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PRESS RELEASE

Phillips Announces

Foujita /Sanyu: Muses and Models

**A Comprehensive Exhibition of Foujita and Sanyu
To Debut in Paris, Followed by Hong Kong**

Phillips Paris: 19 – 30 March 2019

Phillips Hong Kong: 18 – 31 May 2019



Léonard-Tsuguharu Foujita
Nu allongé, Madeleine, 1931

PARIS - 28 FEBRUARY 2019 - Phillips' upcoming selling exhibition, [Foujita /Sanyu: Muses and Models](#), is set to transform the Paris galleries of 46 Rue du Bac from 19 to 30 March, 2019. Presenting some 30 works focusing on the 1920s and 1930s of Léonard Tsuguharu Foujita (1886-1968) and Sanyu (1895-1966), the exhibition pays homage to the artists' exploration of the subject of the female nude, which made them pioneers of their generation. It marks the first exhibition curated by Clara Rivollet, who recently joined Phillips Paris as International Specialist. The exhibition opens to the public in concert with the *Salon du Dessin*, an important art fair dedicated to drawings, before travelling to Phillips' Hong Kong galleries in the St. George's Building from 18 to 31 May, 2019, coinciding with the *Le French May* arts festival and the Spring auctions.

Fittingly, *Foujita /Sanyu: Muses and Models* will launch in Paris, the city critical to the development of both artists. It was here that Foujita and Sanyu's styles evolved in dialogue with their Western contemporaries, notably Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, Amedeo Modigliani, Chaim Soutine, Fernand Léger, and Man Ray. Foujita and Sanyu bridged Asian and Western

traditions, merging traditional techniques derived from Japanese printing and Chinese calligraphy with the modern, liberal sensuality they encountered by living and working in Paris during the 1920s.

Clara Rivollet, International Specialist of 20th Century & Contemporary Art, said “We are delighted to be launching this exhibition in Paris, an homage to the city which served as a backdrop for the Post WWI golden decade of emancipation, creative emulation and fruitful cultural exchanges. It marks the first time that Foujita and Sanyu are presented together in a dedicated exhibition. While Foujita benefited from the Musée Maillol retrospective last year in Paris, since Sanyu’s unique Museum show at Musée Guimet in 2004 he has been underrepresented in France. We are happy to offer our French audience a chance to discover his work. Both Foujita & Sanyu’s groundbreaking modernity offers a positive message with a hint of subversion, still very much relevant today.”

In conjunction with the exhibition, Phillips will host a panel discussion on 21 March with Sylvie Buisson, the Foujita expert and author of the catalogue raisonné in conversation with Jean-Paul Desroches, former Musée Guimet General Conservator and organiser of the exhibition *Sanyu, Language of the Body* (L’Ecriture du corps) in 2004 at Musée Guimet. Titled ‘Trait pour trait, Foujita/Sanyu’, the discussion will be moderated by Clara Rivollet.

Foujita and Sanyu - A Comparative Journey

After a short stay in Tokyo, Sanyu settled in a cosmopolitan Paris in 1921. That same year, Foujita - who had set up studio in Montparnasse in 1913 - completed his first nude painting titled *Nu allongé avec Chat* (Collection Petit Palais, Geneva, Switzerland).

Hailing from Japan and China respectively, Foujita and Sanyu were both inspired and transformed by Paris and their engagement with the artistic avant-garde, mingling with their contemporaries at la Coupole or la Rotonde and at the dissenting artistic salon gatherings.

The artists also encountered the female nude as a liberated model, as the women’s movement gathered momentum, championed by such fascinating and controversial personalities as music hall star Mistinguette, artists’ muse and Man Ray’s lover Kiki de Montparnasse (who modelled both for Foujita and Sanyu), and the subversive singer Suzy Solidor, depicted by Foujita in 1927. Both Foujita and Sanyu’s works offer glimpses of this uniquely rich ecosystem of emancipation, extreme creativity and cultural exchange which, though it collapsed with the beginning of WWII, remains to this day one of the most important and formative periods in the history of modern art.

Drawing on the Japanese print tradition which chooses to ignore the representation of depth, Foujita’s hair-thin brush skillfully outlines the disinhibited female nude model against a porcelain-white solid ground. His command of the line and attention to detail result in a unique, almost surreal representation of the subject. While Foujita seeks perfection, Sanyu favours spontaneity, deliberately stylising the female body to a few modulated lines, successfully translating the logic of the Chinese character as an artistic form.

Clara Rivollet

Clara Rivollet has recently joined Phillips as International Specialist of 20th Century & Contemporary Art, based in Paris. Clara is a key business-getter for 20th Century & Contemporary Art across France, Belgium and Switzerland. Primarily supporting 20th Century & Contemporary Art sales in Asia, she also leads all client engagement activities in our Paris space. This includes auction highlight tours, private selling exhibitions, pop up shows and talks, and selected third party events.

Before joining Phillips, Clara spent over seven years as a Specialist in Christie’s Paris, where she was a key business getter in Europe for their Asian Contemporary Art sale in Hong Kong. Clara also worked at SAKS Gallery from 2010 to 2011.



Sanyu
Kneeling nude



Léonard-Tsuguharu Foujita
Baigneuses (bathers), 1917

PHILLIPS PARIS

Exhibition: 19 – 30 March 2019

Location: 46 Rue du Bac, Paris 75007

PHILLIPS HONG KONG

Exhibition: 18 – 31 May 2019

Location: 14/F, St. George's Building, 2 Ice House Street, Central Hong Kong

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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.

PRESS CONTACTS:

PARIS - Jasmine Spezie, *CEO*, IC Insight Communications

LONDON - Katie Carder, *Head of Press, Europe*

HONG KONG - Ingrid Hsu, *Public Relations Director, Asia*

Jasmine@insightcommunications.cc

kcarder@phillips.com

ingridhsu@phillips.com

+33 1 42 84 19 09

+44 20 7901 7938

+852 2318 2043

PHILLIPS NEW YORK - 450 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10022

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

PHILLIPS HONG KONG - 14/F St. George's Building, 2 Ice House Street, Central Hong Kong

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