

# CHRISTIE'S

## For Immediate Release

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## **CHRISTIE'S TO OFFER MOST EXCEPTIONAL WORKS BY ARAB AND IRANIAN ARTISTS EVER SEEN AT AUCTION**

**Rare and outstanding works by the most-sought after artists in the region to headline Christie's forthcoming sale of *International Modern & Contemporary Art* in Dubai**

*Christie's Dubai: International Modern & Contemporary Art, 30 April 2008*

*Sponsored by Credit Suisse*

**Dubai** – Christie's forthcoming *International Modern & Contemporary Art* auction, taking place in Dubai on April 30, will be characterized by an outstanding selection of rare and sought-after examples by the leading Arab and Iranian artists. In assembling the Arab and Iranian works for this forthcoming sale, the growing interest in contemporary art from the region and Christie's broad reach in the wider Middle East market has attracted clients from around the world to consign more significant pieces than ever before – illustrated by their scarcity and quality. This auction follows the third sale of *International Modern and Contemporary Art*, staged in October 2007, which totalled \$15,235,725/AED 55,915,111, establishing 62 new world records.

“This is unquestionably the most important grouping of contemporary Arab and Iranian art available for sale in the Middle East to date and the diversity and quality of the pieces being offered for this sale attests to the robust development of the market and interest in these categories,” said Jussi Pylkkänen, President, Christie's Middle East. “We anticipate that both private and institutional collectors will recognize the exceptional works on offer and bid accordingly,” added William Lawrie, International Modern and Contemporary Art specialist and head of sale

“We are delighted to have established a sponsoring partnership with Credit Suisse who is supporting the events around the auction for the third time”, said Michael Jeha, Managing Director, Middle East. “With the backing of Credit Suisse as one of the leading global providers of financial products

and services in Investment Banking, Private Banking, and Asset Management, Christie's is proud to present our most exciting sale yet."

This 198 lot sale, estimated to reach in the region of \$11 million, is led by a commanding pre-revolution bronze sculpture, *The Wall (Ob Persepolis)*, by Iranian artist Parviz Tanavoli, executed in 1975. This unique work is conservatively estimated to fetch \$400,000-600,000. It is an outstanding example from the artist's monumental series of bronzes, the *Walls of Iran*, which represents his greatest and most mature achievement. The present work is an extraordinary opportunity for a collector of institution to acquire a rare work of the highest calibre. Works from *The Wall* series can be found in several important collections including the Museum of Modern Art, Vienna, the Ludwig Museum, Aachen, Germany, The Grey Art Gallery, New York University, the City of Isfahan and the City of Tehran.

The important Egyptian artist Mahmoud Said, one of the Arab world's greatest ever painters, will be represented by two pieces, including one of his earliest-produced seascapes and the exceptional *View of Sirros*, 1949, (estimate: \$200,000 – 250,000). The sale will also offer another early masterpiece by the artist, *The Lighthouse at El-Mak*, an oil on canvas painted in 1918, the fifth earliest recorded works by the master, painted at the dawn of modern Arab art (estimate: \$120,000-150,000).

Several important works by the Egyptian Wanly brothers, offered from a private Egyptian collection, will feature in the sale. Seif and Adham Wanly worked closely together in the same studio. On the surface their work shows striking similarities but on careful inspection there are distinct differences Adham Wanly's work is always rooted in the sensations of the world around him, an extension of impressionism and post-impressionism, while Seif's paintings are more abstract and anticipate trends in international contemporary art. Adham is represented by *The Singer* (estimate: \$30,000-40,000), painted in oil in 1952 and *Dabkka Dance in Lebanon*, painted in 1956 (estimate: \$40,000-60,000), while Seif is represented by *Nubian Village*, painted circa 1950s. Another work by Seif Wanly is also offered in the sale, from a private Greek collection, *The Accordionist*, painted in 1959 (estimate: \$35,000-50,000)

The sale also boasts a very large work of exceptional quality from the 1960s by Dia Azzawi. One of the most important works from the early period of, perhaps the best known living Iraqi painter, *Folklore Mythology*, painted in 1968, has combinations of colours not seen in his later paintings (estimate: \$80,000-120,000).

Additional highlights of the forthcoming sale are seven outstanding works by Iranian artist Charles Hossein Zenderoudi. These works span the five decades of his career, from the 1960s until 2006, each from a different phase, showing both evolution and continuity in his work, from his early

engagements with neo-traditionalist iconography through to his various experiments with letterism and ornamentation. Highlights of the group include *VAV + HWE*, an acrylic on canvas painted in 1972, measuring two metres square, which is exceptional in its use of modulated tones of red, and the balance of black, white and red coloured masses, carefully controlled to produce an extraordinary, vibrant effect (estimate: \$400,000-600,000). *Tchaar-Bagh*, painted in 1981 and *Linthal-Manama*, both carry an estimate of \$250,000-300,000.

Ahmed Moustafa is represented in the sale with *Meditation on Three Themes from Sura Ya' Sin*, painted in 2006, a triptych of monumental quality and proportions (estimate: \$350,000-400,000). The artist holds the world record price at auction for any work by an Arab artist (achieved for *Qur'anic Polyptych of Nine Panels* in 31 October, 2007). The present work is likely to attract significant attention in the sale.

One of best-known Arab artists, whose work is influenced by Arabic calligraphy, is Libyan Ali Omar Ermes. *Qaffon Aasif - Stormy Qaff*, painted in 1983 (estimate \$65,000-85,000), shows an unfamiliar way of executing the letter *qaff*, which in some ways resembles the old Kufic script. Unusually for the work of Ali Omar Ermes, it has stormy golden strokes around its sides. A very similar painting is in the collection of the Smithsonian Institute in Washington DC.

Christie's auction will also feature a strong showing by artists from the Levant, including an exceptional piece by Syria's Fateh Moudarres. *Wedding in The Kalamoom Mountains, Syria* (estimate: \$200,000 – 300,000), painted in 1977, and featuring gold leaf, sand and oil on canvas, it is likely to attract considerable attention among collectors and Institution for its complex composition of virtually 'three paintings in one'. Moudarres, along with several of his contemporaries, often sought to depict everyday people and the problems they encountered. The present scene depicts the life of simple peasants and showing the country bride and wedding party.

A number of works by Lebanese painter Paul Guiragossian, include *Celebrations* (estimate: \$200,000 – 250,000), the largest work by far by this sought-after artist to ever be offered at auction. A recent work by the UAE's Abdul Kader Al Rais, *Bishra*, is a large and powerful calligraphic triptych painting and is expected to outperform its pre-sale estimate of \$150,000 – 250,000. From the collection of Mrs. Miremadi, well-known Iranian collector and art critic, also come untitled pieces from Hossein Kazemi and Farmaz Pilaram. The sale will also feature Iranian artist, Mohammed Ehsai's *He Is The Merciful*' (estimate: \$100,000-150,000). Painted in 2007 it is one of the largest works ever produced by the artist, and will be one of nine works featured on the front of the sale catalogue. An eye-catching work by Farhad Moshiri, entitled *I Love You Until Eternity*, rounds off the Middle Eastern section, executed in acrylic, crystals and glitter on canvas (estimate: \$200,000-250,000)

The sale will also offer a carefully curated selection of works by some of the most exciting international and Western artists spanning several important periods, and a selection of artists books, a selection of which has never before been offered at auction (see separate press releases).

“Once again Christie’s LIVE™ will enable collectors and interested parties around the Middle East and the world to enjoy the look, sound and feel of these exciting sales in Dubai from their personal computer, as well as participate in them,” concluded Michael Jaha, Managing Director, Middle East.

The sale of ***International Modern & Contemporary Art*** will take place at **the Jumeirah Emirates Towers hotel at 6.30pm on 30 April 2008**. It will follow Christie’s third sale of ***Contemporary Jewels and Watches in Dubai***, to be staged in the same venue at **6.30pm on 29 April 2007** (please see separate press release). Both Sales will go on public view ahead of the auctions from 27 April 2008 onwards, and

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#### **Notes to Editors**

##### **About Christie’s Middle East**

- ❖ Christie’s commitment to the Middle East is unrivalled. Christie’s was the first international auction house to have established a permanent presence in the Middle East when a representative office was opened in Dubai in April 2005, and have staged five auctions to date in the Middle East.
- ❖ Christie’s auctions in the Middle East have achieved over \$61 million, and have each witnessed approximately 50% of buying from the Middle East, demonstrating the strong demand from clients in the region for this new platform in the international art market.
- ❖ In addition to auctions, Christie’s have staged five international public art exhibitions in the region to date, bringing over \$60 million/AED 180 million worth of Art, objects, Jewellery and watches from Christie’s most important sales worldwide direct to clients in the Middle East.
- ❖ Christie’s has organized a number of charity events in the region. Most recently, Christie’s conducted the charity auction for His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum’s *Dubai Cares* charity which raised \$10 million /31 million AED towards providing education for children in poor countries around the world. This event established a record for the amount of money raised during a charity auction in the region. The total sum achieved by charity sales which Christie’s have conducted in the region to date stands at over \$16 million.

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