EDITORIAL

PREPARING THE PARTY to mark Arts of Asia’s 37th anniversary and new offices, and Arts of Asia’s new study centre and library, takes me back in my memories to those long ago years in the late 1960s when the South China Morning Post with other local papers and magazines, such as the Far Eastern Economic Review, The Hong Kong Standard, the Sunday Star, Modern Asia, The Asia Magazine and Country Life in England accepted our topical contributions both locally and overseas. In those days, Robin Hutcheon was SCMP’s editor in chief, and Brian Cubbertson was the Sunday editor, while Derek Davies was the publisher of the Far Eastern Economic Review, Alan Castro of the Tiger Standard and David Roads of Modern Asia. All were both professional and personal friends of ours in those days, as those who have survived are still today.

An art magazine is most surely reflected in its production. Arts of Asia must be unique in being scanned and colour separated continuously since its preview trial issue in 1970 (now a highly rare collectible) by Daiichi System Graphics Co., Ltd, under the most highly artistic supervision of the published author and professional Japanese photographer based in Hong Kong Mr Fumio Okada. I consider him to be undoubtedly the best colour separator, not only for Hong Kong, but up to now, for China and the Far East. I know of no one who can surpass him in hands-on colour separating skills, as well as the use of the most up-to-date equipment for the job.

It was the late Derek Davies I consulted to help me find a highly respected, certified public accountant when I proposed to start our magazine. He recommended Li, Tang, Chen & Co., and we are still welcoming their annual help.

Since twelve years ago, I have entrusted the printing, production and dispatching of Arts of Asia magazine to Paramount Printing Company Limited at Tseung Kwan O in the New Territories. Under our own personal supervision throughout the printing production and dispatching, exceptionally high results are achieved at bookshop, public and personal library levels. We have been lured, again and again, by other printers offering tempting very special discounts, which I have always refused.

The local Hong Kong art galleries have given us wonder-
ful support since our first days of opening, consistently through to the present, as is witnessed in these pages. I thank them, as well as all those others involved in this art market that are not more specifically named here. It was all of them, in the past 37 years who have helped Arts of Asia to reach this impressive standard, and we hope they will continue to support the magazine as wholeheartedly, as they have shown, in the years ahead.


Of the early names no longer with us, how can we ever forget for their support Dunt King and Charlotte Horstmann, or still today Kai-Yin Lo, Gerald Godfrey, Glenn and Lucille Vessa of Honeychurch Antiques, Mr K.Y. Ng of K.Y. Fine Art, and the Hong Kong Art Craft Merchants Association, Ltd.

It is many years now since Bill Caskey of Caskey and Lees enlisted me for help when he and his wife Elizabeth Lees sought to establish the San Francisco Arts of Pacific Asia Show. I asked Emily Sano, Director of the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco, to encourage her museum to sponsor the preview night in benefit of its Education Programs. Their gala preview evenings established their success from the very beginning, and early this year they celebrated brilliantly their tenth anniversary.

In New York, Brian and Anna Haughton, the Directors of Haughton International Fairs, in April 2006 welcomed their eleventh International Asian Art Fair at the Seventh Regiment Armory, which also featured the arts of Africa, Oceania and the Americas. Their benefit preview was for the Asia Society. From their first fair, I have never missed attending and reporting the Haughton International Asian Art Fairs prominently and accurately in Arts of Asia, with numerous Arts of Asia photographs of the participants.

From our earliest days Arts of Asia has received useful support from Sotheby’s London, and especially when Julian Thompson came out East 33 years ago to establish Sotheby’s Hong Kong. Presently Christie’s is celebrating the establishment of their Hong Kong presence here since the past 20 years, and I do sincerely thank both auction houses equally.

Other auction houses that should be mentioned here with my thanks, include in Beijing the China Guardian Auctions Co., Ltd. It is twelve years since I personally attended for Arts of Asia their inaugural auction, and since then, they have certainly grown. As also in Massachusetts, North America, two individual houses: Eldred’s and Skinner’s. While last, but
Pearl and Raymond Chak

Daiichi System Graphics Co., Ltd

Bebe and Angus Forsyth

Edmond Chin

Chan Shing Kee

Pressroom Printer and Design

B.L.C. Fine Art Ltd

Lam & Co. Solicitors

Rohit Kapoor, The Citigroup Private Bank
certainly not least, Bonhams in London, and Bonhams and Butterfields in San Francisco, under the able stewardships of Directors Colin Sheaf and Dessa Goddard respectively.

*Arts of Asia* is always strongly supported by respected New York dealers. Of four offering varied expertise I can mention my friends Leon and Karen Wender of China 2000 Fine Art who I can rely on for their expert judgments on contemporary Chinese paintings. Michael C. Hughes, LLC, “Asian Art”, is most personally known to me through my own and the magazine’s interests in lacquers and Chinese snuff bottles. While Tim Mertel of L’Asie Exotique, who has wide knowledge of “Asian Antiques and Ethnographic Art”, is perhaps best known for his Japanese objects which include amongst others, Japanese festival dolls. Mr Conor Mahony, President of The Chinese Porcelain Company, is the gentleman to see for “Chinese ceramics and works of art for the Imperial, Domestic and Export markets”.

Worldwide sought for his Asiatica and Ethnographica is the West Coast American dealer Thomas Murray, who I welcome to my offices whenever he passes through Hong Kong on his China and further East Asia travels. He is the American dealer who truly knows Indonesia, and understands tribal arts and peoples well, especially for their textiles and other weavings.

I do thank most warmly those friends of *Arts of Asia* who sent us the wonderful flower arrangements and baskets of fruit (including Martin Fung Ltd and Chine Gallery Ltd) for the party. There is space to illustrate some representative examples. I do thank also all those friends, both local and from overseas whose presence in Hong Kong enabled them to attend. The excellent photographs of the party were taken by professional photographer Michael Chung. The names of our guests under the pictures (which generally exclude our own) should be read from left to right. From the 150 people who attended I am afraid it is impossible to show everybody. Please forgive me if your
picture does not appear, however I am happy to be able to record some of the groups of guests and friends I was requested to be present with. I am glad you all enjoyed the chilled Moët and Chandon pink champagne and the delicious food. While I remember thank you C.P. Lin (the important art collector of Chinese paintings in Hong Kong) for your lavish gift of red wine. Soon guests were leafing through the many catalogues on display and even settling down in the library to research in the unique collection of art books and catalogues from major auction houses and leading art galleries.

There is just enough space to congratulate Christie’s Hong Kong on the success of their Spring auctions (May 28th to June 1st, 2006), where fantastic results were achieved, realising a total of over HK$1.2 billion (US$154 million). It is a record for any series of auctions in Asia, with numerous world records exceeded in a variety of categories. Their tremendous success that week, according to Edward Dolman, Chief Executive Officer of Christie’s International, was a clear testament to the immense strength of Hong Kong as one of the three foremost auction centres in the global market. It marks a significant milestone, as Christie’s Hong Kong celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2006.

The Christie’s Asian art sales achieved a combined total of HK$847 million (US$110 million). Most notably an early Ming underglaze copper-red pear-shaped vase, Tuhuchung-ping, fetched HK$78,520,000 (US$10,207,600) in The Imperial Sale, for which further coverage will appear in the Salesroom News of the following September–October 2006 issue of Arts of Asia. The vase in perfect condition went to Steve Wynn, Chairman and CEO of Wynn Resorts (Macau).

From March 25th to April 3rd this year, as usual at that time I was in New York to attend exhibitions, fairs, auctions and private functions with important collectors during Asia Week. Eskinazi, J.J. Lally, Carlton Rochell, Gisèle Croës, Michael Hughes and Anthony Lin were very successful. Jim Lally’s exhibition was completely sold out, while Carlton Rochell said he had the best sale financially since he opened. Already, by the end of the first day Giuseppe Eskenazi had sold five of the eight Chinese bronzes he was exhibiting. Michael Hughes sold many of his beautiful cinnabar lacquer pieces.

Bill Caskey and Elizabeth Lees, organisers of the 2006 New York Arts of Pacific Asia Show, say that “as far as our New York show went this year, we were very, very pleased. The Wednesday night preview reception attracted far more people than we had anticipated. The tone for the show was set that Wednesday, and continued until our closing on Sunday night. For the most part exhibitors sold well, especially those dealing in Chinese material. Attendance was amongst the highest we have ever had.”

A new direction was apparent at The International Asian Art Fair in New York, March 31st to April 5th, 2006, held by Brian and Anna Haughton. Featuring for the first time also the arts of Africa, Oceania and the Americas, some of the regular earlier exhibitors of antiquities were noticeably absent, their places being taken mainly by dealers of modern Chinese paintings and modern Japanese arts. Several of the regular visitors expressed to me their surprise. I did mention this to Anna Haughton who told me she was quite relaxed about it, because the fair has attracted many new visitors and collectors who are interested in such works.

Finally I just have space to mention for our readers’ special attention the opening of Baoqu Tang Modern Art Gallery at the Intercontinental Hong Kong Hotel since my last Editorial. Seen in the above photograph are Mr Philip Tse and his dazzling wife Judy. At the opening of its first exhibition, owner Philip says: “The Baoqu Tang Modern Art Gallery is transforming Hong Kong’s artistic climate, the much-anticipated inauguration ushers in a new rhythm to creativity in contemporary art.” The gallery of approximately 5000 square feet features the work of both international and Chinese artists. Amongst the important artists is the realistic painter Chen Yifei (1946–2005). It is so sad that he died before fulfilling his total ambition as a filmmaker and lifestyle designer. He is truly a loss to the development of visual art and its understanding in the East and the West.