

For Immediate Release

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CHRISTIE'S

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**LEADING IRAQI CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS
DONATE WORKS TO BE AUCTIONED AT
CHRISTIE'S DUBAI
TO BENEFIT A NEW FOUNDATION
FOR CONTEMPORARY IRAQI ART**

**Modern and Contemporary Arab, Iranian and Turkish Art
Part I - Tuesday, October 25th, 2011 at 7pm
Part II - Wednesday, October 26th, 2011 at 7pm**

Dubai - . An inspiring group of 6 works by some of Iraq's most innovative contemporary artists, including a drawing made especially for the sale by the internationally recognized Ahmed Alsoudani (shown here), will be offered for sale for the first time at an international auction by Christie's Dubai this October 26th, 2011. Proceeds from the sale will benefit Echo (Sada) for Contemporary Iraqi Art, a new non-profit organization established to support new works, education programs, preservation initiatives and research in the realm of contemporary art in Iraq and the Diaspora. Their sale will be among the highlights of a new sale format for Christie's in Dubai which sees the introduction of a part II sale to complement the existing sale format.



Echo was founded by Iraqi-born Rijn Sahakian in 2010, who commented: "though Iraq is particularly known for its regional and historic artistic influence and contributions, today there is little support for artists living in Iraq or the rising Diaspora. Echo is committed to artistic engagement, accessible education, and the critical exchange of ideas, practices, and research." Echo has already taken steps towards this mission, beginning with their public program at the Venice Biennale Iraq Pavilion in June. Four of the participating artists in the Iraq Pavilion have donated works (Jananne Al-Ani, Azad Nanakeli, Ahmed Alsoudani, and Walid Siti).

Hala Khayat, Christie's specialist in charge of Modern and Contemporary Arab, Iranian and Turkish Art, said: "We are delighted to have the opportunity to present the Echo group of works in our inaugural part II sale. This follows on from this April when we offered works by the Edge of Arabia group and raised \$1 million to fund their educational activities in Saudi Arabia."

THE WORKS

Ahmed Alsoudani (Iraqi, b. 1975)

Untitled, 2011

Granite, charcoal and watercolour on paper, 2011

Estimate: \$15,000-25,000 / AED 55,000-91,000 (illustrated on page 1)

In this untitled drawing, made for the auction in October, Alsoudani shows a distorted, grotesque head of a man – a reflection of the horrors of war and its effect on humanity. Ahmed Alsoudani

graduated from the Yale School of Art in 2008 and currently lives and works in New York. His work has been included in museum exhibitions at the Minneapolis Institute of Art (2011), The Arab Museum of Modern Art in Doha, Qatar (2011) and the Saatchi Gallery's Unveiled: New Art from the Middle East (2009). Alsoudani's work is held in the collections of the Columbus Museum of Art, the Pinault Foundation collection, the Qatar Museum and private collections around the world. His work was featured in the Iraq Pavilion at the 2011 54th Venice Biennale as well as the Pinault Foundation at Palazzo Grassi.



Wafaa Bilal (Iraqi, b. 1966)
.....and Counting
 Photographic print, 2010
 Estimate: \$6,000-8,000 / AED 22,000-29,000

Wafaa Bilal, a professor at the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University, is known internationally for his on-line performance and interactive works provoking dialogue about international politics and internal dynamics. In Bilal's 2010 work *...and Counting*, he addresses the death of his brother during the war by turning his own body into a canvas. His back was tattooed with a borderless map of Iraq and dots representing Iraqi and US casualties – the Iraqis in invisible ink seen only under a black light. Bilal fled Iraq in 1991 during the first Gulf War. After two years in refugee camps in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, he came to the U.S. where he graduated from the University of New Mexico and then obtained an MFA at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. He was named "Artist of the Year," in 2008 by the Chicago Tribune, the same year that "Shoot an Iraqi: Art, Life and Resistance Under the Gun," about Bilal and his work was published.

Jananne Al-Ani (Iraqi, b. 1966)
Aerial I (from the series The Aesthetics of Disappearance: A Land Without People) Archival Chromogenic C-Type Print
 Estimate: \$20,000-25,000 / AED 73,000- 91,000

Aerial I is a frame from the film *Shadow Sites II* (2011) which recreates the vantage point of military surveillance by taking the form of an aerial journey over a landscape bearing traces of natural and man-made activity, from the ancient to the contemporary. *Shadow Sites II* is an Abraaj Capital Art Prize production and is currently on show in *The Future of a Promise* at the 54th Venice Biennale and *Topographies de la Guerre* at Le Bal, Paris. Recipient of the East International Award and the John Kobal Photographic Portrait Award, her work can be found in public collections such as the Victoria & Albert Museum and Tate Modern, London; the Pompidou Centre, Paris; and the Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC. Al-Ani studied Fine Art at the Byam Shaw School of Art and graduated with an MA in Photography from the Royal College of Art in 1997. Born in Iraq, she now lives and works in London.



Walid Siti (Iraqi, b. 1954)
Cluster 2
 Acrylic on canvas
 Estimate: \$15,000-25,000 / AED 55,000- 91,000

This works marks a significant point in the progression of paintings and installations that reconstitute the form of the mountain, used by Siti as a central site from which mediations on peoples, imaginations, traditions, histories, and a



host of experiences can be derived. While living in exile for much of his adult life in London, this work grounds and find a place for questioning a state of overwhelming war, brutality, and suppression. Siti's work has been collected and exhibited widely in Europe and the Middle East – he exhibited in the Iraq Pavilion in this year's Art Biennale in Venice and in 2009. Siti's work is in the collections of The British Museum, The Victoria & Albert Museum in London, The National Gallery of Jordan and The World Bank in Washington DC.



Azad Nanakeli (Iraqi, b. 1951)

Testimony

signed and dated 'Azad Nanakeli 2001' (on the reverse)

photographic print 49.1/8 x 70.7/8in. (125 x 180cm.)

Executed in 2001

Estimate: \$8,000-10,000 / AED 30,000-36,000

Testimony is a pivotal work in the evolution of Azad Nanakeli's practice from abstract painting to overt realism in photography and video.

Nanakeli places himself amongst a faceless group of men in traditional Kurdish dress, to

show how the work of himself – the artist – becomes "Testimony." After receiving his degree from the Institute of Fine Arts, Baghdad in 1975, Nanakeli went on to earn a second degree from the Academy of Fine Arts, Florence in 1979 where he has continued to live and work. His work has been exhibited and collected in Italy and Europe. His work was most recently on view with a two-part installation in the Iraq Pavilion at this year's Venice Biennale.



Rheim Alkadhi (Iraqi/American, b. 1973)

Captive Lover (5-part Series)

Photographic prints; polyptych

Executed in 2011

Estimate: \$6,000-8,000 / AED 22,000-29,000

Rheim Alkadhi's early years in Baghdad inform her work and her digital media projects offer conceptual exits from the frameworks of war and occupation; her sculpture and performance projects confront the physicality of art

production in a trans-geographic context. Her work has been exhibited at REDCAT, LACE

(Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions), Artists Space in New York, the Palazzo de la

Papesse in Siena, Italy, and most recently as part of Para/Site's "A Future Museum for China"

(Hong Kong) and Camera Austria in Vienna.

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Image available on request

Visit Christie's on the web at www.christies.com

Notes to editors:

- Christie's auction of *Modern and Contemporary Arab, Iranian and Turkish Art* takes place at the Jumeirah Emirates Towers Hotel on Tuesday and Wednesday, October 25th & 26th, 2011

- Viewing is open to the public at the Jumeirah Emirates Towers Hotel:

Sunday 23 October: 2pm to 10pm

Monday 24 October: 2pm to 10pm

Tuesday 25 October: 10am to 1.30pm (selected lots)

Wednesday 26 October 10am to 2.30pm (selected lots)

- For catalogues and further information, please telephone +971 4425 5647

THE COLLECTION OF ELIZABETH TAYLOR WILL BE ON FREE PUBLIC EXHIBITION ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 23RD FROM 2-10PM

About Echo (Sada) for Contemporary Iraqi Art

Echo (Sada) is a non-profit organization established to fulfill artists' critical need for support in the creation, presentation, and preservation of contemporary art within Iraq and in the diaspora. Echo will serve as an education portal, assist in the production of new work, and create new spaces for the presentation and exchange of contemporary artistic ideas and practices.

Funds raised from the Christie's auction in October will be used to support Echo's organizational development and programs. Upcoming initiatives include a web platform that will connect artists and interested users to resources, multi-media material (and one another), and a series of workshops in contemporary art for artists and students living in Baghdad. The workshops will be led by established Iraqi artists from around the world with Arabic lectures and tutorials streamed live through on-line software developed specifically for the program. Artist collaborations, exhibition, and the commissions of research and works are central to future programs.

Echo was founded in 2010 and is directed by Rijin Sahakian. Sahakian (b 1978 Baghdad, Iraq), is based in the U.S. where she has worked in the arts sector as a curator, producer and consultant. She received her MA in Contemporary Art and Cultural Policy from New York University and is a graduate Fulbright fellow. Echo's Director of Education is Brian Conley (b.1951, Chicago, Illinois), an artist and professor in the graduate fine arts and sculpture programs of the California College for the Arts in San Francisco. Conley is founding co-editor with Sina Najafi of Cabinet Magazine, and from 2005-2008 served as Chair of the Graduate Fine Art Program at CCA.

Echo's founding Executive Board Members include Reem Shather-Kubba and Shwan Taha. Echo's Advisory Board includes: Adel Abidin, artist; Ahmed Alsoudani, artist; Sinan Antoon, writer and professor in the Gallatin Division of New York University; Wafaa Bilal, artist; Carol Becker, Dean of the Columbia University School of the Arts; Saad Eskander Director of the Iraq National Library and Archives; Gordon Knox Director of the Arizona State University Art Museum. Echo's programs are generously supported by the Hivos Foundation. ArteEast, a non profit organization based in New York, is Echo's fiscal sponsor.

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About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business had global auction and private sales in 2010 that totaled £3.3 billion/\$5.0 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 450 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 \$100 million. Christie's has 53 offices in 32 countries and 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, 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.

*Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and do not reflect costs, financing fees or application of buyer's or seller's credits.