

CHRISTIE'S

PRESS RELEASE | HONG KONG | 4 MAY 2018 | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHRISTIES SPRING AUCTION SERIES OF **CHINESE CERAMICS & WORKS OF ART**



A HIGHLY IMPORTANT GILT-BRONZE FIGURE OF
MAITREYA BUDDHA
LATE SUI-EARLY TANG DYNASTY, EARLY 7TH CENTURY
12 3/4 in. (32.4 cm) high

Estimate On Request



A FINE MAGNIFICENT AND EXTREMELY RARE DOUCAI AND
FAMILLE ROSE 'ANBAXIAN' VASE, TIANQIUPING
QIANLONG SIX-CHARACTER SEAL MARK IN UNDERGLAZE BLUE
AND OF THE PERIOD (1736-1795)
21 1/4 in. (53.9 cm.) high
HK\$70,000,000-90,000,000



A MAGNIFICENT BLUE AND WHITE MOONFLASK
QIANLONG SIX-CHARACTER SEAL MARK IN
UNDERGLAZE BLUE AND OF THE PERIOD (1736-1795)
23 1/4 in. (59 cm.) high
HK\$60,000,000-80,000,000

Hong Kong – Christie's Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art sales will take place on 30 May spanning a total of six auctions with over 270 lots on offer. The highlight of the season are the two single lot sales - **Celestial Immortals - The Taber Family Tianqiuping** From Philbrook Museum of Art and **The Nitta Maitreya** along with the much-anticipated themed sales, **Contemplating The Divine - Fine Buddhist Art** and **THREE QIANLONG RARITIES – IMPERIAL CERAMICS FROM AN IMPORTANT PRIVATE COLLECTION**, which are complimented by the **Important Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art** sale.

This focused series of sales accented by various masterpieces, represents one of the most diverse grouping of works ever offered at auction, presenting unique insights on the development of culture and society through the ages, from religious Buddhist figures to works of the imperial court.

Chi Fan Tsang, Senior Vice President, Specialist Head of Department, commented, "Our clients are increasingly knowledgeable and they collect only the very best across categories and eras. We are catering to this desire by curating an ambitious series of sales this season that presents works of extraordinary breadth and quality. Hong Kong continues to serve as the perfect centre for such an undertaking, uniting global collectors in their quest to enrich their collections with culturally important works".

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CELESTIAL IMMORTALS - THE TABER FAMILY *TIANQIUPING* FROM PHILBROOK MUSEUM OF ART



A FINE MAGNIFICENT AND EXTREMELY RARE *DOUCAI* AND
FAMILLE ROSE 'ANBAXIAN' VASE, *TIANQIUPING*
QIANLONG SIX-CHARACTER SEAL MARK IN UNDERGLAZE BLUE AND OF
THE PERIOD (1736-1795)
21 1/4 in. (53.9 cm.) high
HK\$70,000,000-90,000,000

Christie's is honoured to present **one of the finest Qing ceramics ever to come to auction** – an extremely rare **Qianlong Doucai and Famille Rose 'Anbaxian' Vase, Tianqiuping**, from Philbrook Museum of Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

The vase had been in the collection of Mr. George Hathaway Taber prior to 1925, and in 1960, his daughter Mrs. Francis Keally (née Mildred Taber) donated the vase to Philbrook Museum of Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma. This magnificent Imperial *doucai* vase is a testament to the technical advances and virtuosity of Imperial porcelain production during the Qianlong period. The striking shape of the vase is referred to as 'tianqiuping' 天球瓶 "celestial sphere vase", which is extremely difficult to fire due to its massive size and robust form. It is further decorated in the intricate *doucai* and *famille rose* palette, in which motifs are rendered in rich, colourful enamels with underglaze-blue outlines.

This work of impressive stature is extremely rare and is undoubtedly held in the highest esteem by generations of connoisseurs.

Proceeds from the sale will go to the acquisition endowment fund of Philbrook Museum of Art.

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THREE QIANLONG RARITIES –

IMPERIAL CERAMICS FROM AN IMPORTANT PRIVATE COLLECTION

The Qianlong Emperor named his Imperial studio the 'Hall of Three Rarities', after three prized calligraphy he had collected during his lifetime. This season, Christie's specialists have selected three prized and very rare ceramic pieces in this special themed sale, mirroring the Qianlong Emperor's 'Three Rarities'. These three pieces are emblematic and representative of the '**Three Ages**' of the Qianlong Emperor:



A MAGNIFICENT BLUE AND WHITE MOONFLASK
QIANLONG SIX-CHARACTER SEAL MARK IN
UNDERGLAZE BLUE AND OF THE PERIOD (1736-1795)
23 1/4 in. (59 cm.) high
HK\$60,000,000-80,000,000

The Present – Unquestionably the most immediate concern for an Emperor would be to fulfil his responsibilities as a ruler with the Mandate of Heaven, and thus to consolidate his rule over the Empire. One of the most important rituals conducted by the Emperor was the ceremonial ploughing of the first furrow of the Spring season, performed in the hope of heralding an abundant harvest, and thereby bringing wealth and stability to the nation. The scene of tilling depicted here on this magnificent moonflask conveys a poignant political message: that the Manchu people, who were regarded as outsiders, were in fact legitimate rulers of China and took great interest in the welfare of its people. In essence, this vase was more than merely an object d'art, but a symbol of Imperial rule and legitimacy.



A FINE AND SUPERB YANGCAI
YELLOW-GROUND 'BOYS' VASE
QIANLONG SIX-CHARACTER SEAL MARK
IN IRON RED AND OF THE PERIOD
(1736-1795)
15 1/4 in. (38.8 cm.) high
HK\$50,000,000-80,000,000

The Past – In order to consolidate power, the Manchu ruling house embraced the Han Chinese tradition. As with emperors of the past in collecting antiques and archaic bronzes, Qianlong developed a passion for archaism and this is exemplified by the present green enamelled ceramic vases which were made in imitation to the archaic bronzes in Qianlong's own antique collection.



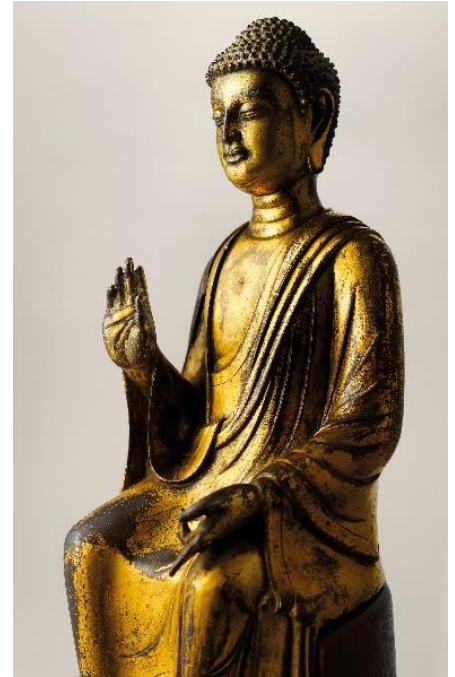
AN EXCEPTIONALLY RARE PAIR OF GILT-DECORATED AND
ENAMELED VASES
QIANLONG MOULDED SIX-CHARACTER SEAL MARKS
AND OF THE PERIOD (1736-1795)
4 in. (10.2 cm.) high
7 1/8 in. (18 cm.) high
HK\$20,000,000-30,000,000

The future - The continuation of the male line was an important consideration for any emperor's succession planning. Having abundant offspring was important in early agricultural societies, and China was no exception. The scene on the current *yangcai* vase portrays a charming vignette of innocence and contentment with many children at play against a lush landscape, conveying the wish for flourishing progeny to ensure the continuation of the Qing dynasty.

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THE NITTA MAITREYA

Christie's is very proud to present this iconic Buddhist figure which is widely regarded as one of the most important surviving early Buddhist works of art. Dating to the 7th century, this gilt-bronze figure of the Buddha Maitreya represents a remarkable theological turning point in the history of Buddhism in China. The Historic Buddha Sakyamuni was slowly superseded by Maitreya, the Buddha of the Future, who would descend from heaven and preside over a world free of pain and disease. Thus the Maitreya Buddha was seen as a savior figure and was particularly embraced during turbulent periods of early 7th century. This figure is considered very large in size for an archaic gilt-bronze sculpture, and would have undoubtedly been commissioned by either the royal family or a powerful elite. Adding to its prestige is the impeccable provenance. The Buddha was once in the esteemed Nitta Collection, which was generally considered to be one of the best Buddhist art collections in Asia, and the collection was exhibited at the National Palace Museum in Taipei in the 1980s.



**A HIGHLY IMPORTANT GILT-BRONZE FIGURE OF
MAITREYA BUDDHA**
LATE SUI-EARLY TANG DYNASTY, EARLY 7TH CENTURY
12 3/4 in. (32.4 cm) high
Estimate On Request

CONTEMPLATING THE DIVINE - FINE BUDDHIST ART



**A MAGNIFICENT AND EXTREMELY RARE POLYCHROME
WOOD FIGURE OF WATER MOON GUANYIN**
LIAO-JIN DYNASTY (907-1234)
26 in. (66 cm.) high
HK\$15,000,000-20,000,000

This themed sale is largely centred around images of *bodhisattvas*- compassionate beings who have attained enlightenment but who have postponed entry into final *nirvana* in order to help other sentient beings gain enlightenment. The sale aims to demonstrate how various images of these intermediary *bodhisattvas* were created throughout time to assist Buddhist followers to contemplate and understand the teachings of the Buddha. From a gilt-bronze figure of Avalokitesvara from the Sui dynasty, to the regal wood figure of Water Moon Guanyin dating to the Liao-Jin dynasty, and a 14th century Japanese embroidery depicting the *bodhisattva* Ichiji Kinrin. These deities were depicted in a markedly different style from that of a Buddha, and were intended to be more accessible and to inspire compassion and devotion.

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LEISURELY DELIGHTS OF A TRANSIENT LIFE

For the themed sale *Leisurely Delights of A Transient Life*, the specialists at Christie's have put together a group of around 90 prized items that reflect the type of objects that would have been suitable for a scholar's studio. These include daily writing utensils made for the scholar's desk, flower vases and incense related implements to decorate the studio, as well as tea or wine drinking vessels and antique objects that reflect the scholarly taste, including some that were specially commissioned for the Imperial studio. These enchanting, playful things are refreshingly modern in their aesthetics and would surely delight anyone with a keen eye for design.



**AN IMPORTANT AND EXTREMELY RARE IMPERIAL YELLOW
JADE HANGING VASE AND COVER, *HETING YOU*
QIANLONG INCISED FOUR-CHARACTER SEAL MARK AND OF THE
PERIOD (1736-1795)
6 in (15.3cm) high
HK\$12,000,000-18,000,000**

IMPORTANT CHINESE CERAMICS AND WORKS OF ART



**A FINE AND VERY RARE BLUE AND WHITE DOUBLE-GOURD VASE
QIANLONG SIX-CHARACTER SEAL MARK AND OF THE PERIOD
(1736-1795)
9 1/8 in. (23.3 cm.) high
Estimate on Request**

Christie's Hong Kong will be presenting the *Important Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art* sale, offering a wide array of Chinese art works spanning various media. Of particular note is a group of eight Chinese classical furniture from the Raymond Hung Collection, all made of precious wood such as *huanghuali*, *zitan* and *jichimu*. Another top lot in the sale is an extremely rare blue and white double-gourd form vase from the Qianlong period, which was formerly in the collection of the shipping tycoon and distinguished collector T.Y. Chao.

CHRISTIE'S

NOTES TO EDITORS

DATE: 30 MAY 2018

LOCATION: James Christie Room, Convention Hall, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, No.1 Harbor Road , Wanchai, Hong Kong

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IMAGE DOWNLOAD [LINK](#)

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.

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**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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