



MING EMPEROR'S CARPET AND FINE CHINESE ART SALE AT BONHAMS

For discriminating Chinese art collectors, Bonhams' sale of fine Chinese Art on 10 November in London provides a rare opportunity to acquire objects made for the Chinese Imperial Court and the Emperor.

The sale offers a stunning array of ceramics, jade, bronzes, furniture and one particularly fascinating carpet which has links to the Imperial Ming throne room in the Forbidden City. The carpet, a subtle work of art in muted yellows and blues, features a five-clawed dragon, symbol of the Emperor. It is estimated to sell for £80,000 to £120,000.

Carpets of this age and form are exceptionally rare. From Imperial records and from inscriptions on carpets themselves we know that carpets were designed specifically for certain halls within the imperial palaces, as an integral part of the architecture of the building. The trapezoidal shape and key-fret border of the present lot suggests that it was intended to be placed around a central octagonal carpet on which the throne platform was placed.

The design of the bold front-facing five-clawed dragon is typical of the Ming period. The colour scheme is also reflected in the wucaï palette used on porcelains which reached its peak during the Wanli period. The five-clawed dragon again suggests an Imperial use

for the carpet, since it is associated with the person of the emperor, and is frequently used on other textiles such as Imperial silk robes.

These Imperial associations and the use of such carpets in very particular settings accounts for their rarity in the past, since such carpets were produced in very limited numbers and passed down as part of the inheritance from emperor to emperor; the lot presently offered for sale is even more rare today.

PRESENT COLLECTABLES AT CONTEMPORARY APPLIED ARTS

If you've yet to discover Contemporary Applied Arts' fascinating exhibition space and shop in London's West End, be sure to pay a visit in the run up to Christmas. For this year's Christmas Show, CAA invited all their members to participate in a collaborative seasonal selling show based on the theme of gifting. Each participant was asked to produce a series of five limited edition 'decorations', which should be representative of their work and retail at just £50. Located in the heart of Fitzrovia, home to multiple galleries and design focused stores, Contemporary Applied Arts is the place to view, commission and purchase the best British craft.

The exhibition opens next week on 18 November at 2 Percy Street, W1. www.caa.org.uk

REAL VENICE AT SOMERSET HOUSE

A major exhibition of photographic works of Venice by fourteen internationally renowned artists is on view at Somerset House until 11 December.

The exhibition, Real Venice, comprises work by artists invited to Venice to create a portfolio of images, designed to raise substantial funds to save Venice and to create a lasting legacy of the city. Real Venice is mounted by the Venice in Peril Fund and curated by Elena Foster.

For centuries, Venice has inspired intellectuals, writers, and artists with its ravishing beauty, riches and strangeness. For the project, the artists were challenged to create a series of meaningful and original photographic images of Venice, perhaps the most photographed, but seriously threatened city in the world.

The resulting images show Venice in all its beauty, but also in all its paradoxes and contrasts. As well as addressing the everyday life of the city's inhabitants, its iconic monuments and modern architecture, the photographs capture the ravages wrought by mass tourism and the rise of the lagoon water level.

The Embankment Galleries are at Somerset House, Strand, WC2. For further information, call 020 7845 4600.



Candida Hofer – Teatro.