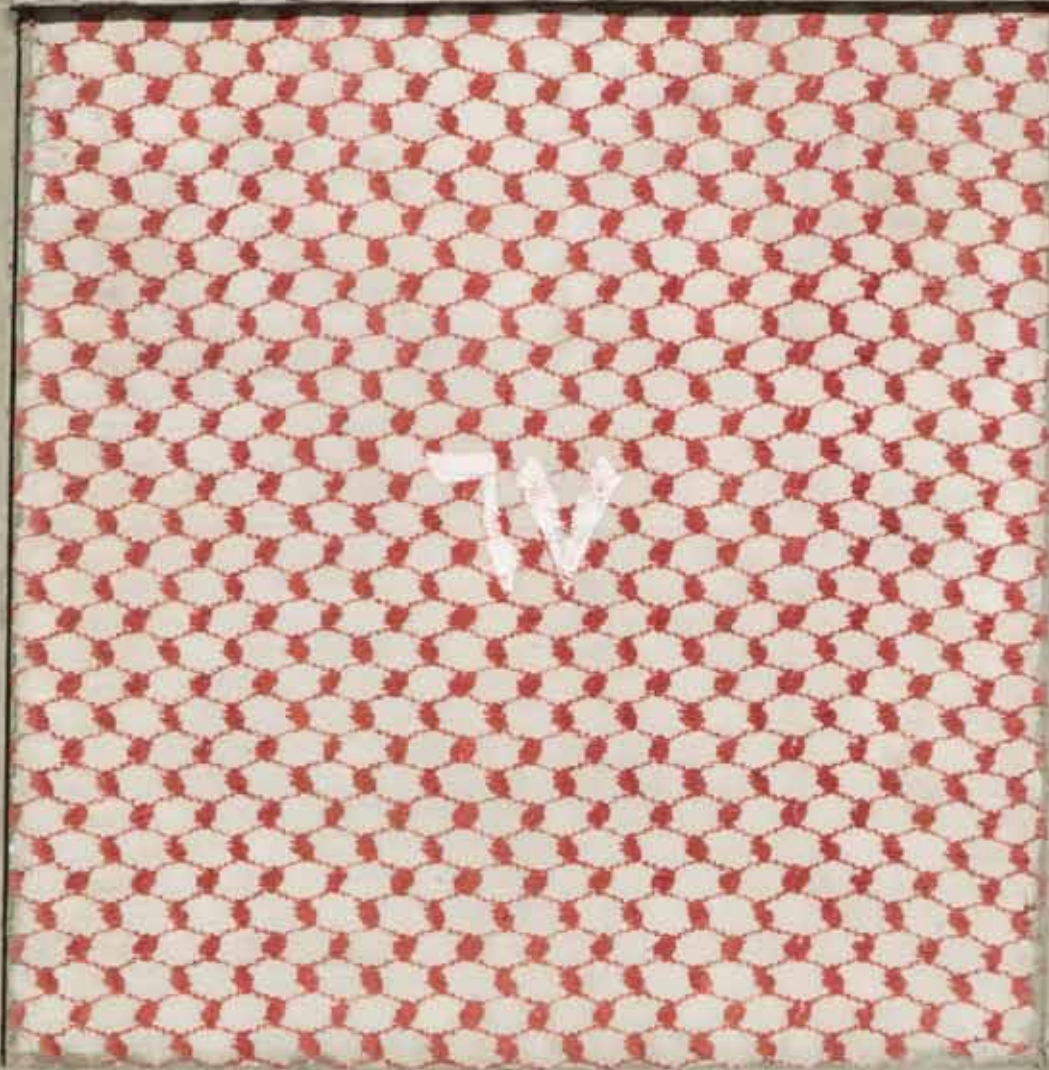


Auction No. 20

# The Young Collectors Auction

Featuring a Selection of Rare Modern Masterpieces

Auction: Tuesday, May 27, 2014







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Art from the Middle East

Viewing: 20 - 26 May, 2014, 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM

**Auction: Tuesday, May 27, 2014**  
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Head of Session & Auctioneer

**Hisham Samawi**



Khaled Samawi

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# Khaled Takreti

(Lebanon, born 1964)

## Lot 001

*Souvenir d'Enfance*  
2008  
Mixed media on paper  
45 x 60 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$4,000 - \$7,000

Khaled Takreti explores the intricacies of interpersonal relationships through emotive portraits that register space and time. Capturing subtle gestures or fleeting moments of expressive admissions, Takreti zeroes in on the fragile nature of social institutions. In his earlier works, the familial unit or bond between mother and child provided a springboard for such examinations and are rendered with reference to his own biography. The artist's large-scale compositions often revolve around female figures, which he feels brings a sense of stability and strength while generating a tranquility and balance in his work. Positioned against vacant or minimal backgrounds, he utilises colour, compositional design, and imaginative imagery to submerge his subjects in the psychology of particular moments.

Born in Beirut in 1964, Khaled Takreti lives and works in Paris. He studied architecture and design at the University of Damascus and worked for the General Directorate of Antiquity and Museums in Syria prior to traveling to New York in 1995 where he resided for two years and focused on contemporary art. Exhibiting since 1996, his paintings have been shown in the Alexandria Biennale and Art Hong Kong, among other venues, and are housed in the collections of the Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art; the National Museum of Damascus; and the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts. Takreti's recent solo and group exhibitions include Gwangju Museum of Arts, South Korea (2014); Ayyam Gallery London (2013); Ayyam Gallery DIFC, Dubai (2012, 2010); Ayyam Gallery Beirut (2010); Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha (2011); and Paris et l'Art Contemporain Arabe, Paris (2011). In 2012 Takreti was named among the top 101 greatest living artists in France by arts publication *Art Absolument*.



**Khaled Takreti**  
(Lebanon, born 1964)

**Lot 002**

*Le Ballon Vert*  
2008

Mixed media on paper  
45 x 60 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$4,000 - \$7,000



# Samia Halaby

(Palestine, born 1936)

## Lot 003

*Garden*  
2001  
Seriscreen wax monotype  
54 x 65 cm  
signed, dated and titled

Estimate: \$6,000 - \$9,000

Samia Halaby is a leading abstract painter and an influential scholar of Palestinian art. Central to Halaby's theoretical treatment of abstraction are formal strategies that attempt to examine and communicate physical properties as they are experienced in reality. Recognised as a pioneer of contemporary abstraction in the Arab world, although based in the United States since 1951, she has exhibited throughout the region and abroad. Samia Halaby was the first fulltime female associate professor at the Yale School of Art, a position she held for nearly a decade during the initial part of her career when she taught at universities across the United States. In addition to a renewed interest in her oeuvre recently, historians of new media are currently re-evaluating Halaby's experiments with computer-based painting in the 1980s, which she created programs for and performed live at Lincoln Center and the Brooklyn Museum of Art in New York and categorised as kinetic art.

Born in Jerusalem in 1936, Samia Halaby's work is widely collected by international institutions including the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum of Art (New York and Abu Dhabi), the National Gallery of Art, Washington, the Art Institute of Chicago, Institut du Monde Arab, The British Museum, and Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art. Halaby's writings on art have appeared in *Leonardo*, *Journal of Arts, Sciences and Technology* and *Arab Studies Quarterly*, among others, while her independently published survey *Liberation Art of Palestine: Palestinian Paintings and Sculpture in the Second Half of the 20th Century* (2002) is considered a seminal text of Palestinian art history. The artist's second monograph, *Samia Halaby, Five Decades of Painting and Innovation* (2014), was published by Booth-Clibborn Editions in conjunction with an eponymous retrospective.





**Samia Halaby**  
(Palestine, born 1936)

**Lot 004**

*Roses and a Daisy*  
2001  
Seriscreen wax monotype  
54 x 71.5 cm  
signed and dated  
Estimate: \$6,000 - \$9,000



# Nadim Karam

(Lebanon, born 1957)

## Lot 005

*The Dream Castle, Watch Out for the Desert Whirlwind, Tugging on the Flower String, All is Well,*  
From the *99 Small Objects* series  
2013

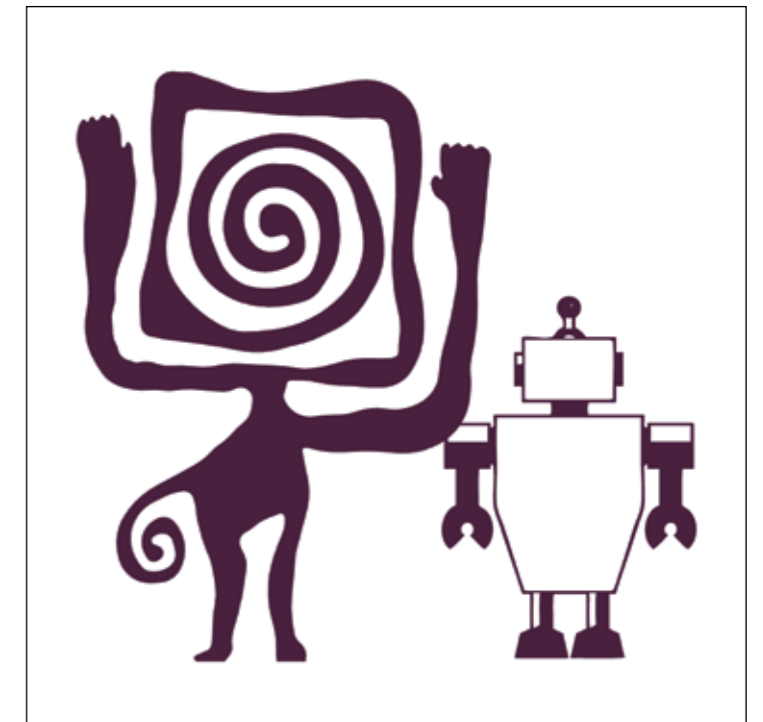
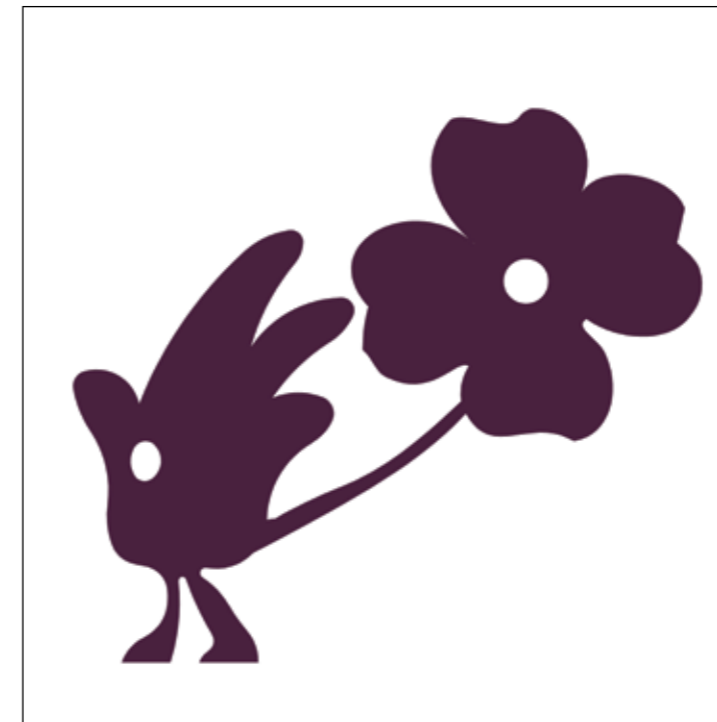
Archival print on cotton paper  
31 x 31 cm each  
Edition 2/5  
signed, dated, numbered and titled

Estimate: \$4,000 - \$7,000

Lebanese artist and architect Nadim Karam's multi-disciplinary approach incorporates painting, drawing, sculpture, and writing. Fusing various cultural influences, Karam's works transcend social, political, and national borders, forming a unique pictorial language, replete with recurring symbols, and with its own original characters and narratives. They form an alphabet of sorts, in what is an ongoing, sometimes absurdist, exploration of the creative power of dreams.

Renowned for his public art and work in urban regeneration, Karam has most recently been lauded for his architectural plan *The Cloud*, which made international headlines for its revolutionary ideas on how to reconfigure public space amidst Dubai's growing cityscape. Karam's projects and installations are interventions that seek to animate cities as diverse as Melbourne, Prague, Dubai, Beirut, London, and Nara, Japan. These interventions often take the form of large-scale steel sculptures, described as 'urban toys' by the artist. For Karam, it is not only we, as humans, who need to dream, but our cities too – his urban toys are acts of whimsy and a rebellion against the soulless nature of so many modern spaces, bringing to life the environments around him. Says Karam: "Each urban toy has a message. An open message ready to be inhabited by stories which become mingled with history."

Born in 1957 in Senegal, Nadim Karam lives and works in Beirut. He received a Bachelor of Architecture from the American University of Beirut (1982) and a Doctorate of Architecture from the University of Tokyo (1989). In 1996, he established Atelier Hapsitus ([www.hapsitus.com](http://www.hapsitus.com)), a satellite grouping of young Lebanese architects, and designers seeking to create an original urban vocabulary through large-scale art installation and architectural works for various cities worldwide. Karam's work has appeared in numerous solo and group exhibitions worldwide including Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris (2013), as well as biennales such as Venice, Liverpool, and Gwangju. The artist's past publications include *The Cloud*, *The Desert and The Arabian Breeze* (2007); *Urban Toys* (2006) and *Voyage* (2000). In 2013 his monograph *Stretching Thoughts* was published by Booth-Clibborn Editions.





# Ammar Al Beik

(Syria, born 1972)

## Lot 006

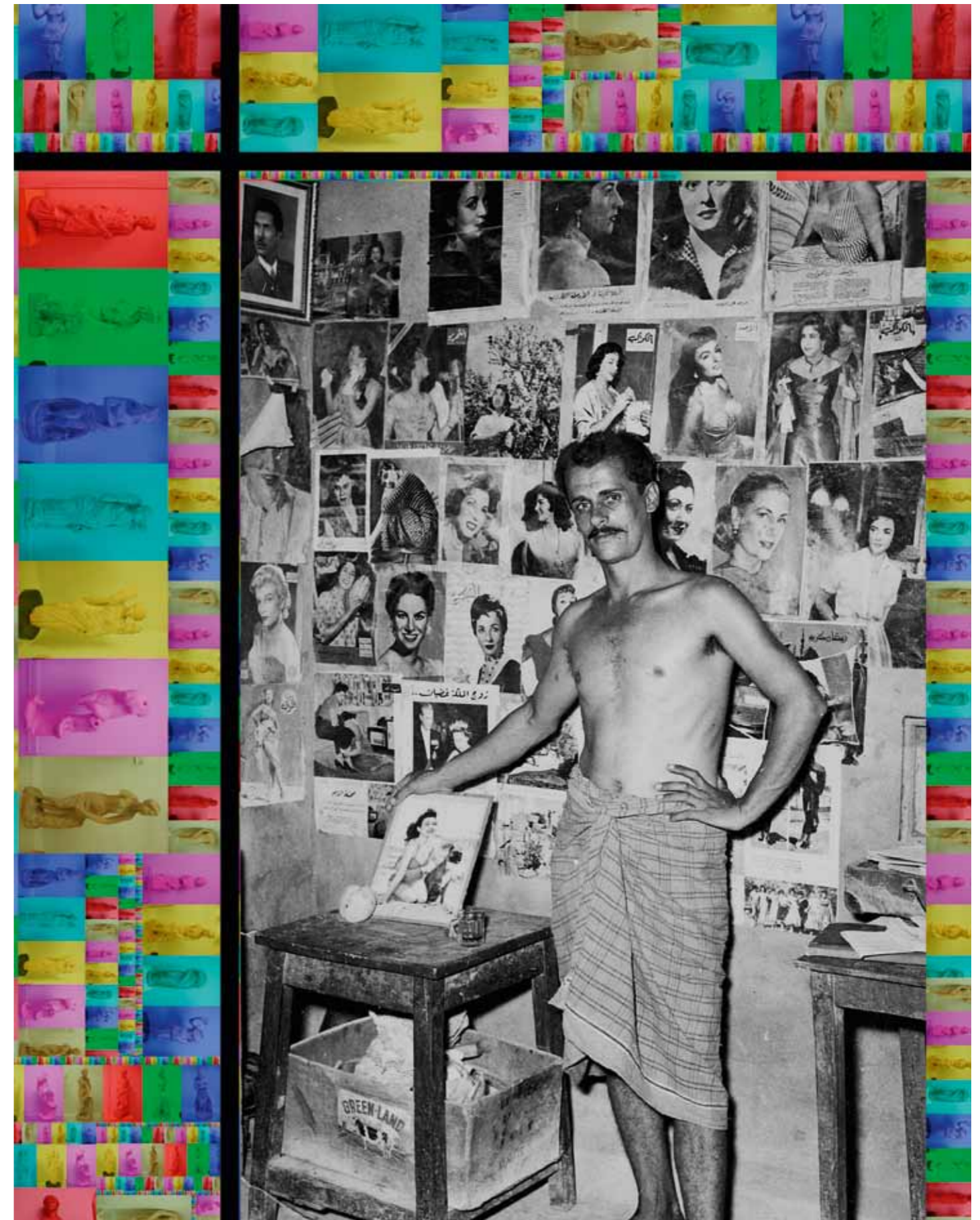
*Giacomo Casanova*  
From the *Lost Images II* series  
2013  
Archival print on cotton paper  
140 x 110 cm  
Edition 1/7  
signed, dated and numbered

Estimate: \$6,000 - \$9,000

Ammar Al Beik's artistic career stems from unconventional roots. Abandoning his pursuit of a degree in business administration from the University of Damascus, he began experimenting with photography while working at a camera repair shop in the heart of the Syrian capital. Receiving rigorous training through this inadvertent apprenticeship, he began to work in photography and inevitably turned to filmmaking. Two decades into his artistic practice, Al Beik continues to alternate between photography and film, and recently added installation to his repertoire, effortlessly moving between media with an acute sense of capturing narrative structures through subtle nuance and an incisive interest in the potential of art as an act of rebellion.

*Lost Images* is a series based on undeveloped negatives that the artist bought from different vendors (some from the black market) in Syria. The artist developed these negatives, which date from 1950 to 1960, and subsequently manipulated them in order to exhume what was otherwise lost with the buildup of time, namely the minutiae of lives now forgotten. The motifs around each black and white picture represent photographs of sculptural portraits of women (Greek, Roman, etc) that exist at the Syrian National Museum taken by the artist in 2005. Such additional imagery cements the recovered photographs as transcendent relics.

Born in Damascus in 1972, Ammar Al Beik lives and works in Dubai. He has exhibited his photographs since the mid 1990s, when he simultaneously began a career in filmmaking that has received critical acclaim and a number of distinctions from juries across the globe. Internationally renowned for his films, he has participated in festivals worldwide, including the Sao Paulo International Film Festival; Edinburgh Documentary Film Festival; Berlin International Film Festival; and Locarno International Film Festival. In 2006 he was the first Syrian filmmaker to receive the award for best documentary at the Venice International Film Festival. In 2011, he returned to the prestigious festival to present *The Sun's Incubator*, a work exploring the domestic effects of the Arab Spring. Al Beik's solo and group exhibitions of photography include Fotofest, Houston (2014); Los Angeles County Museum (2013); Ayyam Gallery Al Quoz, Dubai (2013); Ayyam Gallery Damascus (2011, 2010, 2008); Ayyam Gallery Beirut (2010). Al Beik's artworks are held in private and public institutions such as the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA).



# Safwan Dahoul

(Syria, born 1961)

## Lot 007

*Rêve*  
2014

Archival print on cotton paper  
110 x 120 cm  
Edition 1/25  
signed, dated, numbered and titled

Estimate: \$5,000 - \$8,000

Safwan Dahoul explores the corporal and psychological effects of alienation, solitude, and longing that punctuate the human experience at various stages in life. Partly autobiographical, his ongoing *Rêve* series utilises the formal properties of painting—composition, palette, and brushwork—to recreate the subconscious sense of enclosure that surfaces during times of crisis, whether in death, estrangement, or political conflict. Dahoul's recurring female protagonist facilitates this visceral encounter through her contorted body, often-vacant eyes, and minimal yet monumental physicality.

Born in 1961 in Hama, Syria, Safwan Dahoul lives and works in Dubai. Dahoul attended the Suheil Al Ahdab Center of Plastic Arts and the Faculty of Fine Arts in Damascus. In 1987 he received a scholarship to study abroad from the Ministry of Higher Education and relocated to Belgium, achieving his Doctorate from the Higher Institute of Plastic Arts in Mons in 1997.

His work is held in numerous private and public collections including the Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris; The Samawi Collection, Dubai; The Farjam Collection, Dubai; and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, Kuwait. Dahoul has participated in recent solo and group exhibitions at Ayyam Gallery DIFC, Dubai (2014, 2011); Ayyam Gallery London (2013); Edge of Arabia, London (2013); Emirates Palace, Abu Dhabi (2013); and Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris (2012).





Safwan Dahoul  
(Syria, born 1961)

Lot 008

*Rêve*  
2014  
Archival print on cotton paper  
110 x 120 cm  
Edition 1/25  
signed, dated, numbered and titled

Estimate: \$5,000 - \$8,000



# Faisal Samra

(Saudi Arabia, born 1956)

## Lot 009

*Performance #59*  
From the *Distorted Reality* series  
2008  
Lambda print  
66 x 150 cm  
Edition 2/3

Estimate: \$15,000 - \$20,000



Long considered one of the Gulf's leading artists and a pioneer of conceptual art in the region, Faisal Samra describes himself as a nomad wandering through time. The cultural amalgam of having lived in Paris, New York, and Beirut while also travelling in Morocco and Asia has led to diverse influences in his artistic practice. Combining elements of digital photography, painting, sculpture, video, and performance, Samra probes the political fissures and social contradictions of visual culture through works that subvert historical narratives and contemporary realities. Consequently, the target of Samra's creative machination is primarily visual culture predicated upon systems of mass media, advertisements, or political communication.

Bahraini-born Saudi national Faisal Samra graduated from the *École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts* in Paris. In addition to his artistic practice, he has worked as an art and graphic design consultant for the *Institut du Monde Arabe* (Paris), a stage designer for Saudi television, and an instructor at the Fine Arts Department of Amman University in Jordan.

Samra has contributed to numerous seminal group shows such as *Word Into Art* at the British Museum (London and Dubai), *Languages of the Desert: Contemporary Arab Art from the Gulf States* (Abu Dhabi, Paris and Kunstmuseum, Bonn), and *Traversée*, (Paris, Cairo, Rabat). His work is housed in the collections of The British Museum (London) the National Museum (Mexico City), and the Modern Art Museum (Cairo), and Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art (Doha). Samra has participated in Biennials in Singapore and Cairo, and is a jury member for the Alexandria Biennale, Egypt.



# Oussama Diab

(Palestine, born 1977)

## Lot 010

*Evolution*  
2014

Concrete and canvas on wood  
100 x 300 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$12,000 - \$18,000

Palestinian artist Oussama Diab applies a conceptual approach to painting by exploiting the stylistic variants of the medium as emotive prompts in order to explore how form can articulate the urgency of sociopolitical issues. In an age where digital media have taken a dominant role in filtering our everyday experiences and the construction of imagery has become integral to the negotiation of modern life, Diab addresses the contradictions and obstacles of political conflict, globalisation, and exile through playful symbolism, references to popular culture, iconic imagery, and narrative structures. With each new series he adopts a different painting style, reflecting the impermanent nature of art as it becomes increasingly conceptual and further dematerialised.

Born in 1977 in Damascus, Oussama Diab lives and works in Beirut. A graduate of the Faculty of Fine Arts in Damascus in 2002, he has featured in solo and group exhibitions throughout the region and is the recipient of numerous awards including the Shabab Young Artists exhibition in Syria. Solo shows include Ayyam Gallery DIFC, Dubai (2012); Ayyam Gallery Beirut (2010-II); Ayyam Gallery Dubai (2010); Ayyam Gallery Damascus (2009).



# Mouteea Murad

(Syria, born 1977)

## Lot 011

*Trial No. 80*  
2012  
Acrylic on canvas  
155 x 155 cm  
signed, dated and titled

Estimate: \$15,000 - \$20,000

Mouteea Murad's entrance into art was marked by monotone, expressionist compositions that explored the anguish of modern man. In 2007, however, he emerged with a renewed outlook that redirected his painting style. Abandoning his initial aesthetic, he began to explore colour relativity, spatiality, and the visual dynamism of geometric forms by adhering to the non-objective directives of Islamic art, which references the splendour of the natural world by privileging abstraction and its ability to ignite the senses. Several phases of painting have resulted from Murad's new focus as he builds on the breakthroughs of previous movements, exploring, for example, automatic brushwork, the illusionistic perspective of Op art, the symmetry of geometric abstraction, and the collapsing planes of Suprematism.

In recent years the unification of spirituality and formalism of Islamic art has continued to serve as the basis for Murad's work as he rejects the ugliness of war now plaguing his native Syria. Seeking to offer beauty to a world consumed by conflict, he finds inspiration in the quiet moments that surround him such as a blossoming tree in his studio's garden. This sense of serenity becomes an act of defiance as his compositions radiate with colour in harmonious linear patterns that seek to transport the viewer.

Born in 1977 in Homs, Syria, Mouteea Murad lives and works in Cairo. He received a Bachelor of Arts from the Faculty of Fine Arts, Damascus in 2001. His works are housed in private and public collections internationally, including the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts. The artist's recent solo exhibitions include Ayyam Gallery DIFC, Dubai (2013); Ayyam Gallery Beirut (2011); Ayyam Gallery DIFC, Dubai (2011); Ayyam Gallery Damascus (2010).





# Elias Izoli

(Syria, born 1976)

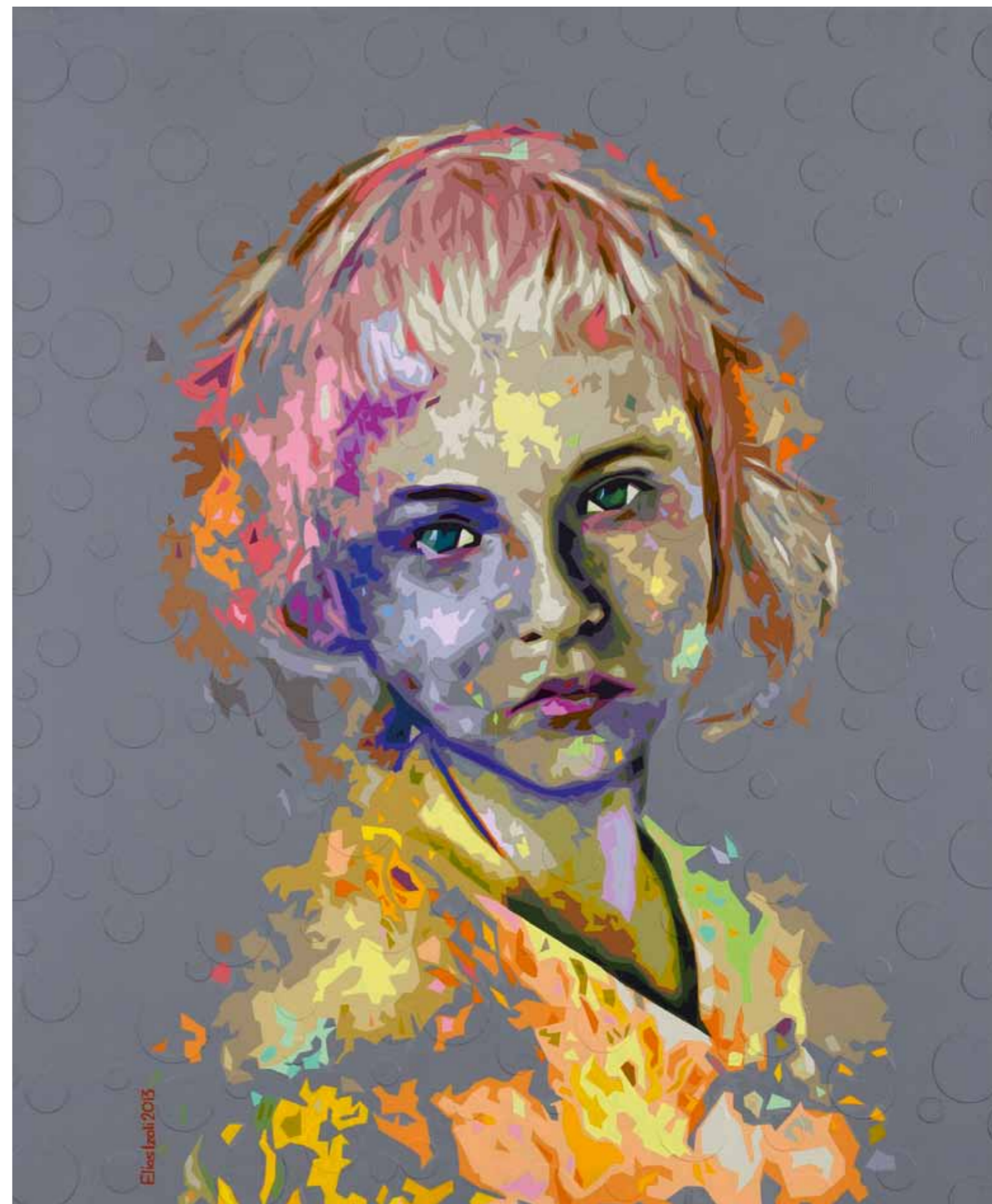
## Lot 012

*Untitled*  
2013  
Acrylic on canvas  
120 x 100 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$12,000 - \$18,000

Elias Izoli is a self-taught realist painter whose creativity was harnessed at an exceptionally young age. In Damascus, his talent was recognised early on and he was given a solo exhibition at the Russian Cultural Centre at age seventeen. With consummate draftsmanship, a marked command of colour, and an intensive approach to capturing his subjects, Izoli's compositions defy conventional portraiture. Recently, the impact of the Syrian war has inspired him to produce psychologically laden portraits of children caught in the crossfire of violence.

Born in Damascus in 1976, Elias Izoli lives and works in the city. He has exhibited since 1993 and was included in group shows at Ayyam Gallery Beirut and Dubai in 2010, 2012, and 2013.





# Abdul Karim Majdal Al-Beik

(Syria, born 1973)

## Lot 013

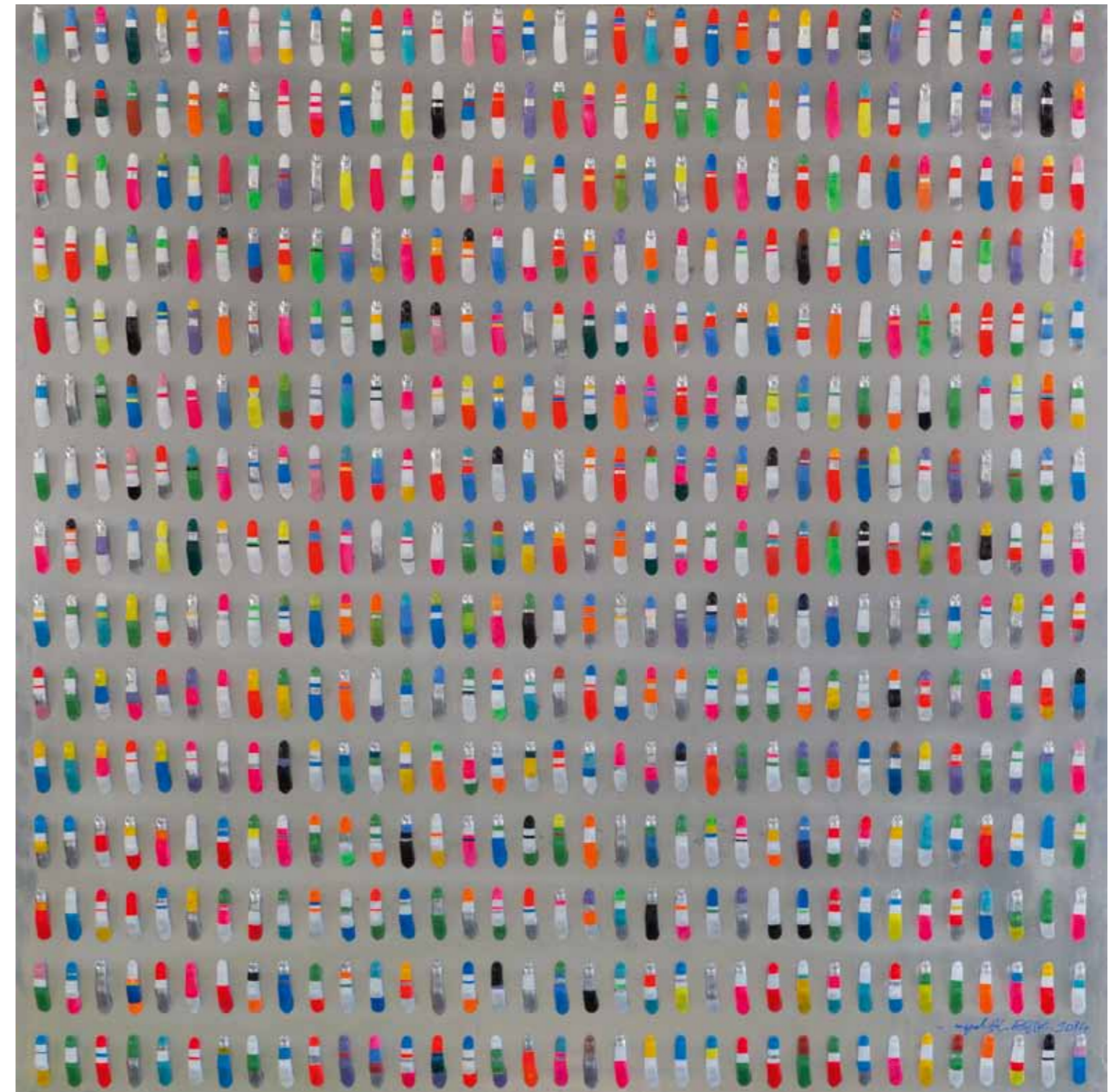
*Beirut*  
2014  
Mixed media on wood  
180 x 180 x 7 cm  
signed, dated and titled

Estimate: \$15,000 - \$20,000

In his large-scale mixed media works, Abdul Karim Majdal Al-Beik transforms unconventional materials such as charcoal, plaster, starch, ash, and burlap into evocative mediums that reproduce the patina of imbued surfaces. Basing his “combine paintings” on the weathered layers of graffiti, markings, and cracks that can be found on the exterior surfaces of public spaces, he seeks to explore how such understated facets can serve as records of the oscillation of society over time. Replicating the outer textures, colours, and shapes of deteriorating facades, Majdal Al-Beik excavates the buried traces of past lives, passages that situate cities as reluctant witnesses.

With the start of the recent war in Syria, Majdal Al-Beik’s practice has reflected greater usage of assemblage through the addition of found objects such as small crosses, fabric strips, string, guns, and knives in order to communicate the stark circumstances of life under conflict.

Born in a small village on the outskirts of Al-Hasakah, Syria in 1973, Abdul Karim Majdal Al-Beik trained at the Faculty of Fine Arts, Damascus. His works are housed in public and private collections throughout the Middle East and Europe and he has been the recipient of several awards, including those from the Latakia Biennale and the Shabab Ayyam competition for emerging artists. Selected solo and group exhibitions include Ayyam Gallery DIFC (2013); Ayyam Gallery Beirut (2012); Ayyam Gallery Damascus (2008); National Museum of Aleppo (2006); Tehran Biennale for Art in the Islamic World (2005); Unesco Palace, Beirut (2001); and the British Council, Damascus (2000).





# Afshin Pirhashemi

(Iran, born 1974)

## Lot 014

*Untitled*  
2013  
Oil on canvas  
100 x 150 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$25,000 - \$35,000

Afshin Pirhashemi examines the complexities of life in modern day Iran through photorealist portraits that often bleed at their edges into expressionist compositions, becoming dramatic tableaux. Pirhashemi is fascinated by the role of women in contemporary Iranian society and their relationships to the world around them. Tapping into the psychosocial dimensions of contemporary Iran, Pirhashemi explores manifestations of power as they appear or are negotiated through gendered bodies and spaces.

Born in 1974 in Urmia, Afshin Pirhashemi now lives and works in Tehran. His works are housed in public and private collections throughout the Middle East and Europe and he is the recipient of awards from the 2003 Tehran 6th International Art Biennial, and the 2004 Beijing Art Biennial Award. Solo exhibitions include Ayyam Gallery, Dubai (2013); Homa art Gallery, Tehran (2009); Seyhoun Art Gallery, Tehran (2005); and Barg Gallery, Tehran (2005). Group exhibitions include *In & Out*, Milan (2009); Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Tehran (2006); Museum of Contemporary Art, Tehran (2004, 2003).





# Mohammad Bozorgi

(Iran, born 1978)

## Lot 015

*Oil Art*  
2014  
Mixed media on canvas  
106 x 160 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$8,000 - \$12,000

Mohammad Bozorgi approaches calligraphy with an architectural eye that is evident in the mathematical structure and symmetry of letters, especially those comprising his *Crying for Honour* series. Bozorgi's masterful command of the centuries-old tradition is the result of intensive studies in classical calligraphic forms such as divani, kufic, nastaliq, naskh, sols, Mohaggegh and broken nastaliq in order to develop distinctly stylized characters based on Arabic and Persian examples. After training with the Society of Iranian Calligraphers for over a decade, Bozorgi left to pursue more innovative calligraphic forms. Drawing from his background in engineering, he makes qualitative calculations when constructing his works, using the directives of geometry to create abstract illusions of movement and space. Building on the breakthroughs of his predecessors, such as those who led the Saqqakhaneh school of Iranian painters in the 1960s, Bozorgi is recognised as a leading figure among the "New Generation" of contemporary calligraphers.

Born in Tehran in 1978, Mohammad Bozorgi holds a Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Engineering as well as an MBA from the Industrial Management Institute and Momtaz degrees from the Calligraphy Association of Iran. His recent solo and group exhibitions have been held at Ayyam Gallery, Jeddah (2014); Homa Gallery, Tehran (2014); Galerie Nicolas Flamel (2013); and Kashya Hildebrand Gallery, Zurich (2012).





Ali Shirazi  
(Iran, born 1960)

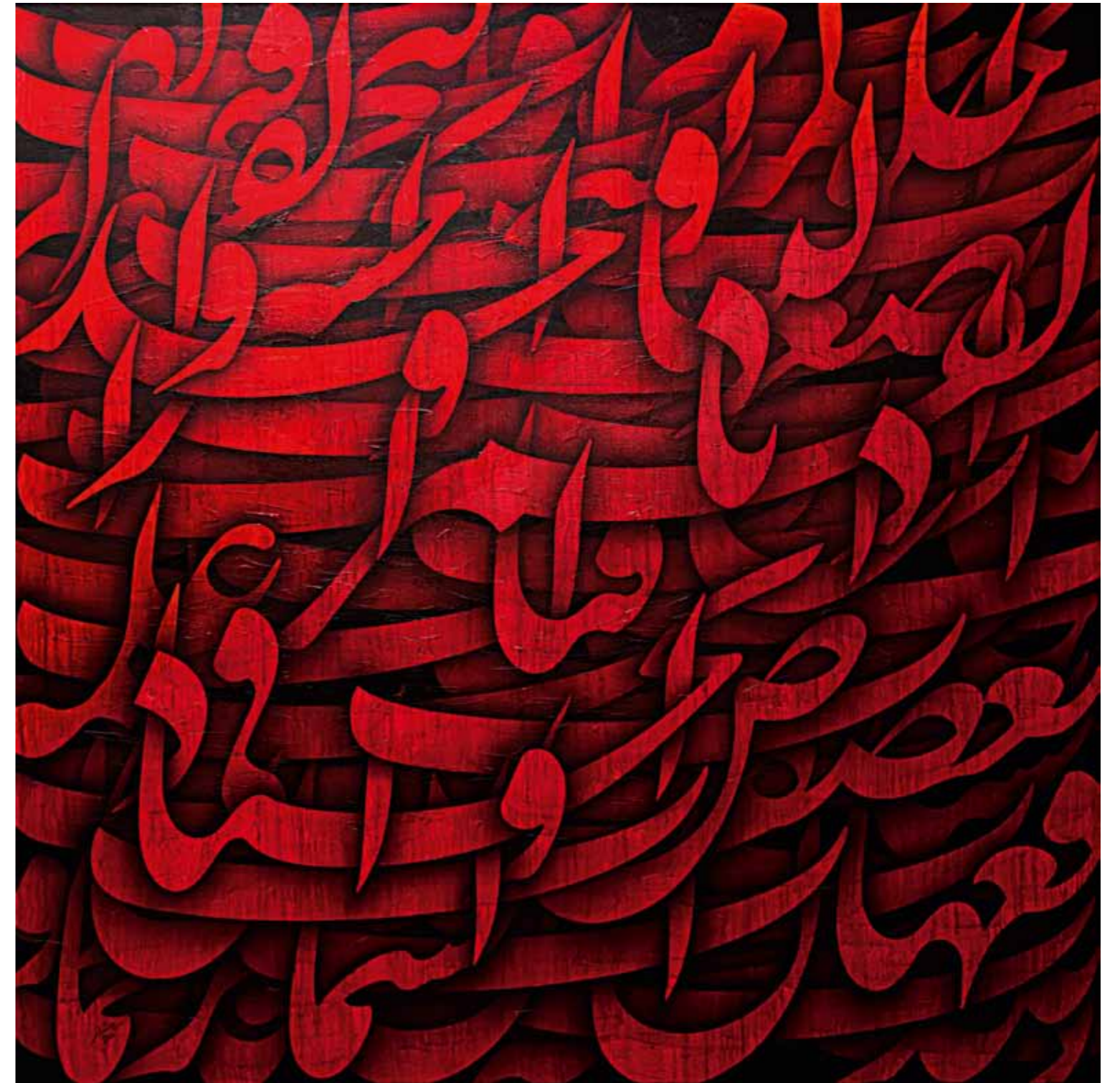
Lot 016

*Al Rahman (Soorat Al Rahman from the Qur'an)*  
2012  
Acrylic on canvas  
200 x 200 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$15,000 - \$20,000

Ali Shirzai has been practicing calligraphic arts for the last forty years. The artist's brightly coloured canvases pay homage to the beauty of the spiritual and the poetic in the Quran. This particular lot references Surah Al Rahman from the Quran, which is composed entirely in *Saj*, rhyming prose characteristic of early Arab poetry. Surah Al Rahman is said to be "the adornment of the Quran," and so the artist melds utterances of an aestheticised nature with representations of objects and phenomena from the natural world. Shirazi pairs Quranic verses such as Al Rahman and Al Hamd with representations of thawing ice or sandstorm patterning.

Ali Shirazi was born in 1960 in Shiraz, Iran. He has trained in calligraphy since 1974, obtaining a distinction from the Iranian Calligraphy Society. Shirazi was former Head of the Isfahan Calligraphy Society and is a member of the High Council of the Iranian Calligraphy Society, Tehran. His works are housed in various public and private collections including the Islamic Culture and Communication Organization, the Imam Ali Museum of Tehran, Tehran Quran Museum, Sharjah Art Museum, UAE, and the Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar.





# Fathallah Zamroud

(Lebanon, born 1968)

## Lot 017

*Untitled*  
2014  
Acrylic on canvas  
160 x 160 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$6,000 - \$9,000

Fathallah Zamroud's recent paintings reflect the critical perceptions of space that have come with his training in architecture and fine art and his interest in the rigorous brushwork and emphatic uses of colour of the German Expressionists. Zamroud trained as an interior architect at the Lebanese American University prior to embarking on a seven-year studio intensive with Lebanese painter Louna Maalouf. Working alongside Maalouf, he gained knowledge of various formal techniques and experimented with a range of drawing and painting media.

When depicting disintegrating cities or the swelling yet desolate camps of the displaced, Zamroud zooms in on remnants and objects such as tires, ladders, temporary roofing materials, and tarpaulin. The artist's expressionist compositions recall the restless brushstrokes of painters such as Karl Schmidt-Rottluff and Emil Nolde while his muted palette allows the viewer to enter such scenes "behind the surface of the real," a place of pathos that Carla Schulz-Hoffmann once observed in the work of Max Beckmann during his exiled years in Amsterdam.

Born in Beirut in 1968, Fathallah Zamroud is a painter of Syrian-Lebanese origins. In 2014, he exhibited at Ayyam Gallery, Beirut in *Material Remains*, a joint exhibition with multidisciplinary artist Ginane Makki Bacho.





# Asaad Arabi

(Syria, born 1941)

## Lot 018

*Dream Science*  
2012  
Acrylic on canvas  
130 x 194 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$15,000 - \$20,000

Between 2010 and 2011, artist Asaad Arabi listened to legendary Egyptian singer Om Kalthoum every day while drawing and painting in an immersive ritual that then compelled him to study every aspect of the legendary songstress' performance and the musicians who played with her. Arabi's 2011 exhibition *Nostalgia* paid homage to the creative prowess of the diva and the intense emotional response she inspired, whereas *Om Kalthoum* (2013) elevated Arabi's studies to a major survey of the iconic cultural figure.

Arabi paints expressive portraits of the singer that while serving as tribute to her talent also investigate the wider relationship between music and painting. In his gestural work, the artist pays close attention to the sensory potential of colour: bold strokes of vivid hues call to mind a conductor leading his orchestra through a powerful symphony, or a composer marking notes on a score.

Born in Damascus in 1941, Asaad Arabi lives and works in Paris. He holds a PhD in Aesthetics from the Sorbonne University and his work on aesthetic theory has been widely published in both French and Arabic. Of the generation of Syrian artists who came of age during the Arab Renaissance or Nahda of the 1960s, Asaad Arabi continues to explore the region's social taboos through his Expressionist works.

Selected solo exhibitions for the artist include Ayyam Gallery Jeddah (2013); DIFC, Dubai (2011); Ayyam Gallery Beirut (2010); Ayyam Gallery Damascus (2009); Cairo Biennial (2004); Sircov Gallery, Brest, France (2003); Kuwait Museum (2003). His works are housed in museum collections including the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), the Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, the Barcelona Contemporary Museum of Art, The National Museum, New Delhi, and South Korea's Museum in Seoul.





# Abdullah Murad

(Syria, born 1944)

## Lot 019

*Abstract*  
2006

Mixed media on canvas  
97 x 130 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$10,000 - \$15,000

Abdullah Murad has developed an exceptional painting style that some have described as “arabesque abstraction.” Considered an innovator in the contemporary abstract school of Syrian art, Murad has exhibited his spontaneous compositions for over thirty years. A consummate colourist whose compositions emanate with liberated forms, he creates an overwhelming sense of harmony through an effervescent palette that manipulates light and dark contrasts, reflecting an organic approach to abstraction. Shapes are created with brushstrokes ranging from restrained markings to vigorous lines that have been unleashed with explosive force.

Demonstrating a level of experimentalism that has distinguished his oeuvre, he also employs other techniques, including collage. Textures are built up so that the surface of the canvas seemingly leaps out at the viewer, while earthen hues effortlessly meet warm and cool colours. For the artist, the inspiration for his paintings cannot be located in a single moment or object. Forever evolving, his melodic compositions are extracted from the depths of the subconscious.

Born in Homs, Syria in 1944, Abdullah Murad graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts, Damascus in 1970. Since then, he has exhibited through out the Middle East at venues such as Atassi gallery in Damascus, the Sharjah Biennial, and Doha's Al Markhiya gallery. A solo exhibition at Ayyam Gallery Damascus in 2007 drew viewers from all over the region and was accompanied by a monograph covering the expanse of his oeuvre. His works are housed in the National Museum of Damascus and the Syrian Ministry of Culture, in addition to private collections around the world.





# Sami Burhan

(Syria, born 1929)

## Lot 020

*This Reward is my Mother and Father*  
2001  
Oil on wood  
60 x 60 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$4,000 - \$7,000

Syrian artist Sami Burhan is noted for his pioneering use of calligraphy in non-objective art alongside seminal painters such as Nasser Chaura and Mahmoud Hammad, who co-founded the Letterism school in 1964. The Letterism group first galvanized artists to explore the potential of pre-modern forms, namely Arabic calligraphy, as the bases for abstraction. Teeming with effervescent hues that dance against aquarelle fields, Burhan's paintings introduced a colourist approach to the text-based aesthetic. In the artist's compositions, letters are stretched beyond their structural limits to create broad rhythmic lines that intersect or are stacked, adding a sense of dimensionality to the surface space of the canvas. Often occupying the center of the composition, these formations appear to move with dynamic energy that radiates from their centers.

Born in Aleppo, Syria in 1929, Sami Burhan began studying Arabic calligraphy at age thirteen. In the years since, he has held more than fifty solo exhibitions throughout the Arab world, Europe, and the United States. Burhan attended the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris after which he obtained a degree in painting and sculpture from the Academy of Fine Arts in Rome. He also holds a degree from the Institute of Coin and Medal Design. In addition to his art, Burhan has worked in arts education at the Teachers' Training College of Aleppo in Syria, and has taught the aesthetics of Arabic calligraphy at the Institute of Islamic Studies in Rome. His works are housed in various institutions and private collections, including the National Museum of Damascus and the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts.





**Sami Burhan**  
(Syria, born 1929)

**Lot 021**

*Mother*  
2001  
Oil on wood  
60 x 60 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$4,000 - \$7,000





**Sami Burhan**  
(Syria, born 1929)

**Lot 022**

*Ibn Tufail*  
2001  
Oil on wood  
60 x 60 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$4,000 - \$7,000



# Safwan Dahoul

(Syria, born 1961)

## Lot 023

*Untitled*  
1994  
Mixed media on wood  
49 x 123

Estimate: \$30,000 - \$50,000



Safwan Dahoul explores the corporal and psychological effects of alienation, solitude, and longing that punctuate the human experience at various stages in life. Partly autobiographical, his ongoing *Dream* series utilises the formal properties of painting—composition, palette, and brushwork—to recreate the subconscious sense of enclosure that surfaces during times of crisis, whether in death, estrangement, or political conflict. Dahoul's recurring female protagonist facilitates this visceral encounter through her contorted body, often-vacant eyes, and minimal yet monumental physicality. Frequently depicted in the confinement of non-descript settings, she is invariably defined by architectural details and the placement of interior accents such as a table and chair, deepening the state of her disaffection, as even the familiar becomes a site of distress.

The featured 1994 mixed-media triptych was created during the artist's time in Belgium, where he pursued a PhD, and displays the early experiments in space and usage of colour as an emotive signifier that were crucial to the development of his acclaimed series.

Born in 1961 in Hama, Syria, Safwan Dahoul lives and works in Dubai. Dahoul attended the Suheil Al Ahdab Center of Plastic Arts and the Faculty of Fine Arts in Damascus. In 1987 he received a scholarship to study abroad from the Ministry of Higher Education and relocated to Belgium, achieving his Doctorate from the Higher Institute of Plastic Arts in Mons in 1997.

His work is held in numerous private and public collections including the Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris; The Samawi Collection, Dubai; The Farjam Collection, Dubai; and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, Kuwait. Dahoul has participated in recent solo and group exhibitions at Ayyam Gallery DIFC, Dubai (2014, 2011); Ayyam Gallery London (2013); Edge of Arabia, London (2013); Emirates Palace, Abu Dhabi (2013); and Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris (2012).



# Samir Rafi

(Egypt, 1926 - 2003)

## Lot 024

*Untitled*  
1956  
Oil on masonite  
83 x 60 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$15,000 - \$20,000

A prominent Egyptian modernist, Samir Rafi was widely known for combining international trends with traces of Pharaonic art in compositions that poignantly depicted modern day Egypt. Rafi was among a number of pioneers who chose to investigate images and scenes of everyday life rather than the romanticised or embellished portraits of the upper echelons of Egyptian society that had dominated local art prior to Gamal Abdel Nasser's revolution. When placed within this important historical context, in which Egypt was experiencing radical cultural transformations with artists and intellectuals often at the helm, his seemingly modest compositions are in fact earth shattering, reflecting metaphysical underpinnings. The manner in which he depicted his subjects is also striking, as they exude a certain foreboding and their melancholy dispositions seem to point to an almost apprehensive outlook towards Egypt's future.

Born in Cairo, Samir Rafi (1926-2003) obtained a Bachelor's degree from the School of Fine Arts in Cairo, where he focused on the decorative arts, and later went on to complete a PhD in art history from the Sorbonne in Paris in 1953. In Europe he met several leading figures of European Modernism, including Picasso, Giacometti, and Fernand Leger. Returning to Egypt amidst the fervour of Pan-Arabism, he exhibited extensively in Cairo and worked alongside the Contemporary Art Group, which he co-founded in 1964. After teaching decorative arts at the School of Fine Arts in Cairo, he moved to Algeria, where he taught art history. Rafi resided in Paris during the final years of his life. His works are housed in major institutions in Egypt, and in Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art and the Barjeel Art Foundation.





# Moustafa Fathi

(Syria, 1942 - 2009)

Lot 025

*Untitled*  
2000  
Mixed media on canvas  
167 x 120 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$30,000 - \$40,000

Moustafa Fathi was a pioneer of contemporary Syrian art who began painting during the latter half of Syria's modernist renaissance. An academic and practicing artist with a rich artistic life that spanned four decades and two continents, Fathi is recognised for establishing new formal and theoretical frontiers with a contemporary painting style rooted in the traditional visual culture of the region. Fascinated by artisan printing materials, he carved hundreds of woodblock stamps after years of intensive research. Applying these templates as small cells of complex designs against flat colour planes, he created elaborate mixed media works that reflect the automatic brushwork of Abstract Expressionism and the sophisticated symmetry of Islamic art and ancient hieroglyphs. Producing an inherent tension in compositional space, this symbolist approach reduces nature to its most organic state, as pockets of dynamic force are contained by infinite vastness.

Born in Deraa, Syria, Moustafa Fathi (1942-2009) received a Diploma in Engraving from the Faculty of Fine Arts, Damascus in 1966 and a Diploma in Engraving and Lithography from the Ecole Supérieure des Beaux Arts, Paris in 1978. Between 1966 and 1987, he taught at the Faculty of Fine Arts, a position that furthered his contributions to the Damascus art scene. Throughout his career he exhibited at home and abroad, most notably in a number of prominent European institutions, including the Picasso Museum in Antibes, which houses one of his works. In 2008, his final exhibition was held at the Latakia Museum of Modern Art.





# Louay Kayyali

(Syria, 1934 - 1978)

## Lot 026

*Boats*  
1960  
Oil on canvas  
93 x 46 cm  
signed

Estimate: \$90,000 - \$120,000

A leading Syrian modernist painter, Louay Kayyali was one of the Arab world's greatest social realists. Elevating his ordinary subjects with the monumentality reserved for religious icons, his downtrodden workers, disenfranchised youths, and solitary mothers are akin to the leading characters of Italian Neorealist cinema, an influence that most likely resulted from his time in Italy during the late 1950s. At the height of Syria's modernist period, Kayyali chronicled everyday life with pensive attention to detail, capturing the psychic tensions of a region on the brink of sociopolitical crisis. With their subtle yet weighty inferences, the artist's delicate still-lives and landscapes are equally revealing.

Kayyali's often brooding portraits were frequently painted from a vantage point that situated the artist (and viewer) slightly below the subject or at eye level so that the figure is at all times equal to or above the position of an outside gaze. This powerful and transgressive method of portraiture is accentuated by the depiction of protagonists in their everyday settings, selling lottery tickets, fixing the nets of fishing boats or carrying their shoe shining equipment—a combination that spoke to a wide spectrum of the Syrian public and popularised his art.

The present lot was painted in the early 1960s and represents a seminal series focusing on the island of Arwad, a historic fishing village off the coast of Syria.

Born in Aleppo, Louay Kayyali (1934-1978) began painting as a young boy. Prior to attending the Academy of Fine Arts, Rome between 1956 and 1961, he actively exhibited in Syria and held his first exhibition while still in secondary school. In 1960 he was featured in the Syrian pavilion of the Venice Biennale alongside Fateh Moudarres. Upon returning to Syria, Kayyali worked as an art instructor at secondary schools in Damascus and later as a professor of interior design at the Faculty of Fine Arts. Despite a relatively short career, he frequently exhibited in Syria's leading cultural spaces and maintained a following in Italy where he participated in numerous art fairs and shows. His works are housed in the National Museum of Damascus, the National Museum of Aleppo, the Syrian Ministries of Education and Culture, and Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art.



# Omar Hamdi

(Syria, born 1951)

## Lot 027

*Untitled*  
1979  
Oil on canvas  
80 x 100 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$35,000 - \$50,000

Omar Hamdi began his artistic career at one of the most pivotal points in regional art when a number of transformations in local visual culture (and in Arab society in general) coincided with an era of politics and war that impacted nearly every nation in the Middle East. As such, his early painting style is distinguished as an evident expression of this period, whereas his recent work has traversed from ethereal abstractions to airy landscapes. He began with a figurative expressionist approach to painting at the beginning of his art career in Damascus in the 1970s, later moving towards abstraction.

Rendered in a palette of yellow and brown, the focus of this untitled 1979 work is a young Bedouin girl. With her highly expressive eyes and clasped hands she suggests both vulnerability and ambivalence regarding her immediate surroundings. Behind her sit other women folk, possible nomads or refugees, perhaps an allusion to the influx of displaced peoples across the Arab world after several wars and increased political instability. The women in the background tend to their children, while men are visibly absent from the scene. The rendering of the central figure in a state of emotional uncertainty is characteristic of the themes of despair and trepidation that surfaced in local painting post 1967.

Born in Al-Hasakiya, Syria in 1951, Omar (Malva) Hamdi is of Syrian-Kurdish background. In addition to having taught painting since the launch of his professional career, the artist has also worked as a graphic designer for the Syrian press, where he occasionally published art criticism. Hamdi's work is housed in private and public collections in Syria, Europe, Asia and the United States. Selected exhibitions for the artist include a solo exhibition at the People's Art Hall, National Museum of Aleppo in Damascus (1976-1977) and group exhibitions at Atassi Gallery, Damascus (2002), New York Art Fair (2002), the National Museum in Krakow, Poland (2003), Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (2003) and Art NY, USA (2004).





# Omar Hamdi

(Syria, born 1951)

## Lot 028

*Untitled*  
1975  
Oil on canvas  
75 x 75 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$30,000 - \$40,000

Omar Hamdi began his artistic career at one of the most pivotal points in regional art when a number of transformations in local visual culture (and in Arab society in general) coincided with an era of politics and war that impacted nearly every nation in the Middle East. As such, his early painting style is distinguished as an evident expression of this period, whereas his recent work has traversed from ethereal abstractions to airy landscapes. Hamdi began with a figurative expressionist approach to painting at the beginning of his art career in Damascus in the 1970s, later moving towards abstraction.

In the center of this 1975 untitled work a figure is shown with her hands extended before her. Enveloping her arms are massive rock-like shackles that she seeks to break free from. Although the burden of these chains inhibits the woman's reach she continues to move toward the sky. Hamdi has depicted these restraints as though they are swaying with the force of the figure's movement. His subject stands before a backdrop of bricks, the shapes of which are similar to that of her chains. Whether she is able to physically tear away from the force that holds her captive is unclear, as her posture can also signal a plea to the heavens. Yet her imprisonment is visually rendered with such severity and physical magnitude that it undeniably implies an allegorical representation of a separate state of confinement.

Born in Al-Hasakiya, Syria in 1951, Omar (Malva) Hamdi is of Syrian-Kurdish background. In addition to having taught painting since the launch of his professional career, the artist has also worked as a graphic designer for the Syrian press, where he occasionally published art criticism. Hamdi's work is housed in private and public collections in Syria, Europe, Asia, and the United States. Selected exhibitions for the artist include a solo exhibition at the People's Art Hall, National Museum of Aleppo in Damascus (1976-1977) and group exhibitions at Atassi Gallery, Damascus (2002), New York Art Fair (2002), the National Museum in Krakow, Poland (2003), Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (2003) and Art NY, USA (2004).





# Nasser Chaura

(Syria, 1920 - 1992)

## Lot 029

*Abstract Blue*  
1966

Oil on canvas  
75 x 75 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$15,000 - \$20,000

Recognised as the father of Syrian Impressionism, Nasser Chaura led an illustrious career that spanned more than fifty years and traversed several schools of art. After studying oil painting at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Cairo towards the end of the French Mandate, he emerged as a prominent member of what is now identified as the second generation of pioneers. Among other milestones, Chaura and his colleagues laid the foundation for modern Syrian art by depicting local subject matter. The artist's early landscapes reflect the naturalistic realism that was popular throughout the Arab world in the early twentieth century.

In 1941 Chaura founded the Atelier Veronese in Damascus, a vital art hub of the period, with painter Mahmoud Hammad, a decade later he established the highly influential Society of Art Lovers with fellow impressionist Michele Kurche. Chaura was the leader of the Impressionist movement until 1964 when he abruptly took up abstraction alongside Hammad. In 1970 he returned to representational art, exploring a new form of realism that sought to engage international trends. The result was a freer approach to landscapes and genre scenes with an emphasis on colour, design, and the essence of forms. His late landscapes are thus airy, detailed, and thoroughly current, demonstrating the work of a mature artist who continued to reinvent his aesthetic.

Born in Damascus, Nasser Chaura (1920-1992) studied oil painting at the Faculty of Fine Arts, Cairo between 1943 and 1947. Returning to Damascus upon completion of his training, he taught at secondary schools until joining the founding teaching staff of the Faculty of Fine Arts, Damascus in 1960. He served as the institution's deputy dean from 1970 until his retirement in 1990. His works are housed in the National Museum of Damascus, the Syrian Ministry of Culture, and the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts.





# Fateh Moudarres

(Syria, 1922 - 1999)

## Lot 030

*Untitled*  
1986  
Oil on canvas  
100 x 100 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$40,000 - \$50,000

A pioneering modernist painter, Fateh Moudarres was a leader of Syrian Expressionism, a loosely defined movement spanning decades with traces still seen today. Before traveling to Italy to receive his formal training, Moudarres was active as a self-taught realist painter in Northern Syria. At the Academy of Fine Arts in Rome he developed an interest in Surrealism and later returned to his native country to form an individual style that he described as “surrealistic and figurative with a strong element of abstraction.”

Deeply affected by his childhood experiences in the Syrian countryside, Moudarres frequently depicted rural subjects on the margins of society, mining Syria’s history, material culture, and natural environment in the process. Although his compositions often drew from a variety of sources, including mythology, ancient visual culture, icon painting, and symbolism, he intermittently addressed the region’s larger political climate, particularly during times of conflict. Moudarres was one of the first Syrian artists to tackle such issues with experimental uses of media and unconventional forms of representation.

Born in a village on the outskirts of Aleppo, Syria, Fateh Moudarres (1922-1999) studied at the Academy of Fine Arts, Rome between 1954 and 1960. The year of his graduation he represented Syria at the Venice Biennale alongside painter Louay Kayyali and later participated in the 1963 San Paulo Biennial, where he was awarded a prize in painting. In 1969 he traveled to France to pursue a graduate degree from the Academy of Fine Arts, Paris. Upon returning to Syria in 1972 he joined the Faculty of Fine Arts, Damascus, where his twenty-year tenure included an appointment as the institution’s dean. Distinguished throughout his career, he received the Jury Prize at the Cairo Biennial in 1994 and the Decoration of Honor from the Latakia Biennial the following year. His works are housed in the National Museum of Damascus, the Syrian Ministry of Culture, Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, and The British Museum.





**Fateh Moudarres**  
(Syria, 1922 - 1999)

**Lot 031**

*Untitled*  
1970s  
Oil on canvas  
70 x 50 cm  
signed

Estimate: \$25,000 - \$35,000



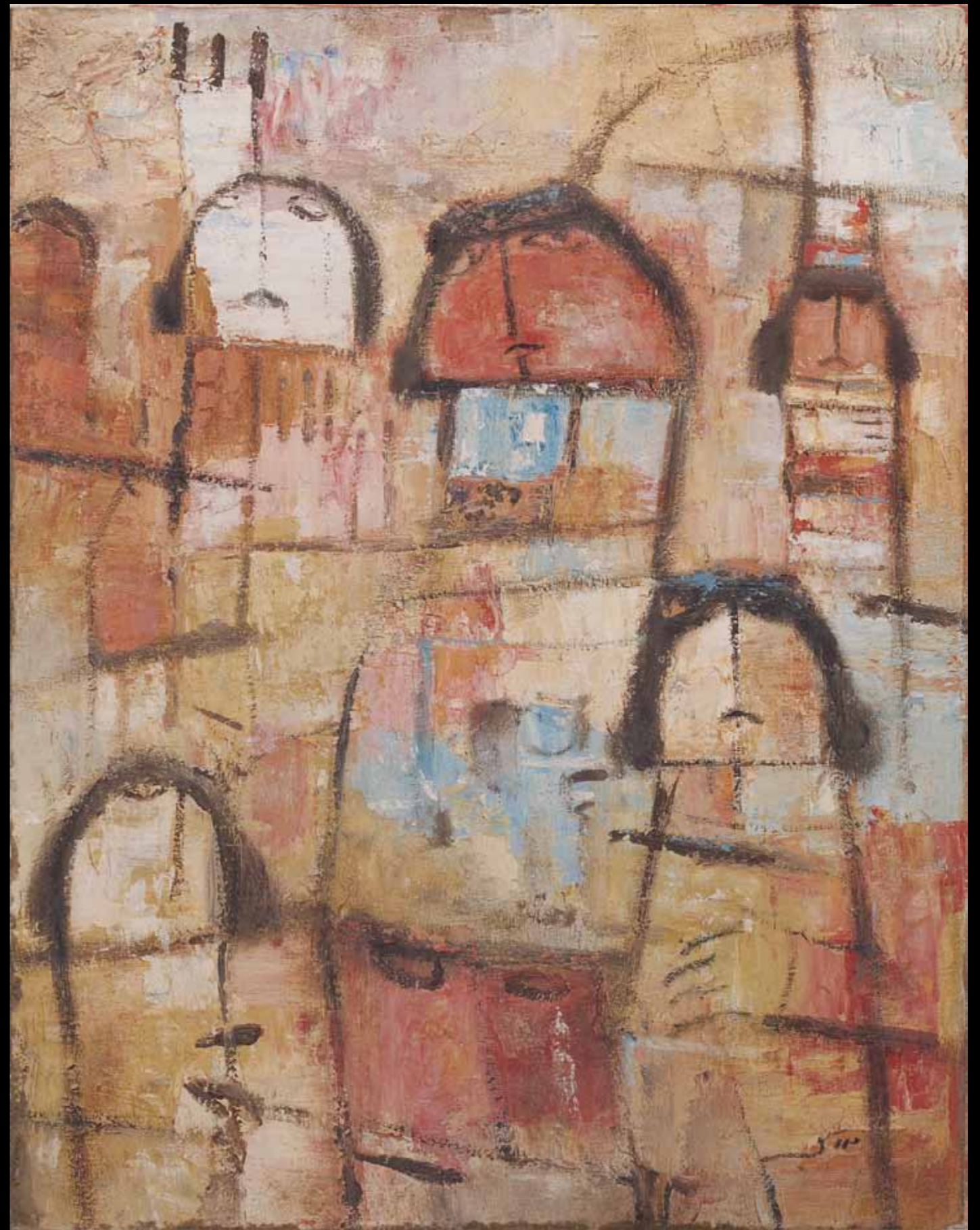


**Fateh Moudarres**  
(Syria, 1922 - 1999)

**Lot 032**

*Untitled*  
1970s  
Oil on canvas  
90 x 70 cm  
signed

Estimate: \$30,000 - \$40,000





**Fateh Moudarres**  
(Syria, 1922 - 1999)

**Lot 033**

*Untitled*  
1970  
Oil on canvas  
60 x 50 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$20,000 - \$25,000





**Fateh Moudarres**  
(Syria, 1922 - 1999)

**Lot 034**

*Untitled*  
1970s  
Oil on canvas  
60 x 45 cm  
signed

Estimate: \$20,000 - \$25,000





**Fateh Moudarres**  
(Syria, 1922 - 1999)

**Lot 035**

*The Mawlawi*  
1990s  
Mixed media on paper  
50 x 35 cm  
signed

Estimate: \$6,000 - \$9,000





**Fateh Moudarres**  
(Syria, 1922 - 1999)

**Lot 036**

*Untitled*  
1990s  
Mixed media on paper  
50 x 35 cm  
signed

Estimate: \$6,000 - \$9,000





# Ahmad Durak Sibai

(Syria, 1935 - 1987)

## Lot 037

*Untitled*  
1981  
Oil on canvas  
73 x 93 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$10,000 - \$15,000

Ahmad Durak Sibai belongs to a generation of Syrian artists whose formative development occurred as the regional art scene transitioned between modern and contemporary art in the late 1960s.

Sibai's palette reflects the earth tones that were popularised by early painters in the first part of the twentieth century, while the angular stylisation of his figures belongs to a modernist trend in Syrian painting that was carried well into the contemporary period. Like many of his colleagues, he adopted elements of symbolism when depicting everyday scenes of Syria, positioning his childlike figures against landscapes or architectural details that captured quiet moments of solitude, whether in the countryside or city. Interested in the intuitive vitality of children's drawings, he sought to harness such creative direction in his paintings.

Born in Homs, Syria in 1935 Ahmad Durak Sibai worked at the Center for Decorative Arts in Homs. His works can be found in the National Museum of Damascus, the Ministry of Culture and in private collections.





# Sirak Melkonian

(Iran, born 1931)

## Lot 038

*Untitled*  
1968  
Oil on canvas  
48 x 66 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$3,000 - \$5,000

Sirak Melkonian began his career in 1950s Iran when the country witnessed a critical modernist period in art. Throughout the decades that followed, Melkonian has built a significant following in his native country as he abandoned the angular, expressionist forms of his early initiation into art and entered the significant school of Post-modern painting that distinguishes contemporary Iranian art of the 1980s and 90s. Appearing as “networks of lines, surfaces and angles,” Melkonian’s paintings allude to a mysterious geology, one that is not rooted in a specific locale but instead hints at the universal. The exploration of seemingly unending landforms is befitting of the linear abstraction the artist has developed over the span of thirty years. Warm tones such as orange and brown tend to dominate in Melkonian’s large-scale works, which also play with altering the depth of conventional space.

Sirak Melkonian was born in Fardoun Village, Iran in 1931. He studied painting with Marcos Grigorian, a pioneer of Iranian Modern art. In the 1950s, Melkonian along with artists E. Svarchian, R. Zarian and R.A. Hayrapetian was associated with Studio Démon, a small arts studio in Tehran that produced popular works. He gained national recognition in 1957, winning a prize at the Contemporary Iranian Artist Exhibition of the Iran American Society. This was followed by the Imperial Court Prize at the Tehran Biennale in 1958 and first prize in 1959 at the Paris Biennale. The artist has exhibited at the Grand Palais and the Salon De Montrouge in Paris, as well as Washington International. He lives and works in Toronto, Canada.





# Lutfi Romhein

(Syria, born 1954)

## Lot 039

*Untitled*  
1995  
Marble  
46 x 18 x 18 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$8,000 - \$12,000

A prominent sculptor in the Middle East, Syrian artist Lutfi Romhein has enjoyed widespread recognition for his public installations. Working in wood, stone, and bronze the artist's oeuvre reflects diversity in techniques and themes. Romhein's broad spectrum of sculpture includes examples exploring the forms of figuration found in ancient art such as Sumerian, Assyrian, and Pharaonic visual cultures and the organic fluidity of specific mediums, namely white marble. Other subjects have included the intimacy of Arab society found in the family unit, as seen in mother and child renderings or lovers portrayed in fleeting moments.

Born in Kraia, Syria in 1954, Lutfi Romhein lives and works in France. After completing his initial formal training, he opened a studio in Damascus where he experimented with different materials. In 1981, Romhein obtained a scholarship from the Italian consul, which allowed him to study sculpture at the Carrara Academy of Fine Arts from which he graduated in 1985. In 2008, he was named sculptor of the year by the Roy René Art and Cultural Association and has also had the opportunity to create monumental works for cities such as Washington and Dubai. Since 1975, the artist has held several individual and group exhibits around the world. Romhein's permanent exhibitions include sculptures at the National Museum of Damascus, the National Museum of Amman in Jordan, and the Syrian Embassy in Washington. His iconic marble and granite work *Together* (2010) is also on view at Burj Khalifa, Dubai.





# Mohammad Al-Fayoumi

(Egypt, born 1963)

## Lot 040

*Ebn Al-Balad*  
2003  
Bronze  
55 x 40 x 43 cm  
Edition 2/4  
signed, dated and numbered  
Estimate: \$20,000 - \$25,000

Egyptian sculptor Mohammad Al Fayoumi's works are voluminous portraits of animals and humans rendered in bronze. The artist's ancestral village of Al Fayoum, occupies part of the ancient site of Crocodopolis, where Pharaonic monuments are found, and is one of the oldest cities in Egypt and the African continent. With roots in a locale of such monumentality, a sense of the magnificent and the historic comes through in the artist's pensive sculptures. The human subjects of Al Fayoumi's oeuvre include seminal or archetypal figures of Egyptian society, which include community leaders, everyday men, or the featured lot "Son of the Soil." His animal figures include wise owls, fish, and birds.

Born in 1963, Mohamad Al Fayoumi is a member of the Mahmoud Mokhtar Association, Cairo, the Cairo Atelier, and the syndicate of Plastic Artists, Egypt. Al Fayoumi has exhibited in many local group exhibitions, Biennales, and symposia since 1990. He is the recipient of the third prize at the 5th and 7th Youth Salon, the first prize at the Cairo Biennale for Ceramics, and has received certificates of appreciation from the Mokhtar Museum, Cairo, the First Sculpture Symposium in Bahrain, and that of Alay, Lebanon. He has participated in Art Sawa Dubai's *Undercurrent: Contemporary Egyptian Art* (2009) and in *Egyptian Tales*, Artspace, Dubai (2012).





Alireza Astaneh  
(Iran, born 1982)

Lot 041

*Farhad*  
2013

Iron and industrial paint  
112 x 72 x 49 cm  
Edition 2/3  
signed, dated and numbered

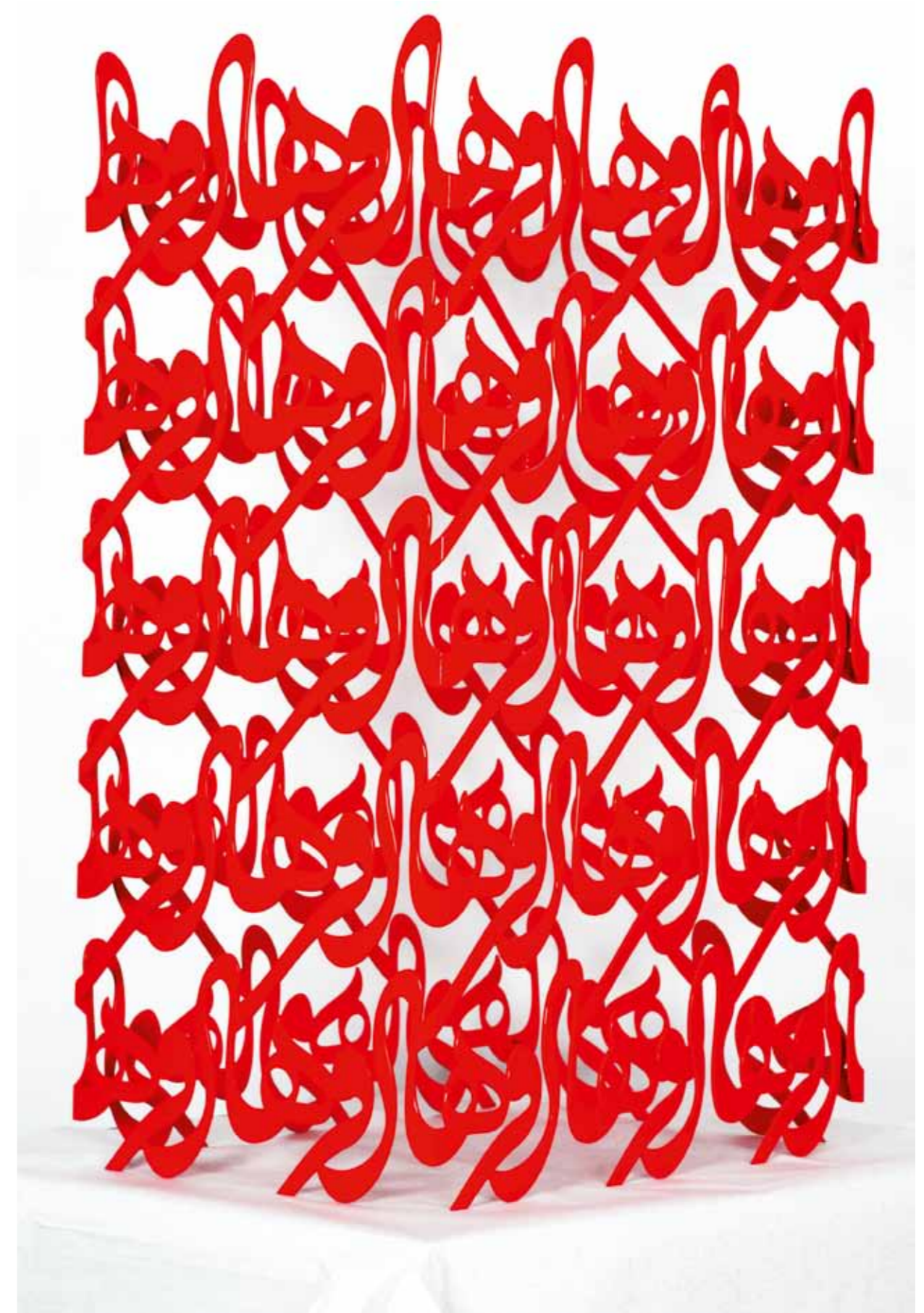
Estimate: \$5,000 - \$8,000

Working in painting and drawing as well as in sculpture, throughout his practice, artist Alireza Astaneh has been focused on exploring calligraphic forms, reclaiming Persian Nakhoni technique from the past while extending it into new directions befitting of contemporary art.

Nakhoni is a method in which the artist embosses and makes writing apparent only through a slight pressure of his fingernails on the back of a delicate piece of paper. Historical examples of such work portray flowers, birds, lovers, buildings, and landscapes. In the mixed media on canvas *Castelli* series (2013), the artist attempts to create a connection between an isolated alphabet or word from Farsi-Arabic script combining it with the synaesthetic qualities of colour to create the pieces, such that repetitions of the word “Esgħ” come to be read and seen as “Golden Love” or “Red Love.”

In a similar vein, in *Farhad* from the artist’s *Verbal Cage* series of 2013, the word “Farhad” is repeated so as to form a layer, which is stacked onto identical sculptural layers that come together to form a four-sided structure representing “joy.” In Islamic art where figurative representation of living beings is abandoned in favour of pattern, line and geometry, repetition and multiplication are understood to represent the infinite, which in Astaneh’s case may refer to infinite love.

Born in 1982 in Arak, Iran, Alireza Astaneh currently resides in Tehran. He received the Elite Diploma of the Iranian Calligrapher’s Society in 1997, and a Bachelor of Arts in Graphic Design from Belford University, Texas in 2007. Soon after, he took part in an exhibition of Nastaliq Calligraphy Masters at the Museum of Contemporary Arts in Tehran, Iran. Since 2011, Astaneh has held several solo exhibitions at Homa Art Gallery in Tehran, and has participated in numerous international exhibitions and events such as Art Basel, Miami Beach, the Vienna Art Fair, the Shanghai Biennial, and Art Dubai.



# Khaled Jarrar

(Palestine, born 1976)

## Lot 042

*Ping Pong Paddles and Ball*  
2013

Reconstituted concrete from the Apartheid Wall  
24 x 15 x 2 cm each racket  
Edition 1/7

Estimate: \$5,000 - \$8,000

Palestinian artist Khaled Jarrar works with photography, video, conceptual art and performance to underscore the precarity of life in occupied Palestine and the long-standing militaristic discourse around it, exploring the complex questions of conflict, nationhood, and home that have shaped the experiences of an increasingly fragmented and displaced population. The notion of state authority is a recurring concern: his project *Live and Work in Palestine* (2011-ongoing) saw the artist design a seemingly official Palestinian passport stamp, which was then offered to tourists arriving in Palestine. Similarly, Jarrar recently constructed an imposing concrete wall extending across the length of Ayyam Gallery London as an interventionist act that made tangible the tedious and sometimes life threatening commute or transit endured by Palestinians, whose communities remain under siege and are cut off by Israeli occupying forces through an extensive network of concrete walls, watch towers, fences, and segregated roads. Further exploring how the Israeli occupation has penetrated every aspect of daily life, Jarrar has created a series of cement soccer balls and other seemingly innocuous objects from material cut from Israel's snaking barrier.

Born in Jenin in 1976, Khaled Jarrar lives and works in Ramallah, Palestine. He completed his education in Interior Design at the Palestine Polytechnic University in 1996 and graduated from the International Academy of Art Palestine with a Bachelor of Visual Arts in 2011. Recent solo exhibitions include Ayyam Gallery London (2013); Galerie Guy Bartschi, Geneva (2013); Galerie Polaris, Paris (2012); and International Academy of Art Palestine, Ramallah (2007). Recent group exhibitions include USF Contemporary Art Museum, Tampa (2013); the Jakarta Biennale (2013); the Berlin Biennale (2012); October Salon, Belgrade (2011); Al-Ma'mal Foundation, Jerusalem (2010); London Film Festival (2010); and the Instant Video Festival, Marseille (2009). Jarrar is also an award-winning filmmaker whose recent documentary, *The Infiltrators* (2012), won accolades at the 9th Dubai International Film Festival.





# Sama Alshaibi

(Iraq, born 1973)

## Lot 043

*Sebkhet el Melah*  
From the *Silsila* series  
2014  
Diasc print  
120 cm diameter  
Edition 1/3

Estimate: \$12,000 - \$18,000

Sama Alshaibi's multi-media work explores spaces of conflict and the power struggles that arise in the aftermath of war and exile. Alshaibi is particularly interested in how such clashes occur between citizens and the state, creating vexing crises that impact the physical and psychological realms of the individual as resources and land, mobility, political agency, and self-affirmation are compromised. Through performance, video, photography, and installation, Alshaibi positions her own body as an allegorical site that makes the byproducts of war visible.

Born in Basra to an Iraqi father and Palestinian mother, Sama Alshaibi is based in Tucson where she is Chair and Associate Professor of Photography and Video Art at the University of Arizona. Alshaibi also holds a BA in Photography from Columbia College and an MFA in Photography, Video, and Media Arts from the University of Colorado. Her works have been collected by both public and private collections, including Nadour, Germany; The Barjeel Collection, Sharjah; The Rami Farook Collection, Dubai; and the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Tunis, Tunisia.

Recently, Alshaibi has featured in solo and group exhibitions at FotoFest, Houston (2014); the Maldives Pavilion of the Venice Biennale (2013); Venice Art Gallery, Los Angeles (2013); Madrid Palestine Film Festival (2013); University of Southampton (2013); Edge of Arabia, London (2012); HilgerBROTKunsthalle, Vienna (2012); Institut Du Monde Arabe, Paris (2012); Maraya Art Centre, Sharjah (2012); Laurie Shabibi, Dubai (2011); and Selma Feriani Gallery, London (2010). In 2015, her first monograph will be published by Aperture Foundation, New York in conjunction with a solo exhibition at Ayyam Gallery, London.



# Thaier Helal

(Syria, born 1967)

## Lot 044

*Untitled*  
2012

Mixed media on canvas  
120 x 120 cm  
signed and dated

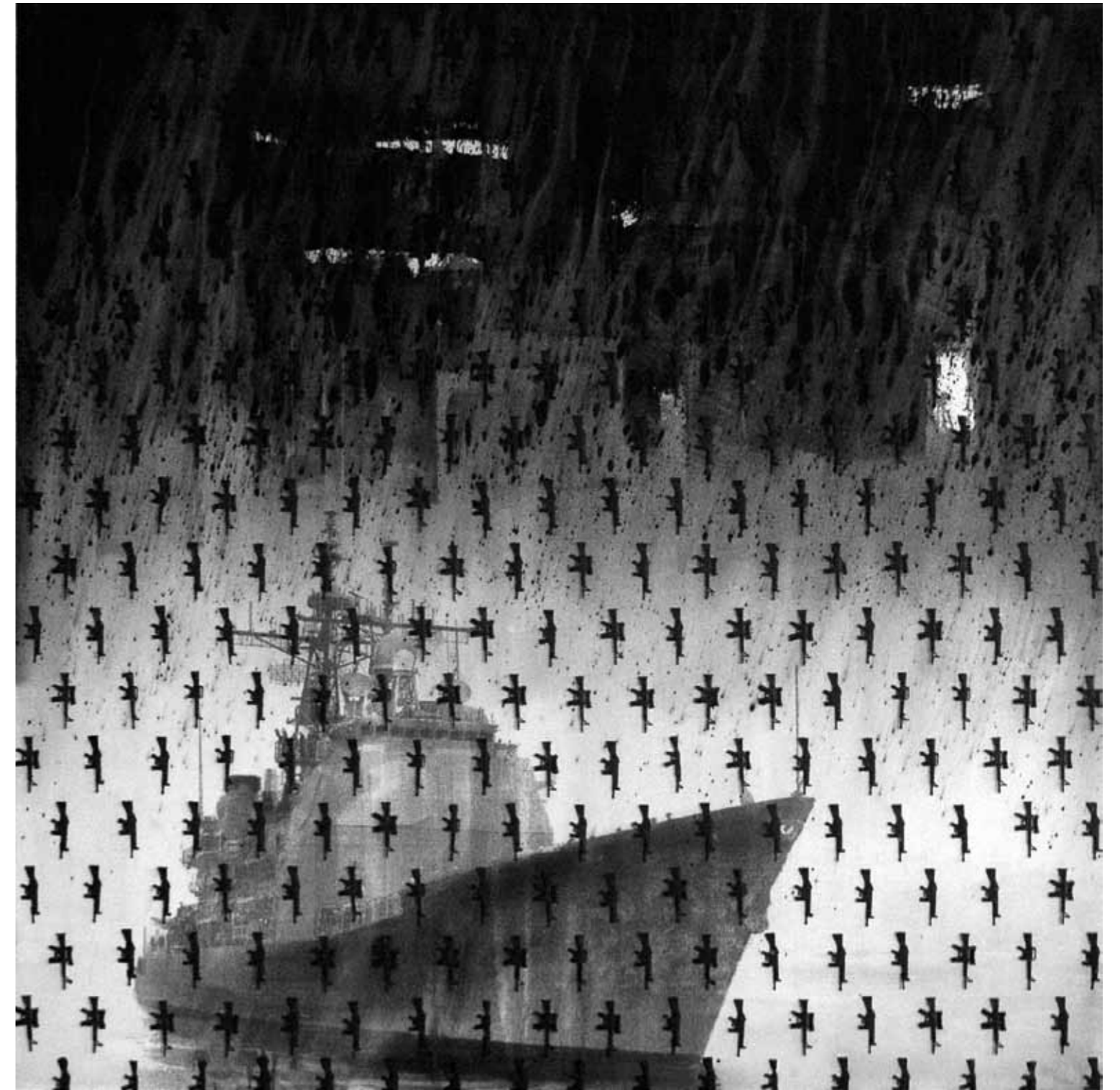
Estimate: \$12,000 - \$18,000

A leading figure in contemporary Syrian art, Thaier Helal's large mixed media works are considered at the forefront of contemporary abstraction in the Middle East. Drawing inspiration from the physical and sensory aspects of the world around him, Helal explores the dynamism of space as it is reshaped by the ebb and flow of society and culture. His canvases communicate movement and energy through explosions of colour, the meticulous division of the picture plane, and the repetitive layering of the surface. Although utilising the leitmotifs of contemporary painting, the artist's deliberate approach is reminiscent of the formalism of Islamic art, which relies on units as part of a larger whole to communicate a sense of wonder when alluding to the sublime.

Recently, Helal has utilised images of the Syrian Army taken from news media in haunting compositions that isolate the mechanisms of warfare. Isolating such stark imagery against a black background, Helal confronts the abject reality that currently besieges Syrians while pointing to the increased militarisation of global society.

Born in Syria in 1967, Thaier Helal graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts, Damascus before relocating to Sharjah in the 1990s, where he currently lives and works. He is the recipient of numerous awards including the Al Burda International Award from the Emirati Ministry of Culture, Youth and Community Development (2008); the Grand Gold Award at the Contemporary Painting Biennial, Tehran (2005); the Award for Painting at the Sharjah International Biennial (1997) and the Distinguished Works Award at the 15th General Exhibition of the UAE Fine Arts Association (1996). In addition to his breakthroughs in abstraction, Helal has contributed to the development of regional art as a longtime faculty member of the University of Sharjah, Fine Arts College.

Selected solo exhibitions for the artist include Ayyam Gallery, Dubai, DIFC (2012); Ayyam Gallery Cairo (2011); Ayyam Gallery Beirut (2010); Ayyam Gallery Damascus (2010); Green Art Gallery, Dubai (2006, 2003); Cultural Foundation, Abu Dhabi (2002); Sharjah Art Museum (2000). His selected group exhibitions include Paris Abu Dhabi Art (2008); Iran Contemporary Painting Biennial, Tehran (2005); Imagining the Book International Biennale, Alexandria (2005); and the Sharjah Biennial (1997, 1995).





# Tammam Azzam

(Syria, born 1980)

## Lot 045

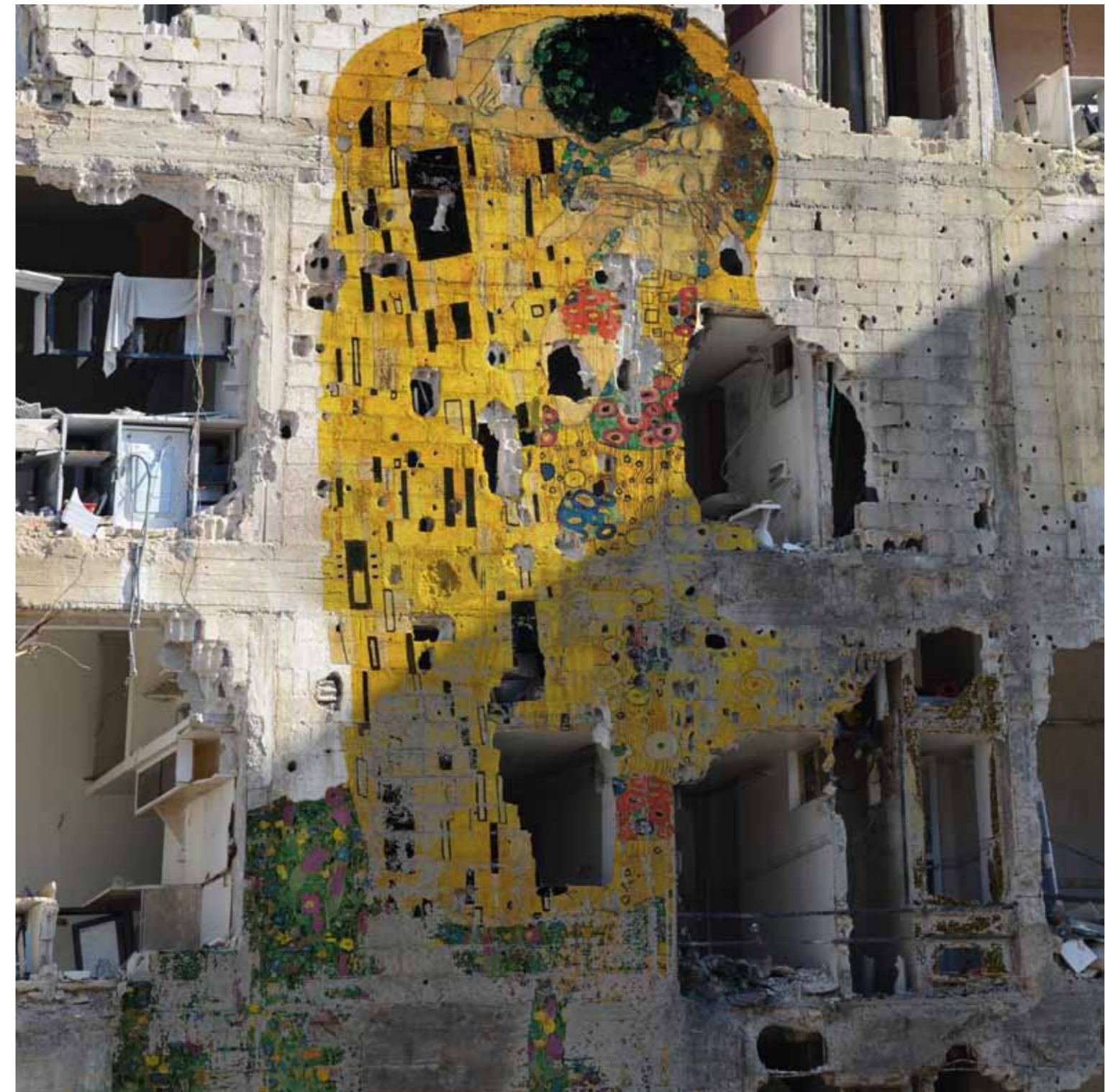
*Freedom Graffiti (Gustav Klimt's The Kiss)*  
From the *Syrian Museum* series  
2013  
Lightbox  
75 x 75 cm  
Edition 2/5

Estimate: \$12,000 - \$18,000

Syrian artist Tammam Azzam creates a “hybrid form” of painting through the application of various media, arriving at interactions between surface and form that borrow and multiply as compositions evolve. Unconventional materials such as rope, clothespins, and other found objects are employed to create depth, texture, and space, achieving a striking balance between ordinary objects and the expanse of the picture plane despite a visible tension.

Following the outbreak of violence in Syria, Azzam turned to digital media to create visual composites of the conflict that have resonated with viewers. As such, Azzam’s images have circulated through various channels of the international art world and the political sphere, drawing attention to the humanitarian crisis that now surrounds Syrians. These recent images are informed by his interest in the interventionist potential of digital media and street art as powerful and direct forms of protest that are difficult to suppress. In early 2013, Azzam made worldwide headlines when his work *Freedom Graffiti* went viral on social media. Enlisting one of the most iconic works of art – Gustav Klimt’s *The Kiss* – to protest the country’s suffering, he superimposed a recognizable image of love over the walls of war-torn Damascus. Belonging to the artist’s *Syrian Museum* series in which he places imagery taken from masterpieces of Western art history into photographs of scenes of devastation across Syria, the work juxtaposes some of the greatest achievements of humanity with the pain it is also capable of inflicting.

Born in Damascus in 1980, Tammam Azzam lives and works in Dubai. He received his formal training from the Faculty of Fine Arts, Damascus with a concentration in oil painting. Recently, he has participated in solo and group exhibitions at such venues as Rush Arts, New York (2014); FotoFest Biennial, Houston (2014); Ayyam Gallery London (2013); the 30th Biennial of Graphic Arts, Slovenia (2013); Ayyam Gallery Al Quoz, Dubai (2012, 2009); Ayyam Gallery DIFC, Dubai (2011).





# Tammam Azzam

(Syria, born 1980)

## Lot 046

*Untitled*  
From the *Metallica* series  
2010  
Mixed media on canvas  
100 x 100 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$8,000 - \$12,000

Syrian artist Tammam Azzam creates a “hybrid form” of painting through the application of various media, arriving at interactions between surface and form that borrow and multiply as compositions evolve. Unconventional materials such as rope, clothespins, and other found objects are employed to create depth, texture, and space, achieving a striking balance between ordinary objects and the expanse of the picture plane despite a visible tension.

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From the artist’s 2010 *Metallica* series, the featured painting represents a body of work that was executed using materials and techniques similar to those found in street art. A forerunner to the artist’s current exploration of such popular forms, the monochrome painting depicts the stacked quarters of a dense city. For Azzam, the *Metallica* series explores “the beauty of anarchy, the complexities of the metal, the chaos of the roads, and the voice of the place,” reflecting the visceral experiences of a metropolis he now excavates through repurposed images of destruction.

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# Nadim Karam

(Lebanon, born 1957)

## Lot 047

*Floating Dreams in Destruction*  
2013  
Mixed media on canvas  
100 x 135 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$15,000 - \$25,000

Lebanese artist and architect Nadim Karam's multi-disciplinary approach incorporates painting, drawing, sculpture, and writing. Fusing various cultural influences, Karam's works transcend social, political, and national borders, forming a unique pictorial language, replete with recurring symbols, and with its own original characters and narratives. They form an alphabet of sorts, in what is an ongoing, sometimes absurdist, exploration of the creative power of dreams.

Renowned for his public art and work in urban regeneration, Karam has most recently been lauded for his architectural plan *The Cloud*, which made international headlines for its revolutionary ideas on how to reconfigure public space amidst Dubai's growing cityscape. Karam's projects and installations are interventions that seek to animate cities as diverse as Melbourne, Prague, Dubai, Beirut, London, and Nara, Japan. These interventions often take the form of large-scale steel sculptures, described as 'urban toys' by the artist. For Karam, it is not only we, as humans, who need to dream, but our cities too – his urban toys are acts of whimsy and a rebellion against the soulless nature of so many modern spaces, bringing to life the environments around him. Says Karam: "Each urban toy has a message. An open message ready to be inhabited by stories which become mingled with history."

Born in 1957 in Senegal, Nadim Karam lives and works in Beirut. He received a Bachelor of Architecture from the American University of Beirut (1982) and a Doctorate of Architecture from the University of Tokyo (1989). In 1996, he established Atelier Hapsitus ([www.hapsitus.com](http://www.hapsitus.com)), a satellite grouping of young Lebanese architects, and designers seeking to create an original urban vocabulary through large-scale art installation and architectural works for various cities worldwide. Karam's work has appeared in numerous solo and group exhibitions worldwide including Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris (2013), as well as biennales such as Venice, Liverpool, and Gwangju. The artist's past publications include *The Cloud*, *The Desert and The Arabian Breeze* (2007); *Urban Toys* (2006) and *Voyage* (2000). In 2013 his monograph *Stretching Thoughts* was published by Booth-Clibborn Editions.



Reza Lavasani  
(Iran, born 1962)

Lot 048

*Untitled*  
2008  
Oil on canvas  
130 x 180 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$10,000 - \$15,000

Employing a multi-process method of working, Reza Lavasani's work is based on drawings that are then turned into paintings or large-scale sculptures, which, due to their apparent solidity, at first appear to have been fashioned of metal or stone. A closer examination of the artist's interests reveals a commitment to recovery, restoration, and reclamation, as well as an overarching vision that considers harmony and ecology, revealing his motivation for creating sculptures from pre-used paper.

Lavasani has the gift of combining elements as synergistic expressions from sources as diverse as religion, philosophy, mythology, Sufi thought, the poetry of Hafiz and Rumi as well as national history. Winged horses and the golden-eagles of Damavand from Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh* (The Book of Kings) appear as sculptural manifestations, whereas evident in the artist's two-dimensional works are motifs from Persian miniature painting and manuscript illumination, with the addition of fable-like elements such as the rendering of wind, waves, and animals in the paintings. Animal forms in metallic purple are captured mid-stride, set against a yellow or gold flecked background, and in other works angels are seen in supplication to fabled animals.

Born in 1962 in Tehran, Reza Lavasani received a Bachelor of Arts in Painting from the University of Tehran. Lavasani has exhibited widely in Iran and has participated in various international group exhibitions and art fairs including in Japan and Italy.





# Youssef Dweik

(Palestine, born 1963)

Lot 049

*Untitled*  
2008

Mixed media on canvas  
150 x 160 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$6,000 - \$9,000

Painter Youssef Dweik uses combinations of soft, textural colours to create a quiet harmony within his works, a technique he developed as a result of years of experimentation with different methods and raw materials. The elimination of traditional perspective that marks his compositions is indicative of a school of Palestinian art that emerged most profoundly in the 1990s with a collective of artists identified as the New Visions Group. Boycotting Israeli art supplies in protest of the occupation of Palestine, they turned to materials found in nature. The works that were created during this time often reject illusionism as a means of anchoring figures and objects, opting instead for flattened spaces divided into units or distinct sections. Referencing the compartments found in the traditional arts of Palestine, be it in the complex designs of embroidery or inlaid mother-of-pearl crafts, such definition of compositional space also provided a fluid narrative structure. In his mixed media work, Dweik achieves a balance between telling the complicated story of Palestine and the desire to reach high levels of formalism.

Youssef Dweik was born in Jerusalem in 1963 and presently resides in the UAE. He graduated from the Department of Fine Arts at Jordan's Al-Yarmouk University in 1985. He is a member of UNESCO's Association of International Artists, the Palestinian Artists League, and the United Arab Emirates League of Artists. Dweik has exhibited his work in solo and group shows throughout the Arab world and abroad.





# Mona Moein Ansari

(Iran, born 1984)

## Lot 050

*Puppet of Society*  
2013  
Mixed media on canvas  
120 x 80 cm

Estimate: \$4,000 - \$7,000

Employing washes of colour and delicately executed forms, Mona Moein Ansari's paintings relate to an interest in offbeat things and characters. For the artist, the part-human caricatures of her paintings are inspired by the emotive signals of others and the objects she regularly encounters. Ansari's long, thin creatures are frequently outfitted in black and white stripes and appear under the title of "puppets," a detail that infers a comment on the charades and social posturing of contemporary society.

Mona Moein Ansari was born and raised in Tehran, Iran and currently lives in Dubai. In 2009, she graduated from Central Saint Martins University of Arts London, where she studied theater design for performance. Her work has been shown widely in Azadi Museum, Tehran, Palazzo Bufalini Citta Di Castello, Perugia, and at the Florence Biennale.





# Oussama Diab

(Palestine, born 1977)

## Lot 051

*The Creation*  
2011  
Mixed media on canvas  
140 x 200 cm  
signed, dated and titled

Estimate: \$10,000 - \$15,000

Palestinian artist Oussama Diab applies a conceptual approach to painting by exploiting the stylistic variants of the medium as emotive prompts in order to explore how form can articulate the urgency of sociopolitical issues. In an age where digital media have taken a dominant role in filtering our everyday experiences and the construction of imagery has become integral to the negotiation of modern life, Diab addresses the contradictions and obstacles of political conflict, globalisation, and exile through playful symbolism, references to popular culture, iconic imagery, and narrative structures. With each new series he adopts a different painting style, reflecting the impermanent nature of art as it becomes increasingly conceptual and further dematerialised.

Born in 1977 in Damascus, Oussama Diab lives and works in Beirut. A graduate of the Faculty of Fine Arts in Damascus in 2002, he has featured in solo and group exhibitions throughout the region and is the recipient of numerous awards including the Shabab Young Artists exhibition in Syria. Solo shows include Ayyam Gallery DIFC, Dubai (2012); Ayyam Gallery Beirut (2010-II); Ayyam Gallery Dubai (2010); Ayyam Gallery Damascus (2009).



# Oussama Baalbaki

(Lebanon, born 1978)

## Lot 052

*Untitled*  
2010  
Acrylic on canvas  
120 x 120 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$6,000 - \$9,000

With a laboured approach to painting, Oussama Baalbaki frequently approaches difficult subject matter. Yet he is also drawn to the aesthetically pleasing or the stillness that exists amidst quiet moments in life. His more politically slanted canvases are at once striking and introspective, while his snapshots of the mundane seem to possess concealed narratives. In his landscapes unexpected elements such as electrical poles or derelict cars gain prominence, often becoming the focus of the paintings, and catching the viewer off guard.

Baalbaki has painted self-portraits with various household objects such as books, knives, and hair dryers since 2010. In this particular piece the artist is depicted lying in bed gripping a handful of paint brushes. The act of holding the brushes is very much an assertion of the artist's identity as a painter, yet at the same time the subject's gaze is ambivalent towards the viewer, directed to something outside of the frame of the painting as though unaware of the filtering of his self image. On his decision to create numerous self-portraits, Baalbaki explains that he prefers to use himself as a model whose features and gestures he is intimately familiar with. At the same time the artist reveals, "I feel as if [I am] drawing another person...an adjacent being," in which the works come to "represent an alternate reality, which is refined of the "flaws, excesses and the paleness of reality."

Oussama Baalbaki was born in Lebanon in 1978 and graduated with an honours degree from the Lebanese University's School of Fine Arts in 2002. He has participated in several group exhibitions such as "Art Studio" under the supervision of the artist Nasser El-Soumi at Goethe Institute in Beirut in 1999, and the Lebanese Plastic Arts Exhibition in Algeria in 2007. His works were exhibited in the "Autumn Salon" of Surssock Museum in Beirut consecutively from the year 2003 until 2008. In 2010 the artist exhibited at Galerie Tanit, Munich, and at Galerie Tanit, Beirut in 2014.





# Farzad Kohan

(Iran, born 1967)

## Lot 053

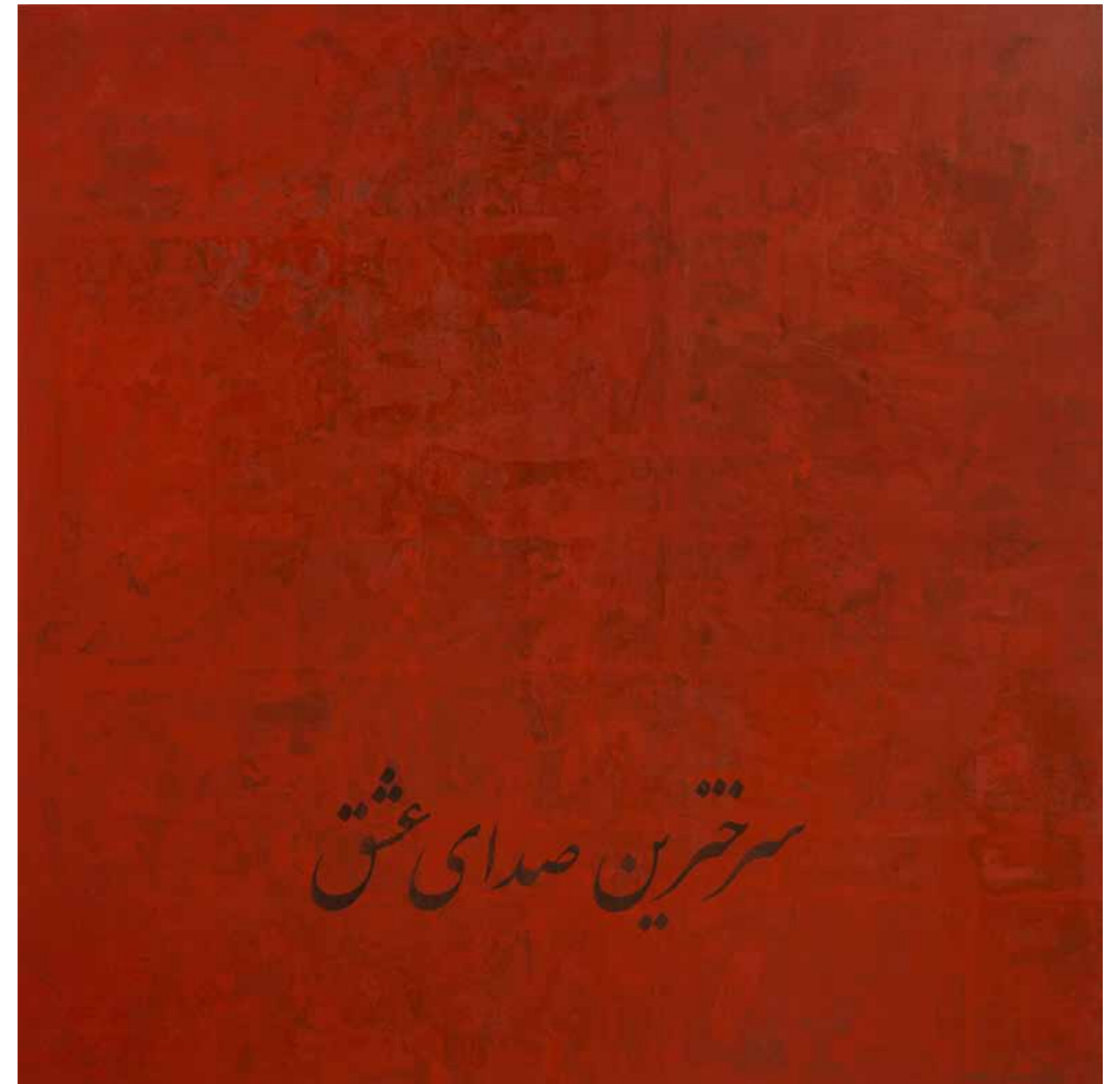
*Reddest Sound of Love*  
2013  
Mixed media on wood  
122 x 122 cm  
signed, dated and titled

Estimate: \$6,000 - \$9,000

The sculptures, installations, and photographs of Iranian artist Farzad Kohan seek to address issues of migration and identity, surpassing the constructed boundaries of social divisions. As a manifestation of his desire to articulate the inner workings of such culture-defining phenomena, Kohan frequently utilises found materials as diverse as wood, coffee, milk, motor oil, and sand to evoke the seemingly mundane.

The artist's recent collage works are comprised of layered newspaper advertisements that are first mounted on canvas then painted, creating a multidimensional tactility. Beneath the surface of his mixed media works are layers of the unseen, a formal detail alluding to the psychic spaces of experiential realities. Kohan states that his work is merely a reflection of how he sees the world around him, "Many find that life is a struggle of both the emotional and the physical...My art reflects what is often a simultaneous experience of both the struggle and beauty that comprises life. With my art, I communicate across cultural divides, language barriers, religion and gender. I'm a citizen of this world."

Born in Tehran in 1967, Farzad Kohan lives and works in Los Angeles. The artist's solo exhibitions include Ayyam Gallery DIFC, Dubai in 2013 and Seyhoun Gallery, Los Angeles in 2006. His selected group exhibitions include Human Rights Awareness Tour, USA (2008); JFerrari Gallery, Los Angeles (2008); Eagle Rock Cultural Centre for Arts (2008); Phantom Galleries, Los Angeles (2007).





# Mohannad Orabi

(Syria, born 1977)

## Lot 054

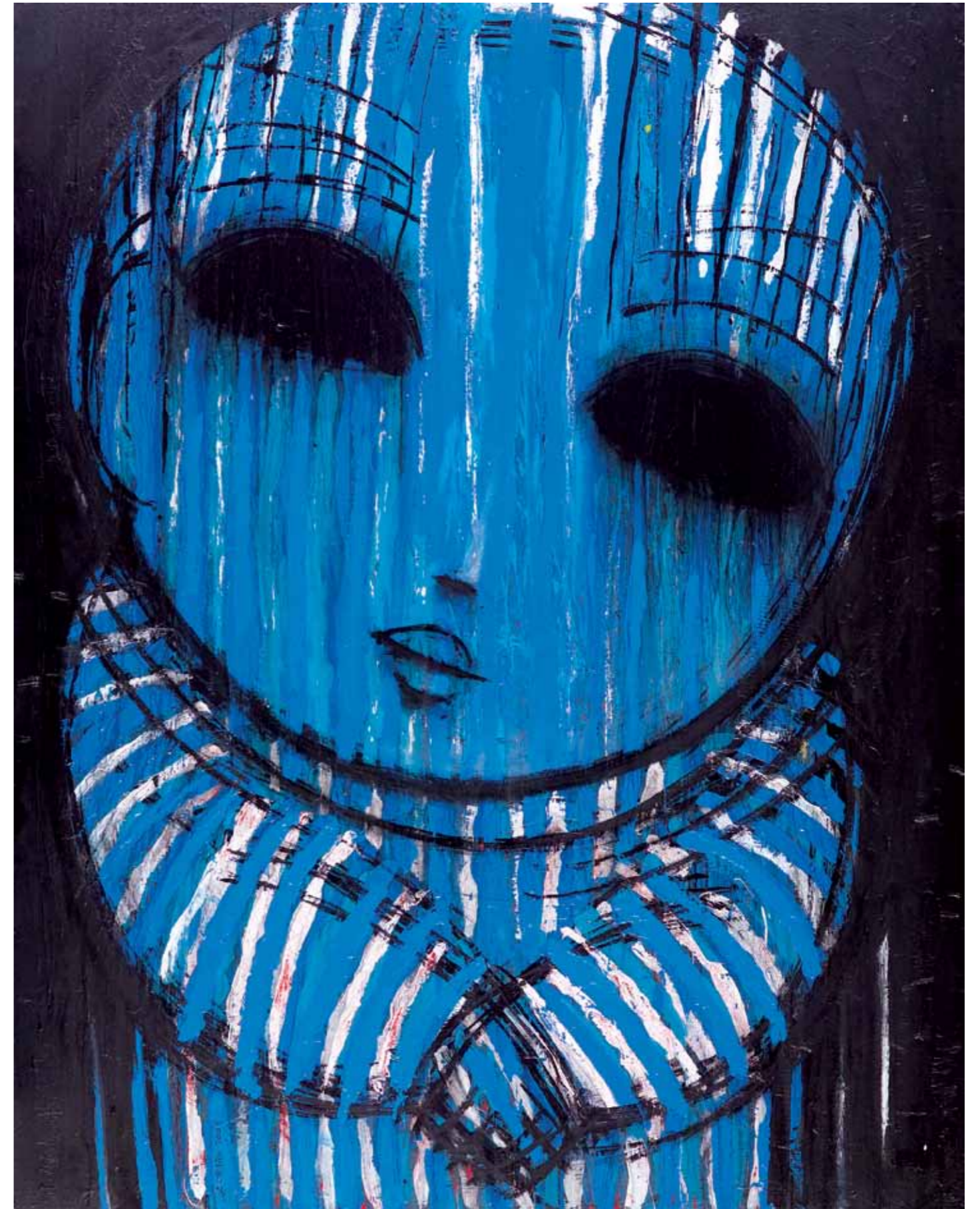
*Self Portrait*  
2008  
Acrylic on wood  
190 x 150 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$15,000 - \$20,000

Dominated by vivacious childlike figures in various scenarios, Mohannad Orabi's previous paintings reflect his interest in the spontaneity of process and the liberation of form that emerges when art is created intuitively without fixed directives. Many of these mixed media canvases were painted as self-portraits, revealing the artist's fascination with the evolution of consciousness in childhood and the wonder and whimsy of the formative years that first shape our comprehension of the world.

With the start of the Syrian uprising and the conflict that followed, Orabi adopted an increasingly realist approach to portraiture, drawing inspiration from the various forms of media that are currently forging a visual repository of the war. Martyr posters, facebook profile pictures, and other types of filtered or composed imagery serve as source material for portraits of Syrians under siege, displaced, and in exile, recording a side of the conflict that lies beyond its ideological divisions and political talking points. While the artist retains an interest in the socialisation processes of childhood, his own experiences of now living outside the country have led him to consider the ways in which visual culture, social media, and digital communication have become substitutes for what was once tangible.

Born in Damascus in 1977, Mohannad Orabi currently lives and works Dubai. Orabi graduated from the Faculty of Fine Art in Damascus in 2000 and won the first prize in The Syrian National Young Artists Exhibition in 2006. Solo exhibitions include Ayyam Gallery Jeddah (2013); Ayyam Gallery DIFC, Dubai (2012); Ayyam Gallery Al Quoz, Dubai (2009); Ayyam Gallery Damascus (2008), Zara Gallery, Amman (2007); and Ishtar Gallery, Damascus (2006, 2004).





Mohannad Orabi  
(Syria, born 1977)

Lot 055

*Self Portrait*  
2011  
Mixed media on canvas  
200 x 150 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$15,000 - \$20,000





# Ahmad Moualla

(Syria, born 1958)

## Lot 056

*Untitled*  
2007  
Acrylic on canvas  
200 x 200 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$15,000 - \$20,000

Ahmad Moualla's theatrical compositions have been indispensable to the allegorical and expressionist threads of contemporary painting that have distinguished Syrian art over the past three decades. In expansive settings reminiscent of staged performances, the artist's faceless, anonymous characters exist as a unified force, moving in waves as though bodies charged by electric connections. Rendered in riotous brushmarks while engaging the tropes of classical painting, his mannerist canvases reflect the dissolution of reality that is often applied to mythical subject matter as an attempt to bridge the past and the present and the experiential with the subconscious. Such grand scenes driven by drama are often situated around a central event, for example a funeral procession or the sermon of an orator. Juxtaposing the alienation of solitude with frenzied collectivity, Moualla has produced weighty reflections on the nature of modern life.

As he built his oeuvre, however, these figures eventually disappeared, leaving an expressionist wasteland of text and brushwork that transports the viewer. The artist cites his early training in calligraphy as the basis for this second branch of work. With the start of the conflict in Syria, however, Moualla has returned to his operatic scenes.

Born in Syria in 1958, Ahmad Moualla studied at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux Arts in Paris in 1987 after pursuing undergraduate education at the Faculty of Fine Arts, Damascus. Upon completing his training in France, he returned to Syria where he taught at his alma mater from 1989 until 1996, developing a significant following among his students and young artists. Since resettling in his native country, he has participated in a variety of exhibitions throughout the Middle East, Europe, and North America and has been given solo shows at some of the Arab world's most prestigious galleries, namely Green Art Gallery (Dubai), Atassi Gallery (Damascus) and Sultan Gallery (Kuwait), gaining notoriety among fellow artists, critics and collectors across the region.





# Saad Yagan

(Syria, born 1944)

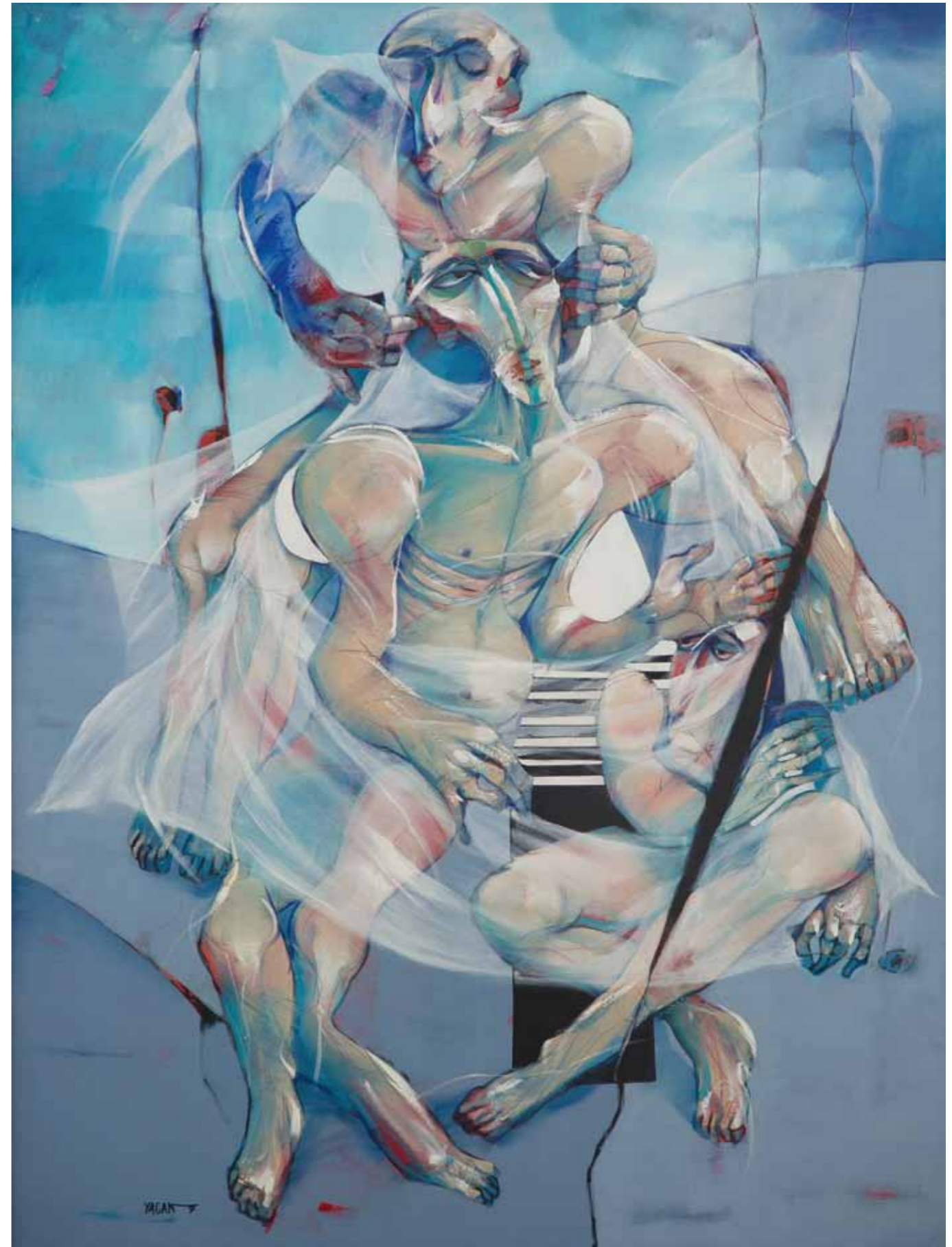
## Lot 057

*Daytime*  
From the *One Thousand and One Nights* series  
2007  
Oil on canvas  
160 X 120 cm  
signed, dated and titled

Estimate: \$10,000 - \$15,000

A leading contemporary Syrian painter, Saad Yagan is widely known for chronicling the modern day experiences of Aleppo residents and their instinctive attachment to the centuries-old city. Yagan's atmospheric paintings have followed two distinct tracts, and can be divided between scenes derived from ancient mythology and literature, such as his *Gilgamesh* and *Arabian Nights* series, and compositions exploring the morose café culture that hosts Syria's recluses, alienated philosophers, and an assortment of other downtrodden clientele. Both narrative threads feature stylised figures whose elongated faces appear worn by time, adopting the lines and brushwork of their settings. Yet their muscular bodies, which appear to be patterned after the perception of hallowed bodies found in religious icons, are rendered with an aestheticised elegance.

Born in Aleppo, Syria in 1944, Saad Yagan began painting at age thirteen. In 1964 he graduated from the Plastic Arts Centre of the Faculty of Fine Arts in Aleppo and held his first solo exhibition at the city's National Museum five years later. To date, he has exhibited in over one hundred exhibitions at home and abroad. In addition to his painting, he has served as a commentator for Syrian television, broadcasting a series of documentaries on art. Yagan has also lectured extensively in local universities. His works are housed in the National Museum of Damascus and the Syrian Ministry of Culture. The artist's recent solo and group exhibitions have been held at Mark Hachem Gallery, Beirut (2014); Art House, Damascus (2011, 2009, 2008); Katzen Center for the Arts, Washington DC (2007); and Art Form Gallery, Montreal (2007).





# Ghassan Sebai

(Syria, born 1939)

## Lot 058

*Untitled*  
2008  
Oil on canvas  
120 x 120 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$8,000 - \$12,000

Although originally influenced by metaphysical approaches to art, contemporary Syrian artist Ghassan Sebai has developed an individual painting style that incorporates cubist elements and the muscular forms of early twentieth-century realism. In the artist's symbolist compositions, figures, most often women, are set against sun-drenched landscapes or atmospheric environments, details that some historians have linked to memories of his childhood home in Homs near the Al Assi River. Mothers, goddesses, and muses are frequently shown with birds, fish, or other animals, hinting at a primal connection to the land. In the more than four decades marking his career, Sebai has continuously reflected on socio-political issues despite his allegorically driven aesthetic. Most recently he has painted large-scale compositions exploring the human cost of the Syrian conflict.

Born in Homs, Syria in 1939, Ghassan Sebai studied oil painting at the University of Alexandria, Egypt and later graduated from Higher Institute of Fine Arts in Paris with a specialization in engraving in 1970. In 1974 he returned to Syria where he taught at the Faculty of Fine Arts, Damascus until 2002. His works are housed in the National Museum of Damascus, the Beiteddine Museum in Lebanon, and the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts.





# Ali Mokawas

(Syria, born 1955)

## Lot 059

*Untitled*  
2008

Mixed media on canvas  
100 x 90 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$8,000 - \$12,000

Ali Mokawas' paintings often resemble etchings, as his limited palette and concentration on line work are emphasised by the subtle employment of contrasting colours. This approach to painting is inspired in part by the intent to capture the startling beauty of the world around him. His figurative compositions are expressionistic in nature and often monumental in subject, offering detailed imagery that is universal in scope.

Born in Latakia, Syria in 1955, Ali Mokawas graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts, Damascus in 1978. Currently an instructor of art, he has exhibited throughout the Arab world, including at the Atassi Gallery in Damascus, Agial Gallery in Beirut, Green Art Gallery in Dubai, and Hewan Gallery in Riyadh. His work has also been shown in spaces throughout Europe. Throughout his career, Mokawas has participated in high profile events such as the Sharjah, Cairo, and Mediterranean Biennials. His works are housed in the Syrian Ministry of Culture and the Barjeel Art Foundation.





# Souad Mardam Bey

(Syria)

## Lot 060

*Untitled*  
2007

Mixed media on canvas  
150 x 110 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$6,000 - \$9,000

The figures of Souad Mardam Bey's paintings are often taken from real life. The artist has seen her subjects many times, either lurking around public spaces or speeding past her on the streets of the various locales where she has resided. Yet she does not simply reproduce snapshots of the everyday man and woman, instead she creates a cast of fantastical and fanciful characters who come forth in plush robes or modern clothing adorned in complex patterns. Inspired by world travels her mystical subjects are adorned in silks and velvets in shades of mahogany and plum. At times her protagonists are pictured with tropical birds, fish, or ducks, foregrounding their symbolic world. Additionally, a focus on texture imbues the artist's gender ambiguous characters with melancholic personas. Their plush lips are sealed, fencing in their deepest secrets, while their eyes express an ethereal quality.

Of her work the artist states, "I do not seek to impose an idea upon spectators. People are free to decide what to see in the eyes of my portraits."

Souad Mardam Bey was born in Damasacus, Syria and studied philosophy at the Lebanese University in Beirut. She also received her artistic training in Beirut and lived in Montreal, Canada for a few years before moving to Cairo in 2001. In Egypt, she has encountered a unique blend of cultures spanning centuries, fueling her artistic endeavours. Mardam Bey has exhibited in venues throughout the Arab world, Europe, and South America.





# Hossein Kashian

(Iran, born 1942)

## Lot 061

*Untitled*  
2010  
Acrylic on canvas  
90 x 150 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$10,000 - \$15,000



Hossein Kashian is a miniature painter and a calligrapher. The artist's calligraphic works range from those reminiscent of ancient scrolls, in which Farsi-Arabic script takes over the canvas in full, while in others the picture plane is divided into strict geometrical sections or quadrants that evoke the symmetry of *Chaar Bagh* often found in the design of Indo-Persian gardens. Other works depict word clusters as whirling or advancing masses utilising broad-spectrum colour palette, thus providing a contemporary take on a traditional art. Originally revered for its role in preservation of the Quran, calligraphy later became a major form of artistic expression in Islamic societies and the foundation for greater experiments in abstraction.

Hossein Kashian was born in Tehran in 1942 and is a graduate of the Iranian Calligraphy Association (1976). He has held more than eighty-four solo and group exhibitions locally and internationally, including in Egypt, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Algeria, Paris, Germany, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Switzerland, China, Dubai and the United States. Kashian has formerly served as Director of the Tehran Contemporary Art Museum, and was founder of Iranian Visual Arts. He has also worked as an art expert at the Visual Arts Center of the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education, Iran.



# Farideh Lashai

(Iran, 1944 - 2013)

## Lot 062

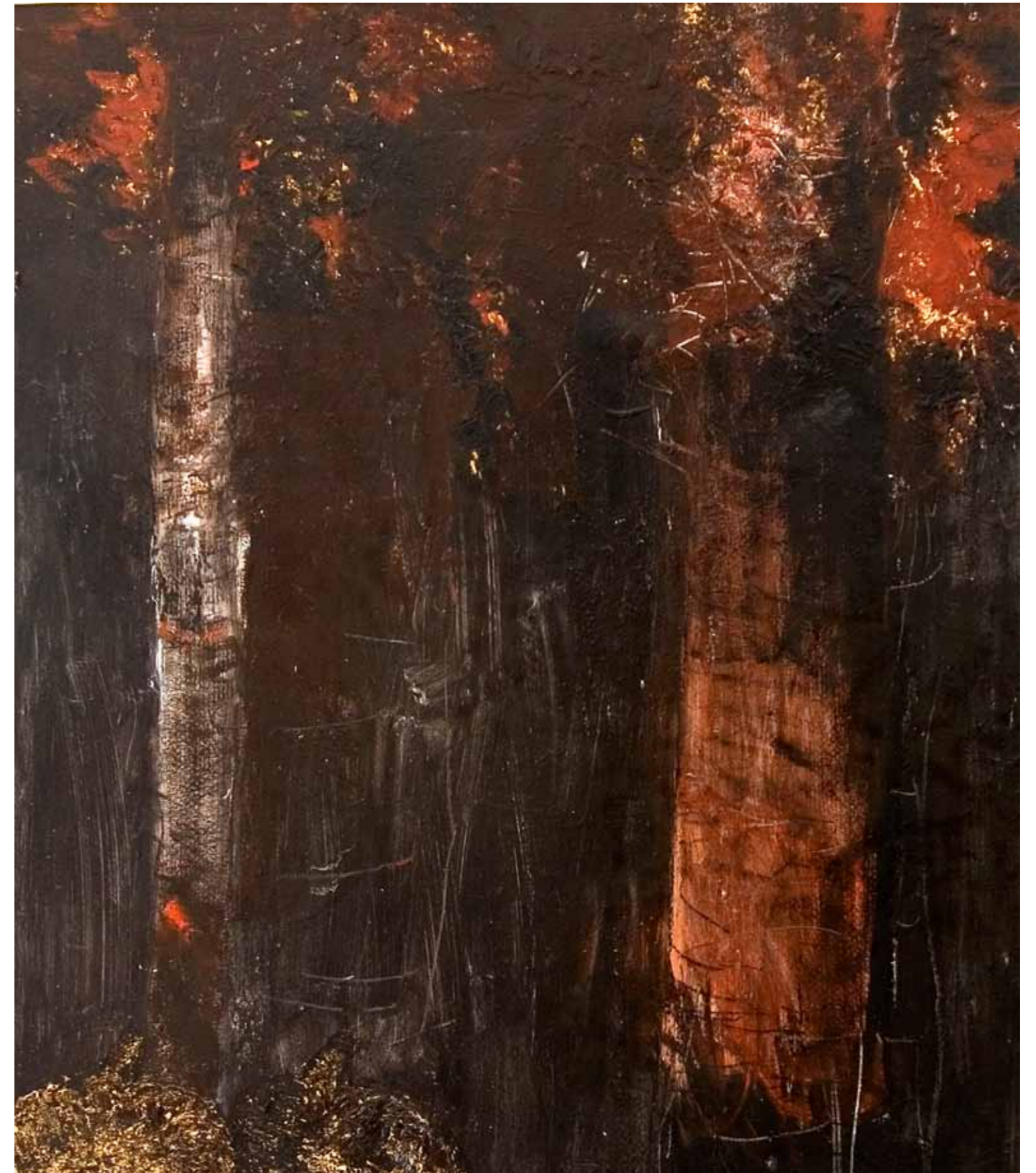
*Untitled*  
2012  
Acrylic on wood  
76 x 67 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$8,000 - \$12,000

Farideh Lashai was one of Iran's most prominent contemporary artists. Prior to her death in 2013, her practice was increasingly focused on combinations of painting and animated projections in which real and imaginary characters journeyed through the abstract spaces of large canvases. Lashai played a pivotal role in the contemporary Iranian art scene and was co-founder of the seminal *Neda* group, a collective of female artists that was established in the 1990s.

In the conceptual grounding and abstracted compositional space of her works, the presence of nature is clearly discernible, appearing sometimes as an interwoven mass, a network of colours, and sometimes as geometrical colour forms. "I have never painted from nature; in the sense of painting a landscape I can look at. But I suppose I have painted by nature. The richness of nature amazes me, and amazement is the starting point for all artistic pursuits," Lashai reflected in an interview with *Canvas Magazine* in 2007.

Born in 1944 in Rasht, Iran, Farideh Lashai was a graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna. She practiced painting since the late 1960s, and over the course of her forty-year career held twenty-five solo exhibitions and participated in more than eighty group exhibitions around the world. A version of *Between the Motion / And the act / Falls the shadow*, was exhibited at the Saatchi Gallery, London, curated by Ali Bakhtiari, with *Magic of Persia*, in October 2012. In 2013, ABBookness published her artist book, *Catching the Moon*, which was launched at JAMM Art, Dubai. In addition to her painting, she was an accomplished writer and translator. Lashai translated several plays by German playwright Bertolt Brecht while her final novel *Shal Bamu* became a bestseller, attracting the attention of Iranian literary circles.





# Ghassan Nana

(Syria, born 1953)

## Lot 063

*Duo I, Pianist and Violinist*  
2009  
Charcoal on canvas  
145.5 x 181 cm  
signed, dated and titled

Estimate: \$15,000 - \$20,000

The paintings of contemporary Syrian artist Ghassan Nana depict a variety of subjects in compositions that rely on expressionist brushwork and incandescent hues in the creation of buoyant settings. Inspired by a range of themes, including ancient mythology and historical tableaux, Nana's atmospheric paintings explore the multitude of experiences that inform both the past and the present, and are embodied in material culture. For the artist, such scenes are fashioned by "life, nature, history, people, and the world's problems." Utilising a painterly approach to depicting hovering "dreams," his melodic brushstrokes guide the viewer's eye across swaying forms as though positioned before a passing haze.

Ghassan Nana was born in Homs, Syria in 1953. He studied at the Plastic Arts Center in Homs (1971) and graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts, Damascus in 1978. Nana has held solo and group exhibitions throughout Europe and the Arab world at such venues as Galerie Tanit, Beirut (2012); the Beirut Art Fair (2011); Tajalliyat Art Gallery, Damascus (2011); the National Museum of Damascus (2009); Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris (2008); Fateh Moudarres Atelier, Damascus (2002); Atassi Gallery, Damascus (1998); and the Cairo Biennial (1996). His works are housed in the National Museum of Damascus and the Syrian Ministry of Culture.





# Ammar Abd Rabbo

(Syria, born 1966)

## Lot 064

*Waiting for the Right Time*  
2007

Archival print on cotton paper  
110 x 80 cm  
Edition 1/5  
signed, dated and numbered

Estimate: \$6,000 - \$9,000

As one of the Arab world's prominent photojournalists, Ammar Abd Rabbo's work has been published in leading and widely circulated publications, from *Time Magazine* to *Paris Match*, *Der Spiegel*, *Le Monde*, and *Asharq Al Awsat*, where he signed more than sixty magazine covers. Spanning a twenty-year career, Rabbo's portfolio includes war coverage in Iraq, Lebanon, and Libya, portraits of head of states, world-renowned celebrities such as Michael Jackson, as well as high profile events such as the Cannes Film Festival and Paris Fashion Week.

Born in Damascus in 1966, Rabbo lived in Libya and Lebanon before moving to France in 1978 after the intensification of the Lebanese Civil War. Prior to joining Sipa press agency in 1992, he studied political science at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques. He later left Sipa to create Balkis photo agency, which is now syndicated by Abaca Press. In 2012, Ammar Abd Rabbo held his first artistic exhibition entitled *Coming Soon* at Ayyam Gallery, Beirut. This exhibition transported the viewer beyond the wall of informality and provided a privileged look into one of life's most intimate spheres: pregnancy. *Follow the Leader*, Rabbo's second solo show held in Dubai, focused on the spontaneity of scenes capturing world leaders, providing a surprising glimpse into the banal side of politics.



Lara Zankoul  
(Lebanon, born 1987)

Lot 065

*Censorship*  
2013

Archival print on cotton paper  
90 x 90 cm  
Edition 1/5  
signed, dated and numbered

Estimate: \$2,000 - \$4,000

The dreamlike compositions of Lebanese photographer Lara Zankoul are contemporary fairy tales that explore the charm and mystery of the human psyche. Whimsical and playful, they represent an attempt to invent new worlds, to push against the boundaries of our reality and escape the monotony of everyday life. The characters inhabiting Zankoul's work are anonymous and timeless, universal symbols existing within a fantastical and surreal landscape.

Born in Lebanon in 1987, Lara Zankoul lives and works in Beirut. She has participated in group exhibitions within the Middle East and France. Part of the Shabab Ayyam incubator programme, she was an award recipient at the 2011 Shabab Ayyam Photography Competition. Zankoul held her first (2013) and second (2014) solo exhibitions at Ayyam Gallery Beirut.





Lara Zankoul  
(Lebanon, born 1987)

Lot 066

*Feminine Side*  
2013

Archival print on cotton paper  
90 x 90 cm  
Edition 1/5  
signed, dated and numbered

Estimate: \$2,000 - \$4,000



# Majid Koorang Beheshti

(Iran, born 1967)

## Lot 067

*Untitled*  
From *The City's Notebook* series  
2012  
Archival print on cotton paper  
70 x 105 cm  
Edition 2/3  
signed, dated and numbered

Estimate: \$4,000 - \$7,000

Majid Koorang Beheshti's 2011 series, *The City's Notebook*, takes a conceptual approach to photography with staged scenes in which architectural details situate his subjects in an apocalyptic urban setting. Angular rooftops, perforated tunnels, and geometric skeletons of edifices enclose the composition of each photograph, creating an abject mood. This bleak environment serves to emphasise the despair, chaos, destruction, and violence that has permeated Iran at certain intervals in its history. With direct references to an armed military presence, the bygone era of the Persian Empire, and various murders of the city's youth, the images appear to grieve a lost metropolis, perhaps even a disappearing heritage, while underscoring the netting framework and enduring corridors that affix residents in this reality.

Born in 1967 in Isfahan, Iran, Majid Koorang Beheshti received a Bachelor of Arts in painting from Tehran's Azad University. He has held solo exhibitions throughout Iran since 1998 and has been featured in group shows in Iran, the United States, Italy, France, the United Kingdom, and Germany since 2004, most notably the exhibition *Persian Visions, Contemporary Photography from Iran*, which toured the United States. In 2012 he held a solo exhibition with Ayyam Gallery Dubai.





# Lamya Gargash

(United Arab Emirates, born 1982)

## Lot 068

*The Orange Room*  
From the *Presence* series  
2007  
C-print  
60 x 60 cm  
Edition 2/7

Estimate: \$2,000 - \$4,000

Lamya Gargash's first artist book, *Presence*, is a photographic series documenting recently vacated houses and structures in the United Arab Emirates that have been abandoned or left for demolition, a reflective comment on the rapid modernisation of the Gulf. A native of Dubai, the artist witnessed the many phases of the Emirates' development and has subsequently captured its ever-changing environments through the intimacy of domestic settings. Such scenes afford Gargash the subjectivity and visceral sense of encounter that is otherwise absent in understandings of modernisation and expansion. In *The Orange Room* (2007) relics of a bygone era allude to a missing human presence. The objects contained in the familiar yet private site of a bedroom appear in waiting as though unsure of their future.

Lamya Gargash was born in Dubai in 1982. She graduated from the American University of Sharjah in 2004 and received a Masters degree in Arts in Communication Design from Central Saint Martins in the UK in 2007.

Gargash has won a number of awards for her work in film and photography, including first prize in the Emirates Film Festival, as well as the Ibdaa Special Jury Award for her movie titled *Wet Tiles*. She has participated in solo and group exhibitions in the United Arab Emirates, Japan, and throughout Europe. In 2009, she was the featured artist of the Emirates' inaugural national pavilion at the Venice Biennale, and also participated in the Sharjah Biennale. Earlier this year, she participated in the FotoFest Biennial in Houston, USA.



# Alireza Fani

(Iran, born 1975)

## Lot 069

*Shut Up!*

From the *Tehran 88* series  
2010

Archival print on cotton paper  
150 x 100 cm  
Edition 1/3  
signed, dated and numbered

Estimate: \$6,000 - \$9,000

In Alireza Fani's works from 2008 to 2010, animal bones and fish appear as individual images as well as in multiples, superimposed onto scenes from daily life, and strategically placed upon or alongside the bodies of various male and female figures. As a child, Fani spent time both in the city and at his father's farm where small details from nature such as "the goose wish bone [his] mother cooked" and "river fish" fascinated him. Years later these visuals find their way into Fani's *Tehran 88* series. Often invoking violence, for example in the presentation of partly cut-up fish in *Tehran 88*, such an artistic representation should not be described as social art but as "art responding to a particular situation, [in which the photographs] render the symptoms of a collective malady of a nation." Bavand Behpoor in *Tavoos* (2010) further contextualises that Fani's photographs offer "a visual solution to a collective silence," in a society where citizens, especially men are often unable to speak of their suffering. As well, viewers may be steered to ask that like fish out of water, can there one day be hope for Fani's country men and women to be united with a more yielding environment? One in which speech may be uttered without fear of being reprimanded.

Alireza Fani was born in 1975 in Tehran, Iran. He received a Diploma in Graphic Design from Chamran Technical High School of Gorgan, and in 1994 entered Azad University of Art and Architecture to further his studies in Graphic Design. He has worked as a graphic designer, art director, and freelance photographer since 1997, developing a focus in fine art photography in 2007. Fani has held several solo exhibitions in Iran while also participating in numerous group shows in Iran, China, Croatia, Poland, the United Kingdom, the United States, the United Arab Emirates, and India.





# Ramin Haerizadeh

(Iran, born 1975)

## Lot 070

*Theatre Group (8)*

2005

C-print

100 x 70 cm

Edition 2/10

signed, dated and numbered

Estimate: \$5,000 - \$8,000

Dubai-based Iranian artist Ramin Haerizadeh fought his way from the paths he was expected to follow to acquire a diverse education in the arts. Exploring photography, drawing, painting, film, animation, and collage, he creates multifaceted works that lyrically reclaim and transform found images into arrestingly witty but tragically troubling scenes of humanity.

Among multiple reproductions of Haerizadeh's self, a lone, bearded, veiled, cross-dressed creature incessantly crops up. This creature reveals a culture of concealment, serving as both a metaphor for oppression and a container of safety. As winners re-write history, Haerizadeh, disillusioned, re-writes, camouflages, and twists given images and apparent truths. He mimics the hypocritical and grotesque manipulations that shape our disturbing world and forcibly alienate personal and collective memories. The inevitable repetition of abusive behaviour, on any scale, resonates throughout Haerizadeh's carefully constructed montages of beasts, texts, icons, magazine clippings, and media images.

Born in 1975 in Tehran, Haerizadeh presented a collaborative exhibition with Rokni Haerizadeh and Hesam Rahmanian at Gallery Isabelle van den Eynde in March 2012 entitled *I Put It There, You Name It*. Receiving wide international acclaim, his works featured in Charles Saatchi's *Unveiled: New Art From the Middle East* London, 2009, Thaddeus Ropac's *Be Crowned with Laurel in Oblivion*, Paris, 2010, *The Right to Protest* at the Museum of the Seam, Jerusalem, and three solo shows at Gallery Isabelle van den Eynde, Dubai as well as Gallery Nathalie Obadia, Paris in 2012. Beyond this, Haerizadeh has participated in group shows in Berlin, New York, Istanbul and Tehran, and has works in various institutional collections such as the Guggenheim Museum, Abu Dhabi, the British Museum, London, the Devi Art Foundation, Deli, the Rubell Collection, Florida, and the Rosenblum Collection, Paris. The artist presently lives and works with his brother Rokni Haerizadeh in Dubai.





# Mohammad Khodashenas

(Iran, born 1975)

Lot 071

*Sahneh*  
2011  
Plexi on canvas  
200 x 200 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$8,000 - \$12,000

In Mohammad Khodashenas' canvases vivid colours and text are layered with corporate logos, images from popular culture, and political graphics, resulting in complex patterns. Incorporating various templates of visual culture, ranging from stencil work and slogans to Calligraphy, Khodashenas chronicles the confrontations between the interwoven political networks fueling globalisation and the youth culture that is currently mobilising in resistance. The viewer is challenged to find meaning among letters, words and iconic images, all of which come together to create a multi-dimensional narrative. At the same time, one is also confronted with the oversaturation of imagery that marks our increasingly interconnected experiences through digital media.

Born in 1975 in Lahijan, Iranian graffiti artist Mohammad Khodeshenas was trained in graphic design, culminating in an undergraduate degree from the University of Tehran. He has exhibited in Iran, including at Azad Art Gallery and filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami's workshop, and in the greater Middle East and Europe at such events and venues as Opera Gallery and the International Poster Biennial, Poland (2010).





Zena Assi  
(Lebanon, born 1974)

Lot 072

*My City in December 10*  
2010

Mixed media on canvas  
100 x 150 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$8,000 - \$12,000

Zena Assi's work on canvas draws inspiration from the relationships and conflicts between the individual and his spatial environment, society and its surroundings. Assi uses various mediums to document and explore the cultural and social changes of her native Lebanon. Through elongated, stylised figures who are often isolated or seemingly disconnected although depicted in groups, she alludes to the growing alienation, social fragmentation, and acute apathy that have accumulated as cultural roadblocks with each political rupture of Lebanon's history. Her work takes shape in installation, animation, sculpture, and paintings on canvas.

Born in 1974 in Lebanon, Zena Assi lives and works in Beirut. She graduated with honors from l'Academie Libanaise des Beaux Arts (ALBA) after which she worked in advertising and taught in universities. Assi has exhibited in solo as well as group shows across Europe, the Middle East, and Northern America including at Art Sawa Gallery UAE (2013, 2009, 2008); Espace Claude Lemand, Paris (2012); Abu Dhabi Art Fair, UAE (2011); Shubbak Festival, UK (2011); Menasart Fair, Lebanon (2011); Subtitled APEAL Royal College of Art, UK (2011); Zoom Art Fair, USA (2010); and the Cairo Biennial (2010). Her work is part of the Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah UAE, and the ALBA University.





# Babak Kazemi

(Iran, born 1983)

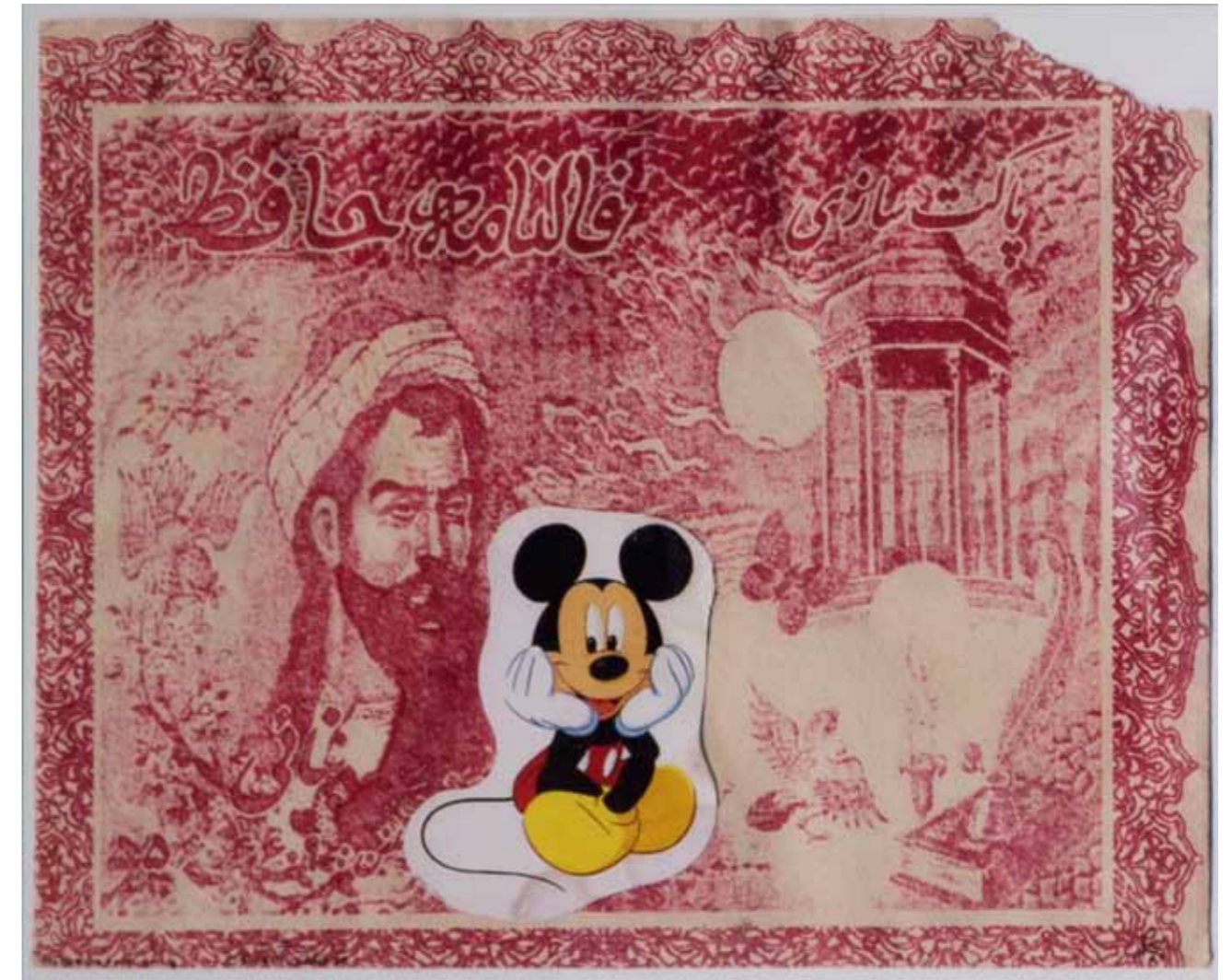
## Lot 073

*The Proposed One to the Group 5+*  
2010  
C-print  
68 x 83 cm  
Edition 1/6  
signed, dated and numbered

Estimate: \$2,000 - \$4,000

Babak Kazemi is a self-taught photographer living and working in Tehran. He was born and raised in the city of Ahvaz, which has served as a recurring subject in the artist's works. Ahvaz is a few kilometres away from the first-discovered oil well in the Middle East and one of several cities greatly affected by the Iran/Iraq war, which Kazemi witnessed during his childhood. Kazemi incorporates oil as a conceptual detail while also utilising it in the artistic process, frequently soaking his photographic prints in oil. Believing that many of the social and political problems in Iran stem from the discovery and production of oil in the region, Kazemi's use of the unconventional medium signifies the sociopolitical context of his dystopian images.

Born in 1983 in Ahvaz, Iran, Babak Kazemi began his artistic career in 1996 and has exhibited in Iran and abroad, including at the group show *5+*, Homa Art Gallery, Tehran, Iran (2011); *Naftoon*, Tarahan-e-Azad Gallery, Tehran (2011); *Television*, Mohsen Gallery, Tehran (2011); *Ministry of Nomads*, London (2010); *Revealing Truths*, Sultan Gallery, Kuwait (2009); and *Voice of Vision*, Galerie Speos, Paris (2009).





# Shurooq Amin

(Kuwait, born 1967)

## Lot 074

*She Loves Me, She Loves Me Not*  
2012

Mixed media on canvas mounted on wood  
110 x 160 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$6,000 - \$9,000

Immediately striking in artist Shurooq Amin's work is the energy exuded by warm hues and painterly realism in the depiction of elaborately attired men and women whose taste for fashion signifies power and overstated social posturing. Amin's figures, pictured against Louis Vuitton luggage or clad in embroidered *abayas*, are often depicted in various states of embrace, locking hands, playing cards, drinking whisky: their true identities hidden, both figuratively and literally, behind the imposition of masks or veils. The women in Amin's canvases are ultimately subservient to their male counterparts, their invisible "puppet masters." Through such imagery she explores the double standards, hypocrisy, and secret lives that exist beneath the surface of a conservative state. Her work confronts the hidden lives of the Arab patriarch: religious preacher, weekend alcoholic; political activist, well-known party-animal; conservative father, secret playboy. Amin's examination of gender roles and performativity while portrayed in the Arab context is applicable to the dynamics of gender as they play out globally.

Born in 1967 in Kuwait, Shurooq Amin is an interdisciplinary art practitioner of Kuwaiti-Syrian background. In addition to being a visual artist with thirteen solo exhibitions to date, she is a Pushcart Prize nominated poet with a doctorate in Creative Writing and Ekphrasis from Warrborough College, England.

In 2013, Shurooq was awarded the title of "Artist of the Year" by the Arab Woman Awards, Kuwait chapter and was the first female Kuwaiti artist to be auctioned at Christie's in 2012. Amin's paintings are housed in public and private collections in the Middle East, Europe, and the United States. Selected solo and group exhibitions for the artist include: Ayyam Gallery Al Quoz, Dubai (2013); Lahd Gallery, London (2011); CAN, New York (2010); Tilal Gallery, Kuwait (2010); 11th International Cairo Art Biennale (2008). A retrospective of her work was recently featured in the biannual art journal, *Contemporary Practices: Visual Arts from the Middle East*.



# Kais Salman

(Syria, born 1976)

## Lot 075

*New Wave*  
2012  
Mixed media on canvas  
200 x 140 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$12,000 - \$18,000

Kais Salman utilises satire to subvert the normalisation of greed, vanity, and ideological extremism that is rapidly defining our era. Each series of Salman's work has sought to reflect a type of psychological violence that occurs when excess becomes rationalised and accepted by societies. Seeking to confront and exorcise sociocultural manifestations of such depravity, Salman taps into ugliness and abjection through intentionally hyperbolised imagery that is accentuated by punches of colour and aestheticised forms. Terrorism, consumerism, cosmetic surgery, religious fanaticism, imperialism, and the voyeurism of the digital age have all served as topics of Salman's carnivalesque compositions.

Born in Tartous, Syria in 1976, Kais Salman lives and works in Beirut. He received a Bachelor of Arts from the Faculty of Fine Arts, Damascus in 2002. His paintings are currently housed in private collections throughout the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe. Solo and group exhibitions include the Alexandria Biennale (2014); Ayyam Gallery DIFC, Dubai (2014, 2010); Ayyam Gallery Beirut 2014, 2012); Ayyam Gallery Al Quoz, Dubai (2014, 2011, 2010); Damascus Museum of Modern Art (2009); The Park Avenue Armory, New York (2008); Carthage Festival for Coast Mediterranean Sea Artists, Tunisia (2005). In May 2010, a work from his *Fashion Series* appeared on the cover of the Wall Street Journal's *Weekend Edition* magazine, a first for an Arab artist.





# Nazar Moosavinia

(Iran, born 1979)

## Lot 076

*Education*  
2013  
Oil on canvas  
100 x 150 cm  
signed and dated

Estimate: \$4,000 - \$7,000

Reflecting a meticulous draftsmanship that punctuates the canvas, Nazar Moosavinia's surrealist compositions erupt as brooding tales of man on the brink of psychological implosion. Reminiscent of the subversively absurdist imagery of Hieronymus Bosch, Moosavinia creates a fantastical and nightmarish world in his series *Recollection of a Hen* (2011). In the darkly executed body of work a progressive role reversal from captive hen to captive human steers a hunt that alternates between confinement, confusion, and submission. Though muted in palette, a bold red features in every painting, along with the prominent inclusion of eggs carefully balanced on their points. Past readings of Moosavinia's paintings have situated the artist among a new generation of Iranians that have utilised visual strategies to explore the increasingly Orwellian tactics of global powers and their impact on modern life.

Born in Abadan, Iran in 1979, Nazar Moosavinia received a Bachelor of Arts in Painting from Jahad University, a Master of Arts in Painting from Azad Art and Architecture University, Tehran, and is a longtime member of the Iranian Painters Society (SIP). Moosavinia has participated in solo and group shows since 2006 in Tehran, London, and Dubai



# Rezvan Sadeghzadeh

(Iran, born 1964)

## Lot 077

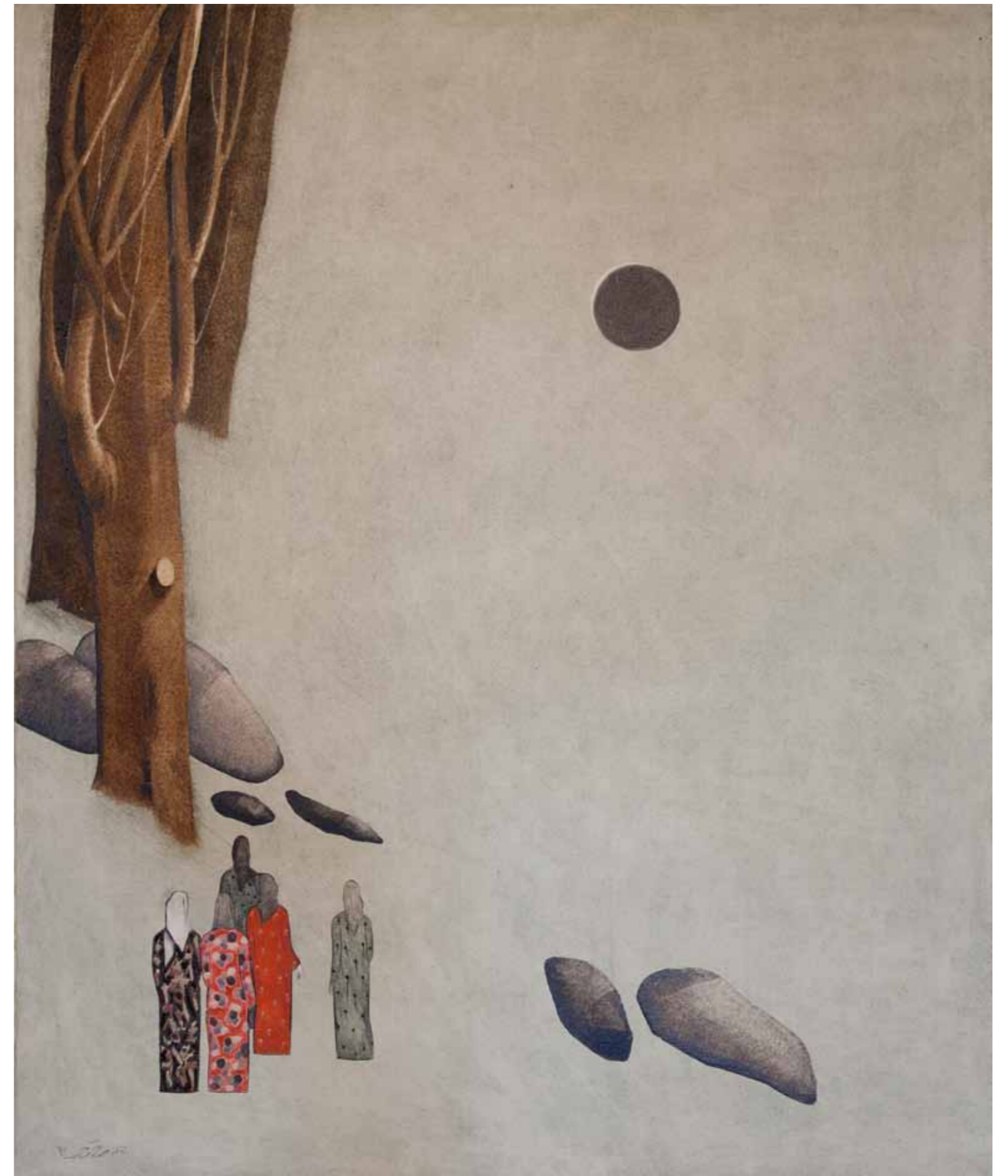
*Untitled*  
2013  
Oil on canvas  
120 x 100 cm  
signed

Estimate: \$4,000 - \$7,000

Rezvan Sadeghzadeh's anonymous female figures stand alongside oversized rocks and boulders, often dwarfed by the monolithic forms. Stones appear repeatedly throughout the artist's works; they are not used merely as peripheral elements in a formal still life, or as background props in a landscape, but rather as organisms with a life and energy of their own, sometimes appearing centre stage to be studied at close range. Sadeghzadeh's subjects are depicted with thin outlines in non-descript settings, an effect that further deconstructs and destabilises the narrative quality of figuration. Allowing the viewer to freely interpret the unifying threads of his work, the artist offers spaces where the subconscious mind can take over.

Born in Ardebil, Iran in 1964, Rezvan Sadeghzadeh presently lives and works in Tehran. He has participated in over one hundred group exhibitions in Iran, Japan, China, France, England, Korea and Kuwait and has held numerous solo exhibitions since 1983.

Sadeghzadeh is also the Director of the Painting Department at the University of Arts in Tehran. He was the winner of the Fourth Tehran Biennale of 1996 and the recipient of the Worldwide Competition for Iran in London (2000). He has also been awarded in the Second Biennale of Contemporary Painting of the Islamic World (2004) and the Seventh Tehran Biennale (2002). Selected solo exhibitions include Ayyam Gallery DIFC, Dubai (2013), Mah Gallery, Tehran (2007), Golestan Gallery, Tehran (2004), Asar Gallery, Tehran (2001), Arian Gallery, Tehran (2000), Arian Gallery, Tehran (1997), 7 Samar Gallery, Tehran (1996), Golestan Gallery, Tehran (1996), and Kandloos Gallery, Tehran (1994).





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|---------|---------|-------------|--------------------|
| Between | 100     | 2,000 USD   | 100 USD            |
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**1. As Is** Goods auctioned are often of some age. The authenticity of the Authorship of property listed in the catalogue is guaranteed as stated in the Terms of Guarantee and except for the Limited Warranty contained therein, all property is sold "AS IS" without any representations or warranties by us or the Consignor as to merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose, the correctness of the catalogue or other description of the physical condition, size, quality, rarity, importance, medium, provenance, exhibitions, literature or historical relevance of any property and no statement anywhere, whether oral or written, whether made in the catalogue, an advertisement, a bill of sale, a salesroom posting or announcement, or elsewhere, shall be deemed such a warranty, representation or assumption of liability. We and the Consignor make no representations and warranties, express or implied, as to whether the purchaser acquires any copyrights, including but not limited to, any reproduction rights in any property. We and the Consignor are not responsible for errors and omissions in the catalogue, glossary, or any supplemental material.

**2. Inspection** Prospective bidders should inspect the property before bidding to determine its condition, size, and whether or not it has been repaired or restored.

**3. Buyer's Premium** A buyer's premium will be added to the hammer price and is payable by the purchaser as part of the total purchase price. The buyer's premium is 20%.

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**6. Bidding** We reserve the right to reject any bid. The highest bidder acknowledged by the auctioneer will be the purchaser. In the event of any dispute between bidders, or in the event of doubt on our part as to the validity of any bid, the auctioneer will have the final discretion to determine the successful bidder, cancel the sale, or to reoffer and resell the article in dispute. If any dispute arises after the sale, our sale record is conclusive. Although in our discretion we will execute order or absentee bids or accept telephone bids as a convenience to clients who are not present at auctions, we are not responsible for any errors or omissions in connection therewith.

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Auction No. 20

# The Young Collectors Auction

Art from the Middle East

Viewing: 20 - 26 May, 2014, 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM

**Auction: Tuesday, May 27, 2014**

**7:00 PM**

**Head of Session & Auctioneer**

**Hisham Samawi**



**Khaled Samawi**

Dubai + 971 4 323 6242, khaled@ayyamgallery.com

**Hisham Samawi**

Dubai + 971 4 323 6242, hisham@ayyamgallery.com

**Ead Samawi, Jr.**

Dubai + 971 4 323 6242, ead@ayyamgallery.com

**Myriam Jakiche**

Dubai + 971 4 439 2395, myriam@ayyamgallery.com

**General Information**

auctions@ayyamgallery.com

**ayyam gallery | al quoz**

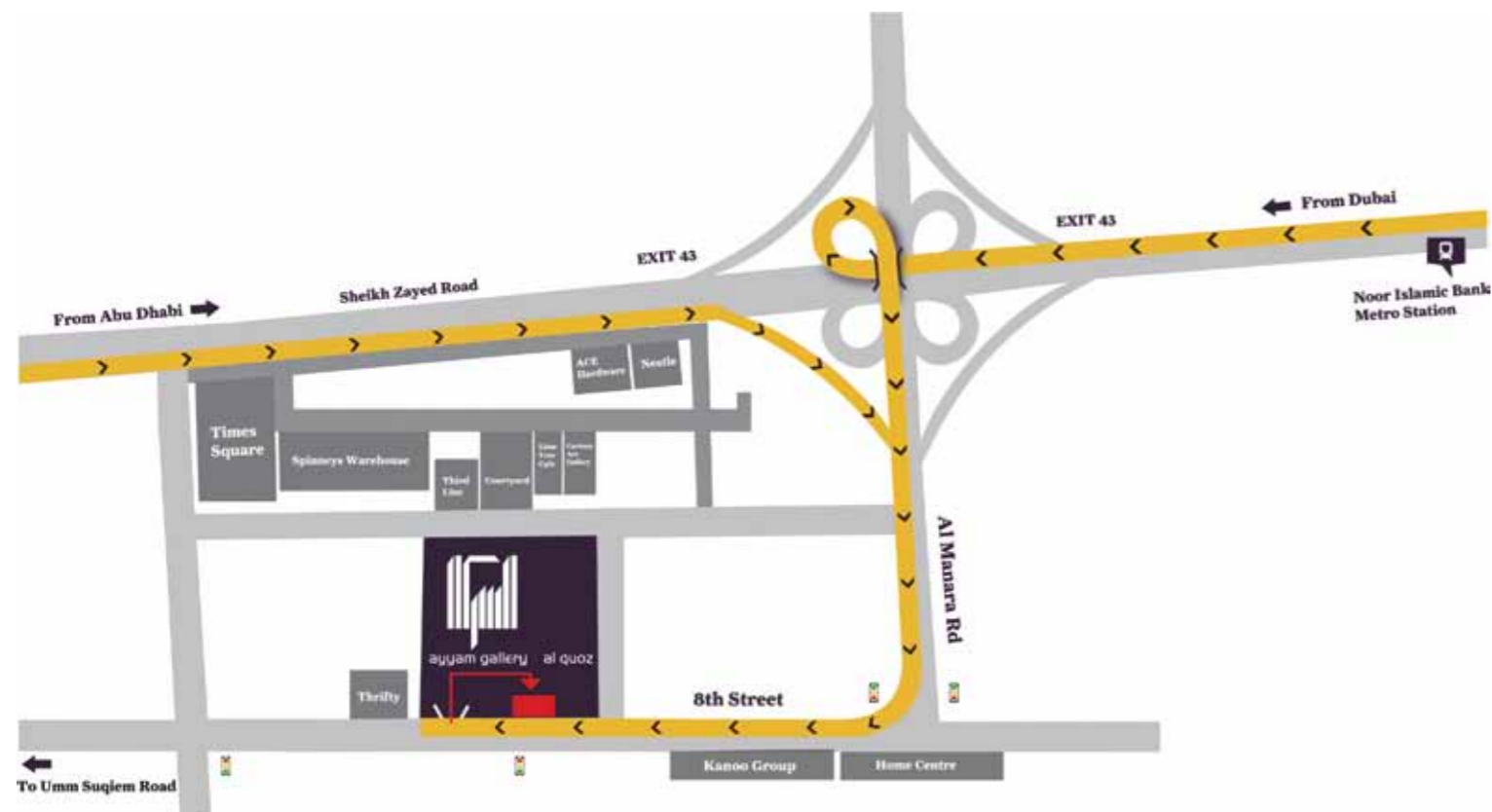
Alserkal Avenue, B-11, Street 8, Al Quoz I PO Box 283174 Dubai, UAE

Phone + 971 4 323 6242, Fax + 971 4 323 6243 dubai@ayyamgallery.com, www.ayyamgallery.com

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**ayyam gallery | al quoz**

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## GUIDE FOR ABSENTEE & TELEPHONE BIDDERS

If you are unable to attend an auction in person, you may give one of the auction specialists (all of whom are listed in the front of the catalog) instructions to bid on your behalf by completing the form overleaf. This service is free and confidential.

Please record accurately the lot numbers, descriptions and top hammer price you are willing to pay for each lot.

We will try to purchase the lot(s) of your choice for the lowest price possible and will never exceed the maximum bid amount indicated on the reverse of this form.

Alternative bids can be placed by using the word "OR" between lot numbers. If your bid on an early lot is successful, we will not continue to bid on other lots for you. If your early bids are unsuccessful, we will continue to execute bids for alternative lots until a bid is successful, maintaining your maximum bid amounts.

Bids must be placed in the chronological order as in the catalog.

The form can be used for one sale only – please clearly indicate the sale number and date.

Please place your bids as early as possible, as in the event of identical bids the earliest received will take precedence. Wherever possible, bids should be submitted at least twenty-four hours before the auction.

Where appropriate, your bids will be rounded down to the nearest amount consistent with the auctioneer's bidding increments. See the 'Conditions of Sale' in the back of the catalogue for more information on increments.

### Important

Please note that the execution of written and telephone bids is offered as a gratuitous service and is undertaken at the bidder's risk. It is undertaken subject to The Young Collectors Auction's other commitments at the time of the auction. The Young Collectors Auction therefore cannot accept liability for failure to place bids, whether through negligence or otherwise. All bids will be executed and are accepted subject to the "Conditions of Sale" printed in the auction catalogue. Please note that a buyer's premium in the amount stated in paragraph 3 of the "Conditions of Sale" in the back of the auction catalogue will be added to the hammer price as part of the total purchase price, plus any applicable sales tax if relevant. Successful bidders will receive an invoice detailing their purchases and giving instructions for payment and clearance of goods. Unsuccessful bidders will also be notified.

All purchases must be paid for and artworks collected within seven days of the auction date or the works may be subject to forfeiture or if it is not removed, (i) a handling charge of 1% of the total purchase price per month from the tenth day after the sale until its removal will be payable by the purchaser, with a minimum of 5% of the total purchase price for any property not so removed within 60 days after the sale, and (ii) we may send the purchased property to a public warehouse for the account, at the risk and expense of the purchaser.

### New Clients

Please note that we may contact you to request a bank reference. In addition, The Young Collectors Auction requires a copy of government issued photo ID in order to generate a new account.

### For Written/Fixed Bids

Bids will be executed for the lowest price as is permitted by other bids or reserves. Stating "Buy" or unlimited bids are not accepted, nor are "plus one" bids.

### For Telephone Bids

Please clearly specify the telephone number on which you may be reached at the time of the sale, including the country code. We will call you from the salesroom shortly before your lot is offered.



# The Young Collectors Auction

## ABSENTEE / TELEPHONE BIDDING FORM

Sale No .....  
 Sale Date .....

Please see important notice and information regarding absentee bidding on the reserve of this form.

TITLE OR COMPANY NAME (IF APPLICABLE)

FIRST NAME \_\_\_\_\_ LAST NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
 CLIENT ACCOUNT NO. \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL\* \_\_\_\_\_  
 TELEPHONE (HOME) \_\_\_\_\_ (TELEPHONE BUSINESS) \_\_\_\_\_  
 FAX \_\_\_\_\_ CELLULAR \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS

Please write clearly and place your bids as early as possible, as in the event of identical bids, the earliest bid received will take precedence. Bids should be submitted at least 24 hours before the auction. The telephone bid service is offered for lots with a minimum low estimate of \$5,000. Bids must be placed in the chronological order as in the catalog. All purchases must be paid for and artworks collected within seven days of the auction date or the works may be subject to forfeiture.

TELEPHONE NUMBER DURING THE SALE (TEL. BIDS ONLY)

| LOT NO. | LOT DESCRIPTION | MAXIMUM DOLLAR AMOUNT OR √ FOR PHONE BID (EXCLUDING PREMIUM AND TAX) |
|---------|-----------------|--|
|         |                 | \$   |
|         |                 | \$   |
|         |                 | \$   |
|         |                 | \$   |
|         |                 | \$   |
|         |                 | \$   |
|         |                 | \$   |

## AUCTION SALES CONDITIONS

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# The Young Collectors Auction

## PADDLE FORM

Sale No .....  
.....

Sale Date .....  
.....

NAME .....  
.....

ADDRESS .....  
.....

EMAIL .....  
.....

MOBILE NUMBER .....  
.....

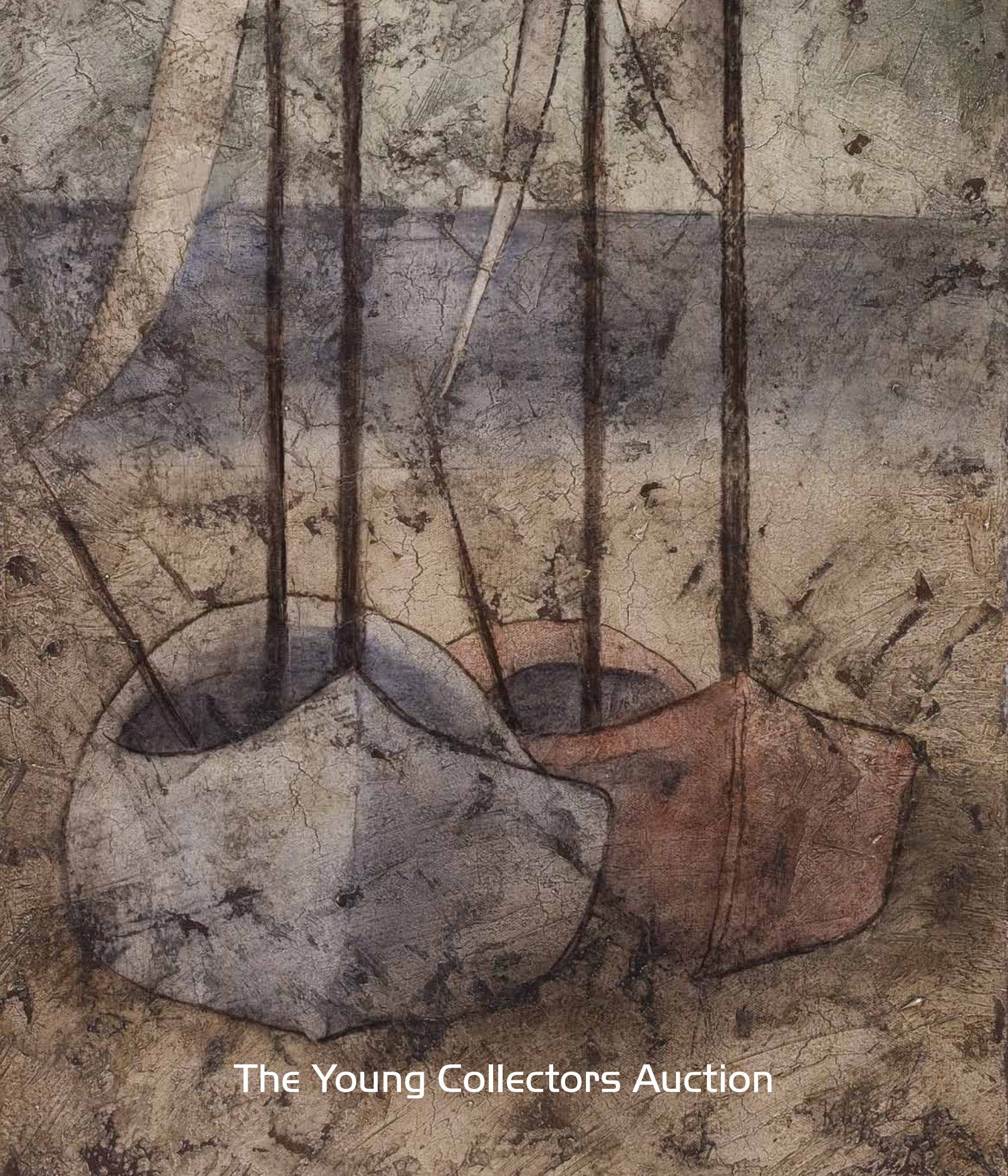
OFFICIAL ID NUMBER .....  
.....

I ..... hereby guarantee that I will fulfill all my responsibilities and obligations as per the Auction Sales Conditions mentioned on the reverse of this form for the above mentioned sale. All purchases must be paid for and artworks collected within seven days of the auction date or the works may be subject to forfeiture. Please see the reverse for further information.

Signature : .....  
.....

Please fax to +971 4 3236243 or e-mail to [dubai@ayyamgallery.com](mailto:dubai@ayyamgallery.com)





The Young Collectors Auction