

# ASIAN ART

THE NEWSPAPER FOR COLLECTORS, DEALERS, MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES • MAY 2025 • £5.00/US\$10/€10

## WILDFIRES IN SOUTH KOREA DESTROY GOUNSA TEMPLE

In mid-March, wildfires swept through South Korea with the first significant fires breaking out in Sancheong and Uiseong Counties. The mountainous landscape combined with strong winds encouraged the fires and significantly hampered fire-fighting attempts. On 25 March, the ancient Gounsa temple complex, about 90 miles southeast of Seoul, was severely damaged by fire, with only nine out of the complex's 30 buildings not being damaged by fire. Losses included Gaunru, a pavilion built in 1668 and rebuilt in 1904. Yousujeon had examples of *dancheong* (a traditional Korean style of decorative painting applied to wooden buildings and artefacts) and was classified as a National Treasure.

Gounsa, located at the foot of Duengun Mountain, was originally built during the Silla kingdom (57-935) in the late 7th century and was one of the largest temples in Uiseong for centuries, established as Silla began to promote Buddhism across the unified Korean peninsula. However, no buildings from this period exist.

The temple was developed by the prominent Confucian official, philosopher and poet Choi Chi-won (b. 857-?), who turned towards Buddhism in his later years. He was known as 'The Lonely Cloud Scholar' and added the Gaunru and Uhwaru buildings to the complex with Master Yeoji and Yeosa. The large Buddha in the current Yaksa Hall (Treasure No. 246) and the three-story stone pagoda in front of the Nahan Hall (Gyeongbuk Cultural Heritage Material No. 28) were built by the monk Doseon Guksa (827-898).

The temple is linked to the miracles of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva (Jizo Bosatsu in Japan), one of the four great bodhisattvas in Mahayana Buddhism alongside Avalokiteshvara, Manjushri, and Samantabhadra. The local belief, associated with East Asian Buddhism, relates that when a person dies and enters the afterlife, King Yeomra will ask if they have been to Gounsa temple. The bodhisattva dedicates his existence to rescuing beings trapped in the suffering realms of the afterlife, rather than achieving enlightenment



Yousujeon Hall of Gounsa Temple, detail, Uiseong County, classified as a National Treasure, was destroyed during the wildfires that ravaged the area in March 2025

himself until all beings are free.

The massive bronze bell at Gounsa temple survived the fire but has a large crack from top to bottom; the wooden bell tower itself perished. A 9th-century seated stone Sakyamuni Buddha from the Unified Silla period

also survived, as it was removed from the site before the wildfire engulfed the complex.

During the Japanese colonial period, Gounsa was one of the 31 main temples of Joseon Buddhism and is currently the headquarters of the 16th

diocese of the Jogye Order, overseeing over 60 temples scattered throughout Uiseong, Andong, Yeongju, Bonghwa, and Yeongyang.

The Korea Heritage Service confirmed there was damage to approximately 30 other heritage sites. In response to the wildfires, preparations were made for the removal of 15 historic objects, including 10 National Treasures from the area, including wooden printing blocks and Buddhist paintings from major temples, such as Bongjeong Temple in Andong and Buseok Temple in Yeongju, in North Gyeongsang Province. These temples are among the seven Buddhist monasteries designated as UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Sites under the 'Sansa, Buddhist Mountain Monasteries' classification.

By 30 March, the Korean government announced the fires were under control and declared the incident the deadliest wildfire outbreak since records began in 1987, with 30 people sadly losing their lives and many others suffering injuries.

ROSEBERYS  
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### Chinese, Japanese & South East Asian Art

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*Blyth's Tragopan with artist's signature, from An Imperial Manual of Birds, Jiang Tingxi, a set of seven album leaves, ink and colour on silk*  
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### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### ESEA ENCOUNTERS, IN LONDON

The Southbank Centre has announced the lineup, in July, for a brand new cultural series showcasing East and Southeast Asia and the diaspora - ESEA Encounters. Taking place from Thursday 17 - Sunday 20 July, ESEA Encounters will showcase a selection of some of the most exciting contemporary art and culture of East and Southeast Asia in an incredible lineup of performances, music, poetry, literature, and art alongside a pop-up market. ESEA Encounters brings together leading artists from across the region and diaspora artists from the UK, continuing the Southbank Centre's ongoing mission to reflect and support the breadth of creative communities represented in London and across the country.

Across the weekend of 19 to 20 July, a pop-up Yokimono Japanese Summer Market will take place in the Royal Festival Hall foyers. Traditional and contemporary Japanese food, culture, arts and crafts will be displayed across the weekend, from vintage kimono, clothing, ceramics, illustrations, and books, as well as a variety of delicious Japanese food.

#### SOVEREIGN ART PRIZE, HONG KONG

The nonprofit Sovereign Art Foundation has announced Indian multidisciplinary artist Arpita Akhanda (b. 1992) as the winner of its 2025 Sovereign Asian Art Prize. Established in 2003, the annual \$30,000 award celebrates artists from the Asia Pacific region while raising funds to support arts programmes for disadvantaged children. This year's jury, which included British curator David Elliott, the Bangkok Art Biennale's artistic director Apinan Poshyananda, and Singapore Art Museum's senior curator Haeju Kim, selected Akhanda out of 36 nominees for her 'poetic, multidisciplinary approach' that involves 'layering, destruction, and time'. The

Continued on page 2

### Inside

- 2 Profile: the artist Udomsak Krisanamis
- 7 Monstrous Beauty, a new take on chinoiserie, in New York
- 8 Hiroshige: Artist of the Open Road, in London
- 10 Ancestral Realms of the Naxi from southwest China
- 12 The royal bronzes of Angkor, in Paris
- 14 Korean art in American Collections and the new Korean gallery at the Peabody Essex Museum
- 16 Printemps Asiatique, June gallery shows, in Paris
- 18 French auction previews
- 19 French exhibitions: A Passion for China at the Louvre; Bamboo patterns at MAD; and the artist Sanyu in Nice
- 20 Also in Paris: artists Taro Okamoto and Paek Youngsu; The Ecology of Things, Japanese art; and Saved Treasures from Gaza
- 21 Exhibitions
- 22 Auctions and gallery shows
- 23 Islamic Arts Diary

### Next issue

June 2025

Our Summer Issue



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# PRINTEMPS ASIATIQUE

This year, Printemps Asiatique runs from 5 to 14 June, an event where dealers and auction houses will not only be showing in their galleries around Paris, but also at the landmark Pagoda building in the 8th arrondissement.

As well as gallery shows, a full programme of gallery and museum tours, lectures, and conferences has been organised to accompany this event that is now in its 8th edition.

For the full programme visit [printemps-asiatique-paris.com](http://printemps-asiatique-paris.com)

## GALLERY SHOWS AT THE PAGODA

From 5 to 12 June, Paris

The Pagoda was originally constructed as a hotel particular in the French Louis-Philippe style, the building was bought in 1925 by Ching Tsai Loo (1880-1957), better known as CT Loo, a celebrated collector and dealer of Chinese and Asian art and antiques. With the help of the architect Fernand Bloch, and under the careful supervision and direction of Mr Loo, the building was transformed into the Pagoda, which served as the home for the family and the gallery. Apart from its striking exterior, the original Shansi lacquer panels from the 18th century have been restored. Visiting the Pagoda is by invitation and reservation only, contact Printemps Asiatique for more information. ♦ The Pagoda, 48 rue de Courcelles, 75008, Paris, [printemps-asiatique-paris.com](http://printemps-asiatique-paris.com), [pagodaparis.com](http://pagodaparis.com)

### GALLERIES EXHIBITING AT THE PAGODA

Gregg Baker Asian Art, Brussels  
Galerie Jacques Barrière, Paris  
Jean-François Cazeau Gallery, Paris  
Clare Chu Asian Art, Los Angeles  
Carlo Cristi, Brussels  
Galerie Nicholas Fournery, Paris  
Galerie Hicco, Paris  
Louis & Sack Gallery, Paris  
Magna Gallery, Paris  
Frédérique Mattel, Paris, Ollemans Oriental Art, London  
Reflets des Arts, Paris  
Alexis Renard Gallery, Paris  
Carlton Rochell Asian Art, New York  
Ranjit Singh Antique Arms and Armour, Royal Leamington Spa  
Mark Staats, London  
Galerie Taménaga, Paris  
Tenzing Asian Art, San Francisco and Hong Kong



Portrait of Louis XIV, pigments and gold on paper, India, Jaipur, late 18th century, height 29.7 x 20.5 cm, Alexis Renard. Photo: © François Mallet



Shrine, China, Qianlong period (1736-95), Newari artist, gold, copper, silver, lapis lazuli, turquoise, coral, and cloth, height of shrine, height of stole 7 cm, provenance Hong Kong art market, 1980s-90s, then private French collection, Tenzing Asian Art



Wood figure of Dainichi Nyorai, Japan, 10th/11th century, Heian period, 67.5 x 49.5 cm x 34 cm, Gregg Baker Asian Art



Diamond and ruby necklace with gold flowers set in the kundan style with diamonds and rubies with a central crescent, all linked with five lines of pearls. Fine detailed enamel from Benares on the reverse, Benares, India, 19th century, length: 26 cm, provenance: private Belgian collection, Ollemans Oriental Art



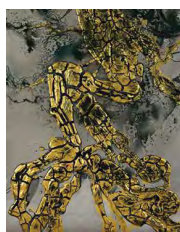
Agate snuff bottle of honey brown tone with dark brown incisions, polished to depict a monkey under a leafy tree, China, 1750-1860, height 5.6 cm, provenance: a private Los Angeles collection, Clare Chu Asian Art. Photo: © Kendall Nishimine



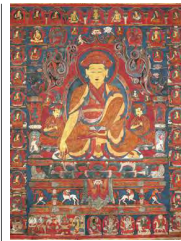
Good Luck in Ground Cherry 24-68 (2025) by Aerie Lee, ink and pigment on Korean paper, 19 x 19 cm, Magna Gallery Paris



Rajasthani vermeil and red glass pendant, circa 1900, rock crystal, black glass paste, Rajasthani vermeil beads, vermeil clasp, Frédérique Mattel



Neagarmatsu (2024) by Takehiko Sugawara (b. 1962), mixed media on washi paper mounted on panel, 146 x 112 cm, Galerie Taménaga



Thangka depicting Barawa Gyaltsen Pelzang, an eminent Druk pa Kagyu monk, depicted as a Buddha, holding a book, emblem of his written teachings and spiritual chants, tempera and gold on cotton, Western Tibet, early 15th century, 81 x 99 cm, Carlo Cristi



Untitled (1970) by T'ang Haywen, ink on Kyro board, diptych, 70 x 100 cm, signed on the lower right, provenance: artist's studio and private collection, France, documented in the T'ang Haywen Archives, Galerie Jean-François Cazeau



The Navagraha, phyllite, North India, 11th-12th century, Pala period, 26 x 65 cm, Galerie Hicco



Gilt-copper and textile elephant head ornament (nettipattam), South India, 19th century, Ranjeet Singh

## EVENTS IN JUNE

### INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

In partnership with Printemps Asiatique, the Musée Guimet and its president Yannick Lintz, an international symposium on Asian Bronzes has been organised for Saturday 7 June to coincide with the exhibition Royal Bronzes of Angkor, Divine Art (see article on this exhibition on pages 12 and 13 of this issue).

### STUDY DAYS

On 6 and 7 June, Musée Cernuschi is hosting study days on the art and culture of tea in East Asia. There are also a series of events throughout the week on a variety of Asian art topics, bringing together curators, art historians, and experts, including guided tours, study days, and master classes. And, for the first time, the Korean Film Festival joins Printemps Asiatique for the screening of *Little Forest* (2018), based on a manga series of the same name by the Japanese artist Daisuke Igarashi.

The cultural programme runs from 5 to 14 June and full events can be found on Printemps Asiatique's website, [printemps-asiatique-paris.com](http://printemps-asiatique-paris.com)

## GALLERY SHOWS AROUND PARIS

Here is a selection of dealers holding shows in their galleries around Paris or dealers who have rented galleries for Printemps Asiatique from 5 to 14 June. Check the event's website for up-to-date information on the gallery shows nearer the time.

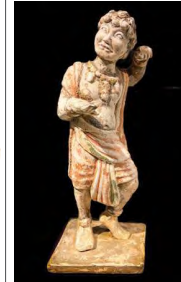
A2Z Art Gallery  
Galerie Jean-Christophe Charbonnier  
Espace 4 Gallery  
Espace Culturel ICILE  
Yann Ferandin  
Galerie Kiyama  
Bertrand de Lavergne  
Valérie Levesque  
Galerie Looloolook  
Galerie Mingel  
Cristina Ortega & Michel Dermigny  
Frédéric Rond  
W Shanshan  
Galerie Tiago  
Atelier YE Xingqian



Pair of birds of prey, China, Qianlong period (1736-95), height 16.8 cm, Bernard de la Lavergne. This type of statuette, particularly depicting birds, sought to rival Meissen production at this time.



A glass snuff bottle of flattened rectangular form painted inside with Zhong Kui riding on a sedan chair supported on the shoulders by two devils in a procession on one side; the reverse with four devils, China, signed Ye Zhongshan and dated 1899, height 5.7 cm, Galerie Espace 4. Photo: Pascal Lachaume



Kunlun dancing boy with curly hair and a gold necklace, Tang dynasty (618-907), North of China, earthenware, height 26.8 cm, W Shanshan



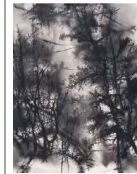
Suzuribako with 20 compartments for playing poetry games, Japan, first half of the 18th century, Cristina Ortega and Michel Dermigny



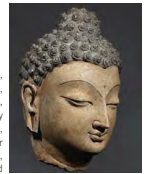
Object (2025) by Ken Noguchi (1982-), urushi lacquer, linen, cotton rope, diam. 48 cm, Galerie Mingel



A Tree Frog in a Hishaku by Miyamoto Risaburo (1904-1998), circa 1960, Galerie Kiyama. A hishaku is a traditional Japanese utensil, consisting of a long wooden handle with a small ladle or container at the end. It is often used in rituals such as worship or for scooping water.



Sooty Landscape, Ink on canvas, 92 x 73 cm, Atelier YE Xingqian



Buddha head, Gandhara region, stucco, circa 4th century (Gupta influence), height 25 cm, former Belgian collection, Frédéric Rond



Ryoshibako or calligrapher's paper box in gold and green lacquer on a black lacquer background, signature of Shibata Zeshin (1807-1891), Galerie Tiago. Photo: © Inu Studio



Gilt bronze and cloisonné enamel panel depicting the bodhisattva Maitreya, so-called Maitreya, in a mountainous landscape, wood frame with floral scrolls, China, Qing dynasty, Qianlong period, 18th century, 36 x 33 cm, Galerie Valérie Levesque





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8th edition

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*Visit by invitation and reservation only*

