

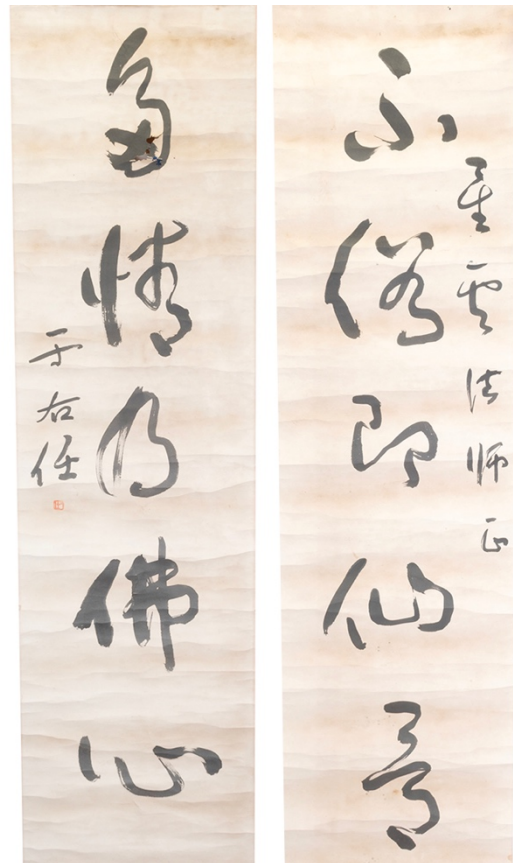
## Attributed to Yu Youren: Pair of Calligraphy Couplet.

The revolutionary poet and founder of multiple universities, Yu Youren was one of China's preeminent Republican-era poets, statesmen, and academics, whose works continue to hold profound relevance today.

Michaan's Auctions is proud to offer **Attributed to Yu Youren: Pair of Calligraphy Couplet** (\$2/3,000) for sale in our May Gallery Auction, held on Friday, May 17th.

The lot consists of a pair of scrolls that contain a single couplet, written in black ink and stylized calligraphy. As translated by Mijung Kim, the Asian Art Department Manager at Michaan's Auctions, the first scroll reads “不俗即仙骨” which translates to “Unperturbed is the mark of a divine being, while the

second reads “多情乃佛心” translated as “Compassion is the heart of a Buddha. The scrolls show some signs of wear, including dark spots and wrinkles from rolling, but overall, the artwork is in excellent condition. The artwork is signed with the artist's name via a red



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seal on the left-hand side of the last scroll.

This piece is representative of the work of one of China's finest calligraphers. The poem is written in the standardized cursive script developed by Yu Youren in the 1930's. Rooted in traditional characters found on monumental steles, Yu Youren's characters feature a rawer style which emphasizes the structural strength of its forms. He further stabilizes these forms by lowering the center of gravity, which prevents the sweeping gestures of his principal horizontal, vertical, and diagonal strokes from losing their structural integrity. These characteristics are further emphasized by the nature of the poetry, which uses accessible language, rhyme schemes, and tonal regulations in contemporary use. At his best, as in this work, the poetry features intense emotional

content that never dips into sentimentality.

Yu Youren was born in 1879 in the central province of Shaanxi during the late Qing dynasty. After his mother's early death, he lived with his aunt, working as a goat herder before studying poetry at a private school. He took first place in the national education exams and continued his studies at several universities around the country. After passing the notoriously difficult civil service exams, he was denounced as a revolutionary due to the satirical nature of his poetry. Placed on a wanted list by the imperial government, he was forced to flee to Shanghai, then controlled by the United Kingdom. While in the city he helped to found Fudan University, then fled to Japan for a year where he joined the underground resistance movement known as the Tongmenghui, before returning to China and

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establishing multiple nationalist newspapers in Shanghai. After the fall of the Qing dynasty, he was briefly nominated as the Deputy Minister of Transportation but was soon forced to resign, whereupon he continued to engage in revolutionary political activities. In 1922, he founded Shanghai University and began collecting examples of Chinese characters, a project that culminated in a book that standardized cursive Chinese script. He followed the Chinese Nationalist government to Taiwan in 1949, where he continued to write poetry, creating works of calligraphy which are commonly regarded as amongst modern China's best, until his death in 1964.

**Attributed to Yu Youren:**

**Pair of Calligraphy Couplet**

(\$2/3,000) will be offered in Michaan's Auctions May Gallery Auction on Friday, May 17th features excellent furniture,

lighting, and decorative pieces from the Furniture & Decorations Department, in addition to important works from notable artists in the Asian Art Department, and a number of fine pieces from the Jewelry departments. The auction is led by the Furniture & Decorations Department, which will be offering a salon set, chandeliers, and tables in prominent French and Italian styles, while the Asian Art Department offers works of calligraphy and painting by important Chinese artists. Also included in the sale are platinum, diamond, and gold items, including works by Eric De Kolb, presented by the Jewelry Department.

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