

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Christie's and Chinese contemporary artist Zeng Fanzhi
support the environment with charity auction of iconic work
*The Leopard***

**To be sold at Christie's Hong Kong Evening Sale on 28 May,
With proceeds to benefit The Nature Conservancy**



The Leopard

signed in Chinese; signed 'Zeng Fanzhi' in Pinyin;
dated '2010' (lower right)
oil on canvas
280 x 180 cm. (110 1/4 x 70 7/8 in.)
Painted in 2010

Estimate:
HK\$6,000,000 – 8,000,000
US\$769,200 – 1,025,600

Hong Kong – Christie's, the world's leading art business, will hold a special charity sale of an iconic work by renowned Chinese contemporary artist Zeng Fanzhi. *The Leopard* (image above, estimate: HK\$6-8 million/US\$769,200 – 1,025,600), will be offered at Christie's Hong Kong Evening Sale of *Asian 20th Century and Contemporary Art* on 28 May. With proceeds going to non-profit organisation The Nature Conservancy, Christie's will also waive all commissions for the sale of this work. *The Leopard* will be displayed together with over 30 other works from Zeng's solo exhibition entitled “*BEING*” (界線的共鳴). The exhibition will be held from 27 to 30 May at the Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre and will be sponsored by the François Pinault Foundation, the Rockbund Museum and Christie's. The free exhibition, based on the theme of people and the environment, shows the latest works from Zeng's *Nature Series*. The charity sale of *The Leopard* is a befitting highlight to this meaningful collaboration in support of the environment.

Eric Chang, International Director of Asian 20th Century and Contemporary Art at Christie's Hong Kong commented, *"Christie's support for the charity sale of The Leopard is an example of how our auctions continue to bring the best art and the best people together. Our Hong Kong sales of Asian contemporary art in particular have been instrumental in propelling Chinese art to the global stage since over a decade ago. As all eyes are on Asia now, I hope more of the world's collectors will support this worthy cause and participate in this sale."*

THE LEOPARD

Zeng Fanzhi is one of the world's best known Chinese contemporary artists whose 'Hospital' and 'Mask' series are highly regarded internationally. In *The Leopard*, which is from a new series called 'Nature', Zeng has reversed his usual subject-ground relationship.

On a monumental canvas standing nearly three meters tall, Zeng presents a solitary and ill lit leopard, moving cautiously through a dark forest. The foreground of the composition is dense with Zeng Fanzhi's characteristically expressive brushwork, depicting a thicket of dry, lifeless branches with no order other than the insinuated drive to envelope the protagonist. The depth of the landscape is delineated by mysterious flairs of white and the powdery blue snow embankment. The leopard is shown passing over this ridge, against an infinite black sky, peppered with flakes of snow, behind him. The surface of the canvas is built up through a range of brushstrokes ranging from the broadly expressive to the truncated, calligraphic branches, and the soft inviting texture of the animal.

Some areas of the composition seem deliberately blurred, as an audience's vision would be in trying to gaze through a snowstorm. The handling of the leopard is particularly evocative, highlighting the soft subtle beauty of its coat, varying from white to ochre to soft amber, speckled with its black spots and the snow gathering on its back. Its gaze is almost shockingly human. A viewer, who knows Zeng's practice, becomes aware that the artist has afforded the animal a greater humanity than his human figure-based paintings.

Eric Chang, International Director of Asian 20th Century and Contemporary Art at Christie's Hong Kong commented, *"The significance of Zeng Fanzhi's art lies not solely in its theme or the media employed, but largely in his exploration of the expressive power of lines and their aesthetic meaning at all levels. In his line aesthetic, Zeng adapts the artistic tradition of his Eastern cultural origin revamps the style of calligraphic lines consummately practised by classical Chinese artists and integrates them with the lavish colors and textures found in Western oils."*

Boosted by the power of colors, each and every brush stroke in the hand of Zeng manifests unique, subtle changes that liberate the potential power of the lines and their expressive capacity as an abstract element. It is through such an endeavour that he brings about a new language of art and extends the expressive power of lines beyond their possible height and depth, transcending both his Self and the traditional culture of Chinese art in which his aesthetic of lines is rooted. His latest 'Landscape Series' is a sweeping exegesis and recapitulation of this spirit. It is further developed and more sophisticated, and is a development of the art of lines in the contemporary art scene."

**** IMAGE UPON REQUEST ****

“BEING” (界線的共鳴) - Zeng Fanzhi Exhibition	
Dates	27 -30 May 2011
Venue	Hall 5E, Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre 1 Harbour Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong
Opening Hours	10:30am – 6:30pm
Admission	Free

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About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business had global auction and private sales in 2010 that totaled £3.3 billion/\$5.0 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. Visit Christie's Website at www.christies.com

**Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and do not reflect costs, financing fees or application of buyer's or seller's credits.*

About The Nature Conservancy

The Nature Conservancy is a leading conservation organization working around the world to protect ecologically important lands and waters for nature and people. At present, the Conservancy is working in over 30 countries across the globe to address threats to conservation involving climate change, fire, fresh water, forests, invasive species, and marine ecosystems. The Nature Conservancy commenced work in China in 1998, in a partnership with the Chinese government, and together has launched a number of important initiatives including mapping out China's biodiversity, promoting sustainable forest management and forest restoration, strengthening the nature reserve system, combating climate change, protecting the Yangtze River, as well as many projects working to protect the natural and cultural heritage of northwest Yunnan's "Three Parallel Rivers" area. Visit The Nature Conservancy on the Web at www.nature.org and www.tnc.org.cn

About the François Pinault Foundation

The François Pinault Foundation develops an ambitious program of exhibitions, designed to present works from François Pinault's collection to the widest audience possible. Exhibitions are featured in Venice at Palazzo Grassi and Punta della Dogana, permanent sites dedicated to the collection since 2006 and 2009 respectively, as well as throughout France (Lille, Dinard) and beyond (Moscow). The Foundation's program has been met with great success, allowing over 1.5 million visitors to discover this exceptional collection.

About Rockbund Art Museum

Located in Rockbund, the famous Bund area where Huangpu River intersects with Suzhou Creek, Rockbund Art Museum (RAM) was originally the Royal Asiatic Society (RAS), home to the former Shanghai Museum, one of the first modern museums in China and was restored by renowned architect David Chipperfield. As the only contemporary art museum on the Bund, RAM considers its mission to be "the spread of humanistic values and the promotion of art". RAM dedicates its efforts to the study, exchange and promotion of contemporary arts. Rockbund Art Museum was officially opened on May 4, 2010 and sequentially held different types of exhibitions including "Cai Guo-Qiang: Peasant Da Vincis", "2010 • Zeng Fanzhi" and "By Day, By Night, or Some (Special) Things a Museum Can Do". All exhibitions were with high originality and rich artistic and social significance. Meanwhile, RAM has launched more than 60 not for profit events including academic and educational lecture, seminar, performance and workshop etc., receiving active participation and positive remarks from the public. For more information on RAM, please visit www.rockbundartmuseum.org