Contemporary Asian Art on artnet Auctions:

Yayoi Kusama, Yoshimoto Nara, and More

New York, NY, July 14, 2017—artnet Auctions is pleased to announce their latest sale, Contemporary Asian Art. This online-only auction is now open for bidding and will run through July 27 offering paintings, prints, sculpture, and more by sought-after artists including Mr., Zheng Lianjie, Rei Sato, and Kim Jongsook, among others.

One of the top lots included in this sale is Yayoi Kusama’s Pumpkin (1985), estimated at $20,000–30,000. Her signature pumpkin motif is emblematic of her career since she was a student in Kyoto. She has often said that through her representation of this symbol, she feels that she is presenting a surrogate of herself. This unique work—which features the iconic shape decorated with Kusama’s quintessential black and yellow dots—perfectly captures the distinctive style that has become synonymous, not only with her work, but also with the artist herself.

The auction also includes Kusama’s Night, a 1989 screenprint estimated at $9,000–12,000. This work recreates a hallucination that the artist had as a child, thus combining her eccentric persona with playful patterns, such as her famous dot and net motifs.

Last April, two Kusama works sold at record-breaking prices on artnet Auctions’ Asian Art sale. A print of a green pumpkin made in 2000, sold for $38,400, more than triple the estimate, while a set of five miniature, spotted pumpkins sold for $33,600, more than double the estimate.

The same spring sale also broke an auction record for two Yoshitomo Nara prints: Backwards Forwards (2012), which sold for more than double the estimate at $24,000, and Tell Me Why (2015), which sold for $22,800.

Contemporary Asian Art also features two Nara works: the 1995 unique drawing Untitled 95-35, estimated at $25,000–35,000, and the 2012 print Don’t Cry,
estimated at $12,000–15,000. Both works exemplify the Japanese artist's characteristic dichotomy between childlike whimsy and somber reflection.

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