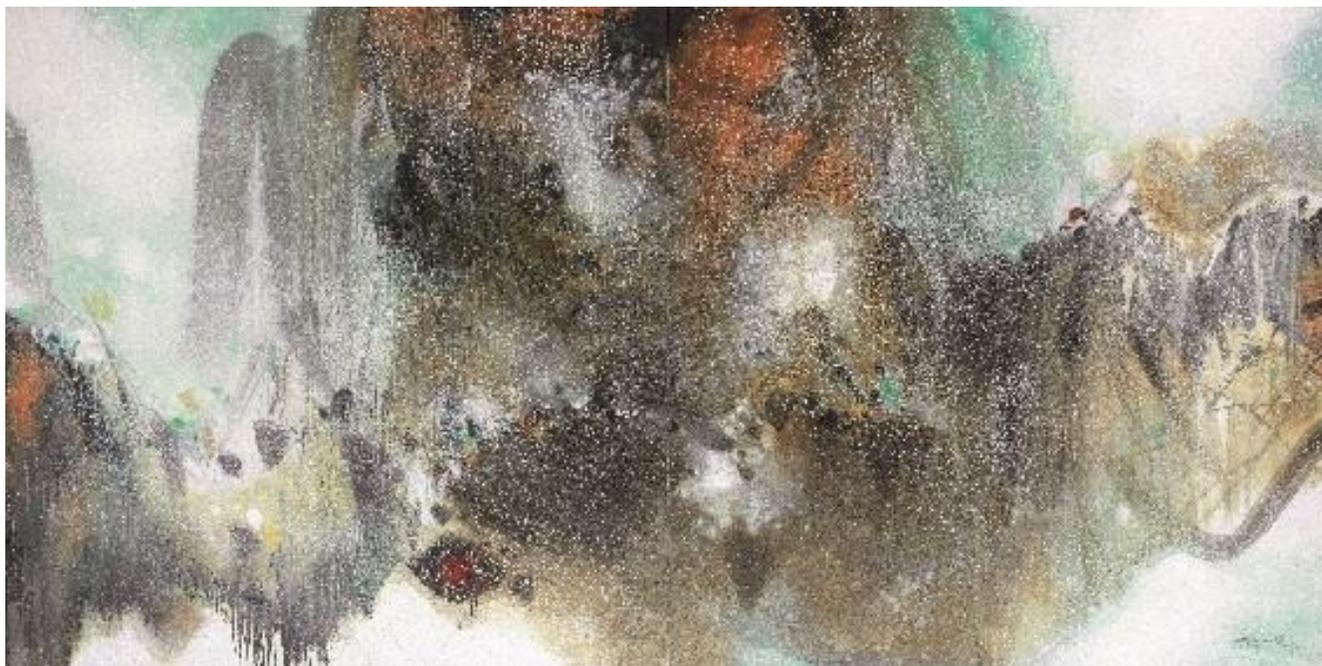




# CHRISTIE'S

PRESS RELEASE | HONG KONG | 14 November 2016

## Asian 20th Century & Contemporary Art Autumn Auction Series



**CHU TEH-CHUN (1920-2014)**  
*Vertige Neigeux (ZHU DEQUN, Snowy vertigo)*  
Oil on canvas, diptych  
each: 200 x 200 cm. (78 3/4 x 78 3/4 in.)  
overall: 200 x 400 cm. (78 3/4 x 157 1/2 in.)  
Painted in 1990-1999  
Estimate on Request

**Hong Kong** - On November 26, and 27, Christie's will hold three sales of Asian 20th Century & Contemporary Art and a special section of works in The Pioneers sale, offering a combined total of more than 450 lots from both emerging and iconic artists across Asia.

This season will feature some of the greatest works from the most renowned modern artists, as well as introduce a new wave of artists to our evening sale platform for the first time. Riding on the strong momentum of Southeast Asian artists in recent seasons, a selection of masterworks from artists across the region will be offered with particular highlights from artists from the Philippines.

**Eric Chang, Deputy Chairman, International Director of Asian 20th Century and Contemporary Art** commented "This season all eyes will be on "**The Pioneers**" sale, a ground-breaking evening sale which celebrates the leading modern and contemporary Asian artists who ushered in an era of artistic evolution and innovation. This sale and the wider themes this season present the forces that have shaped the artistic landscape as well as the next wave of contemporary trailblazers."

This autumn Christie's will be presenting some of the most monumental works of Modern masters to appear at auction from renowned artists such as **Chu Teh-Chun**, **Zao Wou-Ki**, **Wu Guanzhong**, **Lin Fengmian**, and **Sanyu**.

The works of these modern masters will be offered as part of the wider Asian 20th Century & Contemporary art auction series, as well as in "The Pioneers" special evening sale.



**CHU TEH-CHUN**  
**(ZHU DEQUN, 1920-2014)**  
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to paint after witnessing a hailstorm in the Swiss Alps. *Vertige Neigeux* is a celebration of the beauty of a snowed under landscape imbued with the rich energy of nature. This work took ten years to complete (from 1990 to 1999), and stands as an unparalleled work in the artist's oeuvre.

Artistically, Chu first uses splash colours as the base tone to create a sense of unison, the pale wash of paint creates an illusionistic depth, rendering the wide expanse of the landscape. The traces of paint in place of figurative depictions look free and spontaneous, yet is done meticulously with precision, guiding viewers to admire the hazy distant landscape.

**LIN FENGMIAN (1900-1991)**

*Fishing Village*

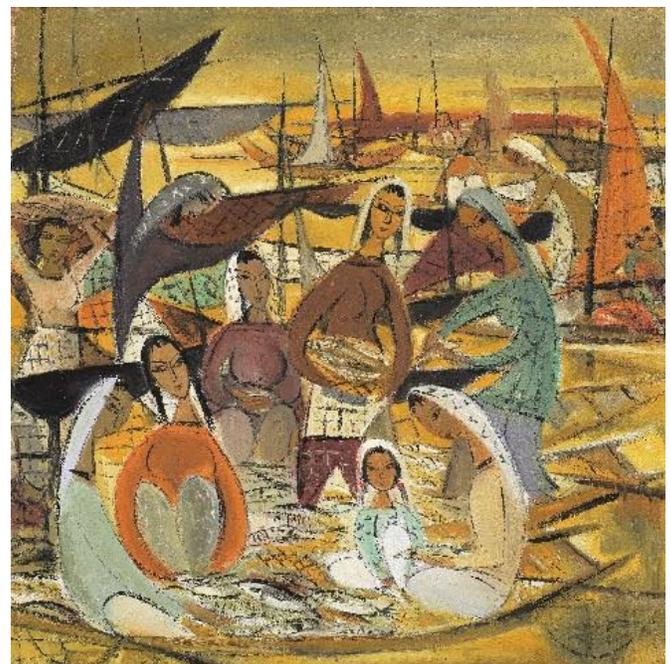
Oil on canvas 80 x 78 cm. (31 1/2 x 30 3/4 in.)

Painted circa. 1950s-1960s

Estimate on Request

A contemporary fine arts educator, and a modern art pioneer in 20th century China, Lin Fengmian is one of the most iconic innovators in Chinese art history. Lin Fengmian was known for blending Chinese and Western styles and his liberal style and open-mindedness inspired the likes of Zao Wou-Ki, Chu Teh-Chun and Wu Guanzhong.

Created in the 1950's, *Fishing Village* is the ultimate artistic attainment: it celebrates the artist's compositional finesse, skillful manipulation of light and space, and his breakthroughs in fusing Chinese and Western arts in masterful application of colour.



**RYUZABURO UMEHARA (1888-1986)**

***Cannes***

**Oil and mineral pigment on canvas**

**129 x 95 cm. (50 3/4 x 37 7/8 in.)**

**Painted in 1961-1963**

**HK\$10,000,000-16,000,000**

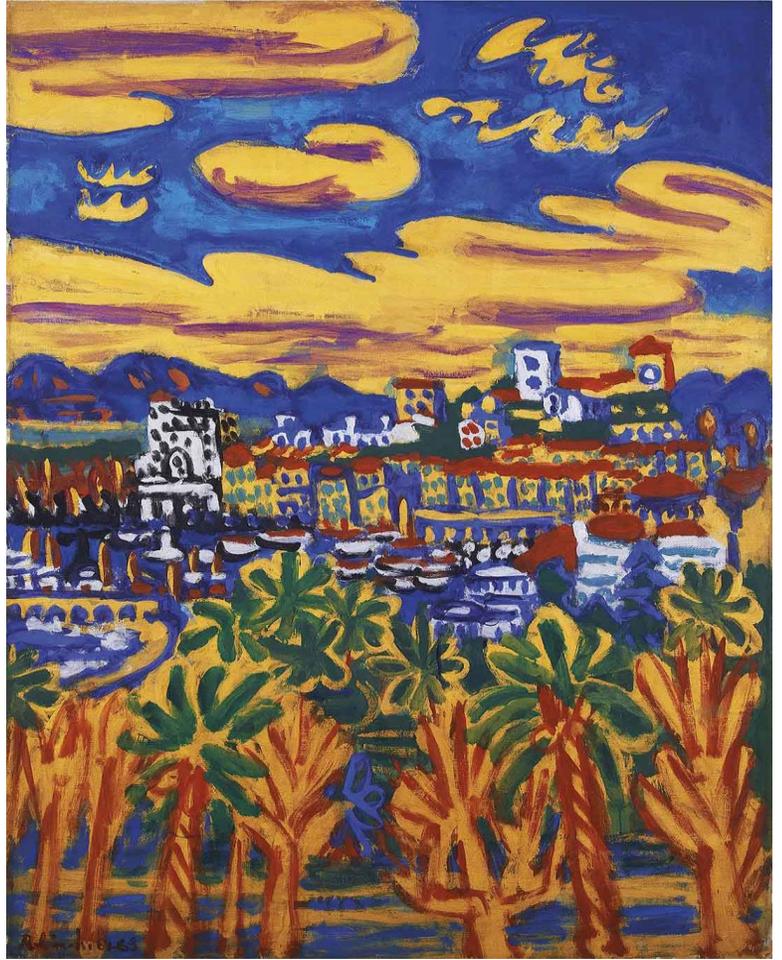
**US\$1,300,000-2,100,000**

The masterpiece *Cannes* by Umehara will be presented among a selection of works by Japanese pioneering artists including Atsuko Tanaka.

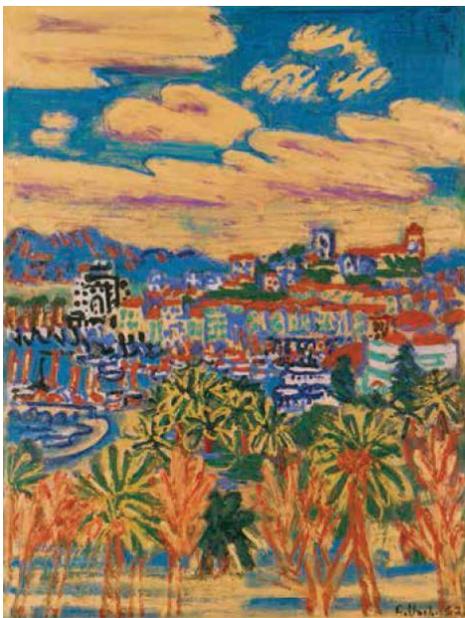
*Cannes* was painted sometime between 1961 and 1963 as Umehara's signature piece during the 1960s. To attain his vision for Japanese oil paintings, Umehara broke with traditional colour norms by using gold and platinum – an approach never attempted before by Western artists.

What made the revolutionary, bold palette in *Cannes* so noteworthy is Umehara's courage to revolutionise art conventions. Umehara pioneered a brand-new painting style that was never attempted before and was the only artist in both East and West with this unique palette, imbuing oil paintings with Japanese flair.

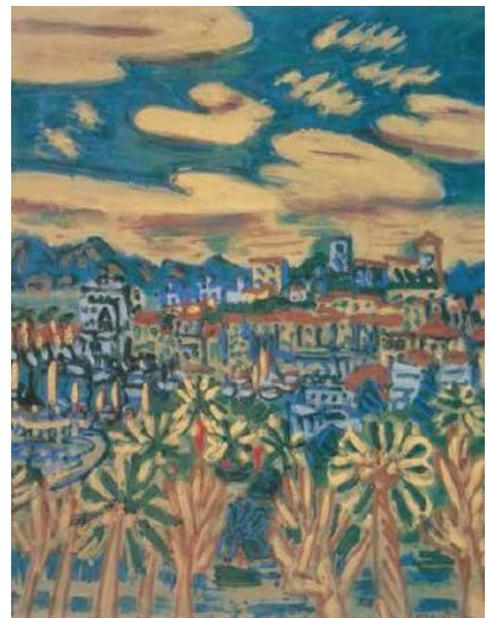
As *Cannes* demonstrated, Umehara successfully blended traditional Japanese culture and philosophies into his creations, trailblazing a Japanese oil practice seen in neither Western nor Eastern art conventions.



**Comparable Examples in Private Hands**



Ryuzaburo Umehara, *Cannes*, Oil on canvas, 110 x 82.5 cm, 1962, The National Museum of Modern Art Tokyo



Ryuzaburo Umehara, *Cannes*, Oil on canvas, 98x78.5, 1962, Private Collection

**SANYU (CHANG YU, 1901-1966)**

*Chrysanthemums in a glass vase*

Oil on masonite

91.6 x 125 cm. (36 1/8 x 49 1/4 in.)

Painted in the 1950s

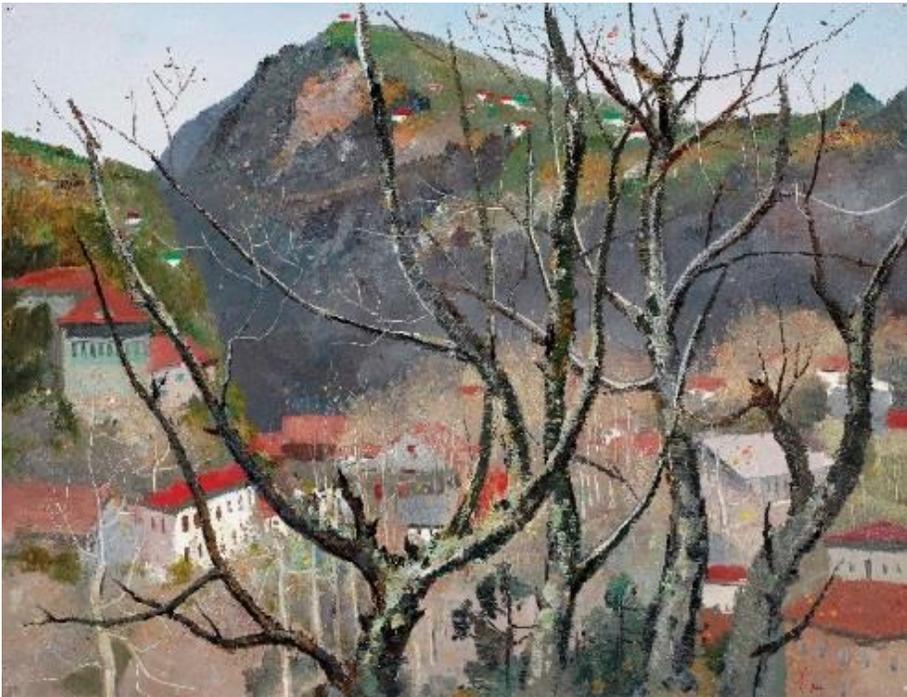
HK\$20,000,000-30,000,000

US\$2,600,000-3,900,000

*Chrysanthemums in a Glass Vase* exemplifies Sanyu's unique exploration of color, space, and line as a pioneering artist of the 20th-century. Unlike the light and shade the Impressionists evoked with their rich varieties of color, Sanyu employed only ochre, scarlet, black, and gold, setting them off against each other to create a surprising lustre. Within this seemingly flat visual space, Sanyu abandons single-point perspective for a view in which our eyes focus toward both left and right, enhancing the painting's depth and spatiality.



*Chrysanthemums in a Glass Vase* evokes the aura of traditional Chinese landscape paintings, but is elevated with innovative use of perspective, modeling of forms, and colors. Evoking the spirit of the Impressionists, Cubists, and Fauves during the period in which he worked, Sanyu forged a stylistically unique path, and successfully transcended the boundaries of both East and West.



**WU GUANZHONG (1919-2010)**

*The Lu Mountains*

Oil on wooden panel

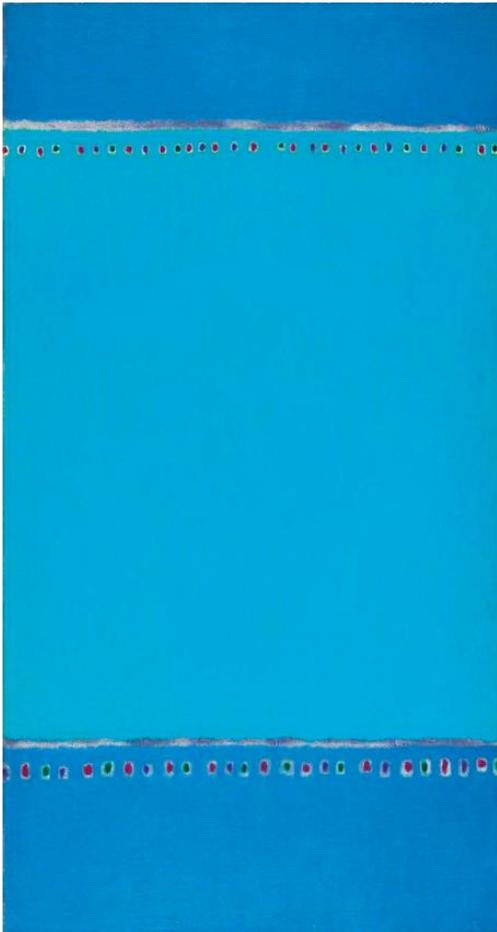
45.8 x 59.8 cm. (18 x 23 1/2 in.)

Painted in 1974

HK\$25,000,000-32,000,000

US\$3,300,000-4,100,000

*The Lu Mountains*, dating from 1974, is Wu Guanzhong's most representative work from the 1970s, when his work in the oil medium was at its peak. In it Wu finds a precise balance between realism and a more freestyle (or xieyi) approach. Wu's composition allows viewers to imaginatively enter into the scene, by glimpsing beautiful scenes in the distance through the branches. This double presentation of close-up branches with more distant vistas adds a wealth of poetic energy to this otherwise realistic scenic presentation.



**KIM WHAN-KI (1913-1974)**  
**4-X-69 #121**  
**Oil on cotton**  
**168.9 x 88.9 cm (66 1/2 x 35 in.)**  
**Painted in 1969**  
**HK\$10,000,000-12,000,000**  
**US\$1,300,000-1,600,000**

Kim Whan-Ki is one of the most highly recognised pioneers of abstract painting in Korean modern art. His wandering life-style, traveling from Korea, to Japan, to France and finally to America embodies his endless quest to develop and express a unique style of abstract painting.

*4-X-69 #121* represents a mature work from Kim Whanki's New York Period with the composition displaying a distinct luminosity and rhythm. The delicate balance and modulation of color and shape harkens back to the artist's love of the landscapes of his homeland, drawing inspiration from his cultural history as he forges a new path forward for Korean modern art.

Additional artist works offered as part of the evening sale



Kim Whan-Ki,  
*Lotus Flower*,  
Lot43

**ZAO WOU-KI (ZHAO WUJI, 1920-2013)**

***Water Music***

**Oil on canvas**

**160.5 x 128.5 cm. (63 1/8 x 50 5/8 in.)**

**Painted in 1956-1957**

**HK\$36,000,000-46,000,000**

**US\$4,700,000-6,000,000**

Zao Wou-Ki's *Water Music* records the artistic achievement during Zao's oracle bone period, and acts as a precursor for his later success with abstract paintings. Zao once interpreted five elements and created paintings on fire, wind, earth as well as water around 1955 to 1958. Different from the heavy impasto and strong brushstrokes in many of the other works from oracle-series, the semi-transparent paint and application of dripping technique on *Water Music* is extremely rare which shows a very personal interpretation of water by Zao. Subtle but essential, soft but powerful, quiet but ceaseless, as if ancient Chinese saying, "The water that bears the boat is the same that swallows it", and "The highest good is like water. The goodness of water serenely benefits all things" (Laozi, Tao Te Ching, Chapter 8). *Water Music* is a continuation and extension of Eastern artistic traditions, which reveal his unique view point compared with other Western abstract artists.



This season once again showcases works by renowned Chinese, Korean, and Japanese artists such as Nara Yoshitomo, Zeng Fanzhi and Yayoi Kusama as well as rapidly emerging talents such as Liu Wei and Wang Guangle. The line-up of works showcases the very best in contemporary artistic talents across Asia and supports the market demand for both blue chip and rising artists.

This season will also provide a platform for the most promising artists to be represented in the evening sale, standing shoulder to shoulder with well-established icons, for their exceptional prospects and growing admiration among collectors for this select group a such as Huang Yuxing, Yuan Yuan and Jin Meyerson.

**ZENG FANZHI (B. 1964)**

***Mask Series No. 4***

**Oil on canvas**

**166 x 180 cm. (65 3/8 x 70 7/8 in.)**

**Painted in 1994**

**Estimate on Request**

As a top contemporary Asian art highlight this season, *Mask Series No. 4* reveals the ills of the society by using intense symbolism and visually nuanced themes. In this painting, the joints and veins are bulging as if the skin has been flayed, and the raw flesh is exposed. The bold and unruly brush strokes, as well as the exceedingly distorted proportion are visually intense and echoes the psychological state of the figure. Zeng Fanzhi once said, “I think hands are especially effective in expressing the personality and expressions of an individual”. “I wish to use the hands to express internal states. When everything except the hands are covered, I feel that they should be exaggerated, enlarged, and their movements expressed more prominently.”



**YOSHITOMO NARA (B. 1959)**

***Eastern Youth***

**Acrylic on canvas**

**160 x 145 cm. (63 x 57 1/8 in.)**

**Painted in 2000**

**HK\$10,000,000-15,000,000**

**US\$1,300,000-1,900,000**

In *Eastern Youth* sophisticated brushwork, harmonious colours, and balanced composition elevate the aesthetics of a painting, while exuding a sense of loneliness, with the calm and collected child set against an empty backdrop. The child in the painting is not provided with a tangible subject for him/her to communicate with, but the child's forward facing gaze seems to be directed at the audience, hoping to directly engage and interaction with them. It is this air of loneliness Yoshitomo Nara recalls in his own childhood.

It is these artistic characteristics that has validated Nara's exceptional talent as a contemporary Japanese artist and also speaks to his ability to surpass the superficial and to directly deal with the spiritual and heartfelt.

**YUAN YUAN (B. 1973)**

*Elgin Station*

Oil on canvas, diptych  
each: 240 x 180 cm.

(94 1/2 x 70 7/8 in.)(2)

Overall: 240 x 360 cm.

(94 1/2 x 141 3/4 in.)

Painted in 2012

HK\$1,200,000-1,800,000

US\$160,000-230,000



*Elgin Station* is a monumental diptych and one of the largest of the dozen or so works exhibited after Yuan Yuan's return to China in 2012. Yuan's painting focuses on the station's Victorian glass roof, painting the dilapidated glass and metal with extraordinary sensitivity.

*Elgin Station* represents a unique departure from many of Yuan Yuan's other works, which often depict the full depths of an interior space. Here, the artist has chosen to frame the work as if we are looking upwards at just one small section of roofing, filling the whole canvas with large oblong blocks of colour. By painting the simple struts of metal and glass in this way, Yuan showcases the transcendental qualities of his subject, maximizing the impact of the structure on the viewer's own understanding of time and space.



**JIN MEYERSON (B. 1972)**

*Before the Invention of Death*

Oil on canvas

200 x 600 cm. (78 3/4 x 236 1/4 in.)

Painted in 2009-2010

HK\$800,000-1,200,000

US\$110,000-160,000

Meyerson was one of the earlier painters to engage with software technologies such as Photoshop, to create image manipulation techniques during the early 2000s. As an artist Meyerson set himself apart by producing a wider range of effects by distorting his sketches manually, most notably by printing them and dragging or spinning the prints across scanner to accomplish his well recognised "glitch effect".

In *Before the Invention of Death*, urban forms are mashed together in a way that seems almost random however through careful examination, lines and edges might subtly hint at recognizable imagery. This form of abstraction has been created where digital photography meets manual composition, creating a fundamentally new image that transcends and evokes the original.

Responding to the strong demand of collectors for Southeast Asian art in recent years, this season Christies will be presenting a strong line-up showcasing the most iconic artists in the region, with a particular focus on the Philippines. These exceptional works reflect the diverse and innovative perspectives, and embody the painters' cultural heritage and personal journeys. The selection of works comprise both pioneering contemporary artists and modern masters and offers a glimpse into the artistic evolution of their home countries and the growing recognition of Southeast Asia as a platform of artistic excellence.



**JOSE JOYA (1931-1995)**  
*Tivoli Copenhagen*  
Oil on board  
46 x 123 cm. (18 x 49 in.)  
Painted in 1964  
HK\$3,000,000-4,000,000  
US\$390,000-520,000

Painted in 1964, *Tivoli Copenhagen* is representative of Joya's work in the 1960s, and was created at the height of Jose Joya's career amidst some of his most triumphant accomplishments. Likely executed during his travels in Europe in 1964 when Joya represented the Philippines in the Venice Biennale, Joya visited the Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen and sought to capture the lush splendor of the gardens using his own unique stylistic techniques.

**AFFANDI (1907-1990)**

*Ka'bah*

Oil on canvas

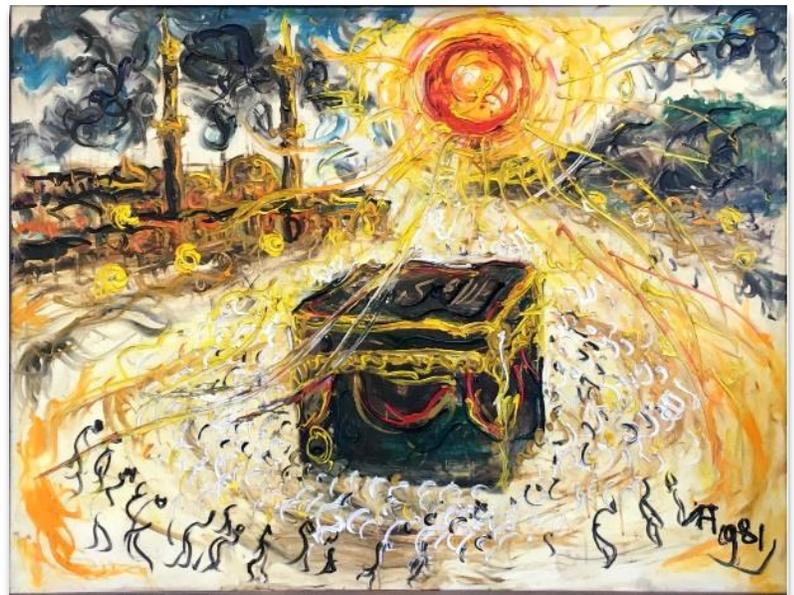
111 x 150 cm. (43 3/4 x 59 cm.)

Painted in 1981

HK\$4,000,000-6,000,000

US\$520,000-780,000

Painted in 1981, *Ka'bah* presents an aerial view of Islam's most sacred mosque, the Al-Masjid al-Haram, in Mecca. The work showcases the intensity of the sacred journey of the pilgrims rendered in the forms of traditional Javanese wayang kulit puppets. Affandi picks out the outermost ring of devotees in stark black paint, but as they come closer to the Kaaba, they become rendered in white, indistinguishable from one another as they swirl around the Kaaba.



In *Ka'bah*, Affandi seeks to capture the energy of the sun, his favourite element and frequent emblem in many of his paintings. The sun frames the scene, as if casting its blessing and embrace protectively around the devotees. The blazing heat of the Kaaba compound as evoked by the merciless swirls of red and yellow paint that lash downwards from the sun is subtly juxtaposed by its surroundings. Cool green hills and a rich blue sky frame the scene, and serve to heighten the drama and emotive impact of the central scene.



**RONALD VENTURA (B. 1973)**

*Cumulus*

Oil on canvas, eight lightboxes  
150 x 305 cm. (59 x 120 1/8 in.)

each lightbox:

21 x 30 x 5 cm. (8 1/4 x 11 3/4 x 2 in.) (8)

Executed in 2011

HK\$3,000,000-4,000,000

US\$390,000-520,000

*Cumulus* depicts a critical perspective on the degradation of the seemingly picturesque Philippines and of the irreversible impact of external forces, with the light boxes serve as a physical manifestation of the surrounding smaller islands of the Philippines. The artist's brilliant grasp of compelling motifs and his ability to synthesize them within a single composition are a testament to his artistic technique and vision.

**ANITA MAGSAYSAY-HO (1914-2012)**

*Nag-lipon Ng Dayami (Gleaners)*

Oil on canvas

85 x 142.5 cm. (33 1/2 x 55 7/8 in.)

Estimate on Request

As of the leading modernist painters in the Philippines, Anita Magsaysay-Ho was the only female artist named one of the Thirteen Moderns and possessed the rare gifts of an impeccable compositional technique combined with the flexibility to absorb and individualize new artistic influences. In *Gleaners* this skill is on clear display through masterful blending of localized genre scenes with an almost geometrical sense of modern figuration.



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## NOTES TO EDITORS:

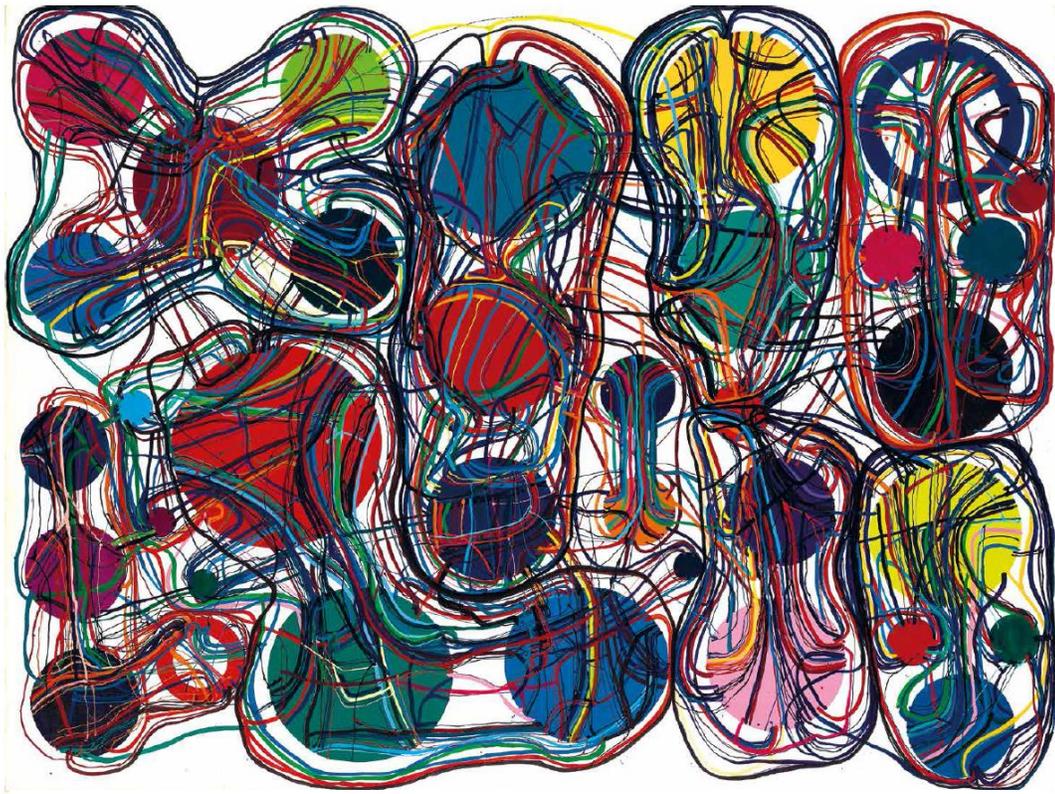
### ASIAN 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY AND CONTEMPORARY ART SALES

**Auction:** 26, 27 November 2016

**Venue:** James Christie's Room and Woods Room (Day Sale)

Convention Hall, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, No.1 Harbour Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong

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**ATSUKO TANAKA (1932-2005)**

**'84B**

**Vinyl paint on canvas**

**194.4 x 259.4 cm. (76 1/2 x 102 1/8 in.)**

**Painted in 1984**

**HK\$9,000,000 - 16,000,000**

**US\$1,200,000 - 2,100,000**

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## **About Christie's**

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction, private and digital sales in the first half of 2016 that totalled £2.1 billion / \$3 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. Christie's offers around 350 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.

2016 marks Christie's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary. 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. Click [HERE](#) to view a short film about Christie's and the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Christie's has a global presence in 46 countries, with 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, financing fees or application of buyer's or seller's credits.*

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