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Asian Arts



SOTHEBY'S UNVEILS A RECENTLY REDISCOVERED PAIR OF
IMPERIAL FAMILLE VERTE PORCELAIN BOWLS

KANGXI PERIOD

IMPORTANT THANGKAS

FROM A PRIVATE EUROPEAN COLLECTION

SONG CERAMICS

FROM A PRIVATE ASIAN COLLECTION

Paris, 3 December 2018 – In June, Sotheby's set a record for a Chinese porcelain in France. There was applause as a rare Famille Rose Imperial vase, Qianlong mark and period, XVIII century, sold for €16.2 million. It had been brought to our experts in a basic shoe box. On 11

December, the highlight of the Asian Art sale will be a pair of Famille Verte porcelain bowls Kangxi *Yuzhi* imperial mark and period.

Rediscovery of a rare pair of imperial Famille Verte porcelain bowls, Kangxi period

These extremely rare **imperial bowls (estimate: €450,000-€550,000)** are part of a small group of porcelains with vibrantly coloured designs over a coral ground. The imperial mark indicates direct use at the palace. The floral designs evoke springtime, symbolising prosperity and abundance. They were probably made in the imperial workshops at Jingdezhen during the reign of Emperor Kangxi. One example of this type of bowl is held in the Guimet Museum in Paris, and similar porcelain bowls can be found in major private and museum collections, including those of the National Palace Museum in Taipei and the Shanghai Museum.



Also in the sale will be a selection of ten ceramics from the Song dynasty, coming from a private Asian collection. These include a **rare Ding bowl dating from the Northern Song dynasty (estimate: €40,000-€60,000)**, carved with a delicate open peony flower, and a **Ding dish dating from the Northern Song dynasty or Jin dynasty (estimate: €15,000-€20,000)**. The design and white colour of the interior, which features a finely moulded sinuous dragon among rinceaux and clouds, evoke the simplicity and grace of works from this period.

Another highlight of the sale will be a group of 16 Chinese ceramics and porcelains formerly in the collection of **L.A. Basmadjieff**, and which have remained in the family until now. Lastly, among the remarkable porcelains is an important **blue and white porcelain water sprinkler** from the Ming dynasty, 16th century (**estimate: €50,000-€70,000**) and a **rare large blue and white and underglaze vase in blue, Meiping, 20th century (estimate: €45,000-€55,000)**.

Buddhist art



A selection of thangka from a private European collection

A group of nine thangka from a European collection will feature in the sale, including two rare pieces made for the Ngor monastery in Central Tibet. One features the **Kalachakra Mandala (estimate: €50,000-€70,000)**, mid-15th century, which symbolises the Wheel of Time. It is part of a series of paintings made in a Nepalese style.

The other is a large **portrait of an abbot from the Ngor monastery, circa 1704 (estimate: €30,000-€50,000)**. It could be the 25th abbot Sangye Phuntshok, who led the monastery between 1686 and 1689. Two similar works are kept in American museums, at the Rubin Museum of Art and at the Newark Museum.

Important Buddhist statues

Two figures will lead the Buddhist section of this sale. One is an **imposing carved gilt-lacquered wood figure of the Buddha** dating to the **late Ming dynasty or early Qing dynasty (estimate: €100,000-€150,000)**. It is rare to find a lacquered wood figure of the Buddha Shakyamuni of this impressive size.



The other is an **important gilt-lacquered wood standing figure of the Buddha Amida Nyorai, Kamakura period, first half of the 13th century**, from the famous collection of Charles Gillot **(estimate: €80,000-€120,000)**. Charles Firmin Gillot (1853-1903) was a successful inventor and art collector. He used his fortune to amass an eclectic collection ranging from Egyptian antiquities to Islamic glass, encompassing Mediaeval works and sculptures, Japanese and Chinese works of art, paintings, prints and sculpture.



A **rare polychrome copper alloy group comprising the Buddha Shakyamuni and 16 arhats in, Tibet, 15th century (estimate: €60,000-€80,000)**, uses imagery often found in thangka paintings featuring Buddha and the arhats.

Works on paper by Qi Baishi, from the collection of Ernest de Vleeschouwer

Two superb ink and colour works on paper by Qi Baishi (1864-1957), formerly in the collection of Ernest de Vleeschouwer, will also feature in the sale: *Belle de Jour* (estimate: €50,000-€70,000) and *Vignes* (estimate: €80,000-€120.000). Ernest de Vleeschouwer was a Belgian engineer and scientist moved to China in 1923 to work for the Belgian Railway Company. On his return to Belgium, he continued to be actively involved with China and travelled there frequently with the Belgium-China Association founded in 1957, the year he may have acquired *Belle de Jour*.



Other remarkable works



An important **gui**, an archaic bronze ritual food vessel, from the early Western Zhou dynasty, 11th-10th centuries BC, will also be a highlight of the sale (estimate: €80,000-€120.000). It was formerly in the collection of Dr., nb Otto Burchard in Berlin, who founded the first international Dada fair in 1920, before being acquired by another famous collector of Chinese archaic bronzes, Anthony Hardy.

Lastly, the sale included a **jifu**, an embroidered yellow silk twelve-symbol dragon robe made for an empress, Qing dynasty, Guangxu period, after 1870 (estimate: €40,000-€60.000€).



The lack of vents at the front and back of this robe identify it as being designed for a woman. More importantly, the 12 symbols of imperial authority that are embroidered on the shoulders, the upper parts and skirts on the sides of this fine yellow silk robe indicate that it would have been worn by an empress. These symbols were meant to demonstrate the emperor or empress's legitimacy to the throne, visually associating him or her with the powers of heaven and earth.

Arts d'Asie

Sale on 11 December 2018

Exhibition from 8 to 10 December

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