Paul Guiragossian

Signed and dated '82; signed on the reverse.
Oil on canvas.
81 by 65cm; 32 by 25½in.

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Geneva (acquired directly from the artist)
Acquired directly from the above by the present owner

£40,000-60,000
£49,500-74,500
US$70,500-106,000

Paul Guiragossian is considered one of the foremost artists of modern Lebanon, achieving recognition in his own lifetime and honoured with a state funeral upon his death. This superb example of his minimalist style displays the distinctive use of vibrant colour, the bold brush on the vertical and the fascination with the power of the group that so typifies the artist's work.

Guiragossian's powerful sweeps of colour are simultaneously practical and symbolic. In his passion for painting and his hurry to produce works of art, the artist would open open tubes of paint and then quickly apply thick, textured swatches of colour. Yet it was not just practical necessity that led him to produce these distinctive minimalist figures. In reducing the human body to its essential vertical element, Guiragossian intends to express the solitude of the human being. Unfettered by their physical form these distinct glowing figures pulse with life, bright souls painted directly onto the canvas.

Struggling with profound depression, a survivor of the Armenian genocide and a civil war, Guiragossian found comfort in the social group. In this painting fundamentally isolated figures come together in a tightly knitted crowd, finding solace in one another. For Guiragossian this sense of unity was an extraordinary thing, rare moments of accord which he celebrates in paint.

For further examples of Paul Guiragossian's work, please see lots 211 and 217 in this sale.
Chafic Abboud (1926-2004)
Clarté (Clarity)

signed, titled, and dated No. 1972 - April 73 on the reverse
of the canvas.
162 x 190 cm; 64 x 74.8 in.

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, France (acquired directly from the artist)

£30,000-40,000
$50,000-66,000

"His painting is... celebrative and vestigial, the story, like the form, vanishes within colour that
focuses on colour, or coagulates in polychromatic vision of being and things."

Joseph Taweel for Christie's, May 1994

Chafic Abboud's luminous canvases are exquisite expressions of form
and place through colour and light. Sometimes, varied tones of the
same basic colour at other times brightening reds and greens,
or blues and orange, Abboud's works are always balanced, with one
colour complementing or offsetting another.

Born to a wealthy middle-class Lebanese family, Abboud's youth was an idyll of summers in the
mountains, and winters in Beirut, at the time the 'Riviera' of the Middle East. His paintings are a
clear reflection of a happy, well-adjusted mind. There is little that is dark or melancholic, poignantly
inhibiting or inflammatory in his work. Chafic Abboud is a
pure artist, taking a still life, a landscape or a
memory of his childhood and depicting it in a style
that owes much to Abstract Expressionism.

Moving to Paris in 1946, Abboud was one of the
many artists to populate the city at the
time. With the end of the Second World War
the Parisian art scene had moved towards Abstract
Expressionism. Abboud's style characterized by
loose brushwork and a lack of figurative subject
matter. Abboud is an unmistakable child of the
movement.

The artist may not have wished to shock, but his intention was to
question. In painting in this manner, Abboud encourages the viewer to
puzzle over the scene, to question what is it that he is trying to express?
The artist creates a visual enigma, providing essential parts but only
hinting at the whole. Just as mind-bending puzzles prove so rewarding when solved, so do Abboud's
paintings when they crystallize before your eyes.

In this delicate painting the cream ground seems
almost to have been poured across the canvas, like
sunlight streaming through a window. His expressive
brush casting shadows of grey and blue, gently
reminding us of the areas where pure light strikes dark
matters creating soft silhouettes on the canvas.

There is a lyrical quality to the painting that is typical of
Abboud's oeuvre. Yet what is so outstanding in this
canvas is the subtle suggestion of light for which the
artist is so celebrated. Chafic Abboud himself named it
Clarté; a singular homage to the radiance of this
work.

For a further example of Chafic Abboud's work, please see lot 20 in this sale.
206  

Elle Kanaan & 72x106  
La Moisson (The Harvest)  

signed, signed on the reverse  
of on canvas  
113 by 142.5 cm; 44¾ by 56¼ in.  
Executed in 1984.  
PROVENANCE  
Private Collection, Beirut  
EXHIBITED  

£ 10,000-15,000  
€ 12,400-18,600  
US$17,600-26,400

207  

Saliba Douaihy 1912-1994  
Untitled  

signed  
of on canvas  
46.5 by 68.8 cm; 18¾ by 27¼ in.  
Executed circa 1940.  
PROVENANCE  
Private Collection, Connecticut  
Sale, Sotheby's, New York, February 1995, Lot 32  
Acquired directly from the above by the present owner  
For an example of Saliba Douaihy's later work in the Colour Field style,  
please see lot 209 in this sale.  

£ 8,000-12,000  
€ 9,900-14,900  
US$14,000-21,000
Louai Kayyali is one of the most highly regarded artists of the modernist movement in the Arab world. Perhaps one of the most palpably socialist artists of the region, his sympathy with the plight of his country's peasant under-class is apparent in his choice of subject matter. More often than not Kayyali's paintings feature characters and personalities who would have been ostracized, or at best ignored, by the higher echelons of Syrian society. The shoe-shine boy, the peasant, the seamstress and the fisherman form the bulk of Kayyali's subject matter. Depicted with great tenderness and compassion, the working classes transcend their social bind in the artist's personal homage to their lot.

Misunderstood, and indeed criticized, by the literati during his lifetime for his "nekromantism" in insisting on painting the predicament of the masses, it was only after his death that he came to be truly appreciated. Afflicted by a deep depression that eventually resulted in his suicide, Kayyali's work, always poignant, developed a critical and melancholy air more apparent in his later works. These paintings have an austere clarity that leaves nothing to the imagination, the bold lines and acute realism of this period was naturally preceded by the optimism of youth when his work was less fantastic.

This rare and early painting by the great master features a typically strong outline and accurately expressed hands and feet. The weighty bulk of her figure is effortlessly articulated by the swell of her dress at the knees, and the outline of her muscular shoulders and her work-hardened hands a clear indication of the reader's poor status woefully working in the field. Where this would have been expressed in a brutally direct fashion in his later work, here it is softened through a prism of hope. The woman's face is less marred by struggle, and the book she reeds is a clear sign of education an attempt at betterment and a symbol of a brighter future.

This image would have been a particularly potent one at the time, with the rise of agrarian and industrial capitalism and the emergence of modern education in Syria. Every the intentionally flaked surface of the canvas, a characteristic of Kayyali's early practice particularly associated with the 1960s, suggests the close of one era and the birth of a new one.

For a further example of Louai Kayyali's work, please see lot 210 in this sale.
Adham Wandy 1908-1959  
Spring in Marjouf  

signed  
on board  
60.5 by 78.5cm; 23½ by 30¼in.  
Executed in 1949  
PROVENANCE  
Private Collection, Cairo  

£ 15,000-20,000  
€ 18,600-24,800  
US$ 26,400-35,200
210

Louai Kayyali 1934-1978

Moulloula

signed and dated 76
oil on canvas
75 by 95cm; 29¼ by 37¼in.

PROVENANCE
Private Collection, Aleppo (acquired directly from the artist)

For a further example of Louai Kayyali's work, please see lot 208 in this sale.

£20,000-30,000
€24,300-37,300 USD $35,200-51,300
211  
Paul Guiragossian 1920-2004  
Celebration  
signed  
oil on canvas  
91 by 100.5cm, 35 3/4 by 39 3/8in.  
PROVENANCE  
Private Collection, Beirut  
For further examples of Paul Guiragossian's work, please see lots 204 and 217 in this sale.  
£ 50,000-70,000  
€ 62,000-86,500  
US$ 88,000-124,000