



Regional artists set records at Christie's Dubai auction

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Zena Assi- YA BEIRUT #1 2 3 4 2012 Mixed Media and collage on Canvas 135 x 165 x 4 cm

DUBAI: Christie's auction house has announced that the totals for its most recent sale of Modern and Contemporary Arab, Iranian and Turkish Art was "well above the high estimate." In a two-part auction held Tuesday and Wednesday evening, 103 works from 13 countries were put on the block.

Over \$6 million was made – \$4,128,750 from the Part I sale, \$2,256,000 from the Part II sale. This was against a presale high estimate for the sales of \$5.5 million.

Works by several of the region's leading artists set auction records.

Lebanon's Chafic Abboud (1926-2004) attained a personal world record when his "Le Chemin d'Alep," estimated to be worth \$200,000-250,000, sold for \$387,750.

"Grosser Kopf (Nach Rechts)" (Large Head Turned Towards the Right), by Syrian-born Marwan (b. 1934) also shattered previous international auction records. With an estimated worth of \$80,000-120,000, it sold for \$171,750.

Marwan's countryman Safwan Dahoul (b. 1961), also broke international records with the sale of "Rêve 16," which was purchased by an Asian collector for \$219,750.

Several works also set new auction records. Lebanon's Zena Assi (b. 1974) set a record for her "Ya Beirut, ya setadouniah #1,2,3,4" (Oh Beirut, Oh Lady of the Universe #1,2,3,4), which sold for \$75,000, against a \$50,000-70,000 estimate.

"Fireworks" by Syrian artist Thaeir Helal (b. 1967) went for \$68,750. Christie's reports "Tomb Sonata in Three Military Movements II" by Egypt's Khaled Hafez (b. 1963) also apparently sold for \$68,750.

The highlight of the sales came during the sale of Iranian artist Farhad Moshiri's "The Secret Garden," 2009, a giant bear made entirely of light-reflecting crystals, which had created a following during its exhibition in Dubai.

Nine collectors – two in the room and seven more phoning in their bids – competed to acquire the piece. When the dust settled, the piece being sold for \$987,750, the saleroom reportedly burst into applause.

All works put on sale by Turkish artists were sold.

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