

CHRISTIE'S

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LACQUER • JADE • BRONZE • INK THE IRVING COLLECTION

The Private Collection of Florence and Herbert Irving

Global tour to begin in Hong Kong | **November 23-26**

Auctions to take place during Asian Art Week New York | **March 2019**



Pictured above in situ in the Irvings' New York apartment are objects included in the March 2019 auctions.



Florence and Herbert Irving pictured with a selection of Japanese lacquer works from their collection. Photo credit: Fred R. Conrad

New York – Christie's announces it has been entrusted with The Private Collection of Florence and Herbert Irving, aptly titled **Lacquer • Jade • Bronze • Ink: The Irving Collection**, paying homage to the materials the Irvings spent their lives studying. The collection will be sold across two dedicated live auctions with a complementary online auction during *Asian Art Week New York* in March 2019. Additional jewelry highlights will be included in the New York *Magnificent Jewels* sale in April 2019. Works from the collection will be exhibited for the first time in Hong Kong beginning on November 23, marking the start of a global tour of collection highlights.

For Florence and Herbert Irving, the opportunity to live in dialogue with their extraordinary collection of Asian art and European decorative art—a collection forged through unstinting personal scholarship and friendship with the world's leading scholars—was an incomparable experience. The first highlights exhibition in Hong Kong will showcase a curated selection of jades that reflects the Irvings' deeply-rooted, life-long commitment to Asian works of art, including an exceptional selection of jades, gilt-bronzes, lacquers, ceramics, and paintings.

Featured lots in the Hong Kong exhibition will include **An Important and Very Large Gilt-Bronze Seated Figure of a Four-armed Bodhisattva, Dali Kingdom, 11th-12th century** (\$4,000,000-6,000,000); **An Important Large Imperial Pale Greenish-White Jade Deep Bowl, Qianlong period, dated to 1786** (\$1,000,000-1,500,000); **A Set of Lacquer Table Wares, including a Writing Box and a Paper Box, by Shibata Zeshin (1807-1891), Meiji period** (\$200,000-300,000); and **Scholar at Writing Desk, by Fu Baoshi (1904-1965)** (\$800,000-1,200,000).

The Hong Kong preview (November 23-26) will be followed by tours to Christie's locations in Beijing (December 8-9) and Shanghai (December 12-13). Additional public exhibitions will take place in early 2019, including a curated preview of European decorative arts alongside Americana Week at Christie's New York (January 12-20), and tours to Los Angeles (February 26 – March 2), and San Francisco, revealing new elements of this multifaceted collection with each stop ahead of the full New York exhibition (March 2019). A robust program of client events including handling sessions, tea talks, and lectures will coincide with exhibitions at each location.

Jonathan Rendell, Deputy Chairman and Head of Sales Curation, Christie's, comments: *"Christie's is honored to present The Private Collection of Florence and Herbert Irving, a grouping recognized for its remarkable quality and beauty. Carefully assembled across more than 50 years, the Irvings created one of the world's foremost private collections of Asian art. During their lifetime, the Irvings generously donated an extraordinary number of their treasured artworks to The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. The selection offered at Christie's this Spring encompasses their most valued objects; those they chose to live with in their New York City home: exceptional Asian art set amongst elegantly appointed decorative arts. The global tour of highlights aims to continue the Irving legacy through a series of public exhibitions and lectures, leading up to the March auction, which will offer a landmark opportunity for collectors to participate in the next step of this celebrated collection."*

The Irvings are remembered as two of New York's most treasured civic leaders and philanthropists. From modest Brooklyn roots to the triumph that was the Sysco Corporation, the Irvings' inspiring trajectory allowed them to build a better, more enlightened world. Their many contributions spanned significant and important donations to The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, including well over 1,300 works of Asian art, and underwriting acquisitions, curatorial positions, exhibitions, and galleries in the museum's Department of Asian Art. In honor of the Irving's extraordinary generosity, The Met named the entirety of their Asian art galleries *The Florence and Herbert Irving Asian Wing*. Their commitment to philanthropy is also seen across a network of charities, most notably New York-Presbyterian/Columbia University Medical Center, where the Irvings became the largest donors in its history.

The works to be offered in the March 2019 sales represents the ethos and spirit of the Irvings, one founded on the principles of helping others and embracing fine art. For the Irvings, it was not enough to live surrounded by beauty; they felt obligated to share it with the world. The March 2019 sales offer the opportunity for collectors to participate in the legacy of one of the United States' foremost private collections of Chinese, Himalayan, Japanese, and Korean works. Additional highlights from the collection will be unveiled in the months leading up to the sale.

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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 2018 that totalled £2.97 billion / \$4.04 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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