This colourful 19th century Tibetan tiger rug belongs to Tuyet Nguyet and Stephen Markbreiter. For good luck and protection it is normally placed in the entrance of their home in Hong Kong.

Vietnam are both informative and beautiful. I am particularly impressed by the ceramics. It’s a lovely publication and as always is of the highest quality... We are pleased with the high quality of the advertising in your magazine and will continue to run more in the future.

Carpets and rugs have a special interest in my family, since the days I first came to Hong Kong and married my dear husband, an architect and designer from London. Over the last fifty years in Hong Kong we have lived happily in many apartments and houses. Our homes were always enriched with the displays of our collection of antiques, paintings and art, including attractive Tibetan rugs. This special interest is shared in this November-December 2009 number with our distinguished Arts of Asia subscribers who are highly educated, sincere and enthusiastic to learn and appreciate as much as they can about Asian antiques, art and culture.

This edition’s cover article “Discovering Tibetan Carpets: The Mariani Collection” was written by renowned textile expert Diana K. Myers who lives in Washington DC. She made a special trip to Singapore to meet Claudio and Irene Mariani who were gracious and helpful in showing their diverse and rich collection. Over a period of twenty years Mr and Mrs Mariani passionately collected 330 rugs. With professionally taken photographs of the best and rarest examples, Diana’s defining article discusses in detail the history, uses, design and structure of Tibetan rugs. She says, “The carpets Claudio has assembled certainly reflect his love of discovery; the 330-some rugs provide a bird’s-eye view of the colour, design, function, and abundant individualist artistry that define Tibetan carpets of the past 150 years. The Mariani collection also reflects what we know, and have still to understand better, about these distinctive carpets.”

The November-December 2009 number continues the Tibetan art theme with a fourteen page article written by independent scholar Ulrich von Schroeder, “Buddhist Sculptures and Thangkas: Tibetan Museum of the Alain Boridor Foundation”. The Tibetan Museum opened in April this year in the medieval town of Gyantse, Tibet, with a collection of three hundred sacred objects, mainly from Tibet and the Himalayan region, as a result of Alain Boridor’s studies of the Buddhist arts and religion.

Samuel J. Lieber, a successful lawyer in New York City, believes that “the love of art is a highly personal matter; that the evaluation of art quality is properly a matter of individual determination based on one’s own hierarchy of values and emotional response”. In March 2009, Sam and his charming wife Gabrielle invited myself and Robin to their Manhattan apartment overlooking Central Park. There we found they live happily at home with ancient and contemporary art of a wide variety, in the entrance foyer, ancient Gandhara and Kashmir sculptures, contemporary paintings by British artists, John Hoyland, ancient ceramic vessels from China and Thailand. In the living room, a 19th century sculpture from India, a 100 BC Bocianok Ice man figure, Japanese contemporary ceramic works.

This attractive November-December 2009 issue also includes two Japanese subject articles. Dr Robert Mintz, Associate Curator of Asian Art at the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, writes on Japanese cloisonne at the turn of the twentieth century. Sir Hugh Cortazzi was a former British Ambassador to Japan (1960–1964) and President of the Asian Society of London (1965–1983). An author of numerous works on Asian subjects, this time he writes on Yoshio Markino, a Japanese artist in Edwardian London.

See at the grand opening of Seoul Auction in Alexandria House in Hong Kong is Mr Jun Lee, CEO, who had this to say about his company: “We are delighted to have moved to this new office in Alexandria House and to present our first private sales exhibition ‘Cutting Edge’ until August 14th, 2009 featuring works by young Korean artists. Founded in 1998, we are Korea’s oldest and leading art auction house. During the past decade, Seoul Auction has been at the forefront of the development of the Korean art market, conducting over 100 auctions. The opening of our new office demonstrates that we are fully committed to establishing Hong Kong as a truly international art hub and to better serving our clients throughout the Asian region. We look forward to seeing you at our upcoming Hong Kong auctions.”

In the next photograph I am with Philip and Judy Tse at the Chen Yifei solo exhibition in Hanghong, Kowloon, Hong Kong at their newly relocated spacious BaoQu Tang Gallery of Art, which reopened in July 2009. The collection of twelve memorable Chen Yifei’s paintings were assigned from Marlborough Fine Art in London who was the artist’s long-time representative before he sadly passed away at the age of fifty-nine in 2005. In 1993 Chen Yifei, the most respected and leading of contemporary Chinese figurative, portraiture and western-style oil painters, signed an exclusive worldwide contract with Marlborough Fine Art. He subsequently had major retrospective exhibitions in Beijing, Shanghai, Paris, London, New York and Munich.

Robin and I will once again be meeting new and longtime friends at the 12th Asian Art in London (AAL) from October 29th to November 7th, 2009. For the Gala party on November 3rd at the British Museum guests will enjoy a private viewing of the recently opened Sir Percival David Collection of Chinese Ceramics in the new Sir Joseph Hotung Centre for Ceramic Studies. (See. Arts of Asia—June 2009 special issue featuring “Sir Percival David Collection at the British Museum”.) A full listing of AAL events and evening receptions are available on www.asianartinlondon.com. But to indicate the breadth of the exhibits I highlight here four of the most exciting exhibitions that will be held in London galleries during that time.
Eskenazi Ltd
An Old Man Resting Under Pine Trees,
ink and colours on silk, mounted on board, anonymous, Yuan or early Ming period, 14th century, diameter 26.8 cm

Roger Keverne Ltd
Square bronze equestrian huntsmen mirror,
Tang dynasty, 11.4 cm

Littleton and Hennessy Asian Art
Carved cinnabar lacquer brushpot, Qianlong period, height 14 cm, diameter 12 cm

Marchant
Yellow ground blue and white “gardenia” dish, Zhengde mark and period, diameter 25.2 cm

Littleton and Hennessy Asian Art with galleries in New York and London (1 Princes Place, Duke Street, St James’s) will hold an exhibition during AAL of scholar’s objects in bamboo, porcelain, stone, lacquer and jade demonstrating the refined taste of the literati class. Each piece has been chosen to extremely high standards of beauty, craftsmanship, material and rarity. Many of the pieces have distinguished provenance from well-known collections.

Marchant’s gallery at 120 Kensington Church Street, London, has been refurbished and reopened on October 26th with a “Ming Porcelain” exhibition. The hardback book with introduction by John Ayers illustrates fifty-four pieces, many held for some years to celebrate the reopening. Highlights from the exhibition include a small fluted blue and white dish from the Yongle period, 1403–1425 (its counterpart in the Palace Museum, Beijing); a yellow ground blue and white “gardenia” dish, Zhengde mark and period, 1506–1521 (similar dishes in the British Museum and Fogg Art Museum); and a large iron-red eight-dragon bowl (its mate in the National Palace Museum, Taiwan).

Fair organiser of Florida fame, David Lester, and his son Aaron visited Arts of Asia offices on May 13th, 2009 to ask our opinions concerning holding a major art fair in Hong Kong, Asia’s art centre. He has always been impressed with the positive developments and the high-paced energy in this city. During our long discussion he explained that his fair would be based on the style and scope of his Art Asia Hong Kong fairs which took place during Novembers from 1992–1994 at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC). We recommended that he immediately contact the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre as it is still the best venue in town. However, I warned him that it was now extremely difficult to book an opening and area that would accommodate his large scale event featuring not only Asian antiquities and contemporary art, but also western art and jewellery.

Two months later there have been huge changes in the London fairs scene. After seventy-five years The Grosvenor House Art & Antiques Fair collapsed, even though it was under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra and many of the exhibitors did good business. The other surprising news was Olympia International Art & Antiques Fair was taken over by David Lester and rebranded as LIFAF (London International Fine Art Fair at Olympia).

David called me from his home in Naples, Florida, USA explaining that the former Olympia fair was rated a 2-star. With partners Clarion Events Ltd, they will make LIFAF a 4-star fair. This emphasis will bring quality dealers and artwork, attracting greater attendance. Lee Ann Lester will join her husband David on the executive management, working hard to attract important collectors from the UK and also throughout the world. A large budget will be allocated to promote LIFAF and that is why exhibitors will be required to pay a £1500 levy. Currently being revised are the LIFAF floor plans, stand fitting requirements, stand lighting, fair décor, marketing, promotion and partnerships. “Although higher than prior years, overall pricing for LIFAF 2010 will be substantially less than The Grosvenor House Art & Antique Fair, less than AlFAB Palm Beach fair, less than the major New York fall fairs, and less than the Paris Biennale. In return for this revised pricing structure, we expect to deliver a fair with comparable elegance, marketing, and excellent attendance continuing to be enjoyed by other top fairs.”

David emphasised that the fair needs strong leadership and only strong personalities will survive; that with his wife Lee Ann they will provide such leadership to make LIFAF a
success. He was elated that many exhibitors already signed contracts with him and even wanted three year agreements. They were not opposed to his levy charge and were confident the money will be spent effectively to promote the fair. He clearly has a very optimistic direction for the new fair which he says will have 241 stands when it is held from June 4th to 13th next year. For more information about the LIFAF please contact David Lester (dlester@ifae.com) and Lee Ann Lester (llester@ifae.com).

In late July Priscilla Chak called with exciting news for me. With her husband, William Chak, a venue for their second International Antiques & Arts Expo 2009 had been secured. This will take place at Made-In-Dongguan Trade & Exhibition Center, Songshan Lake in Dongguan, from December 5th–7th with Grand Opening on December 4th. Chaks Investment Limited and Asia Zenith Expo Limited are the sole sponsors. The venue can easily accommodate fifty exhibitors on the first floor.

Following their successful International Antiques & Arts Expo 2009 in Taiyuan, Shanxi, northern China (see Arts of

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Arts of Asia Publications Limited
Suites 803–806, Kowloon Centre,
29-39 Ashley Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong
Telephone: 852-2376-2228  Facsimile: 852-2376-3713
E-mail: info@artsofasianet.com  Website: www.artsofasianet.com