

## **ASIA WEEK**

### **SEPTEMBER 1999 SOTHEBY'S NEW YORK**

New York, N.Y. - Sotheby's will host its Fall 1999 Asia Week from September 13th through September 17th in New York. More than 2,000 lots will be offered, including outstanding examples of works of art, paintings, and furniture from India, Southeast Asia, China, Korea and Japan. The free public exhibition will be held from September 9 through September 16. The sale of Asian Decorative Arts will be held on the internet in the Fall and will include Japanese, Chinese and Indian and South East Asian works of art estimated from \$400.

#### **Korean Works of Art**

Monday, September 13th at 10.15am

This will be the first sale at Sotheby's since 1998 devoted to Korean works of art. The sale will include ceramics, paintings, sculpture, textiles, modern paintings and folk art, with many of the objects from private American collections.

A particular highlight is a tall celadon three-handled jar dating from early Koryo Dynasty (11th century) reflecting a rare direct influence from the Chinese southern Longquan kilns. With comparable examples extant in museums, this elegant rarely seen shape of 'placenta jar' is a precursor to a later distinctive Korean tradition of burying the placenta of the first-born child in an auspicious mountain site. This particular jar, having been in private American West Coast hands for more than forty years, reflects the strong collecting tastes of the uniquely blue-green celadon wares favored by Americans and European collectors. It is estimated at \$70/90,000.

#### **Japanese Works of Art**

Tuesday, September 14th at 10.15am & 2pm

A complete set of the fifty-three prints of the stations of the Tokaido, the route taken by any traveler en-route from Tokyo to the south of Honshu, by Japanese print master Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1858) is the highlight of the sale. Estimated at \$40/60,000, the woodblock prints include a market scene showing horses tied up in deep grass beside the sea. Under the shade of a pine tree, a large group of people have gathered to trade their goods. Another print in the series shows a lake surrounded by huge craggy rock formations with the snow-covered peak of Mt. Fuji in the distance.

A turn of the century cloisonné enamel tray showing pine trees, the needles picked out in metal wire, with Mt. Fuji beyond is estimated at \$8/10,000. The kidney-shaped tray by Namikawa Sosuke is decorated on the reverse with scattered cherry blossom.

Also included in the sale is a large 14th or 15th century shrine containing a circular painting on silk of Aizen Myôô which was formerly in the private collection of John Lennon. The shrine is being offered for sale by Rinpoche Ngawang Gelek who was given the shrine more than a year ago by some generous benefactors who had bought the shrine from the John Lennon Collection. The Rinpoche has now decided to sell the object and donate the money raised by its sale to a Buddhist monastery in Dripung, Kanataka, southern India. The shrine is estimated at \$2,500/3,500.

#### **Chinese Works of Art**

Wednesday, September 15 at 10.15am & 2pm

This 150 lot sale will include an important group of Qing Dynasty Imperial porcelain, a group of stone, wood and stucco Buddhist sculpture, and a fine group of Chinese decorative objects including jades, glass and later bronzes.

Amongst the Buddhistic sculptures are a group of three stone figures from the Allsdorf collection. Two of these, a head of a bodhisattva from the Sui Dynasty (AD581-618) (est: \$20/\$30,000) and a Northern Wei Dynasty (5th

century) head of a demon figure from the Longmen caves near Luoyang (est: \$15/\$20,000) have been extensively published in European collections since the beginning of this century. Other highlights include a brightly pigmented Yuan Dynasty (13th century) stucco figure of guanyin (est: \$45/\$55,000) and an important large Song Dynasty (12th century) figure of a seated buddha (est: \$160/\$180,000).

The most important of the Qing Imperial porcelains in the sale is a set of 12 famille verte "month cups", each individually decorated with a floral subject emblematic of a particular month of the year. This set, commissioned by the emperor Kangxi (1662-1722) was formerly in the collection of Paul Bernat, of Boston, and the collection of the Tsui Museum of Art. (est: \$550/\$650,000). Other Qing Imperial wares include a Qianlong period (1736-1795) doucai vase decorated with lotus and water plants (est: \$100/\$150,000); a Kangxi period monochrome pale blue water pot from an old American collection (est: \$80/\$120,000); a pair of Jiaqing period (1796-1820) famille rose vases from the J.P. Morgan collection (est: \$25/\$35,000) ; and a Jiaqing period box and cover decorated with a gilt dragon that was made for the Summer Palace and has been in the J.M. Hu collection (est: \$20/\$30,000).

#### Indian and South East Asian Works of Art

Thursday, September 16th at 10.15am

A private collection of 30 Indian miniatures accumulated over many years by Mrs. Christian Aall, includes a fine portrait of three Indian recruits: Kala, Umee Chund and Kesoo painted by the 'Fraser Artist' around 1816. The "Fraser Artist" has never been identified but was commissioned by two brothers, William and James Fraser, to paint images of the Indian characters from villages around Delhi, where they were based. Each man wears a dhoti secured by a sash around his waist, has an elaborate knotted turban and holds a long spear. The painting is estimated at \$40/60,000.

An important Tibetan piece included in the sale is a thanka of Aksobhya seated in dhyanasana on a lotus throne. The central figure, flanked by a pair of recumbent elephants, has his hands in bhumisparsa and dhyana mudras, calling the earth to witness his accumulated good deeds. Other bodhisattvas and the serpent tails of two ferocious makaras adorn the thanka and the central group is surrounded by numerous small images of Buddha Sakyamuni, each seated in dhyanasana and holding a patra in his lap. Buddha was meditating when he was disturbed by the demon mara, who tried to convince him to turn away from his contemplative life. However, throughout his life he had accumulated good deeds and he summoned a goddess to prove it. The 14th century thanka is estimated at \$40/60,000.

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