

Press Release

CHRISTIE'S

For Immediate Release

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**MUSEUM QUALITY PICTURES
HIGHLIGHT CHRISTIE'S LONDON ORIENTALIST SALE**

**MASTERPIECE BY JOHN FREDERICK LEWIS, A HIGHLIGHT OF CELEBRATED
'LURE OF THE EAST' SHOW & RECENTLY RETURNED FROM EXHIBITION AT
TATE BRITAIN, THE PERA MUSEUM, ISTANBUL &
SHARJAH ART MUSEUM, U.A.E., LEADS THE SALE**



The Kibab Shop, Scutari, by John Frederick Lewis (British, 1805-1876), estimate: £600,000-800,000 (\$910,000-1,200,000)

London - An atmospheric watercolour *The Kibab Shop, Scutari*, by John Frederick Lewis (British, 1805-1876) is the highlight of the annual London Orientalist sale at Christie's on July 9, 2009. The sale also includes a wonderfully detailed and evocative Ottoman market scene by the great Italian Orientalist Alberto Pasini (1826-1899), estimated at £600,000-800,000 (\$910,000-1,200,000).

Alexandra McMorro, Director and specialist in charge of the sale, said: "This collecting field has developed immensely over the last 10 years in part due to the interest in the category from collectors in the Middle East who are familiar with the exotic locations which so fascinated western collectors in the 19th century. This is still a field where museum quality works can be found and new collectors are attracted by the range of estimates, which begin around £5,000."

Etienne Hellman, International Director of Orientalist Art, said: “Christie’s was the first international auction house to hold a dedicated Orientalist art sale in 1998 and we were delighted with the success of last summer’s record-breaking sale. The works in this sale represent the early dialogue between East and West and we are delighted that private and institutional buyers from the Middle East are an ever growing presence at Christie’s auctions for this category.”

John Frederick Lewis is regarded as pre-eminent among British Orientalist painters, his work encapsulating the allure of the East to Western eyes in the 19th century. *The Kibab Shop, Scutari*, (shown above) was one of the highlights of ‘The Lure of the East’ Exhibition at Tate Britain and The Pera Museum in Istanbul in 2008 and has just returned from the Middle East where the exhibition was on tour to the Sharjah Art Museum in the U.A.E. It is estimated at £600,000-800,000 (\$910,000-1,200,000). The subject is an eating house in Üsküdar, on the Asian side of Istanbul, known to foreign visitors in the 19th century as Scutari. The watercolour shows three male customers in the doorway, sipping coffee and puffing on the long wooden pipe or çubuk, with a humbly dressed cook preparing food in the interior of the shop. To the left, in a separate booth, is a venerable old man reading a letter in the shade. The picture is rich in detail from the Chinese and Japanese export ceramics around the café, to the group of goats and pigeons in the foreground.



Alberto Pasini’s *Mercato Turco*, (shown here) being offered for sale from a private English collection, is a wonderful, detailed scene of the activity in the bustling city market place. In 1867 Pasini was invited by his old friend, then the French ambassador, to Istanbul. He often escaped the pomp of the diplomatic neighbourhood to explore the hustle of the city. He stayed for nine months creating numerous studies in oil and pencil that he would use as source material on his return to Europe. Pasini’s *The Recruits*, for sale from a separate private collection is also included with an estimate of £200,000-300,000 (\$310,000-450,000). It shows a group of conscripts outside the arsenal of the Topkapi Palace in Istanbul.

From the great French master Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824-1904) is *Le Marabout: in the Harem bath*, painted around 1889. It is being sold to benefit the acquisition fund of the Canton Museum of Art and is estimated at £450,000-600,000 (\$680,000-900,000). Also included is *Merchants in a North African Market*, showing a busy trading scene, probably a camel market in Cairo, by Franz Xaver Kosler (Austrian, 1864-1905), estimated at £200,000-300,000 (\$310,000-450,000) and Théodore Géricault’s (French, 1791-1824) an exuberant oil *Turc monte sur un Cheval*, (shown here)



originally sold from the artist's Paris studio sale in 1824 and estimated at £120,000-180,000 (\$190,000-270,000). Fabbio Fabbi's (Italian, 1861-1946) *Danza nell Harem: The harem dance* is also included with an estimate of £100,000-150,000 (\$160,000-230,000).

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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 with regular sales held since 2006.
- ❖ Christie's auctions in the Middle East have achieved over \$127 million to date.
- ❖ In October 2009 Christie's held their first exhibition of international highlights in Abu Dhabi in order to further develop their presence in the Middle East.
- ❖ Christie's next sales in the Middle East will be in Dubai on 27th and 28th October, 2008.

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business had global auction and private sales in 2008 that totaled £2.8 billion/\$5.1 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. Founded in 1766 by James Christie, Christie's conducted the greatest auctions of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, and today remains a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 600 sales annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from \$200 to over \$80 million. Christie's has 57 offices in 32 countries and 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai and Hong Kong. More recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in emerging and new markets such as Russia, China, India and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Mumbai and Dubai.