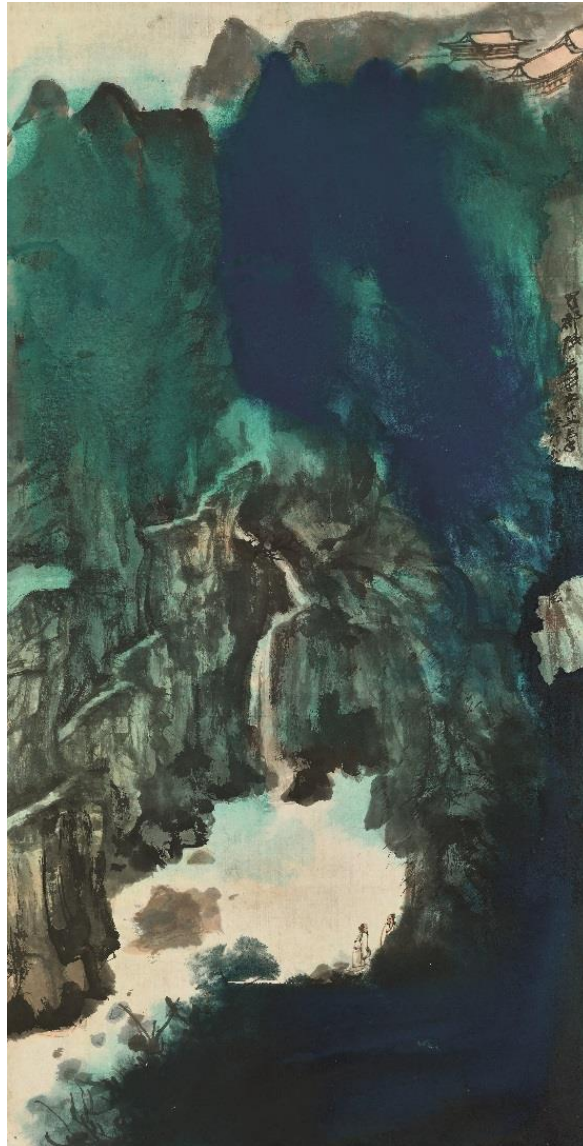


# CHRISTIE'S

Press Release | HONG KONG | 4 May 2018 | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## The Cultivated Mind

### Inner Journeys of Refinement



ZHANG DAQIAN (1899-1983)  
Viewing the Waterfall  
Scroll, mounted and framed, ink and colour on paper  
134 x 68 cm. (52 ¾ x 26 ¾ in.)  
HK\$60,000,000-80,000,000/US\$7,700,000-10,000,000

**Hong Kong** – On 28 and 29 May, Christie's will present a series of sales featuring standout works that embody the spirit of the literati tradition. The literati painters were a class of scholarly and learned individuals who lived in relative seclusion, seeking to internalise their understanding of the world around them painting. Artists often sought to capture the majestic power of nature, depicting scholars in retirement and travellers admiring their surroundings.

A special selection of works this season beautifully capture these ideals and will feature across three sales– **Fine Classical Chinese Paintings and Calligraphy**, **Fine Chinese Modern Paintings**, and **Chinese Contemporary Ink**.

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**Ben Kong, Deputy Chairman, International Specialist Head of Chinese of Paintings**, commented “From classical masters to modern-day pioneers, the influence of the school of literati painting continues to inspire to this day. Through the ages each artist developed a distinctive painting style which reflected their personal journeys of enlightenment and introduced new materials, techniques and ideas to find a personalised form of expression. The assemblage of works this season epitomise these refined tastes and reflect the artists’ internal harmony with the external forces around them”.

## HIGHLIGHTS



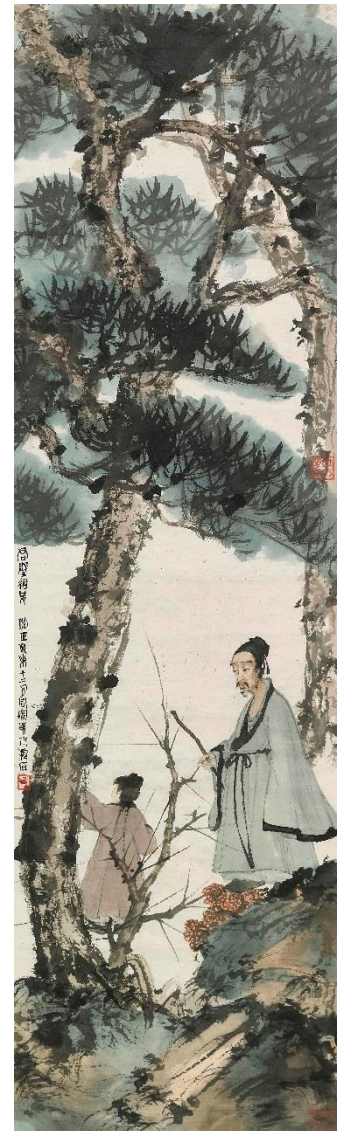
SHEN ZHOU (1427-1509)  
Planting Bamboo  
Handscroll, ink on paper  
24.5 x 98 cm. (9 5/8 x 38 1/2 in.)  
HK\$3,000,000-5,000,000/US\$39,000-65,000

Shen Zhou was one of the greatest literati masters of the fifteenth century.

***Planting Bamboo*** depicts a simple rustic dwelling, with a solitary figure venturing out as if welcoming the bamboo as a most distinguished guest. The overall air of simplicity and directness is likely an idealised image of a scholar’s retreat. The depiction of bamboo is a popular subject choice that perfectly embodied scholarly virtues, and in this composition, the artist masterfully captures the subject with expressive, simple brushstrokes. The fine calligraphy demonstrates the artist’s superb skills.

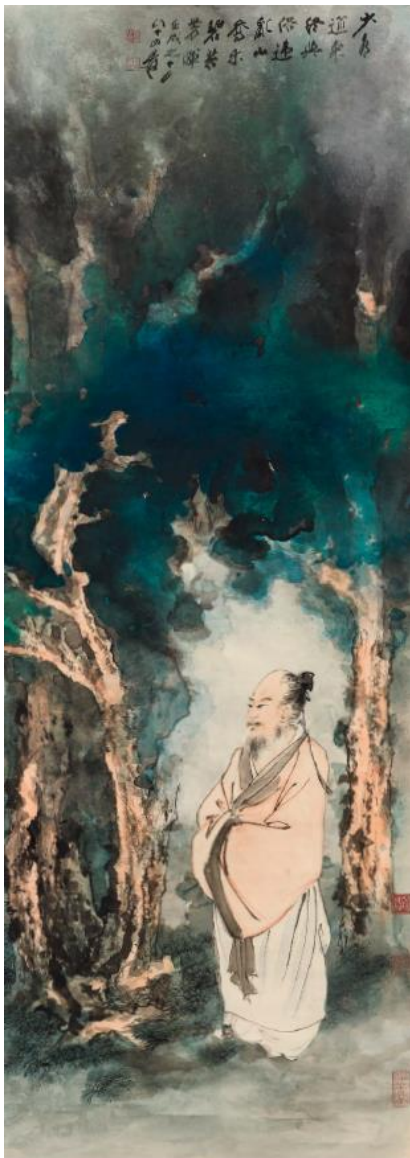
A leading work from the modern period is ***Asking The Child Under Pinetree*** by **Fu Baoshi** (illustrated right). During the 1940s when this work was created, Fu was inspired by the “reconstruction of a certain beautiful story from history”. Fu invoked history to seek out the enduring virtues of figures from the past and cited poems to encourage appreciation of these legends.

While studying in Tokyo, Fu mastered the fine line technique for drawing figures, which is wonderfully on display in this work. Fu masterfully uses free, spontaneous brushwork, rendering the figures with swift, jagged outlines, pale ink tones, and dark accents for details of the robe, while the towering pine trees and orange flowers contrasting with the solemnity of the figures.



FU BAOSHI (1904–1965)  
Asking the Child under Pinetree  
Unmounted scroll, framed, ink and colour on paper  
108.5 x 31 cm. (42 3/4 x 12 1/4 in.)  
HK\$35,000,000 – 45,000,000/US\$4,500,000 – 5,800,000

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ZHANG DAQIAN (1899–1983)  
Lofty Scholar by Lush Trees  
Scroll, mounted and framed, ink and colour on paper  
177 x 61 cm. (69 3/4 x 24 in.)  
HK\$18,000,000 – 26,000,000/US\$2,300,000–3,300,000

Another artist who drew on literati traditions for inspiration was **Zhang Daqian**. Scenes of scholars in various natural settings particularly under trees became an increasingly popular subject in Zhang Daqian's later oeuvre.

First seen in his mid-career, Zhang increasingly turned to this theme after he moved to Taiwan in 1976, with the present work **Lofty Scholars by Lush trees** (illustrated left) being a prized example of this thematic focus.

In this work, Zhang did not depict the scholar in the usual oval-faced full profile of his earlier paintings, but instead shows him staring upwards in three quarter profile with an open and deeply insightful gaze, thereby instilling the greatest sense of emotion intensity into the figure's relaxed posture.



ZENG XIAOJUN (B. 1954)  
Wild Spirit Screen No. 2  
Scroll, mounted for framing, ink and colour on paper  
216 x 318 cm. (85 x 125 in.)  
HK \$1,600,000–2,200,000/US\$210,000–280,000

A consummate connoisseur and artist, **Zeng Xiaojun** collects antique furniture, scholar's rocks and grotesque roots which the Chinese literati have long held the tradition of depicting. In turn, these esoteric objects become the subjects of his ink paintings. With careful, meticulous brushstroke, Zeng Xiaojun portrays the labyrinthine roots and twisted branches of old trees that resonate with this scholarly tradition.

In **Wild Spirit Screen No.2** (illustrated above right) which resonated deeply with the literati tradition, Zeng Xiaojun exhibits his superb eye for detail, texture and form as he painstakingly outlines the intricate branches, and applies light colour to bring forth the mesmerising beauty of the decaying wood which can be appreciated from different angles, much like a scholar's rock.

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

**Chinese Contemporary Ink: 28 May 2018**

**Fine Chinese Classical Paintings and Calligraphy: 28 May 2018**

**Fine Chinese Modern Paintings: 29 May 2018**

**LOCATION:** James Christie Room, Convention Hall, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, 1 Harbour Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong

**PRESS CONTACT:** Lee Bingle | +852 2978 9966| [lbingle@christies.com](mailto:lbingle@christies.com)

**IMAGE DOWNLOAD** [LINK](#)

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### About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction, private and digital sales in 2017 that totalled £5.1 billion / \$6.6 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and international expertise. 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.

Alongside regular sales online, Christie's has a global presence in 46 countries, with 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, Hong Kong, and Shanghai.

*\*Please note when quoting estimates above that other fees will apply in addition to the hammer price - see Section D of the Conditions of Sale at the back of the sale catalogue.*

*\*Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and are reported net of applicable fees.*

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*Images available on request*

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