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Shahzia Sikander, *Slnxay: Narrative as Dissolution #2*, 2008, Ink and gouache on prepared paper, 82 x 51.125 in. (208.3 x 129.9 cm), Courtesy of the artist and Sikkema Jenkins & Co., New York, @ Shahzia Sikander.

SHAHZIA SIKANDER

Pakistan, 1969

Sikander was born in Lahore, where she earned her undergraduate degree at the National College of Arts, studying the traditional (and long overlooked) art of miniature painting. For her graduate studies, she moved to the States to attend the Rhode Island School of Design. She is based in New York City While a painter, her work is founded in drawing. Her subject matter addresses such issues as religious and ethnic heritage and gender. She combines Muslim, Hindu and Christian subject matter (or Pakistani, Indian and American), along with contemporary images with a personal meaning, as well; the finished artwork overlays several symbols of each. Most of the imagery is representational, but she also fills space with abstract, almost floral, designs. Media ranges between large paintings in miniature painting style, printmaking, drawing installations and digitization. Centro Nazionale per le Arti Contemporanea, Rome, Deutsch Bank, MoMA, Guggenheim, Walker Art Center, Whitney and Philadelphia Museum of Fine Arts are a few of the international collections that own her work. Her paintings have been exhibited internationally, including at the Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Fabric Workshop, Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum and Hirshhorn Museum, with group shows at P.S. 1, Sackler Gallery, Museo Carlo Bilotti, Whitney Biennial, Taipei Biennial, Venice Biennale, Istanbul Biennial, Asia Society and Ludwig Museum. In 2005, she was in residency at Otis College, and in 2006, she was awarded a MacArthur Fellowship. The artist is represented by Sikkema Jenkins & Co. and Pilar Corrias. In 2008, Christies New York had one of those rare moments, even for the high-return contemporary art market, when it sold a triptych painting for sixteen times the high estimate, realizing \$325,000. -MJP



Shirin Neshat, *Guardians of Revolution (Women of Allah Series)*, 1994, RC print & ink, 40... x 37 in. (102.2 x 94 cm), Photo by Cynthia Preston, @ Shirin Neshat, Courtesy Gladstone Gallery, New York

SHIRIN NESHA T

Iran, 1957

Arguably the most well-known contemporary Iranian artist, Neshat was born and raised in Qazvin, and left in 1974 to pursue higher education. She attended University of California, Berkeley, for both a BFA and MFA, finishing in 1982 and settling in New York some years later. She is a photographer, filmmaker and video artist, whose work addresses the identity and stereotypes of Muslim women-commenting on the social, political and psychological elements of being a female in contemporary Islamic society. She returned to Iran in 1990, and was appalled that women were made to veil themselves head to toe in the chador. She juxtaposes such images of veiled Islamic women (whether by choice or necessity) with Islamic script and frequently guns. The obvious meaning of such a pairing is the Western view of this ethnic and religious tradition as simultaneously indecipherable and threatening. Unfortunately, when the Islamic Revolution overtook Iran in 1979, her artistic pursuits made her an enemy of her home country and she was exiled. Fortunately, her work also has garnered her much honor as well. In 2009, one of her films earned her the Silver Lion for best director at the Venice Film Festival. Her photos and videos have been exhibited in numerous solo and group shows throughout the world, such as the National Gallery of Iceland, Stedelijk Museum, Asia Society, Walker Art Center, Serpentine Gallery and Tate Gallery. Prestigious collections that have acquired her work are the Art Institute of Chicago, Guggenheim, Met, MoMA, Reina Sofia, Broad Art Foundation, Joannou Collection and Cisneros Foundation, among others. She is represented by Barbara Gladstone Gallery In 2008, at Christies Dubai, a photo from 1997 realized \$265,000, which was double the high estimate. -MJP



Wendell Castle, *Naiad*, 2010, Stained mahogany with oil finish, 34 ... x 42 x 27 in. (86.4 x 106.7 x 142.2 cm), Courtesy of Barry Friedman, Ltd., New York, NY, Photo by A. Spencer Tsai.

WENDELL CASTLE

United States, 1932

Wendell Castle, the leading figure in Contemporary American furniture and design, was born in Emporia, Kansas in 1932. He received BA and MFA degrees from the University of Kansas at Lawrence. For over forty years he has challenged the function and design of furniture making. His superb workmanship and unique designs that meld sculpture and furniture have established Castle as the father of the American studio furniture movement. The design of his works, including chairs, tables, music stands and desks, among others, is organic, with one curvilinear section flowing into the next. Some of the museums that own his furniture and sculptures are the Art Institute of Chicago, Cooper-Hewitt, Brooklyn Museum, Detroit Institute of Arts, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, High Museum, Atlanta, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Addison Gallery of American Art and the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Castle has been the recipient of many honors and awards, including four National Endowment for the Arts grants, three honorary degrees, a Visionaries of the American Craft Movement Award from the American Craft Museum, the American Craft Council Gold Medal, Master of the Medium Award from the James Renwick Alliance of the National Museum of American Art and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Brooklyn Museum. He is represented by Barry Friedman, Ltd., which most recently mounted a solo show of his work in the summer of 2010. In 2008, Rago Arts and Auction Center sold one of his classic chairs for \$204,000. Each work fuses art and functional design, thereby knocking down any barrier between art and craft. His streamlined abstracted utilitarian shapes, which have a futuristic feel, are the ultimate evolution of furniture-making, and are by far the best bets to collect. -MJP