

A HIGHLY CURATED SELECTION CREATING A PANORAMIC VIEW OF ASIAN ART



CHRISTIE'S HONG KONG PRESENTS ASIA+ A MID-SEASON AUCTION OF ASIAN 20TH CENTURY AND CONTEMPORARY ART THIS APRIL

| Exhibition: 10:00 to 17:30, 2 to 4 April 2014 |

| Auction: 15:00, 5 April 2014, Sale 3303 |

| Venue: James Christie Room, 22nd Floor, Alexandra House, 18 Chater Road, Central, Hong Kong |

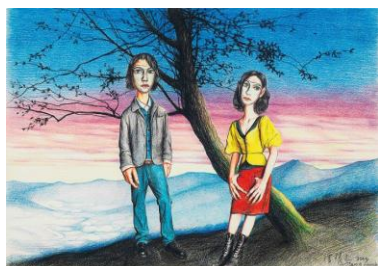
Hong Kong – Christie's Asian 20th Century and Contemporary Art department is honoured to present the inaugural **Asia+** auction, which will take place 5 April in Hong Kong. Focusing on originality, versatility, and collectability, **Asia+** will offer a highly curated selection of over 50 works of art that will appeal to the tastes of both seasoned connoisseurs and younger collectors alike.



Works such as Zao Wou-ki's untitled ceramic study for the mural in the Garo de Oriente metro station in Viuva Lamego, Lisbon (*illustrated left*, estimate: HK\$650,000-850,000 / US\$83,300-109,000), and Zeng Fan-zhi's work on paper, *Sky* (estimate: HK\$500,000-700,000 / US\$64,100-89,700), were chosen for their original and exploratory nature, as well as their ability to represent the versatility of the artists. In its diverse grouping of works from the 20th century, Chinese avant-garde and contemporary movements, **Asia+** provides collectors with a comprehensive range of art historical discourses, creating a unique panoramic view of Asian art.

The top lot of the auction is *Bathroom* by Zeng Fan-zhi. The artistic merit of *Bathroom* is a result of its uniqueness and its significance to the era in which it was created. With its distorted figurative depictions of naked flesh: 'corporeality' directly infuses the senses. This work also seeks to instill awareness in the audience of the nature of a plagued human race and of humanity surviving environmental oppression (*illustrated top*, estimate: HK\$6,500,000-9,500,000 / US\$833,300-1,217,900).

Also among the top lots is *Untitled* by Chu Teh-Chun. Born in Hangzhou, China, Chu left for Paris in 1955 to further explore the discourse of abstract art. After years of immersing himself in the Parisian art scene, his painting style gradually shifted from figurative to abstraction, and his visual vocabulary expanded into a highly individualized language. His virtuosic painterly skills enabled him to express the potential of the oil medium, the alacrity of calligraphy, and the immateriality of Chinese ink painting. Completed in 1972, *Untitled* is a consummate abstract work that embodies the soul of Chinese culture (*illustrated right*, estimate: HK\$500,000-700,000 / US\$64,100-89,700).

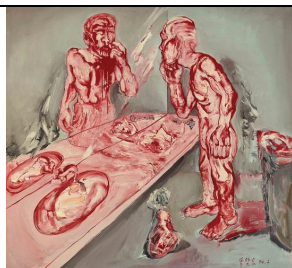
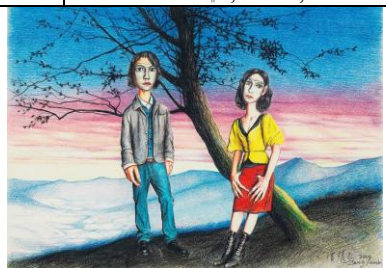


Zeng Fan-zhi will also be represented by, *Sky*, a rare instance of the artist's work with color pencil on paper. *Sky* depicts two figures wearing masks atop a hill against a backdrop of grand landscape composed with soft hues of blues and pinks, which achieves an effect that is reminiscent of the paintings of Mark Rothko. Wearing their public faces, the subjects seem to have been reconciled and are now calmly posing for the world to see (*illustrated left*, estimate: HK\$500,000-700,000 / US\$64,100-89,700).

Ma Desheng's *Goddess (4)* is among the sale's selection of works by Chinese contemporary artists. In 1979, Ma Desheng formed the Stars Group with more than 20 artists. The group's first exhibition was held at the outdoor park adjacent to the Beijing Art Museum, and attracted interest from modernists and abstractionists in the West. After participating in the second exhibition of the Stars Group, Ma Desheng moved to Paris to fulfill his artistic expression in a more liberal environment. During this period of transition, he developed his characteristic figurative style by executing works of Chinese ink on the ground. *Goddess (4)* has a figurative appearance, yet the abstract style is more closely related to Ma's later works in the *Rocks Series* (*illustrated left*, estimate: HK\$140,000-180,000 / US\$17,900-23,100).



AUCTION HIGHLIGHTS DETAILS:

 CHU TEH-CHUN (ZHU DEQUN, French/Chinese, B. 1920), <i>Untitled</i> oil on paper laid down on board, 48.5 x 63 cm Painted in 1972 Estimates: HK\$500,000-700,000 US\$64,100-89,700	 ZAO WOU-KI (ZHAO WUJI, French/Chinese, 1920-2013), <i>Untitled</i> painted ceramic (unique piece), 56 x 56 cm Executed in 1996 Estimates: HK\$650,000-850,000 US\$83,300-109,000	 LIU WEI (Chinese, B.1965) <i>No Smoking Series: Flower</i> mixed media on paper, 75 x 45.5 cm Painted in 1999 Estimates: HK\$260,000-320,000 US\$33,300-41,000	 YOSHITOMO NARA (Japanese, B. 1959) <i>Someday</i> pencil and colour pencil on paper, 22.8 x 15.2 cm Painted in 1998 Estimates: HK\$70,000-90,000 US\$9,000-12,500
 ZENG FANZHI (Chinese, B. 1964) <i>Bathroom</i> oil on canvas, 165 x 180 cm Painted in 1994 Estimates: HK\$6,500,000-9,500,000 US\$833,300-1,217,900	 MA DESHENG (Chinese, B. 1952) <i>Goddess (4)</i> ink on paper, 97 x 68 cm Painted in 1987 Estimates: HK\$140,000-180,000 US\$17,900-23,100	 ZENG FANZHI (Chinese, B. 1964) <i>Mask Series: Sky</i> colour pencil on paperboard, 28.5 x 41 cm Painted in 2004 Estimates: HK\$500,000-700,000 US\$64,100-89,700	

Please click [here](#) for the highlight images.

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**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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Lot 2

CHU TEH-CHUN (ZHU DEQUN, French/Chinese, B. 1920)

Untitled

oil on paper laid down on board

48.5 x 63 cm

Painted in 1972

Estimates:

HK\$500,000-700,000

US\$64,100-89,700

Born in Hangzhou, China, Chu Teh-chun left for Paris in 1955 to further explore the discourse of abstract art. After years of immersing himself in the Parisian art scene, his painting style gradually shifted from figurative to abstraction, and his visual vocabulary expanded into a highly individualized language. His virtuosic painterly skills enabled him to express the potentiality of the oil medium, the alacrity of calligraphy, and the immateriality in Chinese ink painting. Completed in 1972, *Untitled* is a consummate abstract work that embodies this soul of the Chinese culture.

In the painting *Untitled*, the drama between the translucent washes and the dynamic drybrush strokes creates a vast and fluid space that allows the viewer to be lost between powerful emotions and abstract subconscious thoughts. This perfect marriage between spirituality and technique blossoms in the painting. The serenity of the East collides with the magnificence of Western abstraction. Its energy reaches a criticality that the outer glamour implodes on itself creating visual impact. Born out of this supernova is the vibrant energy that is the signature visual language of Chu Teh-chun.



Lot 3

ZAO WOU-KI (ZHAO WUJI, French/Chinese, 1920-2013)

Untitled

painted ceramic (unique piece)

56 x 56 cm

Executed in 1996

Estimates:

HK\$650,000-850,000

US\$83,300-109,000

This work is a preparation study prior to the realization/creation of the great mural decoration for the Gare de Oriente metro station in Viuva Lamego, Lisbon.

Along with Yayoi Kusama, Arthur Boyd and Sean Scully, Zao Wou-ki is among the list of renowned artists who were commissioned to create the site-specific, permanent public art murals for the Oriente metro station. The project was in done in collaboration with a historic tiles manufacturer, Viuva Lamego in Lisbon. Zao Wou-ki successfully transcends his art form across different media and formats, explores and seizes opportunities for new artistic expressions, but also transcends barriers of art appreciation in engaging the community in public art.

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Lot 4
LIU WEI (Chinese, B.1965)
No Smoking Series: Flower
 mixed media on paper
 75 x 45.5 cm
 Painted in 1999

Estimates:
 HK\$260,000-320,000
 US\$33,300-41,000

Liu Wei came to prominence in the early 90s as one of the main proponents of the Cynical Realist style. This extraordinary self-portrait is one of a rare series of ink-on-paper works Liu created between 1992-93, in which he playfully adopts the aesthetic trappings of the literati to portray a contemporary sense of displacement and unease. Rich in allusions both personal and historical, the image recalls a time around 1989 when the artist sequestered himself in his room and, as the inscriptions reads, attempted to divert himself by 'refined' pursuits. Yet he appears hapless and bewildered, locking eyes with an equally bewildered goldfish whose bowl seems too small for it.

The textural richness in the modeling of the figure and the expressionistic tone echo Liu's groundbreaking Cynical Realist works in oil of this same period, such as *The New Generation*, also painted in 1992. The lively calligraphic inscription and the 18 fantastical seals enhance the nuanced richness of the work.

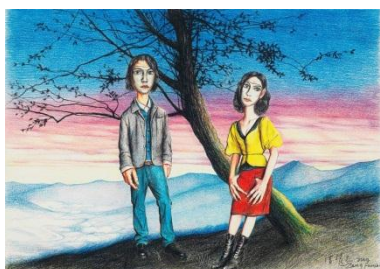


Lot 7
ZENG FANZHI (Chinese, B. 1964)
Bathroom
 oil on canvas
 165 x 180 cm
 Painted in 1994

Estimates:
 HK\$6,500,000-9,500,000
 US\$833,300-1,217,900

Finished in 1994, the oil painting *Bathroom* typifies the mutability of Zeng Fanzhi's style in the course of his energetic art career, while at the same time presenting a work of ultimate sincerity tapped from the artist's own persona, which he is at no pains to conceal. It is unreconstructed human nature freed from the physical confines of surreal characterization, and thus it expresses the most naked candour as between it and the audience.

The artistic merit of *Bathroom* is intrinsic to its significance to its era, and its uniqueness, with its distorted figurative depictions of the realism of naked flesh: 'corporeality' directly infusing the senses. Ever afterwards, the figure depicted in this painting by Zeng Fanzhi will never again be allowed to forget that he is a depraved individual. Repugnant, satirical id aside, this work also seeks to entice the audience into perceiving the expression of oppressed human nature beyond the realm of aesthetics, a strand of humanity still surviving after environmental oppression: this may well be the only true beauty extent in society today.



Lot 8
ZENG FANZHI (Chinese, B. 1964)
Mask Series: Sky
 colour pencil on paperboard
 28.5 x 41 cm
 Painted in 2004

Estimates:
 HK\$500,000-700,000
 US\$64,100-89,700

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The enormous success of the Mask series has catapulted Zeng Fanzhi to the ranks of the great masters of Chinese Art History. The portraits reflected the hidden psychological distress of a populace that was undergoing rapid economic and social changes. The masks not only reveal the doubts and uncertainty of a generation but the artist's own struggle to cope with a world that is full of contradictions. The ten year journey of the Mask series saw Zeng matured and evolved into the artist he is today.

This development is clear in one of the very last works the artist has created within the Mask Series, *Sky*, which is a drawing created with color pencil, a medium that is rare in Zeng's oeuvre. Here, two figures wearing masks are atop a hill in a backdrop of grand landscape of soft hues of blues and pinks, reminiscent of Rothko's paintings. The style of the later period of the Mask Series has been noted by the art critic Li Xianting, "Zeng Fanzhi's figures have learned to relax." Indeed, all the tension of the psyche and its manifestations in the flesh has softened in the drawing. The two figures in the painting seem to have reconciled individuality and their public faces, calmly posing for the world to see.



Lot 33
MA DESHENG (Chinese, B. 1952)
Goddess (4)
 ink on paper
 97 x 68 cm
 Painted in 1987

 Estimates:
 HK\$140,000-180,000
 US\$17,900-23,100

In 1979, Ma Desheng formed the Stars Group with more than 20 other artists. The group's first exhibition was held at the outdoor park adjacent to the Beijing Art Museum. This exhibition sparked public interest in Modernism and abstract art in the West. After participating in the second exhibition of the Stars Group, Ma Desheng moved to Paris to pursue his artistic expression in a more liberal environment. During this period of transition, he developed his characteristic figurative style of executing Chinese ink on the ground. *Goddess (4)* offered in this auction has the appearance of a figurative depiction, yet the abstract style is more closely related to Ma's later works in the Rocks Series. The form is meticulously suggested through the ethereal play between heavy strokes and translucent washes. At times airy and nebulous, other times stark and vivid, such juxtaposition creates multitude of layers that are harmonious yet without any unnecessary embellishments.



Lot 50
YOSHITOMO NARA (Japanese, B. 1959)
Someday
 pencil and colour pencil on paper
 22.8 x 15.2 cm
 Painted in 1998

 Estimates:
 HK\$70,000-90,000
 US\$9,000-12,500

Japanese artist Yoshitomo Nara's "cute", accessible artworks dissolve the boundaries between traditional "high" art and "low" popular culture in post-war Japan, expanding the ways in which art can be read. As one of the most prominent figures of Japanese contemporary art, his remarkable ability to re-appropriate traditional culture helped forge a unique position for Japanese art in the international art arena.

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