

CHRISTIE'S

THE ART PEOPLE

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CONVERGENCES: A SPECIAL SALE OF SINGAPORE ART FOR THE FIRST TIME AT AN INTERNATIONAL AUCTION HOUSE



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CHEONG SOO PIENG
(Singaporean, 1917-1983)

Balinese Dance
Oil on canvas, 134 x 87.5 cm (52 ¾ x 34 ¾ in.)
Painted in 1953
Estimate on request

Hong Kong / Singapore - Christie's announces ***Convergences: A Special Sale of Singapore Art*** to take place on 29 November, as part of Christie's Hong Kong Autumn 2015 Auction Week.

To mark the golden jubilee of Singapore's national independence, this carefully curated sale will feature a selection of more than 40 outstanding works by some of the most renowned modern and contemporary Singapore artists. This is the first time that an international auction house dedicates an individual sale to Singapore art, a category which has been increasingly attracting international collectors in recent years.

Zineng Wang, **Head of Sale, Southeast Asian Art**, commented: "This November, to celebrate Singapore's independence anniversary, Christie's Hong Kong will offer a special, one-off sale dedicated to Singapore art, that will showcase the range and quality of artworks to new and discerning collectors alike. A diverse selection of iconic works will be presented, many of which illustrate key episodes in the history of Singapore art. Through the sale, we are also aiming to highlight the role played by Singaporean artists within the larger realm of Asian modern and contemporary art."

The top lot of the sale is ***Balinese Dance***, one of **Cheong Soo Pieng's** masterpieces and an impressive example of the artist's early oil paintings (*illustrated above left*). To be offered for the first time at auction, this work was created during the years following his famous 1952 trip to Bali, which marked a turning point in Singapore modern art. Depicting a supremely dramatic moment in a ritual performance

featuring what locals call the *Leak*- an iconic mythological figure in Balinese folklore, this is one of the largest works executed by Cheong Soo Pieng in the early 1950s.

Christie's sale will also feature one of the most comprehensive collection of top quality works by Chen Wen Hsi, while numerous artists will make their auction debut, such as emerging contemporary painter Ruben Pang. Important works by Sun Yee, one of the few female artists from the Singapore modernist movement will also be on offer.

ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTS:

Created between the late 1960s and the early 1970s, **Chen Wen Hsi's** *Sea Palace* is one of the most remarkable abstract paintings by the artist to appear on the auction market (*illustrated right*). Extremely sophisticated from a compositional point of view, this work can be seen as the culmination of the artist's exploration of abstraction, where objective forms are juxtaposed and fragmented to reveal the inner side of the human spirit.

Sea Palace also serves as a metaphor for Singapore evolution from an entrepôt status to its subsequent development into one of the world's most affluent nation-states.

This painting leads a group of eight works by Chen Wen Hsi on offer at Christie's, all of which illustrate the range of subjects undertaken by the émigré artist during his illustrious career.



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CHEN WEN HSI

(Singaporean, 1906-1992)

Sea Palace

Oil on canvas

80 x 100 cm. (31 1/2 x 39 3/8 in.)

Painted circa late 60s - early 70s

Estimate on request



Another highlight from this section of the sale is *Assembling*, a significant example of Chen Wen Hsi's avant-garde Chinese ink painting, circa 1980, characterised by bold outlines and a vivid chromatic contrast (*illustrated left*).

Emerging contemporary painter **Ruben Pang** will make his auction debut with *Light the Caretaker* (*illustrated right*). This signature work explores colour, form and transparency, by employing a full chromatic range to render wispy, ethereal figures in dynamic motion. Drawing from a multiplicity of visual cultures, Ruben Pang's works constitute a new orientation in contemporary Singapore art.

Showcasing the diversity of expression in Singapore ink modern and contemporary art, Christie's auction will also feature poignant paintings by Chua Ek Kay, Tan Oe Pang and **Tan Swie Hian** (*illustrated on the following page*).



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RUBEN PANG (Singaporean, B.1990)

Light the Caretaker

Oil, alkyd, acrylic and retouching

varnish

on aluminum composite panel

127 x 86.5 x 127 cm. (50 x 34 1/4 in.)

Painted in 2015

Estimate: HK\$ 40,000 – 60,000

US\$ 5,100 – 7,700

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CHEN WEN HSI (Singaporean, 1906-1992)

Assembling

Ink and colour on paper

Circa 1980

136 x 69 cm. (53 1/2 x 27 1/8 in.)

Estimate: HK\$ 1,500,000-2,000,000

US\$ 192,800-257,100



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TAN SWIE HIAN

(Singaporean, B.1943)

Pandas

Chinese ink and acrylic on paper

Painted in 1993

136 x 69 cm.

(53 1/2 x 26 3/8 in.)

Estimate:

HK\$ 500,000 – 700,000

US\$ 64,100 – 89,700

Notes to Editors:

CONVERGENCES: A SPECIAL SALE OF SINGAPORE ART

Auction: 29 November 2015

Saleroom: Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, 1 Expo Drive, Wan Chai

➤ A selection of highlights from 'Convergences' will be exhibited in Singapore

Opening days: 6 - 8 November 2015

Viewing Times: 11am – 7pm

Venue: ArtSpace@Helutrans, 39 Keppel Road, Singapore 089065

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About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in the first half of 2015 that totalled £2.9 billion / \$4.5 billion. In 2014, Christie's had global auction and private sales that totalled £5.1 billion/\$8.4 billion, making it the highest annual total in Christie's history. 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 has since conducted the greatest and most celebrated auctions through the centuries providing a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers around 450 auctions 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 also has a long and successful history conducting private sales for its clients in all categories, with emphasis on Post-War & Contemporary, Impressionist & Modern, Old Masters and Jewellery.

Christie's has a global presence with 54 offices in 32 countries and 12 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Mumbai. More recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in growth 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. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and do not reflect costs, third-party financing fees or application of buyer's or seller's credits.*

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