Asia Pacific Strategy Commentary 4Q22

Southeastern Asset Management

For Institutional Investors Only

Portfolio Returns at 12/31/22 – Net of Fees (%)

	4Q22	1 Year	3 Year	5 Year	Since Inception 10/31/2014
APAC Strategy (USD)	18.54	-9.33	-3.76	-3.60	2.29
MSCI AC Asia Pacific Index	12.46	-17.22	-0.79	0.16	3.56
Relative Returns	+6.08	+7.89	-2.97	-3.76	-1.27

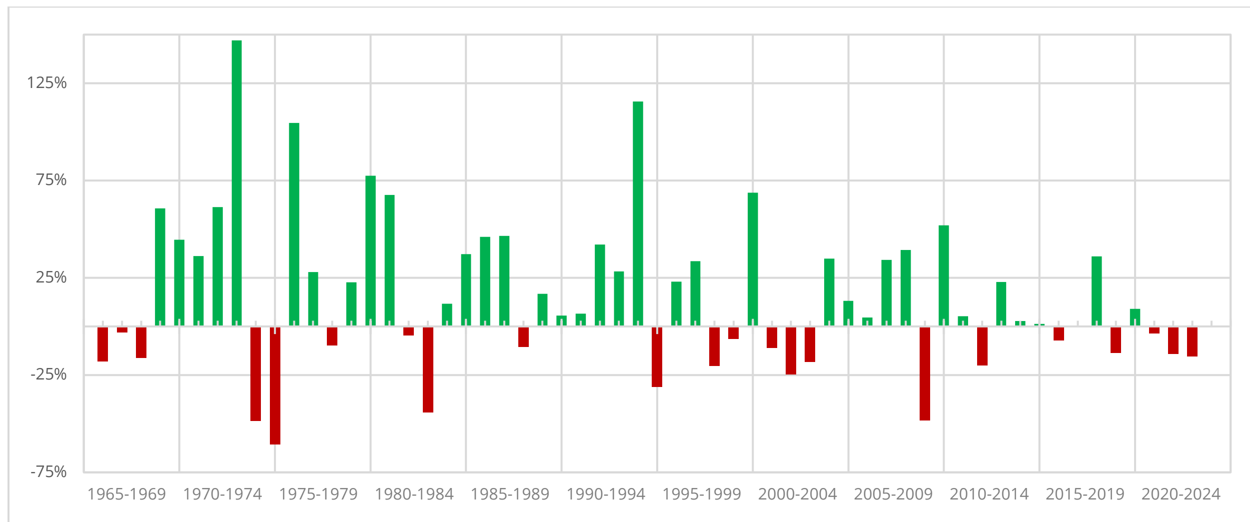
Selected Indices*	4Q22	1 Year	3 Year	5 Year
Hang Seng Index (HKD)	15.03	-12.70	-8.53	-5.06
TOPIX Index (JPY)	3.21	-2.49	5.70	3.23
TOPIX Index (USD)	14.01	-14.28	-0.62	0.14
MSCI Emerging Market (USD)	9.70	-20.09	-2.69	-1.40

*Source: Bloomberg; Periods longer than one year are annualized

Please see the GIPS Report included at the end of this document

The Strategy returned 18.5% in the fourth quarter, outperforming the MSCI AC Asia Pacific Index (MXAP) by over 6%, and ended the year down 9.3%, significantly outperforming the index by almost 8% in a particularly challenging year for most asset classes, including bonds. In 2022, the Bloomberg US Aggregate Index of investment grade credit (LBUSTRUU Index) lost 13%, the worst annual performance since its inception in 1976. This is also the first time we have seen negative returns in US investment-grade debt for two consecutive years. In past market selloffs, investors could seek shelter in the bond market — not this time — almost every asset class was down except for the energy sector and related commodities.

Hang Seng Index Annual Price Changes (Bloomberg)

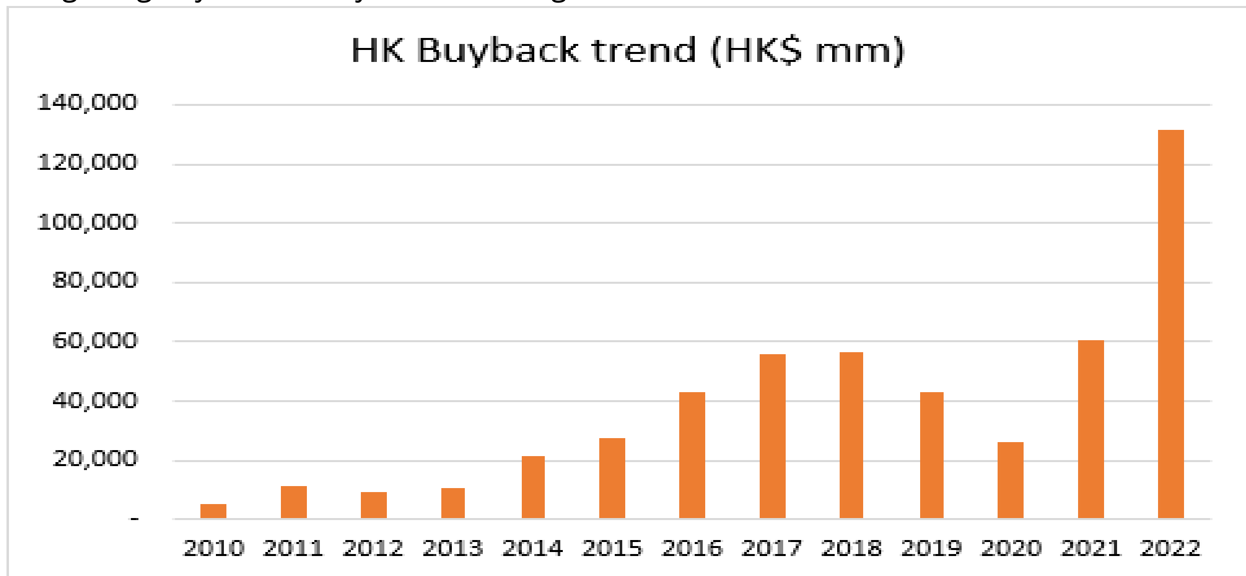


Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index (HSI) recorded a rare third consecutive down year in 2022. The last time this occurred was in 2000 and 1965. The HSI has never seen four consecutive years of negative returns. With China re-opening from Covid lockdowns and the policy environment turning supportive for the battered property and tech sectors, we feel optimistic that the worst is behind us, supported by low valuation multiples and solid future earnings growth. Chinese household balance sheets are much stronger relative to pre-Covid levels. We expect sentiment and consumption to recover as the economy re-opens without the uncertainty of recurring lockdowns. Furthermore, the threat of delisting Chinese ADRs was taken off the table in December when the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (PCAOB) declared they could secure "complete access to inspect, investigate Chinese firms for the first time in history."

US-Sino relations seem to have stabilized after the Biden-Xi meeting in Indonesia in November, where both sides expressed a willingness to engage over issues constructively. The appointment of Qin Gang, the Chinese ambassador to the US, as Foreign Minister is another positive sign that China is serious about maintaining a constructive relationship with the US. Qin will be hosting US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on his visit to China in the coming weeks.

Reflecting massively depressed valuations, healthy balance sheets, and owner-oriented management, HK-listed companies repurchased shares in record volumes in 2022.

Hong Kong Buyback Activity Hit Record Highs in 2022



Source: webb-site.com

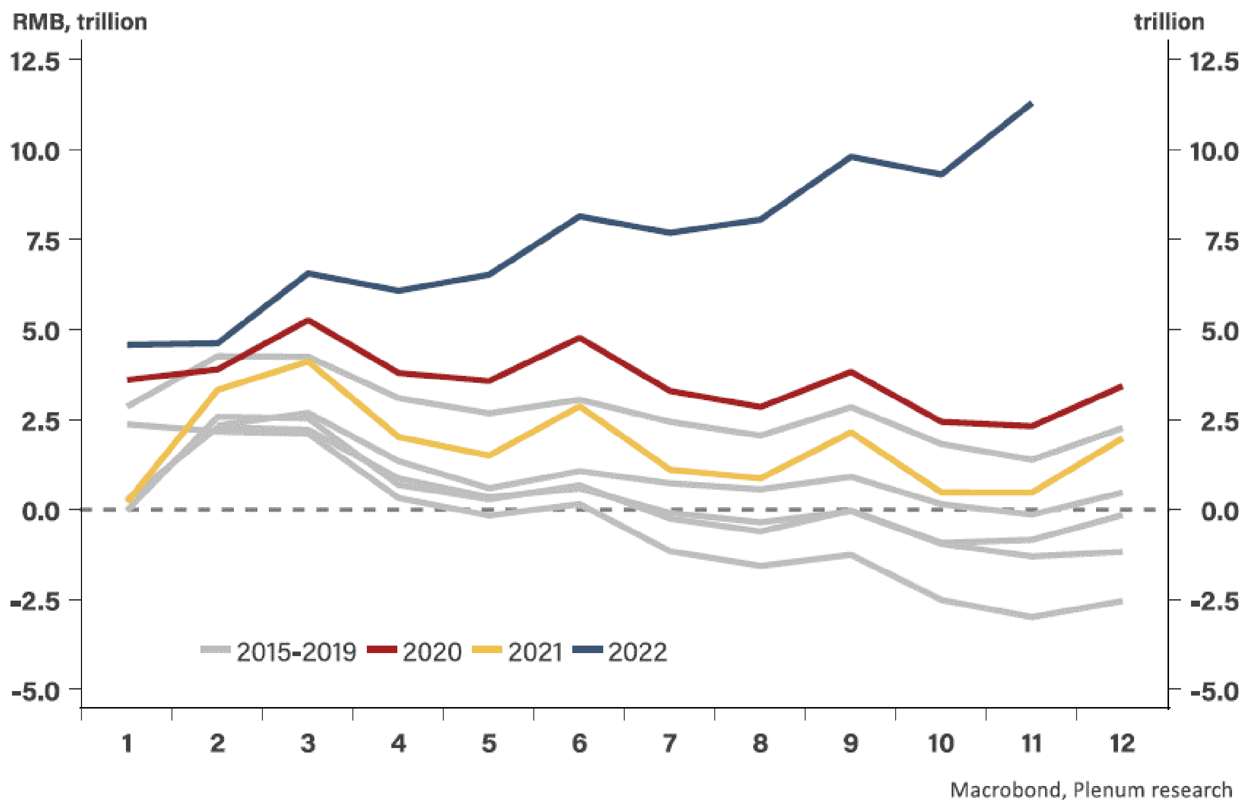
The Strategy's strong fourth-quarter performance doesn't reflect the tremendous volatility experienced during the quarter. Sentiment swung from extreme pessimism in late October to elation in November as the Chinese government made an unexpected U-turn on its dynamic zero-Covid policy. The Chinese government continued to reverse its liquidity crackdown on the property sector and relaxed stifling regulations on the tech sector. Pessimism grew when Xi cemented a third term in office, continuing the draconian zero-Covid strategy, which contributed to two months of weak returns in September and October. However, November saw the Strategy's strongest monthly returns (about 24%) since inception, as our "coiled springs" were finally allowed to reflate. While we underestimated the duration of China's zero-Covid policy, China's exit from dynamic zero-Covid was faster than anyone expected. During the quarter, we increased our exposure to the battered Hong Kong (HK) markets, not knowing that the hardline Covid approach would soon relax, but believing that we were closer to the light at the end of the tunnel, and valuations reflected peak pessimism. We aim to buy high-quality businesses run by intelligent capital allocators at discounted prices. As mentioned in our last quarterly letter, we believe that risk is lowest when the market perceives it to be the highest. This proved especially true for HK-listed equities, which have been quite volatile over the last three years, but began an initial rebound in the fourth quarter.

The Strategy's overweight position in HK/China contributed to our relative outperformance for the quarter and the year and comprised the majority of our absolute performance for the fourth quarter. Our relative outperformance is more than just due to country weightings — it was driven primarily by superior security selection. The top four contributors for the year (MGM China, H World Group, Tongcheng Travel, China MeiDong), which account for over 90% of our

outperformance vs. the index, are not constituents of the HSI and represent less than 1% of the MXAP index. Similarly, the top three contributors (MGM China, Man Wah, H World Group), which accounted for over 95% of relative outperformance in the fourth quarter, are also not constituents of the HSI and under 1% of the MXAP index. Not only are the top contributors substantially off benchmark, but they are also small-mid cap, highly levered to a relaxation of the zero-Covid policy, the Chinese consumer, and are run mainly by owner-operators. **This illustrates why our approach to Asia is important for our ultimate success – being benchmark and market cap agnostic, and investing with a long time horizon beyond the typical quarterly earnings-driven investor – allows us to opportunistically allocate to the best opportunity rather than trying to fit within a box.**

While US dollar strength compounded local-denominated losses in 2022, the fourth quarter brought some relief. The US dollar peaked against Asian currencies, especially the Japanese yen, which appreciated about 10% during the fourth quarter against the US dollar. We believe the US dollar is extremely expensive and could provide a multi-year tailwind to Asian currencies if conditions reverse. The US yield curve inverted even more, a shape highly correlated with recessions and economic distress. The 30-year bond is trading at a 43bp lower yield than the two-year treasury bond, which last occurred during the dot.com crash in 2000.

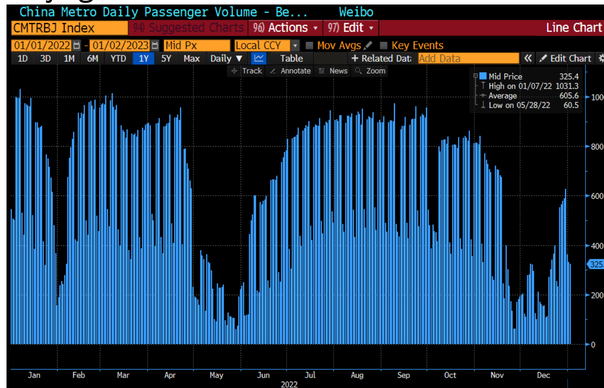
While markets remain volatile, we are optimistic about our portfolio and the region, which is trading at depressed levels. Our strategy is levered to the recovery and growth of the Chinese consumer. Government policy has shifted decisively into a pro-growth mode. In December, the annual Central Economic Work Conference (CEWC) targeted "promoting overall economic improvement," emphasizing boosting consumer confidence and supporting the private sector. At year-end, according to the South China Morning Post, Zhao Chenxin, Deputy Chairman of the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), said authorities would align fiscal, monetary, industrial, technology, and social policies to promote growth. Zhao said, *"We must make the recovery and expansion of consumption a priority, and use government investment and incentives to drive up social investment."* The government has declared support for highly regulated sectors – such as the property sector and online platforms – as part of a broader push to increase consumer spending.



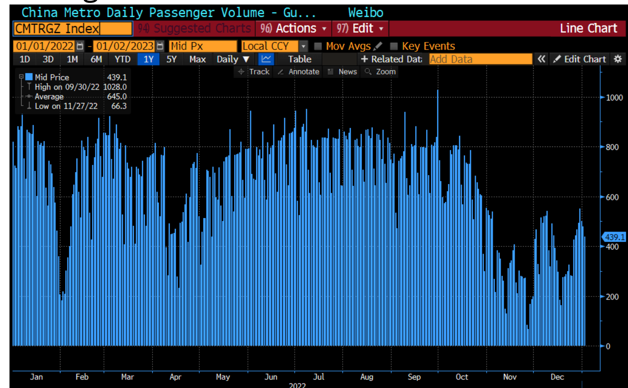
Chinese households saved much more in 2022 than in previous years, as consumption was depressed by Covid lockdowns and disruption. Chinese re-opening spending should benefit our HK/Chinese stocks, as record levels of net Chinese household deposits are available to be spent and the economy has started to recover. According to Plenum Research, in the first 11 months of 2022, Chinese household deposits rose by RMB 15 trillion (trn), an all-time high, while their loans only rose by RMB 3.7trn, about half of the previous years. Net deposits rose by RMB 11trn, five times the increase in 2020, which was the previous record. Notably, around 55% of our investments are directly exposed to Chinese domestic consumption.

China Metro Daily Passenger Volumes

Beijing



Guangzhou



The economy is already recovering. As can be observed from daily passenger rider volumes in key cities (Beijing and Guangzhou in the charts above), peak Covid disruption happened in November/December. These passenger rider volumes suggest that China has passed peak infection and Covid cases are declining. Our portfolio company, online travel agent Tongcheng Travel noted a pickup in travel intention and long-haul travel after many cities saw the peak of the recent Covid wave. The three-day holiday around New Year's Eve (Dec 31-Jan 2) realized 10% YoY growth in air ticketing volume vs. a greater than 40% volume decline during the October Golden Week period. Luxury auto dealer China MeiDong Auto's northern stores have recently seen a "fairly substantial rebound" of foot traffic in their auto dealerships, reflecting a recovery from peak Covid. According to MeiDong CEO Tao Ye, their Chongqing store, which was the first in their network *"to be hit first by the Covid wave, looks like the recovery is there; it's fairly substantial."* There are almost no domestic restrictions and China dropped quarantine requirements for international inbound passengers on January 8.

While monetary policy tightens in the rest of the world, it should continue to ease in China until there is consensus that the economy is recovering. So far, China has appeared immune from the energy shortages and inflation afflicting most of the world, increasingly buying energy at discounted prices in RMB. The Chinese central bank faces no constraints from a domestic perspective of further loosening measures. Last month, People's Bank of China Vice-Governor Liu Guoqiang stated that *"the intensity of monetary policy cannot be less than in 2022."* The CEWC's statement on fiscal stimulus was also more aggressive than a year ago. China's Finance Minister Liu Kun recently reiterated plans to expand fiscal spending to aid economic recovery. We expect our portfolio to benefit from these supportive macro factors.

New Investments

In Q4, we initiated an investment in China MeiDong Auto (MeiDong), a leading auto dealership group in China founded by the Ye Brothers. The company has compounded revenue by 26% CAGR since 2012, gross profit by 33%, EBITDA by 37% and net income by 42% under the best-in-class management team. When MeiDong went public in 2013, it operated on 58 days of inventory, which was already better than most dealerships. With a laser focus on efficiency rather than size, MeiDong achieved inventory days of 6 days in 2021. Fast inventory turnover is one of the most important KPIs in the auto dealership business as it allows efficient use of working capital and greater cash flow generation. Fast inventory turnover also increases the flexibility to react quickly to changing market pricing trends, allowing the company to realize higher average prices, minimize obsolete stock, and sell the most up-to-date and in-demand models.

MeiDong is very efficient; it rotates its inventories 30-50x a year to achieve far superior returns on capital compared to peers. Its cashflow ROIC is in the 40% range, and ROE is in the 30% range. We believe the company will continue to grow rapidly given its smaller size, driven by new store openings, acquisitions, and aftersales service growth. The company is in a net cash position and is ready to get more aggressive in acquiring distressed dealerships − the M&A environment has turned more favorable for leading dealerships like MeiDong, as many other dealerships are still struggling from lockdowns and rising funding costs.

There are concerns about the weak macro and weak property market in China, but we expect MeiDong to be more stable because of its high exposure to luxury vehicles, namely Porsche, Lexus, and BMW, with a more affluent customer base and favorable cost structure. MeiDong enjoys an absorption ratio of over 100% (aftersales business gross profit being well ahead of its SG&A costs), insulating the business from the typical ups and downs of new car sales. MeiDong should continue to compound value under the management's obsessive focus on inventory turnover and asset efficiency (return on capital rather than size).

We initiated the position in MeiDong in October when the market was pessimistic about its growth outlook due to weak macro. Since our initial purchase through year-end, the stock appreciated 46% thanks to the company's solid performance. The management team communicated with the market that Porsche sales volumes grew around 25% YoY and BMW volumes grew high single-digit YoY in 3Q. The solid growth continued in the fourth quarter, with Porsche orders growing by over 20% YoY in October. In addition, MeiDong has successfully integrated the Starchase Porsche business acquired in April, drastically improving inventory turnover and sales productivity. By the fourth quarter, two of the top three highest revenue

stores in the MeiDong network were former Starchase stores that MeiDong general managers had taken over.

Portfolio Review

4Q22	Contribution to Portfolio Return (%)
Top Five	
MGM China	+3.90
Man Wah	+2.12
H World Group	+1.68
Oisix	+1.60
Hitachi	+1.47
Bottom Five	
Baidu	-0.70
WH Group	-0.64
Redbubble	-0.10
Gree Electric	-0.02
CK Asset	+0.02

2022	Contribution to Portfolio Return (%)
Top Five	
MGM China	+3.35
H World Group	+2.54
Tongcheng Travel	+1.63
China MeiDong Auto	+0.92
Hitachi	+0.27
Bottom Five	
Redbubble	-3.10
Baidu	-2.54
L'Occitane	-1.87
Alibaba	-1.81
Oisix	-1.24

MGM China, one of six Macau casino and resort operators, was the top contributor for the quarter and the year. China's dramatic U-turn in its "dynamic zero Covid policy" and the successful renewal of casino licenses for another ten years at better-than-expected terms drove the significant re-rating of MGM China and Macau's listed casino operators. The commitment by the six Macau operators to collectively spend $15 billion (mostly opex vs. capex) during the concession term, 90% of which is for non-gaming, is manageable. MGM China benefited most by being ranked best among the seven bidders for a casino license and was awarded the most incremental gaming tables on an absolute and relative basis. MGM China has gained market share since they opened MGM Cotai in 2018 and added luxury accommodations. MGM China's preferred status is reflected in its superior relative share price performance last year.

MGM China is likely to post another quarter of negative EBITDA in 4Q, but that is already behind us, and the focus is on the pace of re-opening and recovery of mass GGR. Most travel-related restrictions have already been lifted in Macau. Visitors must only show negative PCR test results to enter Macau without a quarantine requirement. In addition, quarantine requirements for visitors from China, HK, and Taiwan were dropped on January 8, which could meaningfully

increase visitation to Macau. Arrivals from HK accounted for almost 20% of total visitations pre-Covid. MGM China sees greater than 90% occupancy based on current bookings for the upcoming Chinese New Year period. Pent-up demand for travel and leisure should benefit Macau. We like MGM China's strong execution capability and position in premium product offerings and still see good headroom in the valuation.

Our China travel-related investments in hotel operator H World Group (formerly Huazhu) and online travel agency Tongcheng Travel were contributors for the year and the quarter, as they benefited from the relaxation of Covid restrictions in the fourth quarter. Both companies are market leaders in highly fragmented markets and have meaningfully strengthened their competitive positioning amidst Covid disruptions, which disproportionately hurt independent operators. Around 35% of all independent hotels in China closed down (on a net basis) in 2020-21, enabling branded hotel chains like Huazhu to gain significant market share. Both companies should benefit from "revenge travel" demand during the Chinese New Year holidays in late January. After three years of stringent Covid controls, there is significant pent-up demand by Chinese to travel, spend, and shop. The top three contributors for the year, MGM China, H World Group, and Tongcheng Travel, will benefit from this unleashing of savings.

Oisix ra daichi, the leading online fresh food retailer in Japan, was a contributor for the quarter, but a detractor for the year. Despite the unfavorable headwinds from Covid re-opening, Oisix's three brands sequentially achieved 7k net subscriber growth. ARPU was down around 5% on a YoY basis, but up 4-12% compared to pre-Covid. Oisix has been suffering from operational start-up issues at their newly built Ebina distribution center, which pressured operating margins by 2%. Its distribution center issues are resolved, and Oisix is progressing toward achieving an additional 1% operating margin by optimizing the pick and pack process and increasing shipment volume. We expect Oisix to accelerate growth and gain market share. Oisix has not been aggressive in promotional activities, but is now operationally ready to acquire more customers aggressively. Oisix also sees medium-term profitability improvement opportunities with its food recycling center initiative with better use of unused/unusable items and economies of scale. We view Oisix's acquisition of a 28% stake in food service operator Shidax favorably as we see both revenue and cost synergy opportunities. Oisix could expand from B2C to B2B areas such as supplying meal kits to nurseries and hospitals through Shidax, while enjoying scale benefits through joint procurement activities.

Hitachi, a Japanese conglomerate, was a top contributor for the quarter. Hitachi reported better-than-expected revenue and earnings thanks to solid organic business growth and favorable exchange rates in the September quarter. Hitachi achieved strong results as all segments excluding IT service, achieved profit growth. It was also noteworthy that Hitachi Energy continued to receive large-scale power grid orders from Germany, Canada, and the US, and the order backlog grew to 2.5 trillion yen. Management raised its full-year guidance for sales by 6%

and EBITA by 2.7%. The company is transforming its business model to more of a recurring service-based business that is less cyclical, leveraging its Lumada digital solution platform. At the end of August, Hitachi completed the partial divestment of Hitachi Construction Machinery. We applaud management's transformation of the business and their focus on ROIC. Hitachi is one of the few Asian companies that has introduced FCF per share growth targets as a financial KPI.

Baidu, China's leading search and AI company, was a detractor for the quarter and year. Baidu core online marketing has shown some signs of improvement from the depth of the second quarter, posting -3.6% growth on a YoY basis, yet Covid resurgence disrupted the recovery again. Verticals such as travel, franchising, and local services continued to be negatively affected. Cloud revenue growth has also moderated to 24% in 3Q due to mobility restrictions delaying project bidding and deliveries. However, we are encouraged to see the company's continued cost optimization in search spending and focus on high-quality cloud business. Baidu's core businesses are sensitive to Covid restrictions, and we expect to see solid growth in 2023 on the back of easier comps, improving macro, and re-opening. Baidu's mobile ecosystem business still generates over 40% operating profit margin. Baidu targets the cloud business to achieve breakeven in the next 2-3 years through economies of scale, product standardization, and by exiting low-margin business. In autonomous driving, Baidu continues to solidify its dominance and is managing investments prudently before the large-scale launch of its RT6 robotaxi model with superior unit economics. Under the 2020 share repurchase program, Baidu has returned about $2.9bn, and it still has about $1.6bn left in this program. Given the attractive valuation, we expect them to continue repurchasing shares.

L'Occitane International, the natural and organic-based beauty products company, was a detractor for the year, but a contributor for the quarter. Its substantial Chinese business was affected by multiple harsh Covid lockdowns that disrupted operations and suppressed consumer demand in 2022. Furthermore, the operating margin for Elemis, one of the key brands, was depressed in recent quarters as management invested in growing the brand in new geographies. Given that HK/China and travel retail is its largest market, L'Occitane should benefit from the relaxation of Covid restrictions in China and HK. L'Occitane, with its primary listing in HK, will also be a beneficiary of new rules allowing Chinese investors to trade in international companies listed in HK via Stock Connect as soon as the first quarter of 2023. L'Occitane is a well-known brand in China and Chinese investors account for roughly 1/5th of daily trading turnover in HK, up significantly from about 5% in 2019.

Alibaba, China's largest e-commerce operator and cloud services provider, was a detractor for the year, but a contributor for the quarter. Alibaba's business was deeply affected by the collapse in consumption and economic activity caused by disruptive Covid lockdowns. In the September quarter, Alibaba's online physical goods GMV declined by low-single-digit YoY, which

translated into a high single-digit decline in customer management revenue. Yet, Alibaba's underlying operating profit grew 29% YoY as the company focused on profitable growth and reduced losses in new initiatives. China's zero Covid policy has been the biggest impediment to consumption. Now that this policy has been scrapped, we expect consumption to recover. The threat of ADR delisting has been removed, and Alibaba is converting its HK listing into a primary listing, increasing its ability to attract Chinese investors through the Southbound Stock Connect program. The government's antagonistic posture towards technology platforms has turned supportive, as evidenced by the recent approval of Ant Financial's capital increase. Alibaba should be a significant beneficiary of the re-opening of the Chinese economy, and we expect earnings to grow strongly in 2023. We were pleased to see Alibaba use almost 70% of free cash flow to repurchase heavily discounted shares over the last six quarters. The company has repurchased $18 billion of discounted shares and has another $22 billion buyback authorization until March 2025.

Redbubble, the leading print-on-demand marketplace operator, was a detractor for the quarter and year. Redbubble posted soft results, with its marketplace revenue down 5% and A$15mm EBITDA loss amidst weak operating environments. Despite the company sticking to its revenue growth guidance, the market is concerned about macro uncertainty, increased costs with headcount and brand investments, and heightened customer acquisition costs. Amplified by its negative working capital model, the current price of 0.2x marketplace revenue indicates that the market is pricing in balance sheet risk. Execution is key, and management is focused on building the business to meet its long-term targets, which requires continued investments. These investments need time to bear fruit while the operating environment has worsened.

See the following pages for important disclosures.

This document is for informational purposes only. Further information about Southeastern Asset Management can be found in our ADV Part 2, available at www.southeasternasset.com. Statements regarding securities are not recommendations to buy or sell the securities discussed. The statements and opinions expressed are those of the author and are as of the date of this report. Holdings identified do not represent all of the securities purchased, sold, or recommended for advisory clients. Current and future holdings are subject to risk and past performance does not guarantee future results. Portfolio information is based on a sample account at December 31, 2022. Portfolio makeup and performance will vary on many factors, including client guidelines and market conditions.

P/V ("price-to-value") is a calculation that compares the prices of the stocks in a portfolio to Southeastern's appraisal of their intrinsic values. The ratio represents a single data point about a strategy and should not be construed as something more. P/V does not guarantee future results, and we caution investors not to give this calculation undue weight.

"Margin of Safety" is a reference to the difference between a stock's market price and Southeastern's calculated appraisal value. It is not a guarantee of investment performance or returns.

Institutional Asia Pacific Equity Composite GIPS Report

Year End	Total Firm Assets (USD) (millions)	Composite Assets (USD) (millions)	Number of Accounts	% of Non-Fee Paying Accounts	MSCI AC Asia Pacific (with net dividends)	Annual Performance Results Composite		Composite Dispersion	Composite 3-Yr Annualized EX-Post Standard Deviation	Benchmark 3-Yr Annualized EX-Post Standard Deviation
						Gross	Net			
2021	10,816	763	<5	0%	-1.5%	-12.3%	-12.9%	na1	22.1%	14.8%
2020	10,270	824	<5	0%	19.7%	13.6%	12.8%	na1	21.9%	16.3%
2019	12,481	603	<5	0%	19.4%	20.2%	19.3%	na1	17.1%	11.7%
2018	13,881	377	<5	0%	-13.5%	-21.0%	-21.7%	na1	16.9%	12.3%
2017	18,203	157	<5	0%	31.7%	41.4%	40.1%	na1	17.0%	12.7%
2016	19,302	111	<5	0%	4.9%	13.0%	12.0%	na1	na2	na2
2015	20,315	98	<5	0%	-2.0%	-2.0%	-2.8%	na1	na2	na2
2014*	30,542	19	<5	100%	-2.5%	-5.3%	-5.3%	na1	na2	na2

*Composite and benchmark performance are for the period 11/01/14 through 12/31/14
na1 - Information is not statistically meaningful due to an insufficient number of portfolios in the composite for the entire year.
na2 - Information is not statistically meaningful due to an insufficient period of time.

Institutional Asia Pacific Equity Composite - Portfolios included in this composite invest in securities in Asia Pacific markets. These markets include developed and emerging markets in Asia or the Pacific region, including Japan, Australia and New Zealand which the manager deems eligible. These portfolios normally contain 15-25 holdings. Country, industry weightings and market cap size are a by-product of bottom-up investment decisions. Cash is a by-product

of a lack of investment opportunities that meet Southeastern's criteria. The benchmark used for comparison is the MSCI All-Country Asia Pacific Index with net dividends.

Southeastern Asset Management, Inc. claims compliance with the Global Investment Performance Standards (GIPS®) and has prepared and presented this report in compliance with the GIPS standards. Southeastern Asset Management, Inc. has been independently verified for the periods January 1, 2001 through December 31, 2021. A firm that claims compliance with the GIPS standards must establish policies and procedures for complying with all the applicable requirements of the GIPS standards. Verification provides assurance on whether the firm's policies and procedures related to composite and pooled fund maintenance, as well as the calculation, presentation, and distribution of performance, have been designed in compliance with the GIPS standards and have been implemented on a firm-wide basis. The Institutional Asia Pacific Equity Composite has had a performance examination for the periods November 1, 2014 through December 31, 2021. The verification and performance examination reports are available upon request.

GIPS® is a registered trademark of CFA Institute. CFA Institute does not endorse or promote this organization, nor does it warrant the accuracy or quality of the content contained herein.

Southeastern is an independent investment management firm that is not affiliated with any parent organization. Southeastern invests primarily in equities.

Results are based on fully discretionary portfolios under management that are managed without regard to tax considerations. Past performance is not indicative of future results.

A list of composite descriptions, a list of limited distribution pooled fund descriptions, and a list of broad distribution pooled funds are available upon request.

The U.S. dollar is the currency used to express performance. Returns are presented gross and net of management and performance fees and include the reinvestment of income. Dividends are recorded either gross or net of foreign withholding taxes based on the treatment of these taxes by the accounts' custodian. Net of fee performance is calculated using actual management and performance fees. The annual composite dispersion presented is an asset-weighted standard deviation calculated for the portfolios in the composite the entire year. Composite dispersion and 3 year annualized ex-post standard deviation are reported using gross returns. Policies for valuing investments, calculating performance, and preparing GIPS Reports are available upon request.

The investment management fee schedule for accounts with a market value less than $100 million is 1.15% on the first $50 million and 1.00% on the next $50 million. The fee schedule

for accounts with a market value exceeding $100 million is 0.90% on all assets. Actual investment advisory fees incurred by clients may vary.

The Institutional Asia Pacific Equity Composite was created on November 1, 2014. The inception date for this composite is October 31, 2014