

CHRISTIE'S

THE ART PEOPLE

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CHRISTIE'S SPECIALLY CURATED SALE

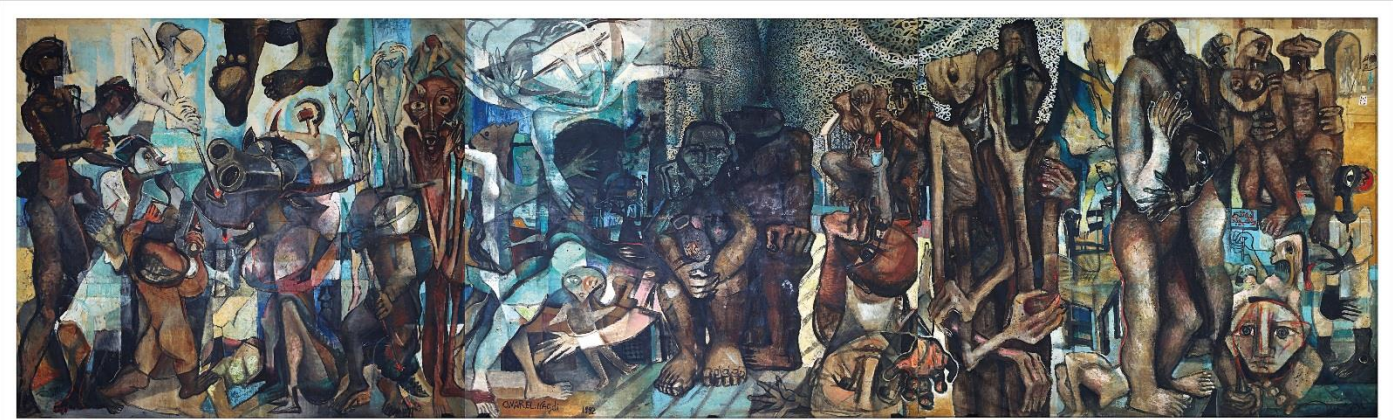
NOW AND TEN

CELEBRATES 10 YEARS OF AUCTIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

ALONGSIDE THE

MODERN & CONTEMPORARY ART AUCTION

ON 16 MARCH 2016



DUBAI – This March Christie's will celebrate its 10th anniversary and its 20th sale season at the Jumeirah Emirates Towers Hotel in the heart of Dubai. On 16 March, as part of the 10th anniversary celebrations, the traditional pictures sale will celebrate the best of Middle Eastern art by integrating a 40 lot strong section entitled *NOW AND TEN*. This specially curated sale presents stellar examples of works by the leading artists in the Middle East, led by Omar El-Nagdi's *Sarajevo* (estimate: US\$400,000-600,000, *illustrated above*). Once part of the prestigious collection of Her Excellency Ambassador Francine Henrich in 1993, this museum-quality masterpiece comes to auction for the first time. To mark this anniversary we are delighted to offer a monumental bronze work, entitled *Heech Lovers*, by Iranian artist Parviz Tanavoli, who since 2008 has held the world auction record for any work of art sold at auction in the Middle East, when *The Wall (Oh, Persepolis)* realised over US\$2.8 million. The *Modern & Contemporary Art* sale and *NOW AND TEN* comprise a total of 125 works, and expect to realise in the region of US\$9 million, the highest pre-sale estimate for the past 10 years. This is indicative of the strong developments of the regional art market and the international appreciation of art from the Middle East.

NOW AND TEN

Omar El-Nagdi (Egyptian, b. 1931) painted *Sarajevo* in April 1992. At three metres in height and almost eleven metres in length, this triptych is arguably the most important and ambitious work produced by the artist with regard to its complexity, monumentality, expression and subject matter. *Sarajevo* depicts the slaughter of El-Nagdi's Bosniak brothers in Sarajevo. It is one of the most poignant depictions of the horrors of war painted since 1937, when Pablo Picasso created his iconic *Guernica*.



Café de Verre, Café Hajj Daoud, Café Palestine, Café Al Bahrein by Shafic Abboud (Lebanese, 1926-2004) features 130 individually painted tempera on panels (estimate: US\$300,000-400,000). Created in 1990, the panels pay tribute to the ‘cafés engloutis’ of Abboud’s beloved city, Beirut. Coming directly from the artist’s estate, these panels previously hung in Abboud’s Parisian apartment, where he lived from 1977 until his death. *Cafés engloutis* translates literally as the ‘engulfed cafés’, referring to the vanishing café-culture that had been widely popular in the Arab world in the

1950s and 60s. As the café-culture slowly disappeared, so did the effervescent intellectual, political and artistic circles that had emerged from these cafés and that were at the core of Modern Lebanese art and literature.

Published in Jabra Ibrahim Jabra’s infamous book on Iraqi art, entitled *The Grass Roots of Iraqi Art* (1983), and originally part of the art critic and writer’s private collection, *Al Buraq* is an outstanding example by Kadhim Haider (Iraqi, 1932-1985), (estimate: US\$200,000-250,000, illustrated right). *Al Buraq* relates to the themes tackled in his most renowned body of work known as the *Martyr’s Epic* (‘Melhamet Al Shahidi’ - 1965), based on a poem he wrote which refers to episodes from the martyrdom of Imam Al-Hussein at the Battle of Karbala.



Masa Al-Kutoubi, Specialist Modern & Contemporary Art: “*Al Buraq* by Kadhim Haider is a spectacular piece from an artist who helped shape Iraqi art history. It is rare to find works of this calibre by the artist in the market, especially from his *Martyrs* series, making it the perfect example to feature in our specially curated 10th anniversary sale, flying the flag, so to speak, for Iraqi art. This work hails from the collection of Jabra I. Jabra, one of the forefront writers and critics of Iraqi art who was instrumental in both patronising and documenting Iraqi artists and art.”



Hala Khayat, Director Modern & Contemporary Art: “ As a student of the acclaimed artist Fateh Moudarres (Syrian, 1922-1999), I am very pleased that this important work is part of the curated auction *NOW AND TEN*. Dating from the 1980s it shows the artist’s mastery and craft in shaping what has become an art history rich with deep rooted symbolism (estimate: US\$200,000-250,000). One of the few rare works by Moudarres of this size and scale, it exemplifies the artist’s ability to delve into thousands of years of civilisation to rewrite a new

chapter of history whilst creating a modern visual language. The top three world records for the artist’s work at auction are of a similar size, yet none are as full in composition or as vibrant as the present work in a horizontal format. A rare jewel from the artist’s oeuvre, the present monumental composition is thus the ultimate collector’s piece. «

Christie’s is pleased to present a museum-quality masterpiece by the Father of Modern Art in Lebanon, Paul Guiragossian (Lebanese, 1925-1993). This work is filled with references to the social realities of his time, evoking the difficulties and anguish witnessed during the Lebanese Civil War. *Souk* is one of the most textural and complete versions of Guiragossian’s favoured subject matter (estimate: US\$200,000-250,000, illustrated right). The mother figure, another favoured subject matter that is visible throughout Guiragossian’s oeuvre, is repeated throughout the

composition and accentuated with the abstracted depiction of an infant in the far right of the composition; the proximity of the figures allude to the presence of a family and the hope for unity, the rough brushstrokes create a sense of torment while the colourful palette infuses a feeling of positivity.

Bibi Naz Zavieh, Specialist Modern & Contemporary Art : “Growing up with Iranian origins, I would often listen to verses by the acclaimed poet Sohrab Sepehri (Iranian, 1928-1980), known as the Persian Ezra Pound. His poems speak of the cultural alienation that Iranians felt in the 1960s and 1970s, as art and literature were profoundly affected by Western culture. Inspired by the traditional haikus, the Zen tradition and equally by French Modernism and Western philosophy, Sepehri painted his trees without leaves or branches and with a restrained palette, inspiring the viewer to reflect upon the metaphysical essence of existence as they bring to life some of his most famous verses (estimate: US\$250,000-300,000, *illustrated right*). Known as the Father of Modern Iranian painting and poetry, Sepehri has been one of the most sought after artists since the inaugural Dubai sales in 2006. Almost every single Iranian collector has either owned, owns or wishes to own one of his Trees. The present painting is one of his most captivating and monumental depictions of Trees and I look forward to the excitement that the work will trigger in the days leading up to the auction.”

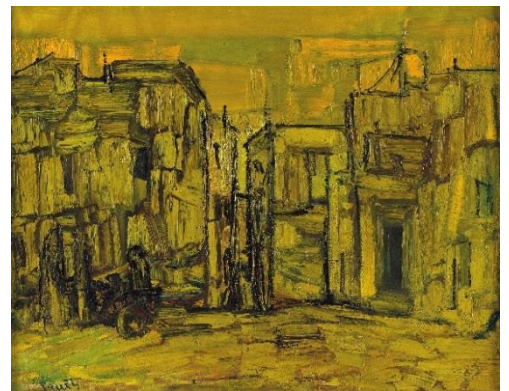


DUBAI: MODERN & CONTEMPORARY ART



A highlight of the *Modern & Contemporary Art* sale on 16 March is a captivating *Portrait of Karl Flinker*, by Manoucher Yektaï (American-Iranian, b. 1922), (estimate : US\$40,000-60,000, *illustrated left*). This work comes to auction alongside an untitled still life, also by Yektaï and both from an Important Private Collection in Paris. Previously held in the collection of the renowned French gallery owner Karl Flinker, who befriended the artist while he lived in Paris, these two works are a testimony to the close ties of Yektaï to Western art and to the multiple aesthetic influences that shaped his oeuvre and career. Recently rediscovered, these outstanding compositions evoke a fruitful artistic era, dating back to the 1960s in France.

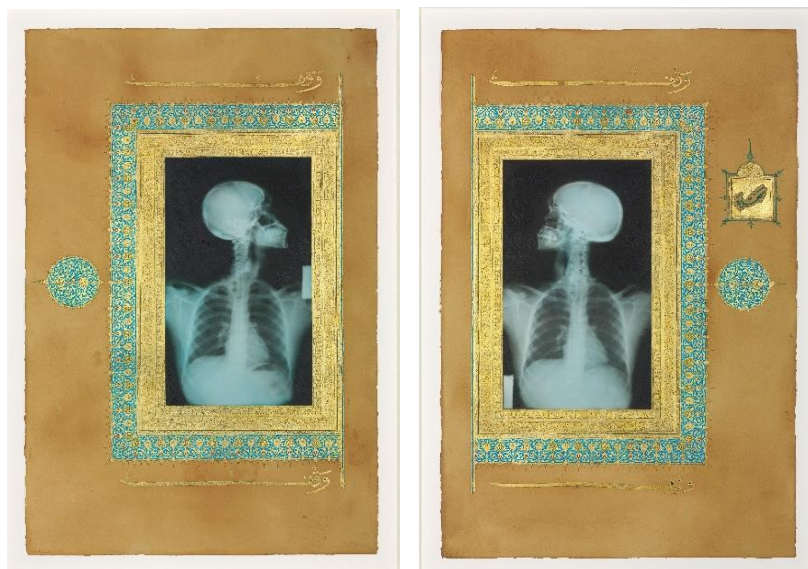
The Barracks of Amanos, painted by Paul Guiragossian (Lebanese, 1926-1993) in the late 1950s, early 1960s, is a hauntingly captivating work that captures the artist’s personal world (estimate: US\$80,000-120,000, *illustrated right*). A reference to the refugee camp of Amanos in Lebanon, where the survivors of the Armenian Genocide congregated in Lebanon, these ‘barracks’ were comprised of several hut-like structures.





The Contemporary Art section of the sale presents an iconic photograph from Shirin Neshat's (Iranian, b. 1957) acclaimed *Women of Allah* series, executed between 1993-1997 (estimate: US\$70,000-90,000, *illustrated left*). Neshat explores the notions of identity and femininity in relation to the contemporary issues of the Iranian society. Entrancing the viewer, these intimate portraits of female protagonists focus on the shielded identity of women in an Islamic culture. It is by addressing these issues that Neshat became one of the most sought-after pioneers of contemporary photography. As an unparalleled artistic force, Neshat has been able to conquer film, video and photographic art both in the East and West, in order to forge a harmonious marriage of her two cultures, ridding them of their stereotypical polarities.

Contemporary Saudi Arabian artist, Ahmed Mater (b. 1979), is breaking boundaries and making waves with his art and innovation. There is a new generation of artists from the Gulf nation who are using their art as a medium for social commentary and self-expression. Ahmed Mater's *Illumination* is a witty and clever way to circumvent the taboo against the realistic illustration of the human form in conservative Islamic society (estimate: US\$30,000-40,000, *illustrated right*).



To counterbalance this, Mater's work also draws from the decorative borders and headings in Quranic manuscripts, which are often printed in a gilded and even "illuminating" script. A similar pair of works titled *Illumination Diptych* (Ottoman Waqf) are part of the permanent collection at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

March 2016:

Activity Calendar

13 March, 11.00 AM	Christie's Press Conference
13-16 March	Christie's preview
13-14 March	Christie's Education Course
15 March, 7.00 PM	Christie's Important Watches Auction
16 March, 7.00 PM	Christie's Dubai: Modern and Contemporary Art
17 March, 7.00 PM	Christie's Elements of Style Auction

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction, private and digital sales in 2015 that totalled £4.8 billion / \$7.4 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. 2016 marks Christie's 250th anniversary. Founded in 1766 by James Christie, Christie's has since conducted the greatest and most celebrated auctions through the centuries providing a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers around 350 auctions 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 also has a long and successful history conducting private sales for its clients in all categories, with emphasis on Post-War & Contemporary, Impressionist & Modern, Old Masters and Jewellery. Christie's has a global presence with 54 offices in 32 countries and 12 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Mumbai. More recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in growth 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.

Images available on request