



CHRISTIE'S

FIRST CHARITY AUCTION IN SAUDI ARABIA ART FOR AL BALAD RAISES \$1.3M / SAR 4.7M

**PROCEEDS FROM SALE OF CONTEMPORARY MIDDLE EASTERN ART
WILL SUPPORT A NEW MUSEUM IN UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE
AND A LOCAL CHILDREN'S NON-PROFIT ORGANISATION**

Jeddah – A special charity art auction held in Saudi Arabia last night (26 June, 2019) raised \$1.3m / 4.8m SAR for a new heritage museum in Jeddah's Historical District, one of the Kingdom's listed UNESCO World Heritage Sites, and a children's non-profit organisation The Help Center.

Organised by the Ministry of Culture in partnership with Christie's, *Art for Al Balad* was one of the first art auctions of its kind to take place in Saudi Arabia since ambitious plans to boost cultural activities across the Kingdom were announced earlier this year.

More than 40 works of contemporary Middle Eastern art were generously donated for the sale by collectors, artists and gallerists including works by artists representing Saudi Arabia and other countries in the region.

The top three selling works in the auction were: Lot 40, *Tawaf Around the Kabbah 2* by Abdullah AlShalty, \$173,000 / SAR 650,000; Lot 12, *Where to* by HRH Prince Badr bin Abdulmohsen bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, \$133,333 / SAR 500,000; Lot 30, *Witness in the Desert 1* by Abdullah AlShaikh, \$101,333 / SAR 380,000.

The art offered in the auction was exhibited for two days prior to the sale, with hundreds of local residents and visitors came to historic Nassif House, in the heart of Al Balad, Jeddah's Historic District.

Ministry of Culture spokesperson Abdulkarim AlHumaid said: *"It has been a privilege For the Ministry of Culture to host Art for Al Balad and welcome so many visitors to Jeddah Historical District – the cultural heartbeat of this great historical city and one of Saudi Arabia's heritage gems. Not only has the auction helped two important local causes, it has demonstrated the wealth of artistic talent that exists in the Kingdom and the wider Arab world. It is the Ministry of Culture's aim to provide many more opportunities like this where our artists can showcase their talent to a global audience and Saudi citizens can enjoy culture as part of their everyday lives."*

Michael Jeha, Chairman, Christie's Middle East, said: *"We were delighted to be involved in this great project which demonstrates Christie's ongoing commitment to supporting the artists, the culture and the preservation of history in the region. Since we opened our office in the Middle East in 2005, we have supported many events and helped raise more than \$25 million for various charities in the region. The auction last night was hugely successful and we were delighted we were able to help."*

Ends

Press Contact:

Ministry of Culture – Abdulkarim AlHumaid/ media@moc.gov.sa
Christie's - Alexandra Kindermann / akindermann@christies.com / +41 79 101 4196

Saudi Arabia Ministry of Culture –The Ministry was created on the 2 June 2018 under the leadership of His Highness Prince Badr bin Abdullah bin Farhan Al Saud, the Kingdom's first dedicated Minister of Culture. The Ministry was established to enrich the lives of the people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and to be the guardian of culture across a wide range of sectors. The Ministry has a crucial role to play in delivering Saudi Arabia's ambitious transformation programme, Vision 2030. Its ultimate goal is to contribute towards building a vibrant, thriving, and ambitious nation. For more information, visit the Ministry of Culture [website](#).

Jeddah Historical District - The Jeddah Historic District is situated in western Saudi Arabia on the Red Sea coast. The site was nominated by [UNESCO](#) as a World Heritage site in 2014, and includes over 600 historical buildings. JHD is part of the wider Ministry of Culture and a key part of the cultural space in Saudi Arabia. It has its own governing body which was recently established to oversee and implement the area's forthcoming cultural regeneration and help the Kingdom achieve its cultural objectives.

The Help Center – A Jeddah-based non-profit organisation that provides children with special educational needs with educational, medical and social services. The centre's five-step approach helps children in early years through to teenage age groups, with cognitive development, communication-related skills and learning in specific subject areas. For further information, visit the [website](#).

Christie's in Saudi Arabia

- In October 2003, Christie's organised an Islamic Art exhibition at the Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in London.
- In December 2005, Christie's were the auctioneers at The Nokia Fonetography Auction, which raised SR 2.3 million for the Charitable Society for Orphan Welfare of Makkah, Taif Branch.
- In April 2009, Christie's in Dubai sold the first time a group of works from Saudi Arabian artists ever offered at an international auction.
- Throughout 2010 Christie's sold the collection of Dr. Mohammed Said Farsi for \$15.4 million, still the highest selling private collection offered at auction in the Middle East.
- In 2011, Edge of Arabia, the pioneering art project for contemporary art from Saudi Arabia, offered six works at Christie's Dubai to raise funds to support their education and art workshop programme, which sold well over estimate for over \$1 million.
- In 2012 Christie's supported *Edge of Arabia Jeddah: We Need to Talk*, the largest exhibition of Saudi contemporary art held on the Jeddah Corniche.
- Christie's participated in The Jewellery Salon in Jeddah and Riyadh in 2015.

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction, private and digital sales in 2018 that totalled £5.3 billion / \$7 billion. www.christies.com

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Images available on request

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