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PRESS RELEASE

GERHARD RICHTER, ZAO WOU-KI AND ZENG FANZHI TO HEADLINE PHILLIPS' MODERN & CONTEMPORARY ART EVENING SALE IN HONG KONG ON 30 SEPTEMBER

Distinguished by Prestigious Provenance and Rare Compositions, the Three Exceptional Paintings Exemplify Defining Moments in the Oeuvres of Richter, Zao, and Zeng



Gerhard Richter

Abstraktes Bild (522-1), 1983

oil on canvas, 100 x 70 cm.

Estimate: HK\$18,000,000-25,000,000/ US\$2,310,000 - 3,210,000

HONG KONG – 11 September 2026 – Phillips is pleased to present highlights from its upcoming [Modern & Contemporary Art Evening Sale](#) in Hong Kong. Bringing together a tightly curated selection of rare and exemplary works, the sale features internationally acclaimed artists spanning generations and geographies, including Gerhard Richter, Zao Wou-Ki, Zeng Fanzhi, Hajime Sorayama, Lauren Quin, Natee Utarit, and Issy Wood. Distinguished by exceptional quality, rarity, and prestigious provenance, the Evening Sale will be held on 30 September, with a public exhibition on view at Phillips' West Kowloon galleries from 21 to 30 September.

Dina Zhang, Head of Modern & Contemporary Art, China, Phillips, said: "This season's Evening Sale brings together works of exceptional quality, rarity, and provenance by some of the most influential artists of the modern

and contemporary eras. From Gerhard Richter's iconic abstraction and Zao Wou-Ki's pivotal early painting to Zeng Fanzhi's acclaimed *Mask Series*, each work represents a defining moment in the artist's career and offers collectors the opportunity to acquire works of profound art-historical significance."

Leading the Evening Sale is Gerhard Richter's *Abstraktes Bild (522-1)* (1983) (illustrated page 1), an outstanding example from the artist's celebrated "Wild Abstracts" period, widely regarded as one of the most significant breakthroughs in postwar painting. Executed during the pivotal year of Richter's move from Düsseldorf to Cologne, the work marks a moment of profound artistic transformation and showcases his mature squeegee technique at its most dynamic, balancing intentionality and chance to create a richly layered surface of remarkable chromatic power.

Acquired directly from the artist by the influential curator Kasper König, *Abstraktes Bild (522-1)* was included in the landmark retrospective *Gerhard Richter. Bilder 1962-1985* at Kunsthalle Düsseldorf and the Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin, before touring major institutions across Europe. Further documented in Dietmar Elger's authoritative catalogue raisonné, the work stands among the most important abstractions of this seminal period, encapsulating Richter's groundbreaking exploration of colour, materiality, and the dynamic interplay between control and chance. Its rarity, provenance, and exhibition history affirm its importance within Richter's oeuvre and the broader history of contemporary art.

Another standout highlight is Zeng Fanzhi's *Mask Series No. 4* (1994), a seminal work from the artist's iconic *Mask series*, widely regarded as one of the defining bodies of work in Chinese contemporary art. Painted in the inaugural year of the series, the work marks a pivotal moment in Zeng's career, when he shifted from the raw expressionism of his early *Hospital* paintings to the allegorical and psychologically charged imagery that would establish his international reputation. Created shortly after the artist's move from Wuhan to Beijing, *Mask Series No. 4* encapsulates the anxieties and aspirations of a rapidly changing society, using the motif of the mask as a powerful metaphor for identity, conformity, and the complexities of modern urban life in 1990s China.



Zeng Fanzhi

Mask Series No. 4, 1994

oil on canvas, 166 x 180 cm.

Estimate: HK\$11,000,000-16,000,000/ US\$1,410,000-2,050,000

importance, compositional rarity, distinguished provenance, and extensive scholarly recognition, *Mask Series No. 4* stands as a landmark work that captures both a transformative moment in Zeng's artistic development and the emergence of contemporary China onto the global stage.

Zao Wou-Ki's *Sans titre (La Théière)* (1951), painted in the year of the artist's transformative encounter with the work of German artist Paul Klee, captures the emergence of the visual language that would later establish him as one of the 20th century's most celebrated abstract painters. While the still-life motifs of a teapot, vase, and flowers remain discernible, they are already infused with the calligraphic vitality, spatial freedom, and poetic abstraction that would become the hallmarks of his mature practice. Serving as a remarkable synthesis of Western modernism and Chinese artistic traditions, the work reveals Zao's unique ability to bridge cultures, drawing upon the structural lessons of European avant-garde painting while retaining the spirit and philosophy of classical Chinese ink painting.



Zao Wou-Ki

Sans titre (La Théière), 1951

oil on canvas, 54 x 65 cm.

Estimate: HK\$10,000,000-15,000,000/US\$1,280,000-1,920,000

Its exceptional art historical significance is matched by outstanding provenance and exhibition credentials. Acquired directly from the artist by the renowned American publisher Harry N. Abrams and Nina Abrams, the painting remained within the Abrams family for more than half a century before entering an important Asian private collection. It was featured in Zao's first New York exhibition in 1952, one of the earliest introductions of the artist's work to American audiences, and later included in the influential exhibition *School of Paris 1959: The Internationals* at the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, where Zao was presented alongside leading figures of the postwar European avant-garde.

As part of the *Living Art* partnership between Phillips and Capella Hotel Group this year, the successful bidder of the present work will receive an exclusive invitation to Capella Taipei, for a suite stay elevated by a *Capella Curates* experience created entirely around them — an experience as singular as the work of art itself.

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Modern & Contemporary Art [Evening Sale](#): 4:30pm HKT, 30 September

Public Viewing: 21-30 September, 11am-7pm HKT

Location: Phillips Asia Headquarters, GF, WKCD Tower, West Kowloon Cultural District, No. 8 Austin Road West, Kowloon, Hong Kong

ABOUT PHILLIPS

Phillips: where the world's curious and bold connect with the art, design, and luxury that inspires them. As a leading global platform for buying and selling 20th and 21st century works, Phillips offers dedicated expertise in the areas of Modern and Contemporary Art, Design, Photographs, Editions, Watches, and Jewels. Auctions and exhibitions are primarily held in New York, London, Geneva, and Hong Kong, with representative offices based throughout Europe, the United States, and Asia. Phillips offers a regular selection of live and online auctions, along with items available for immediate purchase. Phillips also offers a range of services and advice on all aspects of collecting, including private sales and assistance with appraisals, valuations, and financial planning. Visit phillips.com for further information.

**Estimates do not include buyer's premium; prices achieved include the hammer price plus buyer's premium.*

PRESS CONTACTS:

HONG KONG – Ingrid Hsu, Head of PR and Corporate Communications, Asia

ingridhsu@phillips.com

PHILLIPS NEW YORK – 432 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10022

PHILLIPS LONDON – 30 Berkeley Square, London, W1J 6EX

PHILLIPS HONG KONG – G/F, WKCD Tower, West Kowloon Cultural District, No. 8 Austin Road, West Kowloon

PHILLIPS GENEVA - Rue de la Confédération, 7 Geneva 1204

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