

PHILLIPS

PRESS RELEASE

Phillips to Offer an Exceptional and Magnificent Sapphire and Diamond Necklace by Bulgari in Hong Kong this May

Set with an Unheated Ceylon Sapphire with 'Royal Blue' Colour, Weighing 118.35 Carats

The Gem is Among the Largest Faceted Sapphire Ever to Appear at Auction To Lead the Hong Kong Jewels & Jadeite Sale in May at Phillips' New Asia Headquarters



Bulgari

Exceptional and magnificent sapphire and diamond necklace, 2004
Estimate: HK\$24,000,000 – 35,000,000/ US\$3,050,000 – 4,500,000

HONG KONG – 24 March 2023 – Phillips is honoured to present a magnificent sapphire and diamond necklace by Bulgari which was realised in 2004, after the House came into possession of an exceptional and rare 'Royal Blue' sapphire from Sri Lanka. Coming to the auction market for the very first time from an esteemed private collection, the unheated cushion-shaped sapphire weighing 118.35 carats is among the largest sapphires ever offered at auctions in the past three decades. Accompanied by SSEF and Gübelin gemmological reports and appendix letters expressing the rarity and exceptionality of the stone, this sapphire was awarded 98 out of 100 Gübelin Points, which places it on the highest 'Exceptional' grade. Moreover, it received the 'Royal Blue' colour grading by Gübelin Gem

Lab, promising an even saturation rarely seen in unheated blue sapphire of this size. On view now until 31 March at Phillips' new Asia headquarters in Hong Kong's West Kowloon Cultural District, follow the unveiling on 18 March at the opening ceremony, the necklace will lead Phillips' Hong Kong Jewels & Jadeite Sale on 23 May. It will be followed by an international tour to New York, Singapore, Taipei and Geneva.

Benoît Repellin, Worldwide Head of Jewellery, Phillips, said, "Phillips is truly honoured to bring this exceptional and impressive sapphire and diamond necklace by Bulgari to auction. It will be the leading highlight of our Hong Kong Jewels & Jadeite auction on 23 May in our new premises in the West Kowloon Cultural District. This one-of-a-kind necklace's clean and sleek lines, elegant geometry, and the unusual horizontal setting of the 118.35-carat Sri Lankan sapphire are all elements that afford it a timeless modern appeal. Unique in its size, colour and origin, the stone embodies the transparency and luminosity pursued by Bulgari for its High Jewellery creations. This jewel is a holy grail for any collector, with a classic and elegant design typical of Bulgari that emphasizes the beauty and extraordinariness of the gem."



The House of Bulgari is known among aficionados for their selection of the best-coloured gemstones. The quest to uncover nature's rarest treasures is nothing short of assiduous efforts and true passion. Such extraordinary finds always leave a lasting impression and evoke deep connection with its beholder. Lucia Silvestri, Jewellery Creative and Gems Buying Executive Director at Bulgari, could still recall this sapphire which she first held in her hands more than 20 years ago. 'I was so impressed and touched that I still remember the emotion I felt.'

Sri Lanka, previously known as 'Ceylon', remains as one of the most important and historical sources for fine gemstones with one of the earth's largest concentrations of gem deposits, encompassing more than 40 gem-species, in which blue sapphires account for 85% of the gemstones mined on the island. Sri Lanka's gem mining history spans to nearly 2,500 years old, being one of the earliest sources of sapphires in the world producing these beautiful blue jewels. Without doubt, the present sapphire's rich and homogenous colour is the first thing that draws one's eyes towards it, yet upon closer inspection, its high transparency easily inspires awed admiration from the most seasoned connoisseurs. It is difficult to find such a degree of transparency in significantly smaller specimens from Sri Lanka, for this magnificent gem to display such clarity is unimaginable.

Some of the most iconic creations from The House of Bulgari are marked by contrasting colours against the brightness of yellow gold. However, in the 2000s, as the House progressed towards a more two-dimensional design approach, platinum and white gold made a comeback, and jewellery mounted in white metal emanated magnificence that resonated with opulence in the 1950s, especially those from the High Jewellery Collection. Contrary to more colourful creations that incorporated gemstones of various cutting styles and shapes, the present necklace assumes absolute symmetry that reminds us of classic noble and royal jewels. Centring on a single coloured gemstone of impressive size, the diamond-set necklace employs stone arrangement that is found in earlier works from the thirties to the fifties. Each circular link is formed by carefully selected tapered baguette diamonds instead of brilliant-cut diamonds, connected by pear-shaped diamonds at their points to afford lightness of an otherwise substantial necklace. The repeating circular links are typical of Bulgari's 'modulo' jewellery designs, where a single element is produced in series and then connected to each other.

The present magnificent sapphire and diamond necklace was featured in Bulgari's "125 Years of Italian Magnificence" retrospective in China from 2011 to 2012. It is a work of art that embodies a miraculous and singular occurrence in nature, savoir-faire from an illustrious Italian jewellery house, and the utmost caliber of rare gemstone collection.

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Jewels & Jadeite Hong Kong Auction: 23 May, 2023 (provisional date)

Location: Phillips Asia headquarters, G/F, WKCDA Tower, West Kowloon Cultural District, No. 8 Austin Road West, Kowloon

International Tour:

Dates	Location
18-31 March 10am to 6pm HKT	Hong Kong- G/F, WKCD Tower, West Kowloon Cultural District, No. 8 Austin Road West, Kowloon
6-7 April	New York - 432 Park Avenue, New York
20-22 April	Singapore – The St. Regis Hotel, 29 Tanglin Rd Singapore
6-7 May	Taipei – Bellavita, B1 Art Gallery, Bellavita, No.28, Songren Rd., Xinyi District, Taipei, Taiwan
10-12 May 13-15 May	Geneva - Hôtel La Réserve, 301 Route de Lausanne, Geneva Geneva – Phillips, 7 rue de la Confédération, Geneva

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Phillips is a leading global platform for buying and selling 20th and 21st century art and design. With dedicated expertise in the areas of 20th Century and Contemporary Art, Design, Photographs, Editions, Watches, and Jewelry, Phillips offers professional services and advice on all aspects of collecting. Auctions and exhibitions are held at salerooms in New York, London, Geneva, and Hong Kong, while clients are further served through representative offices based throughout Europe, the United States and Asia. Phillips also offers an online auction platform accessible anywhere in the world. In addition to providing selling and buying opportunities through auction, Phillips brokers private sales and offers assistance with appraisals, valuations, and other financial services.

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

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