



JOHN FREDERICK LEWIS
(BRITISH, 1805-1876)
The Kibab shop, Scutari (detail)
pencil, watercolour, bodycolour and
gum Arabic on paper
11½ x 16 in. (29.5 x 40.54 cm.)
Executed in 1858
£600,000-800,000



A CULTURE EMBRACED

For British artist John Frederick Lewis, the Orient was more than just a place for touring. Spending a year living in Constantinople, he then settled in Egypt, spending a total of 10 years in Cairo. The deep extent to which he was able to immerse himself in the culture and environment of these locations is conveyed in works such as his superb watercolour *The Kibab Shop*, where meticulously painted interior details such as the Chinese and Japanese export ceramics, and the birds and animals outside,

join with the convincing portrayal of languid people passing the time in one of Istanbul's many eating houses. Although not painted 'en plain air', and in fact completed some years after his time in Istanbul, this scene speaks of something observed at first hand, something closely felt and understood by an artist who made the middle east his world not just his subject.