Immediate Release
28 October, 2010

Contact:

Kate Swan Malin kmalin@christies.com +852 2978 9966
Gillian Leung gleung@christies.com +852 2978 6736

Christie's Sales of Chinese Ceramics & Works of Art to offer an Impressive Array of Rare and Important Works from Celebrated Private Collections

- Approximately 400 works valued in excess of HK\$555 million (US\$71 million)
- Three well-known private collections lead the season: **Greenwald, Shorenstein, and Fonthill**
- Day-long series of auctions is lead by the **imperial cloisonné enamel double crane censers from the Fonthill Collection** expected to realize in excess of HK\$120 million (US\$15.6 million)



Important Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art

Wednesday, 1 December 2010

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

Hong Kong – Christie's Hong Kong Fall sales of *Important Ceramics and Works of Art* will take place on December 1 at the Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre. With three important single-owner sales and numerous important collections presented during this day-long series, collectors will be treated to a wide range of unique objects across multiple categories. Together these auctions offer approximately 400 works of ceramics, glass, lacquer, bamboo, Imperial furnishings, Buddhist art, cloisonné and jade carvings with a combined estimate in excess of HK\$555 million (US\$71 million).

For Imperial Appreciation: Fine Chinese Ceramics from the Greenwald Collection

Among the many renowned single-owner collections presented this season is *For Imperial Appreciation: Fine Chinese Ceramics from the Greenwald Collection*, a superb private collection featuring exquisite Ming and Qing Imperial porcelains. Gerald Greenwald has been a passionate collector of Chinese ceramics for more than thirty-five years, during which time he has amassed a remarkable collection of fine and very rare pieces. Initially captivated by the beautiful porcelains of the Ming and Qing dynasties, his passionate interest rapidly evolved and as he became more deeply fascinated by Chinese ceramic art

history, he gradually broadened his scope to include ceramics from earlier periods. The result is a most remarkable collection of porcelain, with magnificent works from the Ming and Qing dynasties forming the core of the collection. The forthcoming sale is comprised of **32 Imperial ceramics from the Ming and Qing dynasties, ranging in estimates from HK\$80,000 to HK\$5,000,000**. Each piece carries with it a unique story, often laden with significant symbolism and illustrious provenance.



Leading the collection is a **very rare pair of doucai water pots from the Yongzheng period** (*image left*, estimate: HK\$5-8 million/US\$650,000-1,000,000). These charming water pots are finely painted and enameled around the sides with swirling clouds circling the base in delicate tones of green, aubergine, blue, yellow. Most interestingly, the clouds are used here as a symbol of good fortune, for the word for cloud in Chinese is *yun*, a homophone for the word fortune. Previously in the collection of the Tsui

Museum of Art in Hong Kong, these water pots are elegant examples of the decorative technique known as *doucai*, in which underglaze-blue outlines are filled with colored overglaze enamels.



Porcelains made for the three great Qing dynasty imperial patrons, the Emperors Kangxi (1662-1722), Yongzheng (1723-1735) and Qianlong (1736-1795), are well represented in the Greenwald Collection. Amongst these is a **small, extremely delicate, dish from the Kangxi reign**, which is decorated in fine *famille verte* overglaze enamels (*image left*, estimate: HK\$1-1.5 million/US\$130,000-190,000). Decorated with a ripe peach and the Chinese character for 'long life' written in gold, the dish is entirely suitable for celebration of an imperial birthday. Adding to the

appeal of this exquisite and rare dish is that it was formerly part of the Robert Chang Collection.

Another leading highlight from the Greenwald collection is a **delightful pair of bowls with ruby enameled exteriors from the Kangxi reign** (1723-1795) (*image right*, estimate: HK\$4-6 million/US\$520,000-770,000). The seeds and fruits that decorate the interior of the two cups, are carefully selected for their auspicious meaning with their emphasis on the birth of sons and grandsons, their successful careers, wealth and good fortune, and suggest that these cups were probably originally an imperial wedding gift.



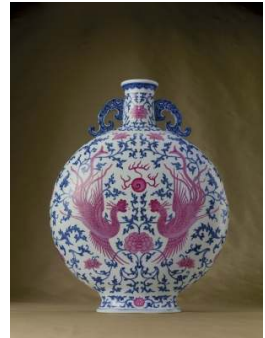
Luminous Colours: Treasures from the Shorenstein Collection

The Chinese works of art from the collection of Walter and Phyllis Shorenstein are spectacular in their beauty, their technical excellence and their historical importance. They include examples of Chinese glass, imperial porcelain and jade of particular distinction. Phyllis Shorenstein was a passionate collector of Chinese glass and the impressively comprehensive collection that she amassed is one of the most admired and comprehensive collections in private hands.

Both Walter and Phyllis Shorenstein will be remembered for their immense contribution to the city of San Francisco's cultural, educational and social life, as well as their generous and thoughtful charitable works. In 1966 Phyllis became one of the founders of the San Francisco Asian Art Museum, and in May 1994 the museum named one of the galleries in their honour to recognize the Shorensteins' support and generosity.

Impressionist paintings from the Shorenstein collection will be offered for sale at Christie's New York on 3 November.

A magnificent pink-enamelled blue and white Qianlong moonflask leads the collection's porcelain offerings (*image right, estimate upon request*). Decorated with phoenixes amongst flower scrolls in underglaze blue and overglaze pink enamel, it is a rare and superb example that is as a testament to the outstanding artistry and technical skill of the craftsmen employed at the imperial kilns. Each phoenix is exceptionally finely rendered, making this moonflask one of the most striking examples of the few porcelains known with this combination of colors and techniques. The pair of this vase is in the Matsuoka Museum of Art, Tokyo.



Chinese glass production reached its highest point in the Qing dynasty, with spectacular glass vessels being made in the Imperial Glass Workshops during the reigns of the Kangxi (1662-1722), Yongzheng (1723-1735) and Qianlong (1736-1795) emperors. Phyllis Shorenstein's collection of Chinese glass is among the most admired in private hands and was passionately assembled with the help of Dr. Clarence Shangraw of the Asian Art museum of San Francisco. The majority of the examples date to the first half of the Qing dynasty and Mrs Shorenstein particularly admired the different colors and forms of the pieces in her collection, which in her own words were 'a chorus

line of colors'. Leading the selection is a **Qianlong ruby red glass phoenix-form ewer**, an impressive piece that demonstrates the skilled combination of molding and carving (*image left, estimate: HK\$4-6 million/US\$520,000-780,000*). Its relief-carved decoration and gilt-bronze handle combine in a most striking and innovative piece which inspired by both a European 18th century silver form and Chinese archaic bronzes. The ewer will be among the collection's most sought-after glass offerings.

Also of note among the glass offerings is **an imperial Qianlong red-overlay pink glass bottle vase** (*image right, estimate: HK\$1.5-2 million/US\$195,000-260,000*). The subtle and complementary contrast of the two colors on this slender and finely-carved vase make it both striking and unusual. An additional highlight is a **rare imperial four-**



color glass Qianlong hu vase (estimate: HK\$2-3 million/US\$260,000-390,000) ingeniously composed with contrasting colors that are meant to imitate white jade, lacquer, lapis lazuli, and emerald green jade. Among the superb transparent glass pieces offered is a **Kangxi colourless glass dish decorated with birds and grape vines** (*image left, estimate: HK\$500,000-800,000/US\$65,000-100,000*). Engraved on its underside by a diamond point using a technique favoured by Venetian glass

workers in the 16th century, this vessel highlights the influence of Western glass techniques on Chinese examples.

Leading the selection of important jades in the Shorenstein Collection is **an exquisite imperial white jade conch shell** (*image right, estimate HK\$3.5-5 million/US\$450,000 – 650,000*). The Kangxi, Yongzheng and Qianlong emperors were devout Tibetan Buddhists, and this very fine carving of a conch shell, known in Sanskrit as *Sankha*, represents one of the most commonly used ritual implements



in Tibetan Buddhism as it conveys the imagery of the Transmission of Buddhist teachings. In China, carved conch shells reached their apogee in the 18th century, and indeed, the Qianlong Emperor bestowed one as a gift to the Dalai Lama. The present white jade shell appears to be unique. The carving of as large a piece of white jade as was used for this work of art would have been a major commission in the early Qing period and suggests that the shell was made for a special occasion or for the express purpose of pleasing the emperor. The decoration, subtly rendered in low relief, was carefully chosen to be auspicious and features the Eight Buddhist Emblems - including the wheel symbolizing knowledge; the lotus flower symbolizing purity and enlightenment; the fish, freedom and conjugal harmony; the banner symbolizing victory, as well as bats for good luck.

Imperial Treasures from the Fonthill Collection

An astonishing splendour is shown here, combined with the finest taste, and one can say without exaggerating that those who are in the business of decorating for the great and rich, to perfect their art would find in Fonthill the most excellent examples.

-C.A.G. Goede, describing Fonthill House, 1805

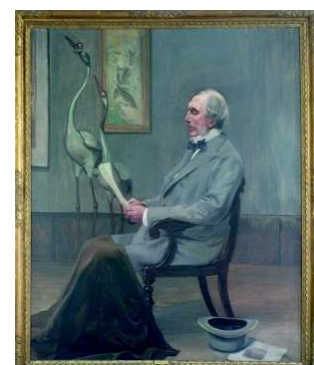
The collection of Alfred Morrison, also known as the Fonthill House collection, was one of the most important 19th century English collections of Chinese art. This season, Christie's long legacy of offering works from this most distinguished of private collections continues with a special single-owner sale of three important works of art offered directly from descendants of Alfred Morrison.

Alfred Morrison (1821 – 1897) was the second son of the wealthy textile merchant James Morrison, who was believed to be the wealthiest commoner in 19th century England. After his father's death in 1857, Alfred inherited the Fonthill estate and devoted much of his inheritance to collecting extraordinary art treasures. Set in the Wiltshire countryside, Fonthill was the perfect backdrop for him to present his magnificent collection, including a significant group of engravings and Chinese art, with a particular emphasis on Qing porcelain and enamel wares.



The Fonthill Collection is especially famous for its exceptional imperial cloisonné and champlevé enamels on metal and for its superb imperial enameled porcelains. **Leading the collection is a magnificent and extremely rare pair of imperial cloisonné enamel double crane censers from the Yongzheng period (1723-1735)** (*image left, estimate upon request*). Representing peace and longevity, these magnificent cranes are auspicious creatures that may have flanked an Imperial throne. Unusually large and exceptionally detailed, these magnificent works of art appear to be unique in having *two* cranes in each group rather than being a pair of single cranes. Indeed, all extant cloisonné censers and candle holders published from the palace collections have only a single crane on each base.

It is thought that these crane censers may have been commissioned by the Prince Hongli (later Emperor Qianlong), probably as a birthday gift for his father Emperor Yongzheng. The peaches held by the taller cranes are symbols of longevity - a fitting choice. Meanwhile, the beautifully depicted bamboo spray symbolizes integrity, a virtue that was particularly valued by the Yongzheng Emperor (r. 1723-1735). Richly endowed with symbolism, this pair of double crane censers was among the most treasured pieces in Alfred



Morrison's collection, as evidenced by his 1880's portrait by Placido Zuloaga which shows the crane censers in the background (*image previous page*). A highlight of the season, these cranes will be among the most sought-after works and are expected to fetch in excess of HK\$120 million/US\$15.6 million.



Alfred Morrison's Fonthill Collection is known for its extremely fine enameled porcelains, especially those with colored grounds. Interestingly, yellow-ground vessels appear to have found particular favor both at the Chinese court of the late 18th century and early 19th century, and in the Fonthill Collection. Also offered is a **very rare yellow-ground famille rose vase** from the Jiaqing period (1796-1820) (*image left*, estimate: HK\$18-25 million/US\$2.33-3.23 million). Exquisitely painted in overglaze enamels in a style characteristic of the finest imperial porcelains made for the Qianlong Emperor, this vase boasts an elegant shape and is decorated with a variety of auspicious emblems including four upside-down bats symbolizing happiness, as well as the *lingzhi* fungus or 'divine branch', one of the most auspicious motifs in a Chinese artist's repertoire.

A pair of **yellow-ground famille rose bowls** from the **Daoguang period** (1821-1850) (*image right*, estimate: HK\$1.2-1.8 million/US\$160,000-230,000) will also be offered. Featuring five iron-red bats on the interior, these bowls are densely decorated with a continuous floral pattern in brightly colored enamels.



Important Chinese Ceramics & Works of Art

The sale of *Important Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art* will feature a broad array of masterpieces across a number of collecting categories, including important jade carvings, superlative ceramics, lacquer, cloisonné, palace furnishings, and works of art.



Among the leading highlights is an **important pair of imperial zitan hardwood embellished screens** formerly in the collection of **Prince Gong**, the sixth son of Emperor Daoguang 1821-1850) (*image left, estimate on request*). Yixin (1833-1898), the first Prince Gong, was one of the most influential figures in China during the second half of the 19th century. In 1851 he was given an extensive mansion by his brother the Xianfeng Emperor (r.1850-1861). This 18th century mansion, which is now a museum, became known as the most sumptuous in Beijing, with the most luxurious furnishings. The magnificent pair of screens formerly in Prince Gong's collection is a testament to this luxury, with their superbly carved *zitan* wood stands and exquisite white jade appliques. Central to the screens' decoration are vases containing lotus plants which, in addition to their association with Buddhism, are also symbols of feminine beauty and of purity.

Among the lead jade highlights is a **magnificent white jade circular table screen** from the Qianlong period (1736-1795) (*image right*, estimate: HK\$6-8 million/US\$780,000-1 million). One of the most fascinating aspects of this screen is not only its large size, but also the translucency of the carefully chosen material. Even though the panel measures approximately 1cm in thickness, when light passes through the stone it enhances the differing depths of the picturesque landscape scene, masterfully carved by the lapidary artist who wonderfully captured an ethereal vignette where minute figures in deep conversation are seen against a backdrop of a vast idyllic landscape.



Another highlight is a superb white jade censer and cover from the Qianlong period (1736-1795) (estimate: HK\$4-6 million/US\$520,000-770,000). Showcasing a flawless stone and outstanding technical quality of the carving and polish, this censer is superbly conceived and very original in design, and indeed appears to be unique. Also of note is a beautifully carved white jade marriage bowl from the Qianlong period (estimate: HK\$4-6 million/US\$520,000-770,000) featuring carefully chosen iconography to provide auspicious messages of happiness, wealth, and longevity.



Ceramic highlights include a magnificent underglaze-blue faceted moonflask from the Yongzheng period (1723-1735) (image left, estimate: HK\$10-15 million /US\$1.3-1.9 million). Large sized vases from this period are exceedingly rare, particularly one potted with eight faceted sides. Superbly painted with scenes of birds on a river bank with delicate and precise brushwork, the only other vase of this size and shape is found in the National Palace Museum, Taipei. Also of note is a large Ming-style and splendidly painted blue and white moonflask (estimate: HK\$10-15 million/US\$1.3-1.9 million), as well as a rare blue and white double gourd vase, one of only two Qianlong-marked blue and white vases of this form (estimate: HK\$9-12 million/US\$1.2-1.5 million). Rounding out the ceramic highlights is a large celadon-glazed triple-neck moonflask featuring five distinctive moulded marks of the five Daoist emblems, the Five Sacred Peaks (estimate: HK\$4-6 million/US\$520,000-770,000).

###

High resolution images of select highlights from Christie's Fall sales of Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art are available here:

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

Auction

For Imperial Appreciation: Fine Chinese Ceramics from the Greenwald Collection

Wednesday, 1 December, 10:30am

Luminous Colours: Treasures from the Shorestein Collection

Wednesday, 1 December, 11:15am

Imperial Treasures from the Fontbill Collection

Wednesday, 1 December, 12:30pm

Important Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art

Wednesday, 1 December, 2:30pm

Grand Hall, Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre

For more information about Christie's Hong Kong Autumn 2010 Season Highlights go to www.christies.com

(Chinese information available on www.christies.com/chinese)

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business had global auction and private sales in 2009 that totaled £2.1 billion/\$3.3 billion. For the first half of 2010, art sales totaled £1.7 billion/\$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 \$200 to over \$100 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.

*Estimates do not include buyer's premium