

# CHRISTIE'S

## LAUNCH OF

### THE MAHMOUD SAÏD

### CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ

THE FIRST EVER PUBLISHED OEUVRE OVERVIEW OF ANY  
MIDDLE EASTERN ARTIST



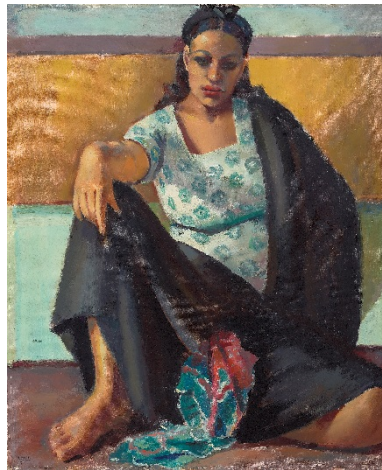
Christie's Dubai is pleased to host the launch of the *Catalogue raisonné* of Mahmoud Saïd (1897-1964), in the year marking the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of this great painter of the Arab world.

Mahmoud Saïd was brought up in the aristocratic circle of Alexandria, being the son of a former Prime Minister of Egypt and the uncle of Queen Farida (1921-1988). Following his father's wishes, he trained as a lawyer and was a judge at the Mixed Court of Egypt until 1947, painting only in his spare time. He developed his own personal style in his depictions of Egyptian landscapes, fascinated by the traditional peasant life in rural Egypt and by the intrinsic Egyptian female beauty. He also produced a wide range of family, colleagues and friends' portraits, in which he captured his sitter's psychology with a profound sensitivity, hence re-interpreting in his own way conventional European portraiture.

The catalogue raisonné was written and researched in co-authorship between Valérie Didier Hess, Director, Business Development for Christie's Middle East, and Dr. Hussam Rashwan, a prominent Alexandrian collector of Modern Egyptian art. The book was published by SKIRA in Milan and incorporates all works of art, both paintings and drawings by the artist known to date:

- 382 paintings and 36 unidentified works of which 56 newly discovered and 51 illustrated for the first time
- 379 drawings most of which have never been published
- 238 documents and photographs of archival material

Furthermore, 11 articles on the subject were commissioned for the book and written by some of the leading academics in the field, such as Nada Shabout or Dr Amal Nasr, just to name two. The book also includes 17 seminal articles difficult of access on the subject previously available solely in Arabic and French and now translated into English.



The book is accompanied by a website [www.mahmoud-said.com](http://www.mahmoud-said.com) where further discoveries of works by the master will be added to the research, as anticipated by the authors.

“Working alongside Dr. Hussam Rashwan was a great opportunity and privilege. We are delighted to have been working on the first ever published catalogue raisonné of any Middle Eastern artist, a major milestone for the history of Modern Arab art. We hope more comprehensive publications of the sort will follow in the coming years. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all who supported our research, from private collectors to government entities, and particularly to our sponsors without whom the publication of this book would have not been possible”, commented Valérie Didier Hess, co-author and Business Director Christie’s Dubai.

The idea to dedicate these last five years to research on Mahmoud Saïd came to Valérie in 2010, when Christie’s was entrusted to sell the private collection of Dr. Mohammed Saïd Farsi, the former mayor of Jeddah, who was an avid collector of Modern Egyptian art, including 10 works by Mahmoud Saïd. At the same time as the auction took place, Valérie met Dr. Rashwan, a living encyclopedia on Modern Arab Art and together they started the catalogue raisonné project. After five years they decided to publish their findings with SKIRA to secure an international reach and to help Middle Eastern art to be seen, understood and recognized by a global audience.

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## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

In Alexandria “The Mahmoud Saïd Museum” is located in the former home of the artist. This hotel particulier was sold to the government in 1970 by the artist’s widow, Samiah Riad, along with a collection of around 40 paintings, several sketches and photographs. Today the villa has been renovated as a museum complex, comprising of a museum on Modern Egyptian Art and a museum on Seif and Adham Wanly in addition to the Mahmoud Saïd Museum.

## **LAUNCH DATES**

- Launch & Panel discussion with the authors at Christie’s Dubai  
15 March 2017 – Press conference at 1.00pm  
At the Jumeirah Emirates Towers Hotel
- Launch & Panel discussion with the authors and Sheikh Sultan Sooud Al Qassimi at Art Dubai  
16 March 2017 from 6.00pm to 7.00pm  
At Madinat Jumeirah Hotel, Art Modern Lounge (?)

## **AUCTION DATE**

- Dubai: Modern and Contemporary Art  
18 March 2017, at 7.00pm  
At the Jumeirah Emirates Towers Hotel

Captions

1<sup>st</sup> page left to right:

*Sunset on the Nil at Luxor, The Whirling Dervisher, Bergère àAlamein*

2<sup>nd</sup> page left to right:

*Les Chadoufs, A girl sitting on the floor, Le Nil ä El Derr*