"The elements that I apply are all inspired from the mysteries of the Mithraism, from the principle of contraries to clash of light and darkness, or pomegranate, which is the holy secret of unity in plurality and plurality in unity, or the cypress tree—the secret to eternal life in contrast to soil/earth—the symbol of death and passing life, or cliff and flower and passing life, or cliff and flower and other such secrets..."

Hossein Kazemi in conversation with London Kayhan Newspaper, 10 March 1995

242 Property of a Distinguished Iranian Gentleman

Hossein Kazemi 1924-1990

Stones and Pomegranate

signed and dated in Farsi 1354 (A.D./A.D. 1975)
oil and gesso on board
90.5 by 95.5cm; 35⅛ by 37⅛in.

PROVENANCE
Soroush Toorakian Collection, Teheran (acquired directly from the artist)
Acquired directly from the above by the present owner

LITERATURE
Exhibition Catalogue, Teheran, Teheran Museum of Contemporary Art,
Three Pioneers of Iranian Modern Painting, 2001, pp. 54-55, illustrated in colour

£ 40,000-60,000

€ 49,500-74,500  US$ 70,500-106,000

The artist & friend of his work, circa 1993, courtesy of the Family
243  
Monir Farmanfarmaian  b. 1944  
Fountain of Life  
nickel, stainless steel, reverse glass painting and plaster on wood  
34.5 by 90cm; 14 by 35.5in.  
Executed in 2005.  
EXHIBITED  
London, Leighton House Museum, Geometry of Hipai, 2008,  
Illustrated on the invitation card  
£20,000-50,000  
€24,800-57,000  
US$35,200-73,000  

244  
Massoud Arabshahi  b. 1955  
Untitled  
signed and dated 1994 (A/P A.D 1995)  
oil and gold metallic paint on canvas  
174.5 by 154.5cm; 68.5 by 60.5in.  
PROVENANCE  
Private Collection, Tehran  
For a further example of Massoud Arabshahi’s work please see lot 249  
in this sale.  
£50,000-100,000  
€62,000-125,000  
US$83,000-168,000
**Fakhir Mohammed** b. 1954

*Mature*

signed and dated 62, signed on the reverse
oil on canvas
80 by 100cm; 31 1/2 by 39 3/8 in.

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

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Marcos Grigorian 1925-2007

12:30 Noon

hay, glue and clay on board
183 by 185 cm; 72 by 72 in.

Executed in 1979.

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

LITERATURE
Exhibition Catalogue, New York, Gorky Gallery, Earth Works
Grigorian, 1995, p. 100, Illustrated in colour

£ 35,000 - 45,000
€ 45,000 - 56,000
US$ 62,000 - 79,500

12:30 Noon represents a later constituent of Marcos Grigorian’s Earthworks series which he began pursuing in the 1960s. A work of compositional simplicity and organic materiality, the present work epitomizes Grigorian’s interest in the land, geometry, and spirituality, whilst operating within the artistic realm of minimalism and abstraction.

The work is set on a square format exemplifying the recurring theme in Grigorian’s work of harmonious proportions. The square has become something of a signature for Grigorian which, although considered a sacred measurement in art, is often compositionally challenging due to the confined space it presents. Upon the square dimensions of 12:30 Noon, six lines extend outwards, splayed at differing angles. They appear to come from a fluid point beyond the pictorial area, a hypothetical space creating an imaginary territory beyond the visible.

The work overcomes the obstruction of operating within a naturally constrictive area found within a square dimension.

Grigorian was interested in the land, often studying it from an aerial view, which manifests in 12:30 Noon, reminiscent of cultivated fields. 12:30 Noon is an amalgamation of hay, glue and clay on board and can be closely related to the Master Paintings of Antonio Tapias. The use of such organic material, favoured by both artists, requires a re-evaluation of what is often regarded as lowly materials. Correlating with the natural world whilst also provoking questions as to what the determinants of an art work are. By literally taking the land and transforming it into an art work, Grigorian reminds us of the simple beauty our natural surroundings affords us. Something which in our increasingly metropolitan existence, we are inclined to overlook.
Parviz Tanavoli (b. 1937)

Poet and Tree of Life

signed and dated 05 on the base
bronze
116 by 56 by 20cm, 45 7/8 by 22 1/4 by 7 7/8in.

Executed in 2005, this work is unique.

EXHIBITED

Vancouver, Elisabeth Louis Gallery, Parviz Tanavoli: Recent Work, 2006,
pp. 16 & 22, illustrated in colour.

For further examples of Parviz Tanavoli's work please see lots 250
and 251 in this sale.

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

The artist in his studio, courtesy of the artist.
Massoud Arabshahi is an artist whose works fall under the category of the Iranian neo-traditionalist movement, whose aims include the synthesis of a distinctly Persian ethos within a contemporary artistic agenda. His connection with Persian culture has led him to attempt a reconciliation of these seemingly opposing elements. Arabshahi’s repeated use of ancient Persian motifs, so characteristic of the neo-traditionalist movement, aims to convey the timeless elements of Persian culture while ensuring they remain relevant in the post-industrial era.

The harsh, burnt tones Arabshahi uses in much of his work recall the ancient Achaemenid rock reliefs at Behistun and Pasargadae, but much of this is often juxtaposed with the introduction of more vibrant tones, emphasizing the conflict between old and new. The mixture of figurative, architectural and geometric shapes from which Arabshahi makes use, introduce a philosophical dimension to his works. His circular shapes are synonymous with ancient symbols for perfection, virtue and the divine. Repeated use of spirals is derived from ancient tomb carvings, where the spiral was symbol of the after-life and the soul’s immortality. Use of horizontal, vertical and downward arrows is also a highly significant component of his works; with downward arrows representing the material world and those pointing upwards signifying the celestial realm.

At first glance, it might appear that Arabshahi’s works are filled with disharmony. The juxtaposition of circular and angular forms refers to the idea of the conflict between heavenly perfection (the circle) and earthly limitation (the square). Whilst these symbols, which are derived from antiquity, may appear out of place in a modern context, they are far from anarchistic. The artist’s aim is to extract from these symbols their timeless qualities and convey their essence through art. In so doing, Arabshahi attempts to transcend an impermanent world.

For a further example of Massoud Arabshahi’s work please see lot 244 in this sale.
Parviz Tanavoli 2057

Hooeh Lovers

signed, dated 03 and numbered 475

Hanging

244 by 140 by 150cm. 08 by 551/4 by 59 1/4in.

£ W £ 70,000-100,000
€ 86,500-124,000 US$ 124,000-176,000

"Happ the moment when we are seated in the palace, Thou and I.
With two forms and with two figures but with one soul, Thou and I."

Quoted from the Persian poet Rabia's
Dekh Shams Karte

One of the founding members of the highly influential neo-traditionalist Sepahshahy movement in Iran, Tanavoli's work derived much from the rich religious and calligraphic heritage intrinsic to Persian culture. Indeed it was the very ethos of the movement to reconcile the traditional and the modern aesthetic. Each artist utilized their heritage in their own individual fashion, but it was Tanavoli who refused to become mired in what he came to believe was a derivative art form, an art heavily reliant on western tenets. In response to this he produced his hooeh.

Hooeh is a fascinating concept. Literally it is composed of three letters, starting with the Arabic ha. Symbolically, it represents nothingness. A suitable, if secular, parallel in western tradition is the number zero; it is both whole and empty, everything and nothing. So too is the ha, but it is also infused with mystical connotations. To the Sufis ha represents God, for nothingness is an aspect of the divine, and in Islamic numerology ha is the letter of guidance.

For Tanavoli the hooeh was a silent protest. Both physically and symbolically, it was a return to the very essence of his culture, the concept of God, and a rejection of the western principles that his fellow artists had become — to his mind — too caught up with. It is not just a protest through conceptually it is a symbol of hope and promise. The hooeh is full of potential, its gentle body — like that of man — is capable of any movement and expression. It is the emptiness of unlimited possibilities, not an unending isolation. Here Tanavoli recalls the coming together of lovers, the "oneness" of a man and God in ecstasy. The pinnacle of the Sufi path, that towards which all mystic strive.

To a Sufi the double hooeh, the Loving Hooeh, is an even greater symbol of the unity of man and God. Man's spirit is eternally intertwined with the essence of God, here represented in perpetual accord. In essence sufism is a journey of love, it is the celebration of a love affair between man and God. An acknowledgement of the power within all creation to love the highest spirit, with the awakening of this passion comes an understanding of all elements of the world. This colour red has over a period been a powerful symbol of passion and ecstasy. It is a decidedly appropriate colour for this particular hooeh, evoking even in itself the ideals of the mystics.

Hooeh should not be understood on a literal plane, it is infused with such abstract concepts as time and space, faith and culture. It is relevant in any social context, for the notion of nothingness and destruction of the self is a universal notion. Ultimately, its impressive physical form the hooeh is as appealing to the western eye as the eastern eye.

For further examples of Parviz Tanavoli's work, please see lots 248 and 251 in this sale.