

CHRISTIE'S

PRESS RELEASE | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | 28 AUGUST 2019

3rd CHRISTIE'S MIDDLE EASTERN ART SALE IN LONDON FEATURES:



Monir Farmanfarmaian (1924-2019), *Untitled (Faravahar Wings, Zarathustra)* 2008 (estimate: £240,000-400,000)

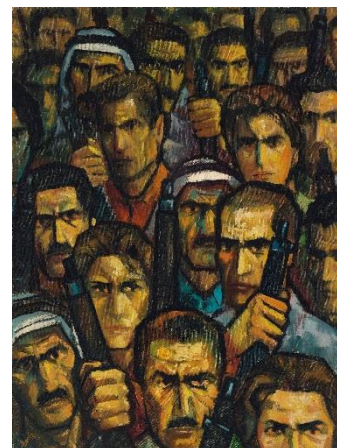
Dubai / London – Christie's third 'Middle Eastern Modern & Contemporary Art' auction to be held outside of Dubai will take place on 23 October and is included as part of the rich and traditional Islamic Art Week in London. Around ninety works of Middle Eastern art have been consigned from around the globe, including Los Angeles, New York, London, Dubai, Paris, Beirut, Buenos Aires, Milan, Perth and Casablanca, among others. The auction is mainly focused on modern Arab and Iranian works, with an emphasis on contemporary practice. Strong modern artists from the region include Louay Kayyali and Fateh Moudarres (Syrian), Manoucher Yektaï (Iranian), Ismail Shammout (Palestinian), as well as strong selection of modern female artists, including Bibi Zogbé (Lebanese), Chaïbia Talal (Moroccan), Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian (Iranian), Zeinab Abd El Hamid (Egyptian), Tahia Halim (Egyptian). Contemporary artists include Farhad Moshiri, Ali Banisadr, Reza Derakshani and Hadieh Shafie (Iranian) and Marwan Sahmarani (Lebanese).

"A diversity of mediums, subject matter, geographies, and sale estimates characterise Christie's third Middle East art sale in London, providing a global platform for art and artists from this ever-evolving region," said **Hala Khayat, Christie's Director and Head of Sale in the Middle East**. "From masterworks by some of Iran, Egypt, and Syria's most celebrated artists to contemporary pieces from emerging talents, there is something compelling for every collector."

A work by the late Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian (1924-2019 – illustrated above), one of Iran's most celebrated artists who passed away earlier this year, will highlight the auction. Executed in 2008, *Untitled (Faravahar Wings, Zarathustra)* is a beautiful and rare masterpiece inspired by the wings of Faravahar, one of the most common symbols of the ancient religion of Zoroastrianism. Kaleidoscopic in its magnificent form, the work depicts a series of triangular mirrors that reflects light in every direction, touching upon the concept of the *fravashi*, which is part of the human soul acting as a divine blessing and entirely good. Standing in front of the

work, the viewer can admire the abstracted and simplified version of the Faravahar, as Farmanfarmaian has broken it down to its foundational essence (estimate: £240,000-400,000). The inclusion of Farmanfarmaian's piece in the auction coincides with major exhibitions of her work this year at the Sharjah Art Foundation and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago. In 2017 a dedicated museum to the artist opened in Tehran.

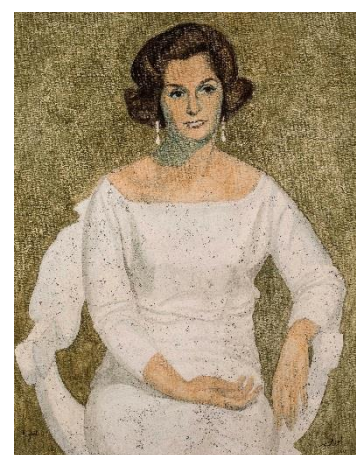
A group of five works by the Palestinian modernist Ismail Shammout (1930-2006) will also be offered by two different collections, which includes the featured work here, *The Way*, along with watercolours from the acclaimed *Tall Al Zaater* series. Painted in 1964 and consigned from a private Italian collection, *The Way* (estimate: £50,000-70,000), was previously exhibited in Berlin's National Galerie in the 1970s, reflecting the artist's international recognition. The work reflects the tone of the dramatic and tragic events unfolding in Palestine during the 1950s and 60s. Viewed as a whole, the profiles create a melancholic, aggrieved tone. The depicted men and women decisively appear to advance together, moving forward, towards the viewer, in constructing a visual narrative of Palestinian nationalism.



A pioneer member of the revolutionary Iranian neo-calligraphists group, Nasrollah Afjehei (b.1933) played a major role in the Naqqashi-khatt trend, in the 1970s. The present work is one of the largest to come to auction (estimate: £60,000-80,000), measuring over 3 metres wide, an impressive work attesting to the artist's perfect technical mastery. Being interested in calligraphy from a very young age, Afjehei practiced under the tutelage of many of the great Iranian

calligraphers such as Mir Khani, Kimia Qalam, and Kaveh. After completing the renowned Society of Iranian Calligraphers course in 1963-1964, the artist started working on the combination of Naqqashi - painting - and Khatt - script.

A Master of Syrian Modern Art, Louay Kayyali produced an extensive oeuvre in his short-lived life, documenting people in his country and portraying the beauty and vulnerability of life. The epitome of feminine grace, the spirit of the *Portrait of Umayma Hussein Ibish*, painted in 1962, dominates the composition, with luminosity (estimate: £30,000-50,000), demarcated by the artist's strong fluid lines and a contrasting colour palette. During the 1960s, the artist moved from Aleppo to Damascus, quickly building a name for himself as he depicted the Syrian upper class as well as the lower working classes, finding the beauty and wisdom within, regardless of class or attire.



Activities for collectors and patrons scheduled during Christie's Middle East and Iranian Art Week in London include book launches, gallery talks, and private tours. A discussion with Syrian contemporary artist, Sara Shamma, a previous National Portrait Gallery BP prize-winner, whose 2016 *Self-Portrait* (estimate: £12,000-18,000) is being offered in the 23 October auction, will take place on Monday 21 October 2019.

Auction *23 October 2019 in London at 7.00pm*

Viewing *19-23 October at Christie's 8 King Street in London*

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About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had auction sales in the first half of 2019 that totalled £2.2 billion / \$2.8 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and international expertise. 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.

Alongside regular sales online, Christie's has a global presence in 46 countries, with 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, Hong Kong, and Shanghai.

**Please note when quoting estimates above that other fees will apply in addition to the hammer price - see Section D of the Conditions of Sale at the back of the sale catalogue.*

**Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and are reported net of applicable fees.*

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