



Limestone head of a Bodhisattva,
Northern Wei dynasty, early
6th century, height 26 cm.
J.J. Lally & Co.



Meiren with fan, ink,
colour and gold on
paper, 18th century.
Alan Kennedy



The Poet (Head of Rabindranath Tagore),
1938, Ramkinkar Baij (born 1922),
cement, 48.2 x 30.5 x 25.5 cm.
DAG Modern



Blue and white porcelain inkstone
made for the Japanese market,
Ming dynasty (1368–1644).
Kaikodo

EDITORIAL

A VISIT to The Metropolitan Museum of Art is always at the top of my list when visiting New York. Like this magazine, the Met has over the years been a keen supporter of Asia Week New York, which again will be showcasing a diverse range of events from March 9th to 18th, 2017. I am, therefore, delighted to present five exceptional articles on assorted aspects of Asian art written by various Met curators in this March-April 2017 issue. I hope that our readers will not only find these articles of great interest, but also have an opportunity to visit the museum in person to view the actual treasures highlighted.

For Asia Week New York 2017, a complete list of the gallery open houses, auctions at Bonhams, Christie's, Doyle, iGavel and Sotheby's, exhibitions, lectures, symposia and special events is available online at www.asiaweekny.com. I also want to highlight below several exhibitions that I think will be of particular interest for readers planning to visit New York.

At J.J. Lally & Co. (Fuller Building, 41 East 57th Street, 14th floor), a diverse selection of ancient Chinese Buddhist sculpture produced over a period of 1000 years—from the late Northern Wei dynasty to the early Ming dynasty—will be shown. Displayed at the top of the page is a sublime 6th century head of a Bodhisattva, carved from a pale tan-coloured limestone in a very simple, unadorned style from the Buddhist cave-temples in Gongxian, Henan province, China.

On the 8th floor of the Fuller Building, Alan Kennedy will present a group of paintings relating to women in Chinese art. The painting shown here portrays a *meiren* (literally “beautiful person”) holding a fan, 18th century, ex-Gérard Lévy Collection, Paris. I am also eager to revisit DAG Modern's impressive gallery on the 7th floor of the Fuller Building. During Asia Week, “The Art of Bengal” exhibition will feature over 100 works that document the unique cultural efflorescence in Bengal that began more than two centuries ago. Established in 1993, DAG Modern is India's largest repository of modern masters representing the gamut of Indian art practice in the 20th century.



Tibetan lama, silver with
copper and gold alloy,
16th century, height 6 cm.
Tenzing Asian Art



Luis Virata with Wang Shixiang
and his wife. This photograph
was taken in 1984 at Wang's
hutong in China

Kaikodo (74 East 79th Street) offers collectors the opportunity to view and acquire fine quality Chinese and Japanese paintings, as well as Chinese works of art. Among the superb items in the gallery's “River of Stars” exhibition and sale are a large ink and colour on silk hanging scroll painting, *Silver Pheasants under Spring Blossoms*, by Ye Shuangshi (late 15th–16th century) and a Ming blue and white porcelain inkstone made for the Japanese market.

Zetterquist Galleries (3 East 66th Street) will present Chinese and Vietnamese ceramics, with highlights from The Brow Collection. James R. Brow and Anh Hoang Brow were long-time expatriates in Asia, who wrote two articles for *Arts of Asia* magazine: “Vietnamese Ceramics: A Ten Thousand Year Continuum” (March–April 2004 issue) and “Bronzes of the Dong Son Culture of Vietnam” (May–June 2007 issue). Eric Zetterquist explained that “The Brow Collection of Vietnamese Ceramics, spanning 1900 years and inclusive of almost every kiln type and style of ceramics from Vietnam, is one of the finest in private hands in the United States”. Illustrated here is a colossal blue and white porcelain jar, one of the largest and finest examples of such wares from the 15th–16th century.



Blue and white porcelain jar,
Vietnam, 15th–16th century,
height 86.5 cm.
Zetterquist Galleries



Lohan figure from the
Yuan dynasty, wood,
height 48 cm
Buddhist Art



Prajnaparamita, West Tibet,
ink and pigment on paper,
12th century, 9 x 7 cm.
Carlo Cristi



Green Tara, dark copper
alloy, Yuan dynasty,
height 20 cm.
Dr. Robert R. Bigler



Zen Lotus, 1974,
Lui Shou-kwan, ink
on paper, 153 x 84 cm.
Robert Hall



Bronze Marangga, East Nusa Tenggara,
West Sumba Regency, Indonesia,
19th century, 21 x 21 cm.
Susan Ollemans

Robert Hall has participated at international art fairs in China, Hong Kong, London, Maastricht, New York and Singapore. In New York, he will be welcoming visitors to his show at Gallery Vallois America (27 East 67th Street). Among his highlights are Chinese glass snuff bottles and a *Zen Lotus* painting by Lui Shou-kwan (1919-1975), one of the most influential modern Hong Kong-Chinese artists and founder of the new ink movement.

Christie's New York will be presenting selected highlights from "The Marie Theresa L. Virata Collection of Asian Art: A Family Legacy" for auction on March 16th, 2017. Acquired over a fifty-year period, this Collection represents a joint collecting effort that spans three generations of the distinguished Virata family. Marie Theresa, known to her friends as Bebe, became interested in art and antiques in the 1960s. Her collecting legacy continued with her children, Luis and Giovanna, as well as her daughter-in-law, Elizabeth. In the late 1970s, the Collection expanded to include classical Chinese furniture, dating to the Ming and Qing dynasties, and other Chinese and European works of art. Bebe became a close personal friend of the pre-eminent New York dealer Robert Ellsworth, who provided advice and guidance from

the late 1970s until his passing in 2014. When I had dinner with Luis Virata in Manila last November, he explained that his family actively sought exceptional examples of furniture in *huanghuali* and *zitan*. In the photograph provided for my editorial, Luis is seen with Wang Shixiang and his wife during a visit in 1984 with Peter Kwok. Wang Shixiang was a poet and calligrapher, and a renowned connoisseur of classical Chinese furniture. Luis noted: "We went to Wang's *hutong* and spent hours talking about various pieces of Ming furniture including his collection and ours".

Several leading galleries for Indian, Himalayan and Southeast Asian art will be participating at Asia Week New York. Tenzing Asian Art will be exhibiting Buddhist sculptures, *thangkas*, textiles and carpets from the Himalayas at Arader Galleries (1016 Madison Avenue). One of the highlights is an exquisite 16th century miniature portrait of a Tibetan lama executed in silver with copper and gold inlay. Samina Inc. and Buddhist Art will also be showing at Arader Galleries, but at the 29 East 72nd Street location. At Carlo Cristi (Leslie Feely Fine Art, 33 East 68th Street), selected sculptures will be on show, including a rare and fine Bon deity and early Pala bronzes. Carlo said that "A group of early illuminations from the Prajnaparamita volumes will make a show in itself for connoisseurs". I also plan to visit Dr Robert R. Bigler's special exhibition, "Dynasties and Identities: Tibeto-Chinese Buddhist Art of the 13th to 15th Centuries", at Dickinson Roundell Inc. (19 East 66th Street). Also just down the street at 47 East 66th Street, Phoenix Ancient Art will present "The Diffusion of Buddha in Antiquity".

For lovers of antique jewellery, Susan Ollemans will present "Abstract Design in Ancient Jewels" at Les Enluminures (23 East 73rd Street). Since starting her art business in 1979, she has sold to many major institutions and museums specialising in Asian decorative art. Sue commented about her exhibition: "Nothing is new in the world of design. This exhibition explores abstract design in pieces of jewellery from the 5th century through to the 19th century from India, Oceania, Indonesia and China. I want to show wearable jewellery presented as sculptural pieces."

Runjeet Singh will exhibit "Arms and Armour from the East" at Tambaran Gallery (5 East 82nd Street). A regular face at London and European fairs and auctions, this will be



Bejewelled Khanjar dagger,
Indian and Turkey,
17th–18th century.
Runjeet Singh



Cloisonné enamel tray by Imperial Court Artist Namikawa Sosuke of Tokyo (1847–1910), width 22.9 cm. Plum blossom design gold lacquer miniature Kodansu (cabinet), 19th century, 8.9 x 7 cm. Orientations Gallery and Oriental Treasure Box at the Nippon Gallery, New York



Lacquer dish with a Shishi lion,
Ming dynasty, 15th century,
diameter 20.5 cm.
Vandervan Oriental Art



The 30th edition of TEFAF Maastricht will be held from March 10th to 19th, 2017. Renowned for showcasing works of art and antiques of the finest quality, these photographs at Vandervan Oriental Art and Gregg Baker Asian Art are representative of the fair's refined displays

his first Asia Week New York exhibition. Runjeet's exhibitions constantly present powerful historical objects in a well-informed and contemporary way. I would also like to draw attention to Stephan Loewentheil's exhibition, "Masterpieces of Early Chinese Photography", at PRPH Books (26 East 64th Street). For the Collectors World section in this issue, Stephan identifies early Chinese photographs of great historical value, which have become extremely rare, and difficult to find in good condition.

Orientations Gallery and Oriental Treasure Box are leading specialists in Japanese art. They will be returning to the elegant Nippon Gallery on the 7th floor of the Nippon Club Tower (145 West 57th Street) from March 11th to 18th. This year's event, entitled "Signs of Reign: A Showing of Splendid Japanese Art", will feature distinguished objects from the Edo, Meiji, Taisho, Showa and Heisei periods. As artworks evocative of aristocratic patronage, regal themes such as chrysanthemums, dragons, court dances, phoenix and dragonflies are represented, including those for Imperial presentation. An illustrative lecture by Hollis Goodall, Curator of Japanese Art at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, will complement the exhibition on Monday, March 13th at 4 pm. This popular lecture is usually standing room only, and is always one of the highlights of Asia Week. Many attendees described last year's exhibition as the most exciting of Asia Week in New York, and several long-time members of the Nippon Club commented that the show was among the finest ever to appear at the Nippon Gallery.

The 30th edition of TEFAF Maastricht will be held at the MECC Maastricht from March 10th to 19th, 2017. Although this brilliant art fair and Asia Week New York have overlapping dates, many collectors, as well as international museums and institutions, will of course attend both events. TEFAF Maastricht is a wonderful event that enables visitors to see high quality art from around the world. The fair's 30th edition will attract both private and institutional collectors in search for outstanding artworks. Among the 270 internationally renowned exhibitors, the Asian art galleries include Vandervan Oriental Art, Gregg Baker Asian Art, Ben Janssens Oriental Art Ltd, Martyn Gregory, Michael Goedhuis, Sydney L. Moss Ltd, Amir Mohtashemi Ltd, and Jorge Welsh Works of Art. Of course I wish them all a very successful fair.

Finally, as I wrap up my Editorial, I would like to remind readers that there will be exciting Asian art auctions and exhibitions taking place in Hong Kong around the first week of April. Please make a note in your calendar accordingly, and you are most welcome to drop by the *Arts of Asia* office in Wanchai. It is always a great pleasure to catch up with loyal readers who share my passion for Asian art.

Robin Markbreiter

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