Reports by publication promotes understanding and appreciation among collectors and fans.

Bridging cultural divides

Audience.”

Through art trends, becomes available for connoisseurs and investors in Asia.

With her interest in Asian art and antiques, contacts that would promote an enduring way.” With her interest in Asian art and antiques, she

When she browsed antique shops always thinking about the war and Vietnam War. She found herself involved in almost every symposia she attended around the world each year means the magazine can down. Publishing only six issues a year means the magazine can...

NHK mentioned that Sotheby’s would promote the fascination and dynamic market.”

Art department, Nicolas Chow, Sotheby’s director, China and Southeast Asia and head of the Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art department at Christie’s.

Art department at Christie’s.

The magazine receives many significant event in the field during the late 20th century means the magazine can maintain an influence on the Asian arts and antiques market.

introduction to see the

A 1970 portrait of Tuyet Nguyet. Photo: Stephen Mark Mann

Mrs Nguyet said: “Right from the start the magazine was published in 1970, followed in the first issue was a detailed article about the auction reviews.

Additionally, Mrs Nguyet said articles must be easy to understand so the content was written for the lay reader.

Mrs Nguyet said: “Right from the start the magazine was published in 1970, followed in the first issue was a detailed article about the auction reviews. The magazine has also influenced collector interest, hosting events and exhibitions at its Hong Kong office and attending major events around the world each year means the magazine can maintain an influence on the Asian arts and antiques market.

The magazine’s Art department, Nicolas Chow, Sotheby’s director, China and Southeast Asia and head of the Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art department at Christie’s.

Sotheby’s is China’s largest auction house to establish a presence in Hong Kong. It held its first auction in January 1973 and had international distribution and, additionally, Mrs Nguyet said Pola Antebi, senior vice...”

The magazine has spanned three decades and its involvement in almost every significant event in the field during the late 20th century means the magazine can maintain an influence on the Asian arts and antiques market.

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A thing of beauty is a publisher’s joy forever

Tuyet Nguyet, founder, publisher and editor of Arts of Asia, is a dynamic force in the Asian art and antiques world as in person. For almost 37 years she has run the magazine, building its reputation and influence through her passion for Asian art and antiques.

“I have seen an increase in the audience that truly appreciates and enjoys the articles in Asia,” she said. Mrs Nguyet’s own journey, like that of the magazine, stretches beyond Asia. She was born in Tam Anh, a province in the Mekong Delta in Vietnam. There were many French influences in her childhood. Her father, who had studied in Paris, and her mother, who was a school teacher, would often entertain French officials and teachers. Mrs. Nguyet studied her secondary education at a school in Ho Chi Minh City.

She received a scholarship to Mundelein College for Women in Chicago, graduating in 1958. The following year, she married a fellow student, who was an established architect, and to Hong Kong, where her husband was employed. Together they had four sons between 1960 and 1969. In addition to her responsibilities as a parent in the early years, she was an active volunteer in the community, serving as a teacher, and would often entertain friends.

Many of the highlights of her career are related to her involvement with auction houses. “Having studied art and antiques in France, I understood the business and became an influential advisor to Christie’s and Bonhams in Hong Kong,” she said.

“I travel about five times a year, mainly to attend and report on international art and antiques exhibitions and auctions,” she said.

In the publishing world, Mrs Nguyet is often asked for advice on the current Asian art scene, especially the trends. “The current Asian art and antique markets are very active and continue to surge in price. This is especially true of the Chinese art market,” Mrs. Nguyet said.

Some of the art and antiques that Mrs. Nguyet chooses to feature in the magazine are related to her personal interests. “I met Wu Guangzhong and his wife many years ago at the Guardian Auctions in Beijing when they set up 12 years ago,” she said. “I travel about five times a year, mainly to attend and report on international art and antiques exhibitions and auctions,” she said.

Mrs Nguyet said that she was grateful for all the support that Arts of Asia had received from her in the industry since she started the magazine. “I want to thank all our worldwide suppliers and contributors who have sustained us for the 37 years of our founding and publishing ‘Arts of Asia’,” she said. “I want to thank all our worldwide suppliers and contributors who have sustained us for the 37 years of our founding and publishing ‘Arts of Asia’,” she said. “I want to thank all our worldwide suppliers and contributors who have sustained us for the 37 years of our founding and publishing ‘Arts of Asia’.”

Some of the objects collected in Asia over the years on display in Tuyet Nguyet’s office.
Priceless collection

Students of art and history can view a range of precious reference material gathered over 40 years.

In celebration of 40 years in art, Markbreiter, editor of Arts of Asia, will open its previously private research and reference library to the public tomorrow.

The Arts of Asia Study Centre and Library contains more than 4,500 Asian art and antique books, back catalogues from reputable auction houses and reference material.

Executive editor Ulrich von Schroeder believed the library should be highly popular with international and local collectors, dealers, academics and students, as well as interested Hong Kong residents, because of its wide range of published books on Asian art references.

"The libraries we have had from several preview users, we believe it will prove to be an invaluable learning and research facility for anyone interested in Asia’s art reference material."

Mr Markbreiter said his mother, Iren Markbreiter, had assembled the collection over the past 40 years.

The collection of books and catalogues has also accumulated as a result of the magazine receiving many auction catalogues and books, back catalogues from Christie’s auction catalogues from Hong Kong, London, New York dating relevant art forms and antiques were represented.

Mr Markbreiter said the extensive collection of books, including art and antique Asian art.

"Our collection has expanded greatly over the years. Whenever my mother and I visit a museum, gallery or art fair around the world, we return with numerous books," Mr Markbreiter said.

Mrs Nguyet and her husband, Stephen Markbreiter, started the library 12 years ago, but at the time they were unable to find an appropriate space to offer the facility to the public.

The recent purchase of a new office with four floors helped them.

Robin Markbreiter said the extensive collection of books is undergoing final cataloguing, but all Asian cultures and their relevant art forms and antiques are represented.

There are also Sotheby’s and Christie’s auction catalogues from London and New York dating back to 1972 and 1967 respectively, and for Hong Kong complete sets starting from the two auction houses’ inaugural auctions in 1974 and 1986.

There are catalogues from China Guardian Auctions for the past 12 years and many catalogues from other prestigious art galleries, including Delouit, S. Marchant & Son, and Popper Fine Art.

One of the unique aspects of the Study Centre and Library is that our extensive range of auction catalogues allows visitors to research the price of various pieces over the years.

For example, with Chinese ceramics, visitors can find out the estimates and prices paid for various works at Sotheby’s auctions in Hong Kong over 20 years ago, at Christie’s in New York over 30 years ago and China Guardian auctions in Beijing up to 12 years ago," Mr Markbreiter said.

"Prices at painting sales in Hong Kong over 30 years ago were generally $100,000. At Christie’s in New York over 30 years ago, an important Chinese painting was sold for $115.48 million, setting a new highest ever paid at auction in Asia for a work of art," Mr Markbreiter said.

The library is accessible by all residents, because of its world-class reputation and potential future contributions, said publisher and editor-in-chief Robin Markbreiter.

"It is the definitive reference source for art lovers interested in the arts of Asia and the world."


Another notable book is The Ch’ing Imperial Painted Enamels, covering the Cultural Revolution by two Chinese magazines and one Hong Kong newspaper.

"The stories and photographs in these rare records are now of great historical value," Mr Markbreiter said.

The library is an accessibility appointment only.

A special edition of the magazine, which is celebrating its 20th year.

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The Arts of Asia Study Centre and Library is the Kowloon Centre in Tsim Sha Tsui that will be open to the public from tomorrow.

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Uncovering a region’s treasures

Arts of Asia is an influential magazine which often includes ground-breaking material that sets buying trends. The team has chosen the following covers that made their mark on the Asian arts and antiques scene, largely because they were ahead of their time. Collectors who took note when the issues were published may be considerably wealthier today as a result, writes Vicki Williams.

MARCH-APRIL 1972

This issue featured one of the many articles written in the 1970s by Tuyet Nguyet, publisher and editor of the magazine. The cover article discussed the life and work of Carlos Villaluz Francisco, whose mural paintings presented in the Manila City Hall on a grand scale made a tremendous impact. The artist died on March 31, 1969, at the age of 57. He succeeded in recording both the past and the everyday life of his homeland.

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1975

The cover article was on bamboo brushpots. At that time bamboo brushpots were an undervalued and not well appreciated art form. The article was ground-breaking in its discussion of the potential value of beginning a collection. At the time not many pieces were being auctioned, and a good piece could be bought for a few thousand Hong Kong dollars. Today these items are considered individual works of art and are highly prized, with the best pieces being auctioned for millions of dollars.

MAY-JUNE 1982

The article about The Chester Beatty Collection of Chinese carved rhinoceros horn cups in this issue was insightful in predicting the importance of these pieces. Prices of rhinoceros horn carvings have increased unbelievably since the early 1980s when they fetched less than $5,000. At the Sotheby's Hong Kong Fine Chinese Ceramics and Works of Art auction held last month, a 14.5cm, 17th century carved rhinoceros horn figure of Wenshu (Manjushri) fetched $48, 8 million. This was considered an extraordinary result and more examples are expected to be sold at auctions.

JULY-AUGUST 1989

“Gold Jewellery in the Nias Culture” was the topic of this cover story. At the time of publication not much was known about this ancient gold jewellery from Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. As a result of the article, the jewellery was better understood and recognised. Dealers told Arts of Asia that thanks to the story, international collectors had become fascinated by the subject.

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1997

Painted Tibetan furniture was the cover story. A relatively new subject at the time, the article provided information on the full range of Tibetan furniture that had only begun to appear on the market in the early 1990s. The impact of the article created great interest in Tibetan furniture collecting, and the issue was a sell-out for any collector in that field. The magazine was so popular it sold out after one year and requests for copies are still received.

MAY-JUNE 2006

In 2003, The Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts, began a dramatic transformation with more than 200,000 square feet of new and renovated gallery space and the restoration and reinstallation of its entire collection. PEM's curators and Arts of Asia worked together to introduce the museum’s most recent achievements to global readers. The museum ordered 2,500 copies for its own use.

Note – back issues of the magazine can be ordered online (www.artsofasianet.com) or in person from the office. Arts of Asia also provides a photocopy service for articles in out-of-print print.

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CONGRATULATIONS to
Arts of Asia Publications on their new offices and the opening of the Arts of Asia Study Centre and Library.

Marsha Vargas Handley

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CONGRATULATIONS to
Arts of Asia on your many achievements & successes over the last 37 Years.

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26 May-1 June, 2006
at the Convention Hall
Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre
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ARTS OF ASIA MAGAZINE | SPONSORED FEATURE A17

SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST WEDNESDAY, MAY 24, 2006

Getting your collection started

Tuyet Nguyet provides the following tips for enthusiasts ready to make investments in this profitable business

ASIAN ART AND antiques have proved to be secure investments, with many items increasing in value by 30 per cent or more over the past 10 years and some rocketing to record prices. If you want to start a collection for investment or pleasure, it is never too late, and despite million dollar prices at recent auctions it can take as little as $10,000 to start. Tuyet Nguyet provided the following tips for new collectors.

DECIDE WHAT TO COLLECT
Look around in antique stores, museums and through specialist magazines and choose some category of art or antiques that evoke a response and that would be a pleasure to have around, whether at home or the office.

INFORMATION IS KEY
As important as purchasing power, perhaps more so at the initial stages, is knowledge. To make an informed buying decision takes sound understanding. One place to begin researching is Arts of Asia as the articles provide the depth of information needed and many photos. Ensure you know a lot about your chosen collection before you buy.

GET HELP
When making a purchase it is vital to feel confident. If not, then seek the advice of a knowledgeable friend or reputable dealer. Better to pay a little more to ensure a good buy.

DO NOT BE INTIMIDATED
By others and do not make rushed purchases which you might later regret. Don't buy because things seem cheap and be careful if pieces are offered both above and below market levels.

TOUCH IS IMPORTANT
Getting a feel for the item or being able to view it close up is also part of the selection process, it is a way to check those small details that separate a genuine article from a fake.

IT MUST BE PERFECT
If you can help it never buy shipped, cracked or broken items, no matter the age or price you are offered, as they are worth far less. If your price is higher don't get caught in the trap of the rare specialist. It is not a matter of having a specialized eye to detect problems, but to recognize that the item is not perfect and that these imperfections will be the first thing that stands out when you buy.

CLEANING AND RESTORATION
Do not attempt to do cleaning and restoration yourself unless you have the background and know what you are doing. Specialist dealers and auction houses calibrate collectors, should cleaning or restoration be needed.

COLLECTING IDEAS
The following are items that can be purchased by the new collector for a reasonable investment: antique gold and silver jewellery, 18th and 19th century blanc de Chine ware, scroll weights and small desk ornaments of animal, vegetable or mythological form.

Also, items of historical interest, for example those related to notable political figures such as Yuan Shikai (1859-1916) or Sun Yat-Sen (1866-1925) or from the Republic of China period (1912-1949) and the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). This covers a wide range of collectibles including art, coins, stamps and photographs, to name a few. These are affordable except at the highest levels.

One of the hottest trends for those with more to spend is avant-garde modern Chinese ceramics and paintings. Examples include ceramics by Liu Liguo or paintings by Xue Song.