

**Four exquisite agarwood pieces to be donated by renowned collector Professor Paul Kan to a charity auction for the cause of charity and cultural promotion**

In recent years, agarwood has become a new craze within the collectors' community, with prices skyrocketing to over HK\$20,000 per gram for top-quality agarwood. Although the agarwood boom has only thrived in the past few decades, this precious incense has been used by our ancestors for thousands of years in religion, culture, art as well as medicine. In order to promote this historical cultural treasure, renowned agarwood collector Professor Paul Kan will donate four of his treasured pieces to a charity auction, with all proceeds going to the preservation of heritage and culture, which includes the renovation and maintenance of The Helena May, one of Hong Kong's most loved heritage buildings and clubs situated in the heart of Central. The auction would be an opportunity to share Professor Kan's passion in agarwood with his fellow enthusiasts and to contribute to cultural preservation and charity at the same time.

As an entrepreneur, Professor Paul Kan is the Founder and Chair of three listed information technology companies in Hong Kong. As a collector, he is one of the most experienced and knowledgeable experts who owns the largest collection of agarwood in Hong Kong. Prof. Kan has even set up his own museum, the Imperial Museum, which welcomes art lovers and enthusiasts to savour the true essence of the heaven's greatest gifts to mankind. Years of experience in collecting led Professor Kan to believe that the items truly worthy of collecting are those that would diminish in quantity over time, and agarwood is his answer. There is also an element of emotion attached to Professor Kan's agarwood collection. It is believed that the name of Hong Kong 香港 ("Incense Harbour" in Chinese) is derived from the historical origins when the planting of agarwood and trading of incense were the major business activities in this vibrant city. Agarwood is an aromatic incense which is formed by the combination of wood fibres and the resin secreted by specific trees to repair their damages. The scarcity of agarwood stems from its delicate and extended formation, often taking hundreds or thousands of years to form, has made it one of the most precious and coveted incenses in the world, earning its recognition as the "King of Incenses".

The first record of mankind using agarwood was from ancient Egypt. Its uses in ancient China for aromatic, artistic, appreciative and medicinal purposes were well-documented. In the Song Dynasty, the value of a tael of fine agarwood could already be compared to a tael of gold. As more and more people learn about agarwood, the supply of natural agarwood cannot keep up with the rapidly expanding demand, thus driving up the prices. According to experts, the high price of agarwood is not expected to drop in the near future.

A devoted philanthropist, Professor Paul Kan has been supporting local charities as well as promoting our cultural essence to the next generation with various public exhibitions of his collections. The agarwood charity auction will be held in September this year and the proceeds will be used to support causes that are related to heritage protection, including the renovation of the 100-year old clubhouse of The Helena May, a declared monument.

With this auction, Professor Kan wishes he could help the cause of charity and promote culture at the same time. According to Professor Kan, “My purpose of collecting is to safeguard, inherit and share our history, heritage and culture with the next generation. The four agarwood pieces I am donating this time are all exquisite collectors’ items, each with their unique forms and nuances. I sincerely wish that this auction would benefit our society and culture, and further the spirit of ‘peace and harmony’ that I have always been advocating.”

### **Agarwood pieces donated by Professor Paul Kan to be auctioned**

<p><b>The Auspicious Dragon</b></p> <p>This agarwood piece resembles a dragon head with horns standing out vividly, staring eyes and wide-opened mouth. It symbolises blessings from heaven, fulfilment of wishes and the arrival of good fortune.</p> <p>H18 x W41 cm, approx. 610g</p>	
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### **Over the Dragon Portal**

Much like a sleek fish racing through turbulence to the sky, this fine piece of agarwood symbolises good fortune, promotion, great wealth, honour and fame.

H62.5 x W11.5 cm, approx. 390g



### **The Giant's Causeway**

This densely overlapping, tapered, cylindrical structure resembles the Giant's Causeway located northwest of Belfast in Northern Ireland. The causeway was formed by more than 40,000 interlocking hexagonal basalt columns from volcanic eruption. It makes a wonderful spectacle as it stretches over eight kilometres of coastline and was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1986. "Giant's Causeway" is also the name of a world famous horse which has been a Champion Grade 1 winner in several of Europe's legendary races.

H33.5 x W29.5 cm, approx. 250g



### **Mountain of Treasure**

Shaped like a lofty mountain range, this piece of agarwood demonstrates the magnificent beauty of nature. One can imagine that deep inside the mountain range lie vast treasures of gold, symbolising prosperity, abundance, longevity and good health.

H25 x W12 x D11 cm, approx. 388g



**Professor Paul Kan CBE, Comm OSSI, Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur, SBS, JP**

Professor Paul Kan is the Founder and Chair of three information technology companies (Champion Technology Holdings Limited, Kantone Holdings Limited, and DIGITALHONGKONG.COM) which are listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange. Professor Kan is also Chair of A Better Tomorrow; Chinese World Cultural Heritage Foundation; and World Cultural Relics Protection Foundation. He is a fervent supporter of the information technology industry and is currently Chairman of Hong Kong IT Alliance and Honorary Chairman of the Hong Kong Information Technology Industry Council. As an aficionado and connoisseur of art and culture, Professor Kan is the Patron of International Foundation for Art Research; Member of Arts and Treasures Evaluation Committee, Ministry of Culture, China; and Executive Committee Member of Hong Kong Youth Arts Foundation. Professor Kan's contribution to the development of technology, arts and culture has received worldwide recognition. He was appointed a Justice of the Peace by the Government of the HKSAR in 2006; awarded Commander of the most Excellent Order of the British Empire (CBE) by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 2006; Commendatore dell'Ordine della Stella della Solidarieta Italiana (Comm OSSI) by the Italian Prime Minister Hon. Romano Prodi in 2006; Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur by the French Government in 2007; and Silver Bauhinia Star (SBS) by the Government of the HKSAR in 2009. In 2011, he was appointed Honorary Consul of the Republic of Hungary in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region and the Macau Special Administrative Region. In 2013, Professor Kan was awarded the Grand Cross of Merit for Outstanding Consular Work by the Federation of European Associations of Honorary Consuls (FUECH) and was appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Hungary by the Government of Hungary.