

For Immediate Release
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CHRISTIE'S

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INTERNATIONALART

FROM ALSOUDANI TO VAREJÃO



To Be Offered In The
POST-WAR & CONTEMPORARY ART - EVENING AUCTION
Christie's London
9 King Street
14 October 2011

London - From Ahmed Alsoudani to Adriana Varejão, Christie's *Post-War & Contemporary Art Evening Auction* will offer a rich selection of art by top international artists from all around the globe, including Europe, the Middle East, Asia and the Americas.

Dina Amin, Head of the Sale; Director of Post War and Contemporary Art, Christie's London: "Bringing together works by artists from numerous different countries, the *Post-War and Contemporary Art Evening Auction* to be held in October reflects the ongoing globalization of the international art world. Talent from around the globe is now taking centre stage and we are delighted to be able to offer exceptional works from across the spectrum including a painting by Iraqi born Ahmed Alsoudani who recently exhibited in his native pavilion at the Venice Biennale, as well as a landmark work by Brazilian artist Adriana Varejão. Covering a diverse range of media and subject matter, the forthcoming auction promises to be extremely exciting, in keeping with the vibrant atmosphere in London surrounding Frieze Week".

Ahmed Alsoudani (B. 1975) is today's most internationally recognized Iraqi artist. Alsoudani fled to Syria in exile during the first Gulf War before claiming asylum in America, where he currently lives. Christie's October sale will include *Baghdad I*, one of the most significant paintings by the artist ever offered at auction (*illustrated on the previous page*). With its incredible force and dynamism, this important picture approaches the subject of war through aesthetics and is one of only a handful of Alsoudani's works which bears a title. Filled with vibrant detail the painting is dominated by a monumental form which recalls the famous images of the statue of Saddam Hussein being pulled over in the artist's hometown. It was created in 2008 and is estimated at £250,000-350,000.



Following the success achieved at Christie's in June 2011 for Majorcan-born artist **Miquel Barceló** (B. 1957) - who became the most expensive living Spanish artist at auction when his *Faena de muleta* sold for £3.9 million - we are now delighted to present *Paseillo negro* (*illustrated left*). Created in 1990, this work is a majestic example of Barceló's hands-on painting technique and belongs to one of the artist's most celebrated series. It depicts the first phase of the *corrida*, when the matadors and their squads parade in front of audience. This painting is going to be offered with an estimate of £400,000-600,000.

Also featured is *The Pillow*, a tender and exquisitely rendered portrait, created by American artist **John Currin** (B. 1962). An important painting from the artist's new body of work exhibited in 2006, it depicts an elusive woman known only to the viewer as *Wanda* (*illustrated right*). Created upon a rich golden-brown ground, the artist illuminates the composition through the slow and smooth process of layering lighter hues of coloured paint. It is a skillful simulation of Leonardo da Vinci's signature technique, *sfumato* that fosters subtle shade and gentle gradations of tone. Traces of the painting's dark base layers abound in the lustrous lapis silk cushion, the delicate bustier of her dress, the warmth of her eyes, in the body of her ochre hair. It is a skillful composition that beautifully captures the mood and atmosphere of the artist's sitter (estimate: £650,000-850,000).



A definitive work by internationally acclaimed Japanese artist, **Yoshitomo Nara** (B. 1959) will also be offered. Painted in 1999, shortly after Nara's first one-man exhibition, *Well* depicts a young child, his most recognised subject painted with characteristically elegant simplicity (estimate: £300,000-400,000; *illustrated left*). Like Murakami, Nara has developed his own unmistakable aesthetic in response to the invasion of Western imagery that hit Japan following the Second World War.

Increasingly appreciated by international critics and collectors, Brazilian-born **Adriana Varejão** (B. 1964) returns to auction following the success of her work at Christie's in February 2011, which established a world record price for the artist. The auction will offer *Pele (Skin)*, an impressive painting which dates from 1996 and which contains many of Varejão's preferred elements: Baroque decorations, flesh and *azulejos* (the typical Portuguese blue-on-white decorative tiles.) In this picture (*illustrated right*), Baroque *azulejos* are shaped in order to form the skin peeled off from a man's back and hands lying down onto a white tiled background. It ambiguously alludes to the two-way cultural cannibalism enacted in Brazil's during the colonial era (estimate £180,000-250,000).





Erfundener Mann (Invented Man) by German artist **Matthias Weischer** (B. 1973) is another key highlight of the auction in October (*illustrated left.*) It is an early masterpiece by the artist (2003) who stands alongside Neo Rauch as one of the foremost members of the acclaimed New Leipzig School (estimate: £120,000-180,000). Created in the year that Weischer held his first international one-man show at the Wilkinson Gallery in London, the painting represents a very rare self-portrait of the artist. Its composition recalls artistic duo Ed and Nancy Kienholz's installation *In The Infield Was Patty Peccavi* (1981). In *Erfundener Mann*, Weischer replaces this pregnant woman with an image of himself. Looking at the figure here, created through a seemingly scattershot range of explicitly varied painterly techniques, and indeed at the surroundings, it becomes clear that *Erfundener Mann* is an investigation into the entire nature of painting, and indeed of representation.

POST-WAR & CONTEMPORARY ART EVENING AUCTION

AUCTION:

Christie's London, 8 King Street

Friday 14 October 2011

6.30 pm

Followed by The Italian Sale

VIEWINGS:

Christie's London, 8 King Street

Sunday 9th October

12 noon-5pm

Monday 10th October

9am-8pm

Tuesday 11th October

9am-5pm

Wednesday 12th October

9am-5pm

Thursday 13th October

9am-6pm

Friday 14th October

9am-3.30pm

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business had global auction and private sales in the first half of 2011 that totaled £2.0 billion/\$3.2 billion. In 2010 it achieved global auction and private sales of £3.3 billion/\$5.0 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. Founded in 1766 by James Christie, Christie's conducted the greatest auctions of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries and today remains a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 450 sales annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from \$200 to over \$100 million. Christie's has 53 offices in 32 countries and 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai and Hong Kong. More recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in emerging and new markets such as Russia, China, India and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Mumbai and Dubai.

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