

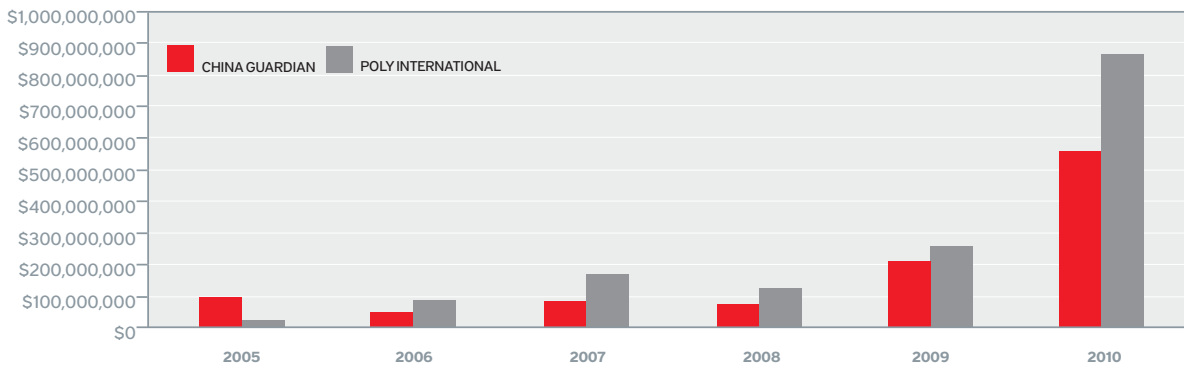
A Long Life, A Peaceful World, 1946, by Qi Baishi, one of the most sought-after artists in China, fetched \$65 million, the highest-ever price for a Chinese painting, during Guardian's spring quarterly sale.

MAINLAND TAKEOVER

The Chinese population has become wealthier over the past decade, with the number of high-net-worth individuals—those with liquid assets of \$1 million or more—increasing from 211,000 in 2002 to 535,000 in 2010. At the same time, interest in Chinese art and antiques has grown, with sales on the mainland increasing at a faster pace than those in the market's historical center, Hong Kong. Since 2005 two Beijing-based auction houses in particular, Poly International Auction and China Guardian Auctions, have published jaw-dropping results. In 2010 the two claim to have generated a combined total of around \$1.44 billion, compared with about \$1.29 billion earned by Christie's and Sotheby's on their Hong Kong auctions of Chinese art and antiques. According to Poly's and Guardian's self-reported figures, painting, mostly in traditional styles, accounts for the lion's share of the mainland sales, with calligraphy and porcelain each responsible for a sizable chunk. **BY ROMAN KRAEUSL**

CHINA AUCTION HOUSE SALES TOTALS IN USD, 2005–2010

The state-backed Poly International, which launched in July 2005 and is planning a public offering next spring, and China Guardian, the country's oldest auctioneer, in business since 1993, are the largest mainland houses. According to their reported results, their combined sales of Chinese art and antiques ballooned more than 10-fold in five years, from \$128 million in 2005 to \$1.44 billion in 2010. The massive jump from 2009 to 2010 can be attributed in part to an increase in the amount of property offered. The houses also stepped up the number of sales they hold from around 30 in 2005 to more than 250 in 2010.



TOP 10 ARTISTS IN 2010

The following painters and calligraphers are China Guardian's and Poly International's top sellers. They do not necessarily command the highest sums; their rank has much to do with the volume of their works offered at auction. However, the 20th-century master Qi Baishi leads the field in both price and quantity. In May, China Guardian sold Qi's painting *A Long Life, A Peaceful World*, 1946, for \$65 million, the most paid at auction for a Chinese painting of any era.

Painting

RANK	ARTIST	NUMBER OF SALES
1	QI BAISHI	1,151
2	ZHANG DAQIAN	877
3	HUANG ZHOU	627
4	PU RU	487
5	HUANG BINHONG	472
6	WU CHANGSHUO	418
7	WANG XUETAO	373
8	LU YANSHAO	365
9	XU BEIHONG	321
10	CHENG SHIFA	302

Calligraphy

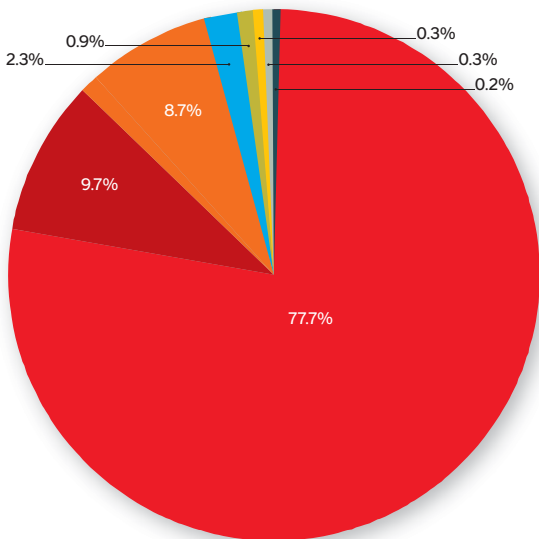
RANK	ARTIST	NUMBER OF SALES
1	YU YOUREN	779
2	QI GONG	250
3	WU CHANGSHUO	140
4	LIN SANZHI	127
5	KANG YOUWEI	116
6	DONG QICHANG	115
7	HE SHAOJI	106
8	PU RU	88
9	ZHANG DAQIAN	82
10	LIU YONG	79

BREAKDOWN OF SALES BY CATEGORY AND PRICE, 2010

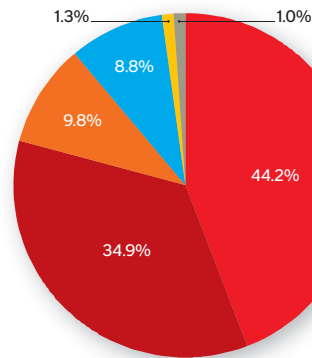
In contrast to Western markets for Chinese art, where porcelain reigns, in Beijing classical, modern, and contemporary paintings and calligraphy make up the bulk of sales in terms of volume and price. Ming and Qing Dynasty wares constitute the majority of the ceramics and porcelain sold.

AUCTION CATEGORIES

Paintings: \$1,116,522,494	Rare Books: \$12,565,076
Calligraphy: \$138,945,187	Sculpture: \$3,642,972
Porcelain & Ceramics: \$126,042,811	Stone: \$3,642,106
Furniture: \$32,996,107	Jade: \$2,848,197



Painting



AVERAGE PRICE PER LOT

<\$10,000
\$10,000–50,000
\$50,000–100,000
\$100,000–500,000
\$500,000–1,000,000
>\$1,000,000

Price in USD

Calligraphy

