

# 'I.M.A.gination': Middle Eastern artworks to go under the hammer to support young creatives

Parisian collectors Claude and France Lemand donated 44 works from their private collection - including pieces by Shafic Abboud and Mahjoub Ben Bellato - to benefit an Institut du Monde Arabe fund



Shafic Abboud's 'Saison' from 1959 is estimated at Dh164,000 to Dh246,000. Christie's



The National  
June 20, 2020

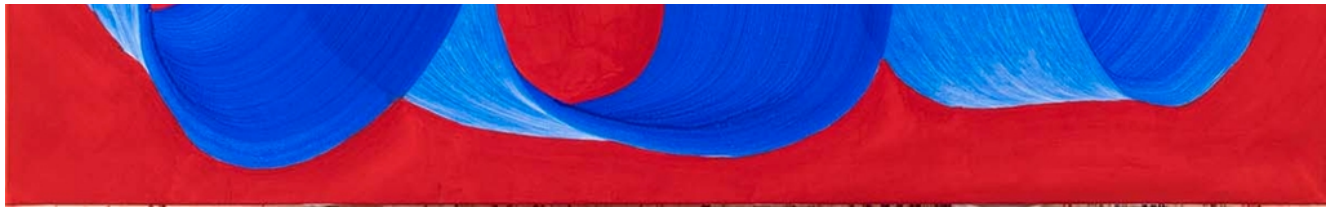
A collection of 44 works by Middle Eastern, Japanese and French artists will go on sale as part of a charity auction by Christie's in Paris.

The works, which have been donated by Parisian collectors Claude and France Lemand from their own private collection, include pieces by prominent Arab artists such as Shafic Abboud, Dia Azzawi, Najia Mehadji and Mahjoub Ben Bella, who died

earlier this month, among others.

Titled I.M.A.gination, the sale, which will take place online from Wednesday, June 24, aims to benefit young artists who are struggling through the collectors' fund at the Institut du Monde Arabe (IMA).



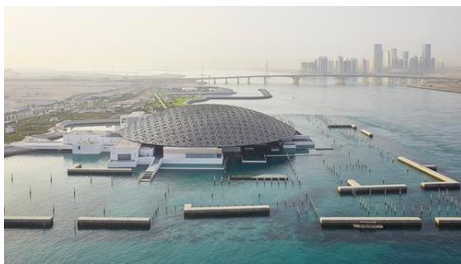


Najia Mehadji's 'La Vierge à l'enfant' from 2019 is estimated at Dh61,500 to Dh82,000. Christie's

“Claude and France Lemand were among the first to believe in the creativity of contemporary artists in the Arab world. They are also known for their generosity. A donation is always a human adventure,” said Jack Lang, former French Minister of Culture and president of the Institut du Monde Arabe, in a statement.

"I am pleased to bring my patronage to this charity sale."

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The selected works also span 60 years of artistic development throughout the Middle East. The top lot of the sale is Lebanese artist Abboud's 1959 *Saison*, estimated at between €40,000 and €60,000 (Dh164,000 to Dh246,000).

Charles Lemand, who left Lebanon in the 1970s to pursue a new life and career in France, is known for championing and exhibiting Arab luminaries such as Abboud, Etel Adnan and Abdallah Benanteur.

In October 2018, Lemand and his wife, France, made history by generously donating the largest art collection to a French cultural institution. Founded in 1980, IMA received a staggering total of 1,300 artworks produced by Contemporary and Modern artists from the Arab world. “Through Paris, I would like to introduce people to the arts of the Arab world,” Lemand told *The National* earlier this year. “Hopefully, this could give a better and more beautiful image of our countries.”

Some of the to-be-auctioned artworks will be on view at Christie's in Paris from Friday, June 26 to Tuesday, June 30, and then again from Saturday, July 4 to Friday, July 10. The online auction closes on Thursday, July 16.

*For more information, visit [christies.com](https://www.christies.com).*

Updated: June 20, 2020 04:44 PM

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