

# PHILLIPS 富藝斯

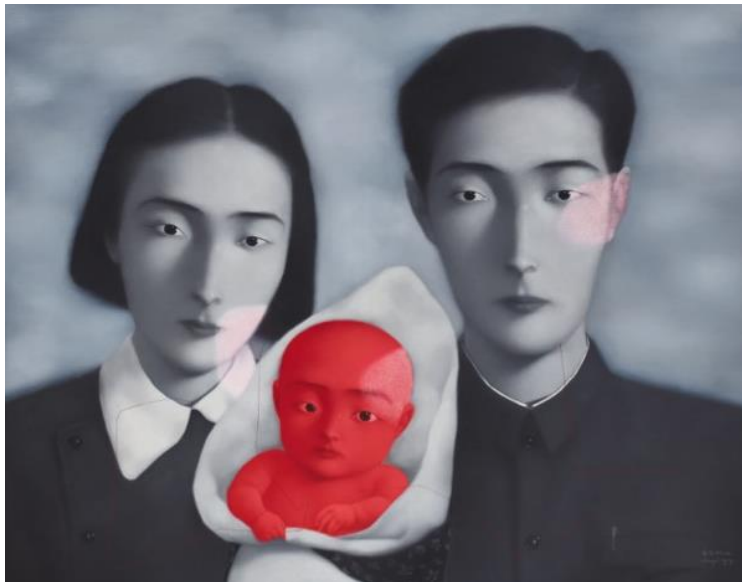
PRESS RELEASE

## **Phillips To Offer Contemporary Chinese And Modern Asian Art From The Esteemed Collection Of Nick Scheeres On 27 May 2018 In Hong Kong**

### ***Pioneers of Modernism: A Selection from The Scheeres Collection***

**Featuring Important Works By Prominent Artists Such As  
Zhang Xiaogang, Fang Lijun, Yue Minjun, Sanyu And Richard Lin  
As Well As Modern Vietnamese Works By Le Pho, Mai Trung Thu, Among Others**

**Dedicated Preview To Be Held In H Queen's Atrium From 24 To 27 May 2018**



**Zhang Xiaogang (b. 1958)**  
*Bloodline: Big Family No.9, 1996*  
Estimate Upon Request

HONG KONG – 17 APRIL 2018 – Phillips is delighted to announce the sale of *Pioneers of Modernism: A Selection from the Scheeres Collection* as a leading highlight of its 20th Century & Contemporary Art and Design Evening Sale in Hong Kong on 27 May 2018. Over the course of nearly three decades, Nick Scheeres has amassed an acclaimed collection of works from the 1930s to the early 2000s by some of Asia's greatest modern and contemporary artists. The collection is representative of Scheeres' discerning eye and refined tastes and passion for modern and contemporary Asian art, culminating in an assemblage of works that narrates the transformation and varieties of Asian art across six decades.

**Comprising 20 lots estimated in excess of HKD 40 million**, the collection includes seminal, historically important contemporary Chinese works by celebrated artists such as Zhang Xiaogang, Fang Lijun, Yue Minjun, as well as such modern masters as Richard Lin, Sanyu, Le Pho, among others. The highlights will be unveiled in a touring exhibition across key cities in Asia (see *page five for details*). Honouring its debut appearance in the market, *Pioneers of Modernism: A Selection from the Scheeres Collection* will be presented in a dedicated auction preview in H Queen's

Atrium in Hong Kong from 24 to 27 May 2018 alongside Phillips Hong Kong's Spring Sale 2018 preview held in Mandarin Oriental Hong Kong.

Isaure de Viel Castel, Head of Department, 20th Century & Contemporary Art, Hong Kong, and Senior Director, said: "Bringing together representative works from pivotal years in art history across Asia, The Scheeres Collection is testament to the remarkable foresight, incremental effort and unique collecting passion with which Nick Scheeres has pursued his love for art. This collection narrates the powerful tale of the sudden and prodigious aesthetic transformation of Asian art, shown through seminal works by artists now regarded as pioneers of Modernism and leading vanguards of contemporary Chinese art."

"Modern and contemporary Chinese art and its other Asian counterparts continue to play an important role in influencing the development and creation of this genre. Phillips has established itself as a leading platform for selling modern works alongside cutting-edge contemporary art, and with the ongoing interest in pursuing historically important works by preeminent Asian artists, we are thrilled to present these impressive works as leading highlights of our May Evening Sale."

### CONTEMPORARY CHINESE

The collection is led by the never before offered Zhang Xiaogang's *Bloodline: Big Family No.9*, painted in 1996 (Estimate Upon Request; *illustrated page one*). In this rare and nostalgic painting, Zhang challenges the notion of identity in the context of Chinese collectivism through his iconic stoic figures. Described as deeply personal and extremely important by the artist himself, *Bloodline: Big Family No. 9* draws from Zhang's memories of Cultural Revolution-era China, and illustrates the joint consciousness of the country at a time of social turmoil. The visual impetus for this specific work comes from a sentimental photograph of the artist's family, depicting his brother on his 100th Day Birthday, pictured with their parents.

Yue Minjun's *Penguin* (estimate: HKD 1.5 - 2 million) - fresh to the market - stands out as a bold example of the artist's distinctive surrealist depictions. Yue is regarded as one of the leading representatives of Cynical Realism, and his iconic smiles express the compulsory mask of satisfaction demanded in a society within which the appearance of the masses had become a state priority. Executed in 2000, the year after Yue created a sensation at the 48th Venice Biennale, *Penguin* captures the artist's highly recognisable humorous portraits of himself with the wide-mouthed expression of laughter and ludicrously embracing a penguin in a heightened surrealist image. Influenced by Surrealism and Social Realist propaganda art, Yue masterfully embeds social commentary veiled behind the satirical mask of his guffawing faces, a nod to the upbeat portrayal of proletariat and military heroes shown in Socialist paintings and propaganda during the Cultural Revolution.



**Yue Minjun (b. 1962)**  
*Penguin*, 2000  
Estimate: HKD 1.5 - 2 million

Fang Lijun's *1994 No. 4* and its precursor, *Series 2 No. 10*, will also be on offer. One of only a handful of works from the same series, *Series 2 No. 10* is from what has been coined the artist's highly important series dated 1990 - 1992 (estimate: HKD 6 - 9 million, *illustrated next page, top left*). This important and never-before-seen example of Fang's earlier work depicts a female acquaintance with her palms pressed together beside her face with a slightly provocative expression emphasised by her subtle smile. She is flanked by two robust men, amidst a backdrop of rippling water dotted with three bald figures emerging from the ocean gasping for air. Such scenes demonstrate an openness in society and a sense of affluence and freedom coming after Deng Xiaoping's Open Door policy in 1978. As a pioneer of Cynical Realism and leading figure of China's avant-garde art movement, Fang creates fictional and ambiguous narratives to examine the shift in China following the social movement in China in the late 1980s. Paintings realised during this period exhibit Fang's

preoccupation with juxtaposing imagery that proliferated in China during the 1980s and became recognisable on a nationwide scale through the controversial River Elegy (*Heshang*) television series aired on China Central.



**Fang Lijun (b. 1963)**  
*Series 2 No. 10*, 1992 - 1993  
Estimate: HKD 6 - 9 million



**Fang Lijun (b. 1963)**  
*1994 No. 4*, 1994 - 1995  
Estimate: HKD 2 - 3 million

*Series 2 No. 10* was a precursor for the present *1994 No. 4*, a key work from the Fang's meditative 1994 blue swimming series (estimate: HKD 2 - 3 million, *illustrated above right*). Painted just one year after Fang's seminal participation in the 1993 Venice Biennale, and in the same year as his exhibition in the 1994 São Paulo Biennial, *1994 No. 4* is a meditative work that captures the artist's preoccupation with human's relationship with water: though it is a source of life, an overabundance of it can kill us. His works personify sentiments of angst as a tool to describe the radical change from a collective sense of self-sacrifice to the contemporary state of individualism. Evoking a sense of vulnerability that informed Chinese culture during this period, *1994 No. 4* depicts a figure, naked and alone, trying to exist and stay afloat in the large seemingly endless body of water. The artist's ubiquitous bald head further represents one's feelings of being omitted and ignored in society.

## MODERN CHINESE

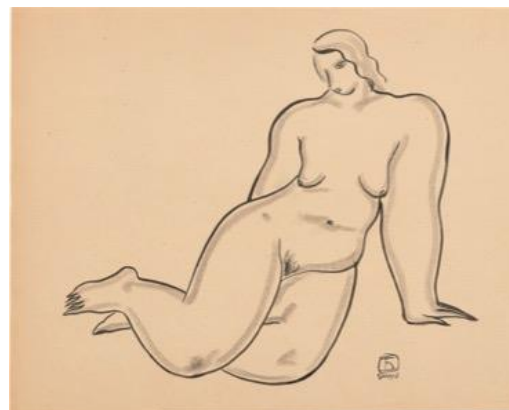


**Richard Lin (1933-2011)**  
*Three Four Five*, 1969  
Estimate: HKD900,000 - 1.5 million

The collection showcases a selection of modern works, four of which are Post-War abstract, minimalist artist **Richard Lin's** creations which are currently gaining huge traction in the international art market. Born in Taiwan, Lin was a peer of modern masters Zao Wou-Ki, Chu Teh-Chun, Hsiao Chin, and other Asian artists who travelled to Europe to study art in the post-war periods, and who developed their own distinct artistic languages with Asian sentimentalities.

The first ethnically Chinese artist to be invited to take part in Documenta 3 in Kassel, Germany in 1964, Lin began his artistic practice with semi-abstract landscape paintings in the early 1950s, based on Eastern philosophy and the concepts of Chinese ink-splash landscape paintings. The lines gradually became simplified and incorporated into the composition starting 1960s, as seen in the present example, *Three Four Five* executed in 1969 (estimate: HKD 900,000 - 1.5 million). Lin places emphasis on minimalistic, structured and geometric abstractionism, all of which underpin the post-war Avant-Garde movement. Other works by Lin include *January* (1970; estimate: HKD 450,000 - 650,000), *One and Two* (1968; estimate: HKD 90,000 - 150,000) and *Composition* (1958; estimate: HKD 90,000 - 150,000).

The collection features earlier works by **Sanyu**, a leader of Chinese Modern Art. Works on paper capture Sanyu's dexterous artistry and craftsmanship, as seen in the exquisite ink on paper drawings, including **Nude** (estimate: HKD 200,000 – 300,000, *illustrated right*), **Standing Nude** (estimate: HKD 120,000 – 220,000) and **Reclining Nude** (estimate: HKD 100,000 – 200,000). Sanyu's instantly recognisable Nude pieces are meticulously executed with fine lines and convey an additional sense of intimacy given their tight frames. The artist's training in traditional Chinese calligraphy further lends itself to Sanyu's unique depiction of the human form, each minimal stroke conveying both beauty and sensitivity.



**Sanyu (1895-1966)**  
*Nude*  
 Estimate: HKD 200,000 – 300,000

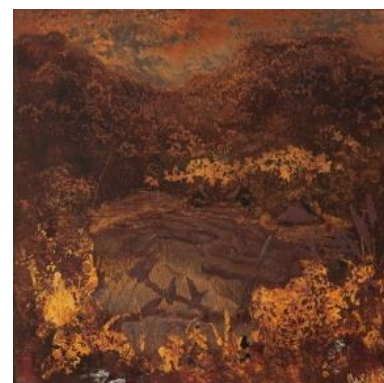
## MODERN VIETNAMESE



**Le Pho (1907 – 2001)**  
*Le Diner*, circa 1938  
 Estimate: HKD 100,000 – 150,000



**Mai Trung Thu (1906 – 1980)**  
*Lady Combing Hair*, 1943  
 Estimate: HKD 150,000 – 250,000



**Nguyen Gia Tri (1908 – 1993)**  
*Landscape with Ricefields*, circa 1946  
 Estimate: HKD 100,000 – 150,000

Scheeres also collects Vietnamese works including traditional silk paintings by Vietnamese modern masters, Le Pho and Mai Trung Thu, both of whom graduated from the first class of the prestigious *École des Beaux Arts de Indochine* in Hanoi. **Le Pho's *Le Diner*** (circa 1938; estimate: HKD 100,000 – 150,000) is a classic example of his depiction of domestic life. This ordinary scene at the dining table exudes a sense of pleasure through Le Pho delicate brushstrokes, offering a sweet glimpse into a private, almost mundane moment shared by a family. The casual arrangement of the meal and the boy in traditional costume are illustrated with the harmonious use of solid colours, conveying a very tranquil and pleasant everyday scene. **Mai Trung Thu's *Lady Combing Hair*** (1943; estimate: HKD 150,000 – 250,000) displays the beauty and elegance of a lady combing her hair through the artist's light touch and gentle brushwork. The subtlety and serenity are epitomised by the artist's mastery of silk painting, while the demure lady as often seen in Mai's oeuvre invites the viewers to experience the nostalgia of Vietnam.

**Nguyen Gia Tri** is known for his immaculate blend of western art techniques and Vietnamese lacquer painting. The present ***Landscape with Ricefields*** (circa 1946; estimate: HKD 100,000 – 150,000) encapsulates the beauty of the Vietnamese landscape, demonstrating the artist's tribute to his country. This small-scale lacquer work embodies the lush and harmonious landscape via the apt use of lacquer and gold paint that shimmers throughout, resulting in an overall rich and picturesque piece.

### **Phillips Hong Kong Spring Sale 2018**

20th Century & Contemporary Art and Design Evening Sale, 27 May 2018, 6pm HKT

Jewels and Jadeite, 28 May 2018, 2:30pm HKT

The Hong Kong Watch Auction: Six, 29 May 2018, 1pm & 4:30pm HKT

**Location:** Mandarin Oriental Hong Kong, 5 Connaught Road, Central, Hong Kong

### **Asia Preview Tour - 20th Century & Contemporary Art and Design Evening Sale**

#### **Seoul**

Phillips Korea Office, #12 SOUNDS, 35 Daesagwan-ro, Yongsan-gu, Seoul, Korea (04401)

26 - 28 April 2018, 11am - 6pm

#### **Shanghai**

Capella Shanghai, Jian Ye Li, 480 West Jianguo Road, Xuhui District, Shanghai 200031, China

4 - 5 May 2018, 10am - 6pm

#### **Singapore**

Four Seasons Hotel Singapore, 190 Orchard Boulevard, 248646, Singapore

5 - 6 May, 2018, 11am - 6pm

#### **Taipei**

14/F Kelti International Tower, 105 Songren Road, Xinyi District, Taipei, Taiwan

19 May 2018, 11am - 5pm

20 May 2018, 11am - 6pm

#### **Hong Kong**

Mandarin Oriental Hong Kong, 1/F & 2/F, 5 Connaught Road Central, Hong Kong

24 - 25 & 27 May 2018, 10am - 6pm HKT

26 May 2018, 10am - 7pm HKT

28 May 2018, 10am - 6pm HKT (*The Hong Kong Watch Auction: Six only*)

### **Dedicated Preview of *Pioneers of Modernism: A Selection from the Scheeres Collection***

**Location:** H Queen's Atrium, G/ F, 80 Queen's Road Central, Hong Kong

24 - 27 May 2018, 10am - 6pm HKT

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### **ABOUT PHILLIPS**

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.

Visit [www.phillips.com](http://www.phillips.com) for further information.

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

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