# ARTHILL

for the museums and the great collections



## **GROUP PRESENTATION**



Hüseyin KOCABAŞ (1909 - 1981)

Founder of our history



# A LEGEND: HÜSEYIN KOCABAŞ

Writed by CELAL ÜSTER
Magazine "P ART CULTURE ANTIQUES" Volume 1 Spring season 1996



In his childhood, while his peers were buying candy or chocolate chips, Hüseyin Kocabaş was unaware that in the days when he bought tear bottles and coins with his own pocket money, he started to create a magnificent collection that would gather the most distinguished examples of Anatolian culture from prehistory to the last period of the Ottoman Empire. Even the astrologers could not have predicted that the boy from Bursa, who could not even finish primary school due to the Greek occupation, would become one of the greatest collectors not only in Turkey but perhaps in the world fifty-sixty years later. No one could have imagined that the collection that Hüseyin Kocabaş would create over the years with love, intuition and knowledge would gradually turn into a museum on its own. Who knew that at the end of an effort based on intuitions, passions and knowledge that would not even fit in dreams, a collecting legend and a real collector who put his name on this legend would be born?

According to art historian Mazhar Şevket Ipsiroğlu, Hüseyin Kocabaş's collecting is a gift from God. Like some people who were born painters and poets, Kocabaş is a person born with the talent of a collector. Moreover, there is no environment around him that directs him to such an endeavor. An incredible adventure of collecting in the fabric trader environment, which can be seen as an ordinary profession, turned out to be the only purpose of Kocabaş's life.

Navigating the history atlas of the Kocabaş Collection is no different than pacing on a time pendulum stretching from the Late Neolithic and Early Chalcolithic layers of Hacılar, which dates back to five thousand BC, to the last moments of the Ottoman period. One's head is spinning. Anatolian Civilizations, Greek Civilization, Roman Civilization, Byzantine Art, Early Islam, Seljuk and Ottoman Arts...

From the Ancient Bronze Age to the Historical Ages of Anatolian Civilizations, from the Urartian Age to the Phrygian Age, spouted jugs, cuneiform tablets, terracotta pots; From the Mycenaean Age of Greek Civilization to the Geometric Age, from the Archaic Age to the Classical and Hellenistic Ages, alabastrons, double-handled bowls, female figurines, bronze child heads; Roman Age bottles and jugs in the form of a woman's head, bronze statuettes. Ritual crosses, censer and ceramic bowls from the Byzantine period. Sculpture works, tomb steles, glass works

from many different periods. Bronze Iranian mugs, brass candlestick pedestals from the Seljuk period, minai ceramics. Silver inlaid bronze candlesticks, gold inlaid brass candlesticks, gilded copper helmets from the Ayyubid, Mamluk, Timurid and Safavid periods. Tombak and enamel artifacts of the Ottoman period. Chinese celadon and porcelain used in the Ottomans. Iznik and



pieces with over 7.000 manuscripts; All of over 20.000 pieces.

Kütahya tiles and ceramics. Çanakkale ceramics, European porcelain, 19th century Turkish porcelain. Beykoz works. Bursa's world-famous velvets. 1. Abdülhamid's enamel snuffbox, IV. Mustafa's writing dipstick set, Mother-of-pearl inlaid lectern, which Sultan II. Abdülhamid had built by Sedefkar Vasıf and presented to the scholar Hodja Sadeddin Efendi from Dagestan. Countless! A magnificent collection of over 10.000 archaeological and ethnographic

The Hüseyin Kocabaş Collection, which includes a variety that can be considered rich even for a museum, should be called "Museum of Anatolian Civilizations". Moreover, the number of second and third class works among his collections is negligible. He was never surprised by the cultural diversity he encountered. He has acquired all kinds of works of almost every culture. After all, he says, "This is real collecting."



"You will gather all the phases and all the schools of an object and bring them together. Otherwise, buying one from this and one from it and putting it on the showcase is nothing but dandy collecting..." In Ferit Edgü's words, this collection is a collection of Anatolian cultures and civilizations as a whole. It's like the product of your thoughts. Terracotta, marble, glass, metal, weaving, writing, tile processing.... Such a diversity and examples of Anatolian culture of about ten thousand years. A person who put all these together and left this world. It is an effort that pushes the limits of human dreams. He is an unprecedented collector not only in Turkey but perhaps in the world. He is self-taught and from a very young age has created a huge collection that even the word "rich" cannot describe. Indeed, one of the secrets of Hüseyin Kocabaş's mastery in this field is that he understood the distinction

between collecting artifacts and collecting, and that it is knowledge and love that distinguishes the collector from the collector and the buyer. Knowing very well that it is not possible to become a collector just by collecting artifacts, Kocabaş realized that the collector must be a very different "creature" from the tourist, who collects images by taking pictures wherever he goes, and the magpie, which takes everything that looks bright and hides it, and that collecting requires a conscious effort. He studied periods, movements, styles and acquired technical, historical and cultural information about his subject. He chose to live with the works he added to his collection and turned collecting into a way of life.



Hüseyin Kocabaş told Selçuk Erez how he fell into this passion shortly before his death: He goes to primary school during the Greek occupation. Inevitably, he stays away from school. After the War of Independence and the proclamation of the Republic right after it, he came to the 15-16th. The years when everyone was in a hurry to live and earn their livelihood. His dreams of studying and becoming a good lawyer are shattered, and he starts working in his father's furniture and furnishings store in Bitpazarı. After a while, his father even started to send him to Istanbul to buy goods. In İç Bedesten(Internal area of jewelery section of Gran Bazaar), Gunseller Osman Efendi is his father's friend. He knows that Kocabaş has been interested in the "old" since his childhood, and that in his spare time he researched past civilizations by mixing Ahmet Refik's well-known volumes of General History at that time. He takes him to the shop of Andronikos Efendi, who was the oldest antique dealer in the Grand Bazaar at that time. Andon Efendi is an Ottoman

Greek from Karaman in his 80s. He speaks with a Central Anatolian dialect. Learning that the young Kocabaş has been "collecting old things" since he was nine years old, Andon Efendi's eyes brighten, saying, "Here, then, this is yours," and presents him with a valuable lekitos, an antique Greek vase containing fragrant oil.

Here, Kocabaş's childhood curiosity became his "goal of life" that day, when he heard old Andronikos' prayers "God showed me today too" behind them in that shop. Over time, the antique dealer Mustafa and Acem Rıza, who gave more importance to the carpet business; Kambur İsmet, who is considered a master in the mother-of-pearl business; Azeri Abdul, who escaped from the Russian Revolution and settled in Pera Palace, and started to trade in antiques when the money ran out; He will also get to know Rıza Bey, who takes turns getting on the carriages that stop at Kadıköy pier at night and pays twice the normal amount each time he gets on.

When the bus stops in Balikesir on his way to İzmir to buy fabric, he will return to Istanbul without buying fabric, giving all his money to the Beykoz production gulabdans he sees in a shop; he will spend all his money to buy back the artifacts taken from Anatolia by staying in second and third class hotels in the European cities he visits, eating cheese and bread for lunch



and dinner; He will break a 2500-year-old ceramic mug with Dionysian ritual figures from Greece and place it in sugar boxes in order to pass it through Customs: He will Greek receive valuable historical artifacts, not money, in exchange for his wheat exports to Greece; When he sees a huge Iznik plate the wall of the on patisserie, where he goes buy dessert in evening for his guests, he say, "There are too many guests, you pour the pudding on this plate."

But there are also scammers in this business. A large number of "head statues" were found in Larissa, between Bergama and Aliağa. In ancient times, those who came to Bergama for treatment would bring these heads as offerings. A man known as Dumping Hüseyin in the antiques market brings a bag full of sculptures to Hüseyin Kocabaş. There are 35-40 head sculptures in the bag. First he asks for a thousand liras for each, Kocabaş opens the door at 500, and finally they agree on 600. When Kocabaş has the opportunity to examine the sculptures in detail, he realizes that they are all imitations worn in the mud. Damping Hussein goes around bragging: "You know, Hodja Huseyin can not scammed! Here I succeeded!" Kocabaş consoles himself by saying, "The collector must also have imitation objects so that he can compare them!"

As Selçuk Erez emphasized, Hüseyin Kocabaş is not just someone who has been collecting

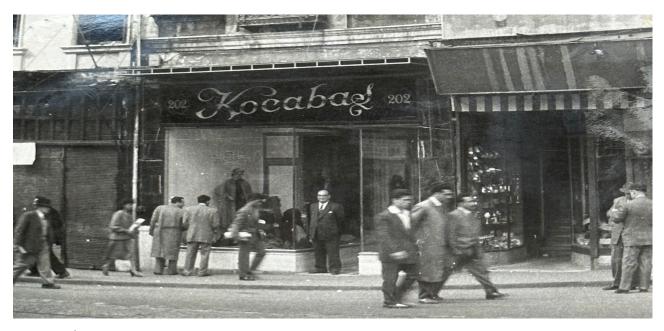


antiques for years without eating or drinking. If so, how does this outstanding collection come about? Starting from a very young age, he read everything he could on history and art, and learned foreign languages by himself in order to access international publications. Not counting Ottoman Turkish, Arabic, Persian, Greek, French, English.



Some photos from the museum house of Huseyin Kocabas





His son İsmail Kocabaş says that he "translated very well" from Ancient Greek. He is also a scholar who wrote a book on the works he added to his collection and made researches. The History of Porcelain, which was published in the Yeni Basımevi in Bursa in 1941, "containing 50 paintings in 28 paintings and nearly two thousand old porcelain brands", is included in the bibliographies published in the West. It is an important book. Tophane Lulecilik, published in the Turkish Ethnography Journal, VIII. Colored Seljuk Glasses for the Turkish History Congress; Seljuk Coppers, which he gave to the 2nd International Congress of Turkish Art, as well as Greek illustrated pottery found in Anatolia, Bursa embroideries, coins, beauty in arms, and his studies on the Pilgrims excavations are some of his works in which he contributed not to be underestimated to science.



You may be surprised, but he also wrote a "drama in verse". This verse drama called Peri Azat, which he wrote and typed in Bursa in 1931, signed his name as "Hussein Veysi Son of the Kocabas". Another unpublished work is Bursa'da Yatanlar. In this book, which he gave years, he wrote the life stories of all the famous almost people, sultans, viziers and

Pashas lying in Bursa. Not only that, he took pictures of all the tombstones. The Saturday meetings of Kocabaş, which also has a library of approximately six thousand books, are still not forgotten. A room of that "museum house" was not forgotten in the mid-1950s, when the Greeks abandoned their hands and moved from Beyoğlu to Nişantaşı, Güzelbahçe, when houses turned into workshops. The book is full. Manuscripts, rare local and foreign editions, books on archeology, ancient artifacts, civilizations published in all languages. According to Mustafa Kayabek, one of the living masters of antiques, Kocabaş's Saturday morning conversations are an instructive dervish lodge, teas and sherbets are drunk. We talk about tear bottles, Seljuk glasses, tombaks and enamels.

Antiquarian shopkeepers also join his conversations, archaeologists who are preparing doctoral or associate professorship thesis, and art enthusiasts such as Rahmi Koç, Sevgi Gönül, Fuat Bayramoğlu. Kocabaş attaches great importance to new collectors, loves to instill collecting and create new collectors. They bring the works they bought and ask for their opinion, and he explains even the smallest piece for hours. Many antique shops in the Grand Bazaar come to learn something.



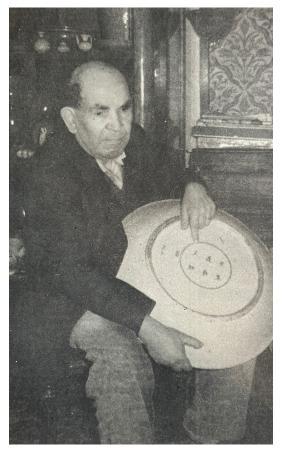


Let's hear from Sevgi Gönül: Sadberk Hanım and I used to go to the upstairs house of Hüseyin Kocabaş, who owns a drapery shop in Beyoğlu. I think he was the owner of one of the rare collections in Turkey that was created with awareness. Huseyin Kocabaş, who is very humble and has a personality that you can't get the impression that he can be the owner of this richness of spirit, was known by many people outside of Turkey. This collection, which was later moved to Nişantaşı, turned into a club where antique dealers, collectors and enthusiasts exchange ideas and meet on Saturday mornings. I was one of these enthusiasts. Hüseyin Bey, originally from Bursa, was a true collector..."

Hüseyin Kocabæ does not often go to auctions. Those who participate in the auction and see that it has increased the price, raise the price of the work to terrible figures because Hüseyin Bey is increasing it, and they think that this work must have something special. Kocabaş avoids the auction to avoid artificial climbing. But almost every Sunday the family goes to a museum; He wanders around the bazaar twice a week. On Tuesdays and Fridays. Walking around the market with him is a unique opportunity to get to know his extraordinary intuition. Rahmi Koç told Sadun Tanju: "You are walking together in the Grand Bazaar. You are talking about something at the same time. You don't have much to do with the surroundings. He suddenly stops and says, 'A clock caught my eye in that window display. It's good. It's not good for me, but don't miss it. ' He says. I buy the watch, I come home. I go through the catalogues. A truly exquisite French watch. 18th century. Where did he see it, how did he know it? Hüseyin Bey had a great sense, It's like he feels it with its textures..."

Oddly enough, Hüseyin Kocabaş had to share a very similar fate with the Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges. Luis Borges was appointed director of the National Library in Buenos Aires when he lost his sight completely. Now he is at the head of nine hundred thousand books, but he can't even see the covers and backs of the books properly.

It is as if God played a "divine joke" on a writer who has always dreamed of heaven as a library, and donated the book and blindness at the same time. Hüseyin Kocabaş also lost his eyesight as



a result of diabetes, after he created that magnificent collection of seven thousand five hundred pieces. After that day, years of effort, knowledge and passion meet at Kocabaş's fingertips. Famous Islamic and Turkish arts antiques dealer Soustiel in Paris tells Ferit Edgü: "He could hardly see his eyes. But when he came to our shop, he was probing the works we showed him with his hand and telling what happened..." Mustafa Kayabek confirms Soustiel with another story: "His eyes were blinded by diabetes. One day he came to the shop. There was a new item, a leather-covered, embroidered box. It looks like an Indian business, as well as an Iranian business. I said, 'Huseyin Bey, this kind of item came,' I handed the box to his hand. Like caressing it with his hands, He examined the box for a long time as if he liked it. He asked about the color. He asked about the shapes of the motifs. I said, 'There are flowers. Are there any greens on it? ' He said. Even when we couldn't see, he would teach us what we didn't know..."

Hüseyin Kocabaş, who was born in Bursa in 1909 and passed away in Istanbul at the age of seventy-two in 1981, wanted that incredible collection to be presented under the roof of a single museum. Everyone too. The collection was passed to the Koç family after the death of its creator. With the new section of the Sadberk Hanım Museum, which was created by restoring the Azaryan Mansion in Büyükdere, and allocated to the Kocabaş Collection in 1988, the city of Istanbul also gained a contemporary museum. His works are now under the roof of a museum in accordance with the contemporary understanding, both in the arrangement of the space and the way the works are presented.

Take a day off, get away from the shallows of daily life and stop by the Sadberk Hanim Museum. While visiting the Hüseyin Kocabaş Collection in the modernly illuminated showcases closed to daylight on the black Adapazarı marble floor of the Sevgi Gönül Building, you will be astonished by this extraordinary person who fits the distinguished products of so many civilizations into a single life, and you will be amazed by the incredible coexistence of cultures from prehistory to the present; you will sense, you will realize the human wealth that lies in the hidden depths of your genes; As those immortal works multiply thousands of times, you will feel an alchemy of civilizations from the past to the present in your soul. You also have a soul. Who knows, maybe this is the secret of Kocabaş's "mysterious" passion that cannot be put into words: What is the secret of immortality, what is the way?

Since 1918, KOCABAS has been internationally recognized as the top expert in Turkish, Ottoman and Anatolian Art and Antiquites. KOCABAS is not only a highly esteemed name and ultimate expert in the international art and antiquities world; KOCABAS has become a legend for its contribution to the recognition of Turkish culture and Anatolian heritage in Europe and the USA. KOCABAS was also the first to establish a private museum in Turkey. The first private museum in Turkey consist from KOCABAS COLLECTION. "UNESCO" accepted; The best collection in the world at 20th. century. Over 10.000 archaeological and ethnographic pieces with over 7.000 manuscripts; All of over 20.000 pieces.

Today, many art collections and art objects in Turkish museums state "THE KOCABAS COLLECTION & THE KOCABAS MUSEUM" as provenance. An extensive part of THE KOCABAS COLLECTION can be seen today at the Istanbul Sadberk Hanim Museum, Istanbul Archaeological Museum, Official Museum of Bursa, Official Library of Bursa, Yapi Kredi Bank Collection, Saint Benoit Collection, Mimar Sinan University Museum and the Kocabas Collection.

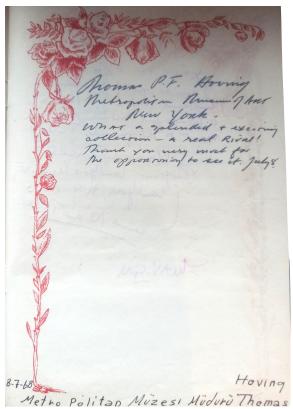
"KOCABAS" hosted many important people such as Mr. Thomas Hoving; Director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Mr. Irwin Hersey; Director of the Museum of African Art, Professor Pierre Demargne from the Art and Archeology Department at the Sorbonne University, Dr. P.R.S. Moorey; Authorized Expert from the Oxford Ashmolean Museum, Former Austrian Transportation Minister Mr. Ludwig Weiss, Ambassadors of the USA, Belgium and Denmark, Mr. Serge Gauthier; Director of Sévres Porcelain, Baron François De Floris, as well as high level executives from the British Museum and Louvre Museum and many other important professionals from the world of international art and antiquities...



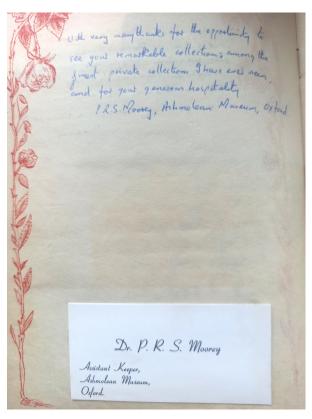
## Some of the visit papers written by important visitors in Museum of Kocabas



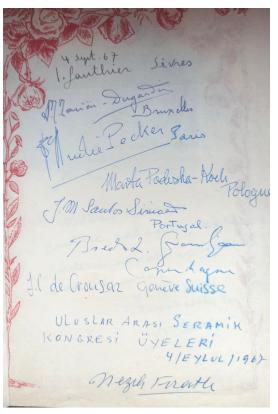
Richard D. Bernett British Museum



Thomas P.F. Having Director of Metropolitan Museum



P.R.S. Moorey
Oxford Museum



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## **PUBLICATIONS OF / ABOUT HÜSEYİN KOCABAŞ**

MEYDAN LAROUSSE Volume: 7 - Pages: 370

LA COLLECTION DE M. HÜSEYİN KOCABAŞ TIRAGE A PART DU BULLETIN DU COMITE NATIONAL TURC - ICOM 1962

LES POTERIES DE FAIENCE APPARTENANT AU COLLECTION DE MESSIEUR HÜSEYİN KOCABAŞ - NAPOLI 1965

TERRES CUITES COLOREES PROVENANT DE BITHYNIE - Andree Rollas 1966

**LYDIAN VASES FROM WESTERN ASIA MINOR** - Crawford H. Greenewalt, JR. UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA BERKELEY 1968

DEUTSCHES ARCHAOLOGISCHES INSTITUT ARCHAOLOGISCHER ANZEIGER /
SPATGEOMETRISCHE GEFASSE AUS KARIEN - WALTER DE GRUYTER&CO BERLIN 1977

ATTIC GEOMETRIC DISHES IN THE COLLECTION OF HUSEYIN KOCABAS- Belleten Cilt:XLI Sayı:161 - Türk Tarih Kurumu / 1977

OUR LOSS HUSEYIN KOCABAS AND ANTIQUES IN TURKEY - Prof. Dr. Selçuk EREZ / 1983

**CATALOGUE OF GLASS IN THE HUSEYIN KOCABAS COLLECTION** - Arkeoloji ve Sanat Yayınları 1984

"EMPEROR" HUSEYIN BEY - The story of a collector who dominates the thousands of vears old heritage of humanity - HÜRRİYET GAZETESİ 1989

CHINESE CERAMICS IN THE SADBERK HANIM MUSEUM - John Carswell SOTHEBY'S 1995

THE LEGEND; KOCABAS OĞLU HÜSEYİN VEYSİ - Celal Üster 1996

ANTIQUE DEALERS OF ISTANBUL - Faik Kırımlı 1996

HUSEYIN KOCABAŞ COLLECTION - Sadberk Hanım Müzesi Yazma Eserler Kataloğu / 1997

THE CATALOGUE OF BOOKS IN THE HUSEYİN KOCABAS COLLECTION - Sadberk Hanım Müzesi Kütüphanesi 2001

**GRAN CATALOGUE OF TURKEY MANUSCRIPTS** - Ankara Milli Kütüphane Başkanlığı Yayınları / 2005

**KAABE of the ART HUSEYIN KOCABAS** - Bursa Araştırmaları Kent Tarihi ve Kültürü Dergisi BURSA ARAŞTIRMALARI VAKFI / 2012



If the story has become a legend, then it will never end, it will continue for eternity, generation after generation...



ARTHILL was founded by Hüseyin KOCABAŞ, the third generation representative of the

KOCABAŞ Family, who has earned the reputation of the Turkish Culture and Anatolian Civilization Heritage in the eyes of the whole world and is accepted as the "KAABA OF THE ART" since 1918.





Hüseyin Kocabaş junior inherited his name and his passion and love for art and antiques from grandfather. He was born in a house where one of the floors was already a museum. Even as a child he grew up surrounded by art and antiques, and also surrounded by artists and art lovers from all over the world.

Due to the intense interest in the famous Saturday art meetings and museum visits, how Mrs. Sevgi Gönül mentioned, Hüseyin Kocabaş would spend her childhood listening to art stories instead of fables and examining antiques instead of playing with toys.

Since there was no place to put the artworks in the museum, his grandfather started to arrange the artworks on the stairs of his buildings, so Hüseyin Kocabaş could not run up the stairs that led to the house for the protection of art.

After the death of his grandfather Huseyin he was always at the center of the organization of works and arrengement of artworks. Family decided to pass some antiques in different museums like SADBERK HANIM MUSEUM, ISTANBUL ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM, OFFICIAL MUSEUM of BURSA, OFFICIAL LIBRARY of BURSA, THE BANK OF YAPI KREDI COLLECTION, SAINT BENOIT COLLECTION, MIMAR SINAN UNIVERSITY MUSEUM.

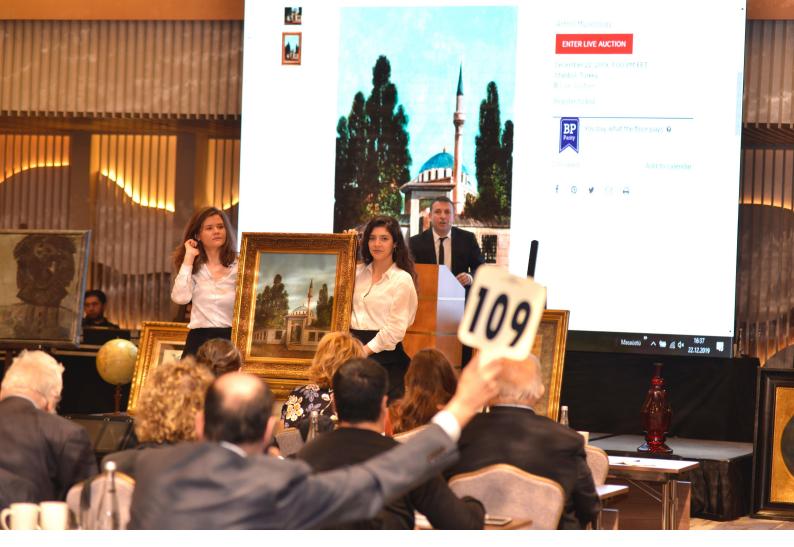
Huseyin Kocabas was in direct contact with all museums and intitutions during the passage of artworks and during the completation of bureaucratic procedures. After the arrangement of these works Huseyin continued to work in the art and antiques sector.

With the vision inherited from his grandfather, Huseyin decided to devote himself especially to organize auctions, and to found a muesum with most important pieces of art of the collection that he collect during the years. And with the effort of many years he has managed to become the most important auction house of the Turkiye. He organized more than 30 auctions with 4th Generation Representative his son Yiğit KOCABAŞ, some of them were saloon-hall auctions and some of them were online auctions.



In 2019 Arthill organized the biggest hall auction of the Turkey, and it was the first interactive auction with online platform on Invaluable portal. All auctions of the Arthill compnay are followed from different countries of the world and followed also from most important collectors and international museums like British Museum, Louvre Museum, etc.

With the base and experience, with the knowledge and know how had from different generations of collecting and museology, ARTHILL provides expertise, consultancy, professional service to museums, institutions and organizations, collectors and art lovers for the development of museology and collecting in Turkey and abroad with this vision and mission. provides art supply and logistics services, organizes exhibitions and auctions, sells antiques and works of art through private and online platforms, and continues research, projects and publications on Culture & Art.



Some photos from the hall auction of 2019







ARTHILL is an international group company with professional staf and solution partners. To extend the vision and business area ARTHILL is partecipating to all important exhibition of the market. And with aiming to grow every year, the group putting in exhibition different innovations and curiosity to catch also the attention of new generation.

For this scope in IAAF of 2021 with his partner Babylons, organized and showed the first Digital Art Exhibition with connection of NFT Technology.

Arthill Group has a perspective for 2023 to open museums in different countries of the world, starting from Qatar and Europe. Which museums will connect the real art with digital art. The company ARTSECURITY, situated under the group is focused on the security of the artworks and their transportations and transfers, and the company ART DIGIT is focused on the digitalization of the artworks, their presentations in digital areas and is also focused on the digital platform of online auctions.

## ARTHILL OTTOMAN DYNASTY COLLECTION

Some masterpieces from the collection..



Diamond set gold pocket watch of Sultan II Abdulhamid Han



Diamond set gold s igarette case of Sultan II Abdulhamid Han



# ARTHILL

## for the museums and the great collections

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