

# MIDDLE EASTERN JEWELLERY DESIGNERS TAKE CENTRE STAGE AT CHRISTIES

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Dubai – Christie's jewellery department is pleased to present five talented jewellery designers from the Middle Eastern region in its upcoming Dubai sale on 28 April alongside a range of Art Deco pieces, signed pieces by the most renowned international houses to superb and unique gemstones, such as a 26.61 carat cut-cornered rectangular Fancy Intense Yellow diamond or a 17.71 carats cut-cornered rectangular diamond ring (D colour, VVS2 clarity) by J.Roca.

“Christie's are committed to offering only the finest examples of modern jewellery and one-of-a kind pieces from the greatest names in contemporary jewellery design. Our first sale in January 2007 showcased Asian and European designers and today we are focusing on the creative strength emerging from the Middle Eastern region alongside unique European creations”, said Lyne Kaddoura, Jewellery Specialist in charge of the contemporary design section of the upcoming sale.

## Contemporary Middle Eastern Jewellery design

Established in 1969, **André Marcha** is an esteemed and renowned Lebanese jeweller, who always strives to bring new ideas and original creations to his pieces, paying particular attention to shapes and colours and the way they interact together. He often works with concepts such as fruit, animals and flowers which translate into *objet d'art* jewels. Christie's is pleased to offer two pieces from the designer: a set of two multi-coloured sapphire and diamond bangles with a matching ring (estimate: \$25,000-30,000 / AED91,000-110,000) and a spinel cabochon and diamond bangle of bombé design (estimate: \$18,000-25,000 / AED66,000-91,000).

Born into a generation-old of families of jewellers, **Selim Mouzannar** travelled the world for several years in quest of inspiration before coming back to his home country Lebanon to realise that all the inspiration he needed was there right in front of him. He started his own company in 1998, choosing not to join the family business. Soon he became known as one of the most renowned jewellers in the country and his reputation outgrew the borders of Lebanon, from Dubai to Paris to New York. Selim Mouzannar's jewellery is inspired by the history of Lebanon and the influences on a society at a crossroads of cultures and religions.

From his *Beirut Collection*, a tribute to the beautiful traditional houses of the Lebanese capital, of which so many have been replaced by high rise buildings, Christie's offers an attractive necklace, designed as a graduated series of rectangular-shaped diamonds each within a single-cut diamond surround (estimate: \$35,000-40,000 / AED130,000-150,000) and a delicate rose-cut diamond set composed of earrings and an articulated ring (estimate: \$15,000-20,000 / AED55,000-73,000).

**Sevan Bicakci** is one of the star jewellers in Turkey. His introduction to the world of jewellery started at the early age of 12 at his master Hovsep Catak's workshop. After working 15 years at the Grand Bazaar in Istanbul, he finally launched his first individual collection in 2002. Each of his pieces is unique and hand-assembled taking from a few months to a year to produce. Often named “The Lord of the Rings”, his work has attracted the attention of Hollywood stars and collectors throughout the world.

The ring on offer (estimate: \$15,000-20,000 / AED55,000-73,000) took four months to produce and enlisted the services of a goldsmith, a sculptor, a painter and a diamond setter, focusing on a reverse intaglio back painted citrine. This is a process where the stone is hollowed out from the reverse and then carved inside



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the stone to create an image, the citrine is then painted inside, thus giving the striking effect of the gemstone encapsulating a miniature work of art. In this particular case it is the Haga Sophia in Istanbul.

Lunched in 2009, **Noor** is the jewellery line from the talented young Lebanese designer **Noor Fares**. Noor had an extremely international upbringing, living between Europe, the United States and the Middle East. Her jewels are a result of a blend of these travels, her Middle Eastern background and the inspiring work of contemporary architects such as Frank Guery or Zaha Hadid.

Christie's is pleased to present an ebony and diamond bangle from Noor's *Touche du bois* collection – French for touch wood – which takes its inspiration from universal lucky charms (estimate: \$8,000-12,000/AED30,000-44,000). A very popular expression in the Middle East, it is usually used in the hope that a good thing will continue to occur after it has been acknowledged.

**Nadine Kanso** founded **Bil'Arabi** Apart from being interested in creating beautiful pieces, Nadine's other interest is to capture the emergence of the modern Arab identity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as she sees it – unique, unavoidable and with a need to be seen and heard. - which literally translates to "In Arabic" – in 2006; an unusual jewellery line which plays on Arabic words, employing them to create pieces projecting a contemporary understanding of the inherent beauty, calligraphic form and lyricism of the Arabic alphabet and language.

*Fdeytak* is the act of sacrificing in the name of love. A grand gesture which in this bangle translates into diamonds, rubies, emeralds and black diamonds – colours that reflect the UAE flag and moreover, the colours of all Middle Eastern flags (estimate: \$12,000-16,000 / AED44,000-58,000).

### Contemporary European Jewellery design

For the past 100 years, the Boghossian family has been creating unique jewellery for a demanding international clientele. In 2008, Albert Boghossian together with two of his nephews, Roberto and Ralph, created **Bogh-Art** - an Haute Joaillerie line that combines precious stones with audacious and innovative design. Bogh-Art is famed for its revival of the ancient art of inlay, a decorative technique of setting a stone directly into another stone, to form patterns and pictures that are seamlessly set within the matrix. The impressive bracelet, cover-lot of this season's catalogue, is composed of a series of oval-shaped emeralds with pave-set diamonds accents, each inlaid within five graduated Mother-of-Pearl panels of floral design, reminiscent of the delicate art of marquetry, a craft highly appreciated and developed in the Middle East (estimate: \$100,000-120,000 / AED370,000-440,000). Two further pieces by Bogh-Art will be offered in the sale; a pair of sapphire, turquoise and diamond ear pendants (estimate: \$80,000-90,000 / AED300,000-330,000); and a sapphire, turquoise and diamond ring (estimate: \$40,000-50,000 / AED150,000-180,000)

With the offered enamel and gold bracelet entitled *Tribute to René Lalique*, **Vincente Gracia** pays homage to the undisputed Master of the *Art Nouveau movement* in jewellery.

Born in Valencia, Spain, a city characterized as a melting pot of cultures and rich in the silver and gold smith traditions; Vincente Gracia obtains most of his design stimulus from the history of Valencia and its surrounding coastlines. He is one of Spain's leading contemporary jewelers as celebrated in Vogue magazine, and has received the National Jewellery Award and the International Jewellery Prize of the City of Valencia. He can pride himself to count amongst his clientele the Spanish Royal Family and collectors from around the world.

René Lalique (1860-1945) is arguably the greatest artist-jeweller known and one of France's foremost jewellery designers. Instigator of an entirely new approach to jewellery, he was a man of exceptional talent and astonishing versatility. He was inspired by nature and his work often associated gold with enamels to convey the dynamic forces of organic life. He was a glass designer, renowned for his stunning creations of perfume bottles, vases, jewellery, chandeliers and clocks. The firm he founded is still active today.

Gracia's tribute to Lalique takes its inspiration from a dog collar style necklace that René Lalique (1860-1945) produced in 1898 which depicts a wooden landscape in yellow gold, with touches of green enamel leaves. However, Gracia's interpretation of Lalique's idea is unmistakably different and very recognizable as the work of the contemporary designer. The wide four panel bracelet is designed as a forest landscape, where each panel depicts a different aspect of nature; the moon through the trees, clouds in the sky, snow on the trees, and fresh green growth from the lifeless forest (estimate: \$15,000-25,000 / AED55,000-91,000).

**Anna Hu** grew up traveling the world with her gem dealer father, in his quest for rare stones. It was whilst working with Harry Winston that she met head designer Maurice Galli who encouraged her to create her own line after taking her on as his only private student. She opened her exclusive jewellery boutique in December 2008 in New York, aged just 29 and creates no more than 30 exclusive Haute Joaillerie pieces a year for private collectors. Two rings, one a charming south-sea cultured pearl, pink sapphire and diamond ring (estimate: \$6,000-8,000 / AED22,000-29,000) and the other a interchangeable single or double-finger designed ring (estimate: \$20,000-25,000 / AED73,000-91,000) will be offered for sale. The second ring is composed of a flowerhead with an oval-shaped ruby in the centre, weighing over 2 carats. The stamen and pistons are designed out of brilliant-cut diamonds and the petals are made of pavé-set pink sapphires and diamonds. Each leaf is set with a pear-shaped rose-cut diamond representing drops of water.

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