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ART & DESIGN

Christie's Puts Chinese Pedestals on the Auction Block

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Antiques

By **EVE M. KAHN**

An unnamed consignor to a Christie's sale in New York on Sept. 17 had stocked his home with empty pedestals.

He had collected more than 100 display stands made of wood, jade, lacquer and enameled metal in China, mostly in the 18th and 19th centuries. They are shaped like dainty tables with cabriole legs, as well as like rocks, crashing waves, roots, tree trunks and toads blowing bubbles. A few have ghosts of indentations from vessels, carvings and deity statues that were originally perched on top. Estimates range from \$800 to \$1,200 for a pair of bamboo stands, small enough to serve as coffee tables for Barbie dolls, to \$20,000 to \$30,000 for three platforms carved with lotus leaves, flowers, stems and seedpods.

Laurence Paul, the owner of *Fleurdelys Antiquités* in London, which sold stands to the Christie's consignor, said that Chinese collectors fleeing political persecution sometimes saved precious objects but left behind the

original pedestals. Since then, she said, some connoisseurs “have been trying to reunite their pieces with the right stands.”

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