

Sotheby's

Press release Paris

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Sotheby's Asian Art Sale in Paris Achieves nearly €30 million (\$35.4m) Triple June 2017 result

HIGHEST TOTAL EVER FOR AN ASIAN ART SALE IN FRANCE



AUCTION RECORD FOR CHINESE PORCELAIN IN FRANCE

**Lost treasure of Imperial China found in an Attic in France sold for
€16.2m (\$19m)**

Highest price in the history of Sotheby's France

AUCTION RECORD FOR A COLLECTION OF CHINESE PAINTINGS IN FRANCE

Total: €10.6 million (\$12,5m)

Paris, 12 June 2018 - Our summer sale dedicated to Asian Arts has just ended with a total of nearly **€30 million (\$35,4m)**, **triple June 2017 result: the highest total ever for an Asian art sale in France**. Throughout the day, recently-discovered treasures of Imperial China,

exceptional paintings from a German collection and remarkable Asian works were offered in three sessions.

The sale got off to an explosive start with the auction record achieved in France by the extraordinary recently-discovered treasure of Imperial China: a **unique Imperial 18th century 'Yangcai' Famille-Rose porcelain vase, bearing a mark from the reign of the Qianlong Emperor (r. 1736-1795). After a 20 minutes bidding battle, the vase was sold for €16.2 million (\$19m)** against an estimate of €500,000 – 700,000 (lot 1) - **Auction Record for Chinese porcelain in France.**

Olivier Valmier, specialist in Asian Art, said: *"The discovery of an imperial treasure like this, found in a French attic for nearly a century, was an extraordinary adventure culminating in the record price achieved today. France is full of lost treasures just waiting to be discovered. As specialists, our work is to reveal them to collectors the world over."*

Sotheby's had unveiled this extraordinary rediscovered treasure of imperial China during press conference in Paris: Discovered by chance in the attic of French family home, this magnificent vase was brought into Sotheby's Paris by its unsuspecting owners in a shoe box. When Sotheby's specialist Olivier Valmier, opened the box to examine the vase, he was immediately struck by its quality. Further research revealed the vase to be a unique example produced by the finest craftsmen for the Qianlong Emperor.

The vase is of exceptional rarity: the only known example of its kind, it was produced by the Jingdezhen workshops for the magnificent courts of the Qianlong Emperor (1735-1796). *Famille Rose* porcelains of the period (or *'yangcai'* porcelains, as they are known) are extremely rare on the market, with most examples currently housed in the National Palace Museum in Taipei and other museums around the world.

The second session continued with the sale of a group of **twenty-eight Chinese paintings, calligraphies and rubbings**. Originally part of a large and important collection of Chinese art that was formed in China in the early decades of the 20th century, these works were only recently rediscovered. They had been passed down in the family and were originally collected by their great uncle, a prosperous German businessman and prominent member of the international foreign community in Beijing and Tianjin in the early decades of the 20th century and probably in the circle of Duan Fang (1861-1911). **The collection totals €10.6 million (\$12,5m) - Auction record for a collection of Chinese paintings in France - .**

During this session, two lots fetched prices of over one million euro. The most sought-after consisted of **"regulated" poems by Empress Yang, assembled by Qian Fu**, with 34 collectors' stamps. Estimated at between €10,000 and €15,000, they inspired a battle all the way up to **€2,465,450 (\$2,901,761)** (lot 34).

From the time of the First Emperor, an item bearing witness to the unification of Chinese writing, one of the most important pieces in this collection with a **Duan Fang** provenance is a very rare rubbing of an inscription taken from the **Taishan Twenty-Nine Character Stele**, mounted as a scroll and with a frontispiece by Duan Fang. Bidders chased it all the way up to **€1,929,000** (\$2,270,375) (lot 18, estimate: €500,000-700,000). It is extremely rare to find a rubbing of the Taishan stele with twenty-nine characters. Only a few have come down to us, including the example on sale today.

The day ended with a sale dedicated to Asian art works belonging to various amateurs and European collections. Bids were competitive for a carved Zitan 'dragon' cabinet, Qing dynasty, a masterpiece of cabinetmaking illustrating the splendour of Qianlong imperial furniture. Rediscovered in the collection of film producer Serge Sandberg, it was sold for **€393,000** (\$462,549) (lot 144, estimate: €120,000-150,000).

An important polychrome stucco figure of Guanyin, Ming dynasty, 15th century, fetched **€237,000** (\$278,942) (lot 184, estimate: €200,000-300,000).

Lastly, an impressively large blue and white 'bajixiang' moonflask, Qianlong seal mark and period, provided further proof of imperial artists' talent. Its decoration of *bajixiang*, the Eight Auspicious Symbols of Buddhism, framed by lotus petals, clearly appealed to collectors, who took the bidding up to **€237,000** (\$278,942) (lot 155, estimate: €200,000-300,000).

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