



CHRISTIE'S

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CHRISTIE'S TO MARK ITS 250th ANNIVERSARY IN DUBAI

1766-2016

CHRISTIE'S DUBAI PRESENTS A CURATED SALE WITH DISCOVERIES AND MANY WORKS FRESH TO THE MARKET

MODERN ARAB AND IRANIAN ART PREDOMINATES CHRISTIE'S DUBAI UPCOMING AUCTION

CULMINATION OF TEN YEARS CHRISTIE'S DUBAI 2006-2016

Dubai – Following the recent and very successful “10 year Christie’s Dubai” celebration this March, the leading art business proudly announces its 250th anniversary. James Christie, founder of today’s most renowned and oldest fine art auction house in the world, held his first auction on 5th of December 1766 in London. To celebrate, both of these landmark events, Christie’s Dubai presents a curated sale, offering 113 works of modern and contemporary art from the region, each reflecting on quality, rarity, freshness to the market and exceptional provenance, with works coming from private collections as widely spread as from Los Angeles to Amman.

BEYOND THE FOUNTAIN: PIONEERS OF SAQQAKHANEH

Christie’s is honoured to be offering this season the exceptional ‘Beyond the Fountain: Pioneers of Saqqakhaneh’ grouping of 19 works, all acquired directly from the respective artists, by the key pioneering Iranian artists who helped shape the much sought-after Saqqakhaneh movement in Iran in the 1960s. Led by rare and seminal works from Parviz Tanavoli and Faramarz Pilaram, Saqqakhaneh took its name from votive fountains installed for public drinking and congregating mainly in the older quarters of Iranian towns and cities. Aiming to reconcile their Iranian heritage and culture with Western art, the Saqqakhaneh artists shared a common fascination for traditional poetics and iconography and recognised the social role of the artist to create works which were accessible and understandable to the contemporary Iranian audience. Widely recognised as the most important movement of 20th century art in Iran, Saqqakhaneh put to light the works of Parviz Tanavoli, Faramarz Pilaram, Sohrab Sepehri, Massoud Arabshahi, Nasser Ovissi and Sadegh Tabrizi amongst others aiming to find and establish a national Iranian school of painting that was revolutionary in its ability to modernistically approach tradition whilst instilling a sense of freedom from the rigid boundaries of visual clichés.



Parviz Tanavoli (b. 1937), *Untitled (Persepolis)*, is a very rare work on card, which was executed in the early 1960's and has been kept since in private hands (estimate US\$40,000-60,000 AED150,000-220,000). Reminiscent of the bronze sculptures for which Parviz Tanavoli is widely celebrated, this work brings together the artist's Persian heritage with a contemporary aesthetic sensibility; the figure seated on the chariot references the Third King of the Persian Achaemenid Empire (ca. 550-330 B.C.), Darius the Great, who ruled the empire at its apotheosis. He is here depicted receiving a messenger, an iconography that is repeated on the carvings in Persepolis, whilst the overall composition with the surrounding figures add humour and a sense of Pop that define the intricacies of the Saqqakhaneh movement. The auction offers two more exquisite works on paper made by the artist in the early 1960s. *Untitled (from the Shirin and Farhad series)* (estimate US\$30,000-40,000 AED 110,000-150,000) and *Untitled (Vanishing Image)* (estimate US\$35,000-40,000 AED 130,000-150,000).



Another highlight of this exceptional collection is *Untitled (Composition 3)* (estimate US\$100,000-150,000 AED 370,000-550,000) by Faramarz Pilaram (1937-1982). In his works, the artist integrates architectural elements recalling the shapes of mosques and minarets from his hometown Isfahan and adapts votive Islamic motifs into his works, seeking inspiration from elements such as popular printed prayers, talismanic seals and amulets. One of five exceptional compositions by Pilaram that is included in this collection, the present work reveals Pilaram's traditionalist attitude and his devotion to spirituality. Pilaram rarely worked at such a large scale as the present work (179x88cm) and the linear grouping of the imagery, complimented by rich tones of colour, resembles long pillars, referencing ancient Islamic banners. Considered sacred by the artist, these larger scaled works enabled him to express more passionately the connection he felt to his artistic practice, making them somewhat primarily devotional. Further works included in the auction are the equally rare to find *Untitled (Compositions 6, 8, 18 and 19)*, each painted in the 1960's and offered as individual lots.



CHRISTIE'S FOR CHARITY

Christie's is as ever very proud to offer three important works of art to benefit reputable charitable organisations.

The proceeds of *Pentagon* made in 2011 by renowned Iranian artist Monir Farmanfarmaian (b. 1924) will be benefiting The Arjan Ala Charitable Trust (AACT) which in turn is dedicated to support the Iranian Comprehensive Haemophilia Care Centre (ICHCC), as a cause that is close to the artist's heart. *Pentagon* has been donated by the artist and is expected to fetch \$120,000 to 180,000 / AED440,000-650,000.

The work is an enchanting example of the artist's most definitive series of mirror mosaic and reverse-glass painting works that explore the infinite possibilities of geometry. Fascinated by the Sufi cosmology and the symbolism in geometry and soon she began to incorporate various shapes and colours - circles, triangles, squares, polygons - in her works, each of these shapes a metaphor for metaphysical values and ideas. Executed in 2011 and exhibited at the Sharjah Biennale in 2013, *Pentagon* is an intentional exploration of an abstract representation of sight, smell, sound, taste and touch.

Two works by the most important Emirati artist Abdul Qader Al Rais (b. 1951) have been specifically commissioned by UAE's leading luxury watch and jewellery retailer *Ahmed Seddiqi & Sons* for the second edition of Dubai Watch Week which will take place in November 2016. The two works will incorporate watch components and the proceeds from the auction will be donated to the Noor Dubai Foundation.

- *Zaman: Saa'a Ramliya (Hour Glass)* offered with an estimate of \$40,000-60,000
- *Zaman: A View from the First Ahmad Siddiqi & Sons Shop* with an estimate of US\$80,000-100,000/AED300,000-360,000. Both works are currently in progress.



MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ART

Village de Choueir - Liban (esquisse) by Mahmoud Saïd (Egyptian, 1897-1964) is a sketch painted on board from 1951 and estimated at US\$80,000-120,000/AED300,000-440,000. The work is one of several comprehensive preparatory oil sketches known as '*modelli*' that Mahmoud Saïd produced for a bigger scale painting depicting the same subject matter that, is one of Saïd's most important and

most ambitious known Lebanese landscapes. The subject is the picturesque mountain town of Dhour El-Choueir that overlooks Beirut, one of the popular summer getaways of the region.



The lyrical title in *Les années de l'oiseau* refers to one of Shafic Abboud (1926-2004) recurring and personal themes of the bird, which has been depicted in several paintings and other works of art. With its poetic connotations of freedom, the bird is an animal with which Abboud associated himself as an adolescent, whose thirst for life was characterised by the awakening of his senses and the liberation of feelings through his painting. The title of the present work, specifically refers to his teenage years that paradoxically coincided with some of the darkest years of Modern European history; 1939-1945. Every element is a quote from reality all brought together by a soft grey-blue tone into one harmonious composition that seems to be permanently in movement with its rich colour contrasts glimmering throughout the surface of the canvas. Throughout this masterpiece, Abboud seems to retrace a bird's trajectory, transcribing each perception into a line, resulting

in one of his most remarkable compositions from that time (estimate: \$120,000-180,000 AED440,000-650,000).



From *Modern to Contemporary Masters*, Farhad Moshiri's (b.1963) *2 Flamingos* painted in 2008, makes him a pioneer of the creative world in the Middle East. Acquired directly from the artist by the present collector, this work enters for the first time the auction world.

By crafting tiny wedding cakes the artist renders the paintbrush redundant as he uses these coloured objects to compose the scene of his canvas. In hues of green, white, yellow, pink and orange, the artist strategically places each pastry in a grid-like fashion across the canvas. Each hue tailored perfectly to form every highlight and shadow of the proposed scene. Breaking down the canvas as if to almost dissect the image into various pixels, this technique draws attention to the artist's meticulous attention to detail, with the ability to be appreciated both up close and from a distance. As a collector of kitsch imagery and an oeuvre which often

takes into account the superficiality and excesses of society, the artist references the attitudes of the Iranian *nouveau riche* (estimate US\$100,000-150,000 AED370,000-550,000).

In a nutshell, Christie's upcoming sale continuous to focus on modern works, a larger section of photography, the Saqqakhaneh school as well as representing again new artists to the auction circuit – this time two established Jordanian artists, Samia Zaru (*1938) and Mohanna Durra (*1938) with respectively works: *Al Aqaba*, 1970, estimate \$10,000-15,000 / AED37,000-55,000 and *Autumn Dew*, 1980, estimate \$18,000.20,000 / AED66,000-73,000

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About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction, private and digital sales in the first half of 2016 that totalled £2.1 billion / \$3 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. 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.

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. Click [HERE](#) to view a short film about Christie's and the 250th anniversary.

Christie's has a global presence in 46 countries, with 12 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Mumbai. 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.*

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