

# A work of Moroccan artist Farid Belkahia sold for more than MAD 830.000 at auction in London



A work by the late Moroccan artist Farid Belkahia has been sold for more than MAD 830,000 at the Bonhams auction house in London.

Called «Etude sur le Malheur» (Study on misfortune), the work, which dates from 1998, was presented at this sale honouring modern and contemporary artists from the Middle East.

«He was determined to take an uncompromising artistic stand, embodied, as early as 1963, by his imperative need to compete against Western influence with the definition of a specifically Moroccan modernity. The result was his radical and definitive break with easel painting and the oil painting medium», according to Bonhams' electronic portal.

The Moroccan painter (died in Marrakech in 2014) showed a clear preference for traditional materials, such as copper and ram's skin.

«This was a celebration of Morocco's pre-colonial, multicultural past, as were his many references to Amazigh (Berber) and African material culture (tfinagh signs from the script of the Amazigh language, patterns of Amazigh carpets, tattoos) and to traditional techniques, such as henna and walnut stain dyes, and the treatment of raw skin», the same source noted.

It added that «Belhakia's work brought to light the artisan methods of the centuries-old culture, as well as popular and traditional arts that remained faithful to their historic and spiritual past».

In the same vein, a retrospective of Farid Belkahia should take place soon at the Pompidou Center in Paris. Five of his works will also be put up for sale in Casablanca, in auctions organized by the Moroccan Company of works and objects of art (CMOOA).