



01.

Marwan Sahmarani



Born in 1970 in Beirut, Lebanon, **Marwan Sahmarani** studied at l'École Supérieur d'Art Graphique in Paris, France. His oil paintings are known for their explosive colour and frenetic brushworks. Initially attracted to surrealist figure distortions, his style developed into abstraction, blending Arabo-Islamic culture with iconography and Western styles. Feeling like he owed his socio-political milieu, Sahmarani's work deals with the chaotic effects of war and individualism. He has held numerous solo shows in Beirut, London, Montreal and Dubai, and group exhibitions in Washington and Mexico. In 2012 he was exhibited in Contemporary Lebanon in the show "Art Beyond Violence", Singapore Art Fair (Lebanese Pavilion). In 2010, he was awarded the Abraaj Capital Art Prize.

Selected exhibitions:

2017, "Drifting Island", Leila Heller Gallery, Dubai, UAE

2015, "New Paintings", Gallery Kashya Hildebrand, Dubai, UAE

2014, "Black Moon", Gallery Kashya Hildebrand, London

FEELING LIKE HE OWED HIS SOCIOPOLITICAL MILIEU, SAHMARANI'S WORK DEALS WITH THE CHAOTIC EFFECTS OF WAR AND INDIVIDUALISM.



Acrylic on canvas



Born in Damascus in 1942, **Simone Fattal** studied philosophy in Paris and Beirut before emigrating to California in 1980 during the Lebanese Civil War. She soon established herself as a painter and sculptor, as well as the founder of the publishing house “Post-Apollo Press” dedicated to experimental literature. Working with multiple mediums, Fattal is best known for her standing ceramic figures, notable for their elephantine legs and clunky form. Fattal’s work explores the duality of feminine/masculine. She takes it upon herself to uncover buried history through her handling of clay, which results in large-scale sculptures. Renowned Lebanese visual artist and poet Etal Adnan – who met Fattal in the 1970s – has written about their friendship with great intricacy. Fattal has been exhibited internationally: at the New Museum, New York; the Sharjah Art Foundation, United Arab Emirates; Cité des Arts, Paris; Bonnefanten Museum, The Netherlands, and the Beirut Art Centre, Lebanon. In 2013 she released a film titled “Autoportrait” screened at international festivals.

Selected exhibitions:

2022, “Kan Ya Makan”, Galerie Tanit, Beirut, Lebanon

2021, “Au bord du Barada”, Galerie Lelong & Co., New York, USA

2019, “Works and Days”, PSI Contemporary, New York, USA

2018, “Paintings and Sculptures”, Karma International, Zurich, Switzerland

2018, “Garden of Memory”, Yves Saint Laurent Museum, Marrakech, Morocco

FATTAL’S WORK EXPLORES THE DUALITY OF FEMININE/MASCULINE. SHE TAKES IT UPON HERSELF TO UNCOVER BURIED HISTORY THROUGH HER HANDLING OF CLAY, WHICH RESULTS IN LARGE-SCALE SCULPTURES.



Work on paper

03.

Ayman Baalbaki



Selected exhibitions:

2022, "Janus Gate", Lebanese pavilion at the 59th Venice Biennale, Venice Italy

2016, "Blowback", Saleh Barakat Gallery, Beirut Lebanon

2014, "Recent Works", Rose Issa Projects Space, London UK

2008, "Apocalyptic Transfiguration", Agial Art Gallery, Beirut Lebanon

Ayman Baalbaki was born in Adeisseh in 1975, the same year the Lebanese civil war began. A lot of his work tackles this conflict and its aftermath. It looks at destruction, displacement, loss, identity, and collective memory. Baalbaki is best-known for his large-scale paintings, executed primarily in thick acrylic paint, distinct for their sense of organised chaos. The paintings depict Beirut's urban environment, the city's demolished structures, bombed suburbs and iconic buildings. His work is recognisable by the distinctive Baalbaki brushwork and the colossal scale of the paintings. The intent to capture the destabilising effects of war extends to his installation work, often incorporating neon signs into the pieces. The artist remains a prominent force in the contemporary Lebanese art scene. He studied at the Lebanese University in Beirut and at the Ecole nationale supérieure des arts décoratifs in Paris. The installation "Janus Gate" presented at the Lebanese pavilion for the 59th Venice Biennale was the piece chosen as the artistic representation of Lebanese arts in 2022. The artist currently lives and works in Beirut.

HIS WORK IS RECOGNISABLE BY THE DISTINCTIVE BAALBAKI BRUSHWORK AND THE COLOSSAL SCALE OF THE PAINTINGS.



Acrylic on canvas



Selected exhibitions:

2016, "The Doors of Perception", Galerie Janine Rubeiz, Beirut, Lebanon

2015, "L'Abécédaire", Galerie Janine Rubeiz, Beirut, Lebanon

2007, "D'une fenêtre, l'autre", Galerie Janine Rubeiz, Beirut, Lebanon

Born in Deir al-Qamar in 1931, **Laure Ghorayeb** has been exhibiting her intricate ink drawings since the 1960s, documenting the people and events in her life, and charting their experiences of living through political conflict. Drawing inspiration from comic-book layouts, her ink drawings are often interspersed with found objects and photographs so as to form intricate collages rich with biographical detail. At the core of her work is a desire to tell a story capable of shifting the axis of social and political conventions. Ghorayeb is an art critic, a writer on culture and has published poems and novellas. She has participated in numerous international solo and group shows in Paris, Baghdad, Alexandria, Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

AT THE CORE OF HER WORK IS A DESIRE TO TELL A STORY CAPABLE OF SHIFTING THE AXIS OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONVENTIONS.



Selected exhibitions:

2021, "How will it end?", Boghossian Foundation, Brussels, Belgium

2017, "Ici et Maintenant", Galerie Tanit, Beirut, Lebanon

2011, "Sharjah Biennial 10 - Plot for a Biennial", Sharjah Biennial, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

Born in 1966, Lebanese photographer **Gilbert Hage** explores the contemporary strengths of his medium. He studied at the Saint-Esprit University in Kaslik and has been teaching there since 1990. He also teaches photography at the Académie Libanaise des Beaux-Arts (ALBA). Even though Hage has an objective approach, his photos always seem to convey some form of intimacy, whether it be portraiture or landscapes. Each one of his series seems to adhere to a very specific protocol, parameters that the artist sets for himself so as to delve deeply into the subject at hand. This often involves the allowance for the subject to determine the final product. The medium of photography is after all an exchange between the photographer and the photographed. The margin for instant and constant change is an organic part one should embrace when holding a camera. Often, the human form is presented in isolation, against a neutral background. Hage is not interested in facts or in a journalistic, exploitative depiction of tragic events.

EVEN THOUGH HAGE HAS AN OBJECTIVE APPROACH, HIS PHOTOS ALWAYS SEEM TO CONVEY SOME FORM OF INTIMACY, WHETHER IT BE PORTRAITURE OR LANDSCAPES.



Chantale Fahmi is a Lebanese photographer and a photography teacher based in Beirut. She obtained her bachelor degree in photography from the Académie Libanaise des Beaux-Arts in 2014. She pursued a master's degree in Art Criticism and Curatorial Studies at Université Saint Joseph de Beyrouth. Since 2014, she has participated in many group exhibitions in Lebanon and internationally. Fahmi is the curator of many photography exhibitions such as "Day 1, Behind the lens of displacement", "Akkar through her eyes" and "Revolt".

Much of her work is about memory, through which she emphasises the importance of the past and its impact on the person's life.

Chantale Fahmi believes photography to be the best medium of her artistic expression and the most immediate way of connecting with her community. Her documentary-style photography allows for unique encounters, which enables her to capture "the details of a life reflected in one shot, telling the story of a place, individual or community".

Selected exhibitions:

2020, "Lebanon, then and now", Middle East Institute in Washington DC, USA and Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, France

HER DOCUMENTARY-STYLE PHOTOGRAPHY ALLOWS FOR UNIQUE ENCOUNTERS, WHICH ENABLES HER TO CAPTURE "THE DETAILS OF A LIFE REFLECTED IN ONE SHOT, TELLING THE STORY OF A PLACE, INDIVIDUAL OR COMMUNITY".





Selected exhibitions:

2022, "Moderne Art Fair", Mark Hachem Gallery, Paris, France

2019, "Live @ the crying room", Tornado Things Gallery, Brooklyn, New York, USA

2010, "Kings of the Impossible", Kleio Projects, New York, USA

2009, "The 7 Minute Special", the Kleio Project, New York, USA

Oregon-based artist Yasmina Nysten was born in Helsinki in 1988 and has lived in Finland, France, Lebanon, New York and Philadelphia. She studied Fine Arts at the Lebanese Academy of Fine Art (ALBA) and Digital Animation at New York's Pratt Institute. She works in a variety of fields including drawing, painting, illustration, and installation. Her colourful acrylic paintings are often composed of distorted figures or absurdist gestures that disrupt an otherwise familiar scene. Her solo show "Live @ the Crying Room" in Brooklyn, New York in 2019 consisted of large-scale figurative paintings depicting semi-surrealistic urban scenes. She has exhibited widely in Lebanon, and internationally at galleries such as Ayyam Gallery Dubai's young collectors auction (2013 to 2015), group shows at Astoria Visual Arts (AVA) in Astoria Oregon, "Scope art fair", Miami 2022 at Mark Hachem Gallery. In 2022, she started a painting partnership with a local Oregonian artist. The duo goes by the name: die Famous. They often travel to Miami to paint large-scale murals in Wynwood for Art Basel.

SHE WORKS IN A VARIETY OF FIELDS INCLUDING DRAWING, PAINTING, ILLUSTRATION, AND INSTALLATION.



Acrylic on canvas



Selected exhibitions:

2021, "Images de rêve. Forêts de symboles", Claude Lemand Gallery, Paris, France.

2021, "Lumières du Liban", Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, France

2018, "The Rite of Spring", Lebanese American University, Beirut, Lebanon

Lebanese artist, **Sarah Abou Mrad** was born in 1988. She is a Fine Arts graduate of Painting from the Lebanese University. In 2010 she established the Art department at "Sainte-Anne des Sœurs de Besançon" school in Beirut where she taught arts for 10 years. She is the first-prize winner of the German Goethe-Institute in 2011 and 2013 for the translation of classical music into painting, as well as the first-prize drawing winner of "Beirut Design Week" in 2015. The same year, Zaaroura publishing house, Contemporary Art Gallery Fadi Mogabgab published her first series of engravings entitled "Matilda".

In response to the August 4th Beirut explosion, she created an extremely impactful sculpture, from the debris, entitled "Beyrouth, L'instant T". This piece was offered to President Macron during his visit to Beirut to be featured at the Élysée Palace, France for the centenary celebration of the formation of Greater Lebanon.

Sara Abou Mrad has participated in several exhibitions in Lebanon and abroad: Beirut Art Fair, Luxembourg Art Fair, Amsterdam Affordable Art Fair, Salon International d'Art Contemporain Paris, Artbox project Zürich, QIAF Qatar, FIAC, 508 Gallery London, Accademia di belle arti di Bologna, Italy.

IN RESPONSE TO THE AUGUST 4TH BEIRUT EXPLOSION, SHE CREATED AN EXTREMELY IMPACTFUL SCULPTURE, FROM THE DEBRIS, ENTITLED "BEYROUTH, L'INSTANT T".



Acrylic on canvas

**Selected exhibitions:**

2022, "Menart Fair", Saleh Barakat Gallery, Paris, France

2021, "Lumières du Liban", IMA "Institut du monde arabe, Paris, France.

2021, " Between shadows and lights " Art installation, Art in motion, Ixsir, Lebanon

Born in 1969 in Lebanon, **Anachar Basbous** works and lives with his wife and two children in Rachana, Lebanon, a village of open-air sculptures overlooking the wide expanse of the Mediterranean Sea. He was born into a family of artists: his father Michel Basbous was a renowned sculptor in his own right and his mother was a writer and poet. Anachar has lived and breathed art and creativity since his birth. He made his first sculpture at the age of 10. Even his name Anachar is a play on his birthplace, forever tying him to this magical place.

Anachar finished his studies in Beirut, then continued his graduate studies in Paris at the ENSAAMA (Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts et des Métiers d'Art), where he specialised in architectural wall design.

When he returned to Lebanon in 1992, he opened his own sculpture workshop in Rachana, where he dedicated himself to stone, wood and metal sculptures, as well as murals sculptures. His works can be found across Lebanon and beyond, in public places, hotels, private residences and gardens.

In 2008, he was commissioned to create a ten-metre bronze public sculpture in commemoration of the life and death of the late Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, erected on the exact spot where he had been assassinated by a car explosion in Downtown Beirut.

His sculptures appear in many private collections as well as in public places in Lebanon, France, United States, UK, Canada, the United Arab Emirates and beyond.



Acrylic on canvas

ANACHAR HAS LIVED AND BREATHED ART AND CREATIVITY SINCE HIS BIRTH. HE MADE HIS FIRST SCULPTURE AT THE AGE OF 10.

10.

Oussama Baalbaki



Acrylic on canvas



Selected exhibitions:

2018, "Against the Grain", Saleh Barakat Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon

2017, "Pleadings of the Light", Agial Art Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon

2013, "Pen to Paper", Athr Gallery, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Oussama Baalbaki was born in Beirut in 1978, where he studied at the Lebanese Academy of Fine Art. His delicate paintings, often executed in photo realistic detail, consist of black-and-white self-portraits, most containing a single surrealistic element. His expressionist landscapes, meanwhile, capture both the beauty of Lebanon's natural scenery and the scars left on it by human presence. In addition to his paintings, Baalbaki began drawing illustrations for several Lebanese publications and designed several book covers for publishing houses. Baalbaki has exhibited his work at numerous cultural institutions including Green Art Gallery, Dubai, the American University Museum and the Sursock Museum, Beirut. He has participated in leading regional art fairs including Art Dubai and Art Abu Dhabi in 2009, the same year he represented Beirut at the International Jeux de Francophonie, where he was awarded the Silver Medal for painting. Baalbaki resides and works in Beirut.

HIS EXPRESSIONIST LANDSCAPES, MEANWHILE, CAPTURE BOTH THE BEAUTY OF LEBANON'S NATURAL SCENERY AND THE SCARS LEFT ON IT BY HUMAN PRESENCE.



11.

Safwan Dahoul



Selected exhibitions:

2022, "Safwan Dahoul: Awake", Ayyam Gallery, Dubai, UAE

2018, "Dialogue", Ayyam Gallery (DIFC), Dubai, UAE

2017, "Painting Across Generations", Ayyam Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon

Born in Hama, Syria in 1961, **Safwan Dahoul** was initially trained by leading modernists at the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Damascus before travelling to Belgium, where he earned a doctorate from the Higher Institute of Plastic Arts in Mons. Upon returning to Syria, he began teaching at the Faculty of Fine Arts and was a prominent member of the Damascus art scene. In the span of a decade, he nurtured a new generation of artists as an active mentor and he often ignited new directions in painting. Given the trajectory and status of his painting style, the artist's career built a bridge between modern and contemporary Arab art. Dahoul's paintings are held in numerous private and public collections, including the Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris; Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah; National Museum, Damascus; The Samawi Collection, Dubai; The Farjam Collection, Dubai; the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, Kuwait.

GIVEN THE TRAJECTORY AND STATUS OF HIS PAINTING STYLE, THE ARTIST'S CAREER BUILT A BRIDGE BETWEEN MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ARAB ART.



Acrylic on canvas



Acrylic on canvas

**Selected exhibitions:**

2020, Gallery Pryzmat, Krakow, Poland

2016, Foyer des Stadttheaters, Münster, Germany

2015, Art Élysées, Petit Palais, Paris, France

2014, Art House Wien, Vienna Austria

Bahram Hajo was born in Syria in 1952. He studied at the Fine Arts Academy in Dusseldorf Germany and in 1984 graduated from the Kunstakademie Münster. His figurative paintings invite reflections on solitude and isolation: lonely faces cautiously stare out at the viewer; elsewhere, figures turn their backs defensively, seemingly moving away from the viewer. The transience of emotion is further captured by the splashes of bold colour that punctuate an otherwise subtle and sparse canvas. Hajo has participated in numerous exhibitions in Poland, Dubai, Amman, and Paris. He lives and works in Germany.

HIS FIGURATIVE PAINTINGS INVITE REFLECTIONS ON SOLITUDE AND ISOLATION: LONELY FACES CAUTIOUSLY STARE OUT AT THE VIEWER.

13.

Jean Boghossian



Selected exhibitions:

2021, "Recent Works", Avenue Louise, Brussels, Belgium

2019, "About Nature & Colours", Gallery Tanit, Munich, Germany

2018, "Unpredictable Horizons", Ayyam Gallery, Dubai, UAE

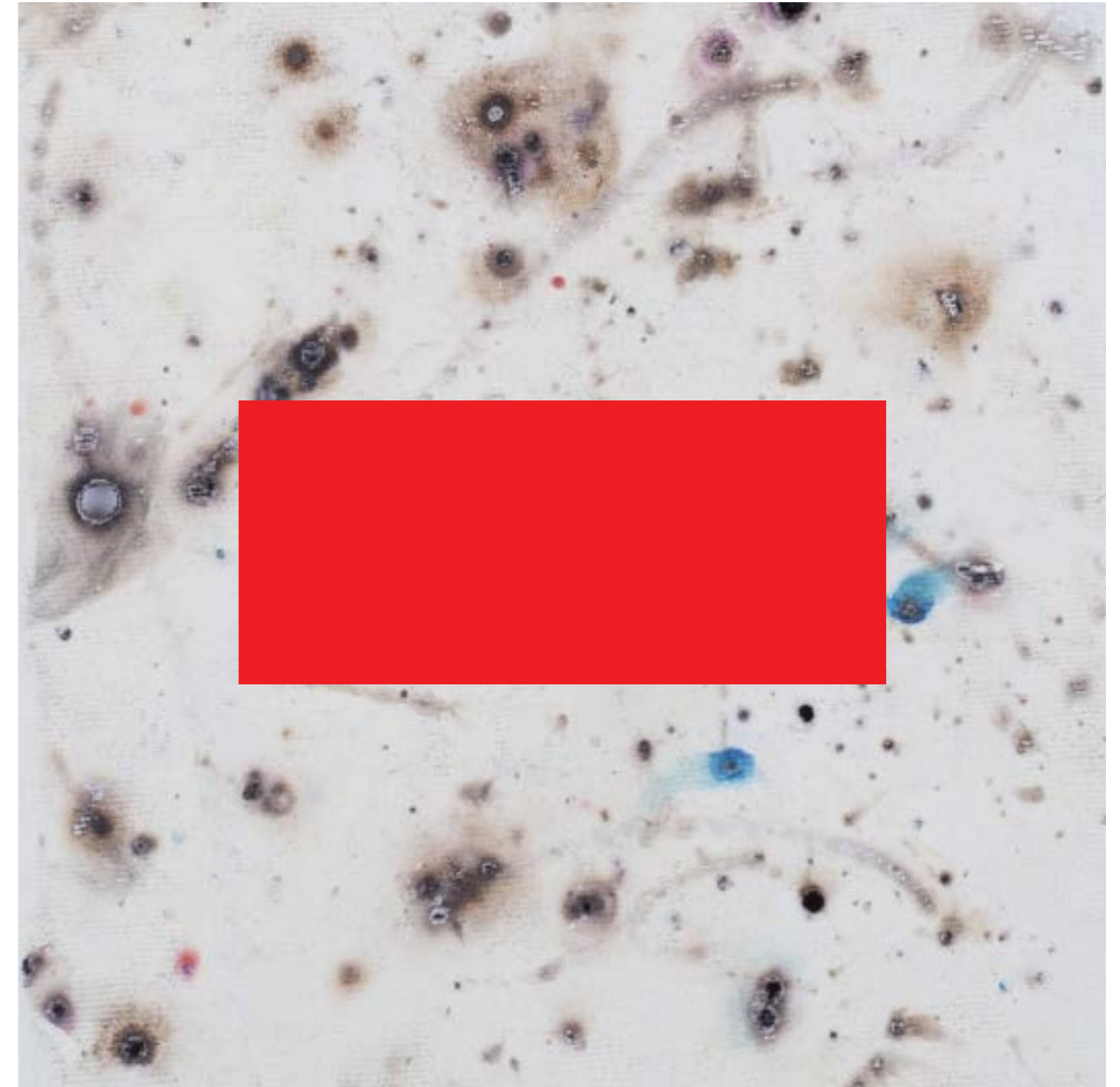
2011, "Burning", Beirut Exhibition Center, Beirut, Lebanon

Born in Aleppo, Syria in 1949, **Jean Boghossian** is an abstract, multidisciplinary artist of Armenian descent. He studied Economics and Sociology at Saint Joseph University (USJ) in Beirut while working for the family jewellery business. In 1975, he moved to Belgium to escape the civil war in Lebanon. Settled in Brussels, he enrolled at the Academy of Fine Arts, Boitsfort, while continuing to oversee the family business. The artist is known for using fire and smoke on his works and is one of only a small number of artists who uses the method of burn degradation on his canvas. He also applies fire to other media, such as paper, books and even furniture while producing fissures, cracks and perforations on the pieces. He works across a range of media that spans watercolour, oil, charcoal and acrylics. Defying categorisation, he uses a variety of techniques and also sculpts in wood, clay, polystyrene and bronze. In 1992, he set up the Boghossian Foundation with the support of his father and brother.

The artist has exhibited extensively with solo and group shows held at: Ayyam Gallery, Dubai (2018); Art Abu Dhabi (2017, 2013); 57th Venice Biennale (2017); Beirut Exhibition Center (2015, 2011); Fondazione Palazzo Albizzini Collection Burri, Città di Castello (2015); and Villa Empain - Boghossian Foundation, Brussels (2014).

THE ARTIST IS KNOWN FOR USING FIRE AND SMOKE ON HIS WORKS AND IS ONE OF ONLY A SMALL NUMBER OF ARTISTS WHO USES THE METHOD OF BURN DEGRADATION ON HIS CANVAS

Acrylic on canvas





Selected exhibitions:

2022, Auction by the Atassi Foundation, Anna Tschopp Gallery, Marseille, France

2014, "Untitled Abstract", Heritage Auction, Dallas, Texas, USA

Born in Kraia, Syria in 1954, **Lutfi Romhein** studied sculpture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Carrara, Italy in 1985. The artist works with wood, marble, plaster and steel. He sculpts aerodynamic, smooth and soothing figures, animals and abstract shapes. The works vary in scale, from monumental public commissions to pedestal-sized pieces and furniture. Romhein's abstractions translate into multi-interpretative subjects suggestive of lean sensuality.

Exhibitions of his sculptures have been held in Syria, the UAE, Italy, France, Canada, the USA, Norway, England and Spain. His work is also on permanent display at the National Museum of Damascus; National Museum in Amman; Town Hall of Brusque, Sainte-Affrique in France, the Syrian Embassy in Washington DC and Burj Khalifa Plaza, Dubai.

ROMHEIN'S ABSTRACTIONS TRANSLATE INTO MULTI-INTERPRETATIVE SUBJECTS SUGGESTIVE OF LEAN SENSUALITY.



Acrylic on canvas

15.

Anas Albraehe



Acrylic on canvas



Selected exhibitions:

2022, "The Dreamer", Anita Rogers Gallery, New York City, USA

2020, "Mother Earth", Agial Art Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon

2018, "The Dreamcatcher", Agial Art Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon

Born in Syria in 1991, **Anas Albraehe** is a Beirut-based artist who primarily works in painting and theatre. In 2014, he received a bachelor's degree in Painting and Drawing from the Fine Arts University of Damascus, Syria. After the onset of the Syrian war, he relocated to Lebanon and obtained an MA in Psychology and Art Therapy from the Lebanese University in 2015. Albraehe is interested in the psychological effect of colour and form; the way portraiture reveals the innermost reality of the individual depicted, as well as the observers.

ALBRAEHE IS INTERESTED IN THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT OF COLOUR AND FORM.

16.

Nazir Ismail



Born in Damascus, Syria in 1948, **Nazir Ismail** took part in over 60 exhibitions throughout his artistic career. His colourful oil paintings capture human figures and roosters in warm, earthy colours, while his watercolours on paper convey the realities of modern Syria. He chooses to filter through the immediate environment he is exposed to, exploring themes of loss, confusion, bitterness, and anxiety. In his words, he seeks to 'work in an expressive manner, trying to transmit the emotional and psychological state through colour and lines, and the general vibe of the art'. He won numerous prizes including the 3rd prize at the exhibition for Young Artists in Damascus in 1971, the Graphic Prize in Berlin in 1980, and the 3rd prize at the Sharjah Biennale in 1996. His work was exhibited in several institutions and galleries, including museums and ministries in Damascus as well as private collections. The artist passed away in 2016.

Selected exhibitions:

2013, "Re: Orient", Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah, UAE

2011, "Faces" collective exhibition with Mustafa Ali, Relaxants Gallery, Qatar

1996, 3rd prize in the Sharjah Biennale, Sharjah, UAE

HIS COLOURFUL OIL PAINTINGS CAPTURE HUMAN FIGURES AND ROOSTERS IN WARM, EARTHY COLOURS.



Acrylic on canvas



Selected exhibitions:

2021, "Abyss", Al Quoz Dubai, UAE

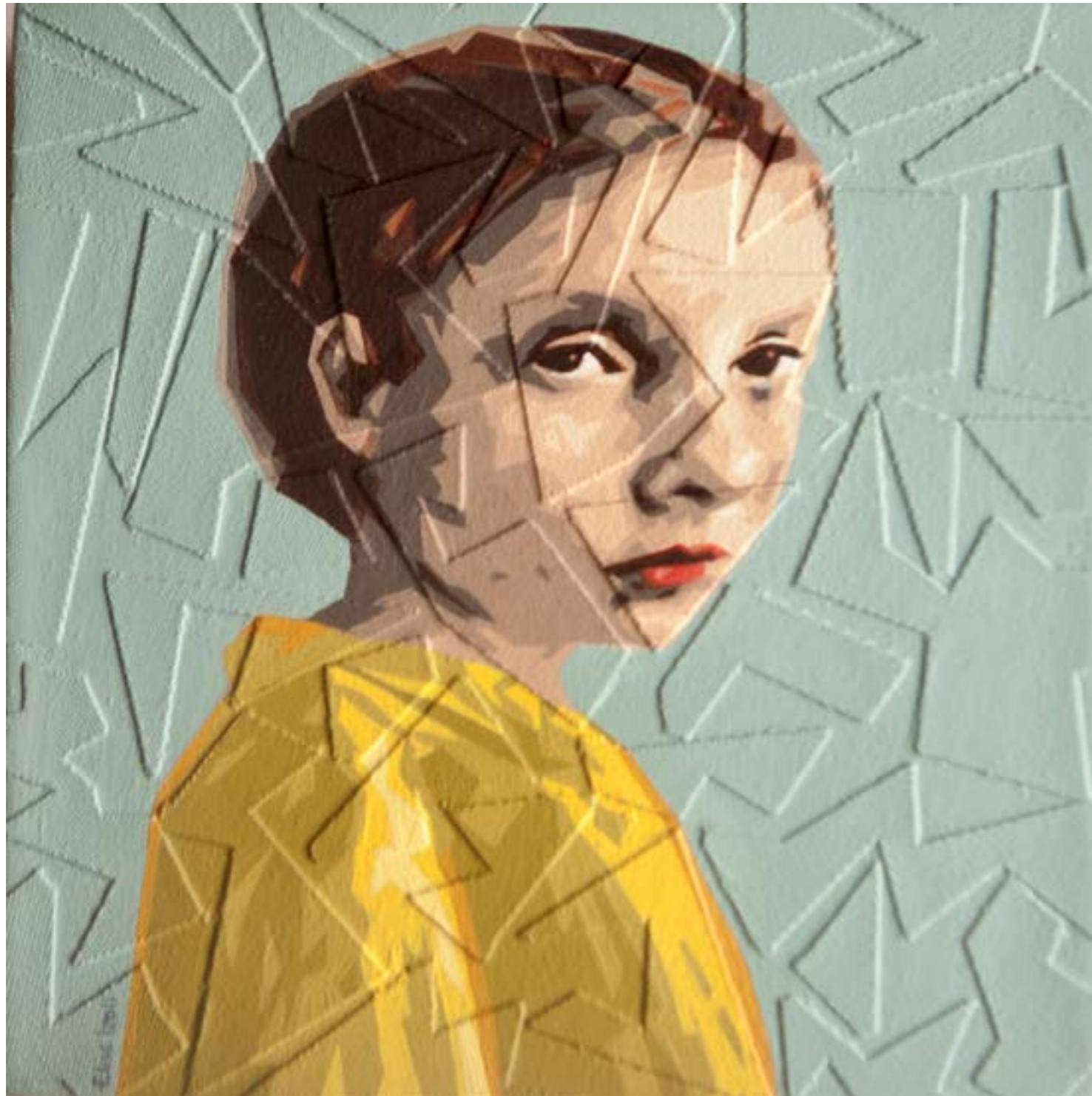
2014, "Landmarks", Dubai-DIFC, UAE

Born in Syria in 1967, **Thaier Helal** has been a student of notable painters such as Mahmoud Hammad during his studies at the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Damascus. His large mixed media works and innovative painting style branded him a pioneer of contemporary abstraction in the Middle East. He focused on the effects of militarisation after the outbreak of the Syrian war and was interested in exposing its tragic global effects. After relocating to the United Arab Emirates in the 1990s, he found solace in adventurous aesthetic methods of painting, experimenting with glue, sand and coal. This textural exploration made him feel more connected to the immediate world around him. He is a Senior Member of the Sharjah Arts Institute and a Professor at the Fine Arts College at the University of Sharjah. In addition, he has won awards from Tehran's Contemporary Painting Biennial (2005), and the Sharjah Biennial (1997). His group shows extend worldwide in places such as San Francisco, Dubai, Beirut, London, and Seoul.

AFTER RELOCATING TO THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES IN THE 1990S, HE FOUND SOLACE IN ADVENTUROUS AESTHETIC METHODS OF PAINTING, EXPERIMENTING WITH GLUE, SAND AND COAL.



Acrylic on canvas



Acrylic on canvas



Born in Damascus, Syria in 1976, **Elias Izoli** is a self-taught painter whose creative talents were revealed at a young age. His intricate paintings of children caught in the crossfire of political violence are executed in startlingly vivid colours, creating emotionally laden portraits in compositions that defy conventional portraiture. His unique and bold use of

colour, which is applied through gestural and fragmented brushstrokes, enhances the loss and sadness portrayed in his subjects' expression. In 1993, he held his first solo exhibition at the age of 17 at the Russian Cultural Centre in Damascus and he exhibited at Ayyam Gallery in Beirut and Dubai in 2010, 2012 and 2013. The artist lives and works in Damascus.

Selected exhibitions:

2018, "Elias Izoli: Seven Years", Ayyam Gallery (DIFC), Dubai, UAE

2018, "City of Grace" at Ayyam Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon

2016, "Elias Izoli: Connected" at Ayyam Gallery (DIFC), Dubai, UAE

HIS UNIQUE AND BOLD USE OF COLOUR, WHICH IS APPLIED THROUGH GESTURAL AND FRAGMENTED BRUSHSTROKES, ENHANCES THE LOSS AND SADNESS PORTRAYED IN HIS SUBJECTS' EXPRESSION



Kais Salman was born in Tartous, Syria in 1976 and lives and works in Beirut. He studied Fine Art at Damascus University. His paintings use satire to subvert the normalisation of greed, consumerism, and vanities that have come to define our globalised present. More recently, his work has explored topics as diverse as the psychological and physical toll of the violence happening in Syria, terrorism, cosmetic surgery, religious fanaticism, and imperialism – themes that speak to the effects of globalisation and its discontents. His provocative and somewhat sinister subjects are exaggerated to a comical effect, which is enhanced by his highly saturated colour palette, to highlight the absurdity of our contemporary era. Salman's paintings are currently housed in private collections throughout the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe.

Selected exhibitions:

2022, "Fables in the Unknown", Ayyam Gallery, Dubai, UAE

2014, "Syria's Apex Generation", Ayyam Gallery, London, UK

2012, "Inner-Self", Ayyam Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon

HIS WORK HAS EXPLORED TOPICS AS DIVERSE AS THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL TOLL OF THE VIOLENCE HAPPENING IN SYRIA, TERRORISM, COSMETIC SURGERY, RELIGIOUS FANATICISM, AND IMPERIALISM.

Acrylic on canvas





Selected exhibitions:

2022, "Pop Artist", Galerie Claude Lemand, Paris, France

2015, "LOL", Ayyam Gallery DIFC, Dubai, UAE

2013, "Complete Freedom", Ayyam Gallery, London, UK

Khalid Takriti is a renowned Syrian artist, who was born in Beirut in 1964. He graduated from the Architecture and Painting Academy in Damascus after which he worked as an architect in Damascus' General Directorate of Antiquity and Museums. In 1992, he moved to New York to develop his artistic practice and later settled in Paris. Takriti's large-scale figurative paintings of the female body are realist in style but the focus on his subject matter is also symbolic. In the artist's words: 'The East has always been depicted as a woman in my work, through her eyes, her soul and her stillness. The West is more about colour, frame, and motion. I think my paintings are definitely influenced by both cultures'. Takriti has held numerous art exhibitions that have revealed his mastery at many galleries in Damascus, Beirut and Paris. Several of his works are held in public and private collections, including the Syrian National Museum and the Royal Foundation in Jordan.

TAKRITI'S LARGE-SCALE FIGURATIVE PAINTINGS OF THE FEMALE BODY ARE REALIST IN STYLE BUT THE FOCUS ON HIS SUBJECT MATTER IS ALSO SYMBOLIC.



Acrylic on canvas



21.

Safak Gurboga



Şafak Gürboğa was born in İzmir, Turkey in 1989. He holds a BA and an MA from Dokuz Eylül University, Faculty of Painting. The artist focuses on topics such as identity, racism, violence and destructive aggression. His bold sense of composition and minimalistic subject matter can put the viewer on edge, the same way one could feel uncomfortable in public moments of silence. Yet one could also feel completely comforted by this dissociation, relieved from the burden of unnecessary utterances.

Selected exhibitions:

- 2015, "Veritas-gerçek" at K2 Rezidans, Izmir, Turkey
- 2015, Group show, Akbank, Günümüz Sanatçıları Exhibition, Istanbul, Turkey
- 2015, Istanbul Rotary Art Contest Exhibition, the Elgiz Museum, Istanbul, Turkey

HIS BOLD SENSE OF COMPOSITION AND MINIMALISTIC SUBJECT MATTER CAN PUT THE VIEWER ON EDGE, THE SAME WAY ONE COULD FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE IN PUBLIC MOMENTS OF SILENCE.



Acrylic on canvas



Cansu Sönmez was born in Istanbul, Turkey in 1991. She graduated from Marmara University Atatürk Education Faculty (Painting Department) in 2013 and she continued her studies at Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, Basic Art and Design Master Programme. In 2013, she took an interest in dystopia as a theme for a body of work, and videotaped as well as photographed the productions of lifeless mannequins in the factory. She aims to show the relationship between mankind, city and nature, heavily venturing into a Magritte-like pop surrealism. From street art to kinetic art, Sönmez appreciates the mental struggle and the intellectual abstraction brought forth by the dialectic between consciousness and unconsciousness. With the works she makes by using Lego pieces, Sönmez shows this dystopian phenomenon, i.e, the unplanned urbanisation created in her country.

Selected exhibitions:

2022, "Summer Show II", PG Art Gallery Istanbul, Turkey

2019, "Cansu Sönmez & Tuğba Çınar: On the Border", PG Art Gallery Istanbul, Turkey

SHE AIMS TO SHOW THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MANKIND, CITY AND NATURE, HEAVILY VENTURING INTO A MAGRITTE-LIKE POP SURREALISM.



Acrylic on canvas



Selected exhibitions:

2017, "Demans (Dementia)", group exhibition, GaleriBU, Istanbul, Turkey

Born in Sivas, Turkey in 1983, **Şeyda Özdamar** studied Textile and Fashion Design at Sivas Cumhuriyet University. She continued her studies in Kayseri at the Faculty of Fine Arts, focusing on sculpture. Her work centres on the changes in educational systems, its reflections on society, and bigotry brought about through the medium of photography. Most importantly, she likes to put great value on the enlightenment engendered by children. She believes that analogue photography is the ideal tool for producing historical documents which feed the collective consciousness. A photograph is a sort of nostalgically confidential item. She has chosen to expose the darkness in all sorts of organised social systems, defying authority at large. War, inequality between men and women, child abuse, human rights, racism, discrimination etc: Özdamar states that she hunts the "emotions reflected in the found image" and that she "erases almost everything else". Intervening artistically on an old photograph is a cathartic means to reconcile matters that particularly bother her personally.

ÖZDAMAR STATES THAT SHE HUNTS THE "EMOTIONS REFLECTED IN THE FOUND IMAGE" AND THAT SHE "ERASES ALMOST EVERYTHING ELSE".



Acrylic on canvas

**Selected exhibitions:**

2022, KargaArt, "Fade-out", solo exhibition, Istanbul, Turkey

2022, Loftart Project "Bir Kelebeğin Kasırgası", Istanbul, Turkey

2020, "From Artist to Artist", Büyükdere35, Istanbul, Turkey

Elif Firat was born in 1994, Istanbul. In 2013, she started studying in Mimar Sinan University's Ceramic and Glass Design Department. Her sculptures are a reflection of the emotional human condition, how the environment takes a toll on our inner and outer beings. This practice lends itself to her own catharsis regarding heavy matters that undeniably affect us all. Her subjects tend to exude a certain neutrality, whether through gender or physical characteristics. This is a meditated choice, since it invites a larger audience to associate with the message conveyed. Firat's figurative ceramics are mostly recognisable for their stoic faces with closed eyes.

HER SCULPTURES ARE A REFLECTION OF THE EMOTIONAL HUMAN CONDITION, HOW THE ENVIRONMENT TAKES A TOLL ON OUR INNER AND OUTER BEINGS.



Acrylic on canvas





Born in Alexandria, Egypt in 1955, **Guirguis Lotfy** is best known for his ancient Egyptian painting technique. He received a BFA in 1980, an MFA in 1986 and a Ph.D on "Coptic Art and Its Effect on Modern Art" from Helwan University (Cairo) in 1991. At the same time, his artistic process attests to his commitment to honouring the historical and cultural past of Egypt but also considers the evolution of painting in present times. His elaborate paintings, rich in figures, pay great attention to academic composition. They depict contemporary Egyptian life, the local characters, iconic figures, ceremonial events, simple playground and park scenes, community and family scenes. Lotfy says: 'I am greatly influenced by the ancient Coptic art, which was always depicting light coming from people. They are stunted from stress and life's hardships but they are content with the little they have and just go on'.

Selected exhibitions:

2013, "Heya Di Masr Ya Abla", ArtTalks, Cairo, Egypt

2004, "Les Mémoires de Guirguis", French Cultural Center, Alexandria, Egypt

1996, "the Wooden Horse", Meniat al Nasr, Alexandria, Egypt

HIS ELABORATE PAINTINGS, RICH IN FIGURES, PAY GREAT ATTENTION TO ACADEMIC COMPOSITION.



Acrylic on canvas



Selected exhibitions:

2022, "Doko al-Jidran", Art Talks, Cairo, Egypt

2017, "Calm Chaos", Art Talks, Cairo, Egypt

Born in Egypt, **Aly Sirry** is a self-taught artist who works in various mediums including pottery, paper-making, metal, wood, ink and acrylic. He is a full-time diplomat with a real passion for the creative fields. His first solo show, "Calm Chaos", which was held in 2017 at Art Talks (Cairo) was a statement about the political rupture and chaos taking place in his immediate surroundings. The artist stands out for his minimalist brushstrokes and monochromatic compositions. Sirry's meticulous attention to detail invites the viewer to take time with each piece. In the words of the artist himself: 'My work seeks to divert observers from the dissonant and invasive ambient noise towards a zone of tranquil reflection'.

THE ARTIST STANDS OUT FOR HIS MINIMALIST BRUSHSTROKES AND MONOCHROMATIC COMPOSITIONS.



Acrylic on canvas



Born in Beheira, Egypt in 1984, **Hady Boraey** lives and works in Alexandria, Egypt. He received a BFA in 2005 and an MFA in 2011 as well as a Ph.D. from the Faculty of Fine Arts from the University of Alexandria in 2015. Boraey's style is recognised for his saturated colour palette, often using a unified crimson red for his backgrounds. His figurative stylistic approach is akin to traditional South African sculpture and ancient Egyptian low-reliefs and manuscripts, yet the inclination tends to lean towards surrealism. He has participated in over 40 group exhibitions in Egypt, Italy, the UK, Switzerland, and the UAE. He has also received various awards from the Faculty of Fine Arts in Alexandria and the medal of appreciation from the Bibliotheca (Alexandria).

Selected exhibitions:

- 2012**, "ON WOOD", Elhorya Centre for Creative Arts, Alexandria, Egypt
2012, "18 Days Revolution", Sakyat el Sawy, Cairo, Egypt
2020, "LINE OF DECENT", Caravan Foundation, USA.
2020, "HEAVEN'S BACKYARD", Art Talks Egypt, Cairo, Egypt

HIS FIGURATIVE STYLISTIC APPROACH IS AKIN TO TRADITIONAL SOUTH AFRICAN SCULPTURE AND ANCIENT EGYPTIAN LOW-RELIEFS AND MANUSCRIPTS, YET THE INCLINATION TENDS TO LEAN TOWARDS SURREALISM.



Acrylic on canvas



Selected exhibitions:

2022, "The Color of Words", L'Atelier 21, Morocco

2018, "Cultural Crossroads", La Galerie Nationale, Dubai, UAE

Born in Fez, Morocco in 1944, **Tahar Ben Jelloun** is an author, poet and painter. He attended Mohammed V University in Rabat majoring in Philosophy where he wrote his first poems consolidated in a publication entitled "Hommes sous linceul de silence" (Men under shroud of silence) in 1971. Having been a professor in philosophy in Morocco, he found a place amongst the team that published the magazine "Souffles" by the mid-sixties. He was an active participant of the rebellion against "the repressive violent acts" of the Moroccan Police. From 1972, he started writing numerous articles for the daily newspaper Le Monde and then earned a PhD in Social Psychiatry in 1975. In 1985, he published the novel "L'Enfant de Sable" (The Sand Child) which brought him to fame. He was awarded the Prix Goncourt in 1987 for "La Nuit Sacrée" (Sacred Night), a sequel to "L'Enfant de Sable" (the Sand Child). He is the author of several educational publications such as "L'Islam expliqué aux enfants" (Islam explained to children) and "Le Terrorisme expliqué à nos enfants" (terrorism explained to our children). In 2008, he was elected member of the Académie Goncourt. Tahar Ben Jelloun is the world's most translated author. His books can be read in 45 different languages. His visual style is suggestively calligraphic yet seems to primarily concern itself with energetic focus points. It is easy to notice the madala-like influence translated into an arabo-Fauve composition.



Acrylic on canvas

EVERY YEAR AT THE FOUNDATION WE SAY WE ARE GOING TO SLOW DOWN ON ACQUISITIONS, YET THE COLLE





Selected exhibitions:

2005, Esthète, Montreal Canada

1998, Galerie El Hawajez, Cairo, Egypt

1992, World Exhibition – Seville Expo '92,
Seville, Spain

Born in Tunisia in 1965, **Feryel Lakhdar** studied at École Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture and at École des Beaux-arts in Paris. She took part in the production of film set design when she moved to France to study urban and furniture design. She took part in the restoration of public spaces such as Château Chinon in Nievre. Her neo-figurative paintings are based on the representation of contemporary women, particularly Turkish women. Lakhdar's work was showcased in different solo and group exhibitions all over the world, including Tunisia, Italy, France, Portugal, Lebanon, and the UAE. Her works can be found in numerous public and corporate collections including the Ministry of Culture in Tunisia.

HER NEOFIGURATIVE PAINTINGS ARE BASED ON THE REPRESENTATION OF CONTEMPORARY WOMEN, PARTICULARLY TURKISH WOMEN.



Acrylic on canvas



Acrylic on canvas



Born in Nabeul, Tunisia in 1951, **Khaled Ben Slimane** graduated from the Escola Massana of Barcelona in 1977 and then from the Technological Institute of Art in Tunisia in 1982. His multi-disciplinary practice includes paintings on paper, canvas and wood. He is mostly known for his ceramic and bronze sculptures.

His work is a harmonious marriage of Eastern and Western tradition. The graphic repetition of the “written word” complies with the conventions of Sufism. The Japanese technique he uses in his calligraphy resonates greatly with Western contemporary purism. His use of negative space elevates his pieces into a cosmic realm. The artist’s works are part of many private and public collections such as the British Museum, the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C., the Idemitsu Museum of Arts in Tokyo, the Benaki Museum in Athens, the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman, and the Badisches Landesmuseum in Karlsruhe. In 1990, he was elected a member of the International Academy of Ceramics, Geneva, Switzerland. His art was exhibited alongside works by maestros such as Joan Miro, Pablo Picasso, and Joan Gady Artigas. In addition, he held solo exhibitions across the world, including Tunisia, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, the USA, Germany, Spain, the UK, Bulgaria and Japan.

Selected exhibitions:

2017, “Ya Latif”, Elmarsa Gallery, Dubai, UAE

2017, 1:54 Contemporary Art Fair, London, UK

2006, “Word into Art: Artists of the Middle East”, The British Museum, London, UK

2005, “Ceramics”, Seto City Art Museum, Japan

HIS WORK IS A HARMONIOUS MARRIAGE OF EASTERN AND WESTERN TRADITION. THE GRAPHIC REPETITION OF THE “WRITTEN WORD” COMPLIES WITH THE CONVENTIONS OF SUFISM.



Selected exhibitions:

2022, Musk and Amber Gallery, Abu Dhabi, UAE

2014, "Les Dessous des Ratures" (Beneath the Crossings Out), Ammar Farhat Gallery, Tunisia

2014, "Self-portrait", Gaya Gallery, Tunisia

Born in Bizerte, Tunisia in 1965, **Imed Jemaïel** shifted his attention to the arts after two years of medical school. In 1990, he earned a degree in Fine Arts, specialising in printmaking. In 1992, he started teaching at the Higher Institute of Fine Arts in Tunisia. He is an art critic influenced by the Dadaist movement and a teacher who encourages his students to draw upon their youth, their visual and emotive memory, all in the spirit of lightheartedness. He has participated in group exhibitions in Tunisia including the Spring of the Arts, the annual exhibition of the Union of Tunisian Plastic Artists. In 2014, he had his first solo exhibition entitled "Les Dessous des Ratures" (Beneath the Crossings Out) at the Amar Farhat Gallery. In his "Les Dessous des Ratures" series, his interest in language is expressed through mesmerising and intricate combinations of ancient symbolism and code. The spectator muses upon the dialectic of what is being said and what still remains a mystery.

HIS INTEREST HIS INTEREST IN LANGUAGE IS EXPRESSED THROUGH MESMERISING AND INTRICATE COMBINATIONS OF ANCIENT SYMBOLISM AND CODE.



Acrylic on canvas



Born in Tunisia in 1937, **Nja Mahdaoui** graduated from the Academia Santa Andrea in Rome and the École du Louvre in Paris in 1967. As a visual artist he has mainly focused on calligraphy. Initially inspired by abstract painting, his work is remarkably innovative in the artistic field of the “written word”. The mere dimension of his lettering draws upon a poetic grandeur and the rhythmic element transports the viewer’s mind into a meditative state. He chooses to illustrate sacred myths, tales and manuscripts. The artist is regularly represented by Elmarsa gallery at international art fairs in Basel, Paris, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Marrakech and Miami. His works can be found in many private and public collections including the British Museum and the Smithsonian Museum in Washington DC, the Mathaf – Arab Museum of Modern Art in Doha and the Institut du Monde Arabe (IMA) in Paris. He is considered a vanguard in the contemporary Arab art scene.

Selected exhibitions:

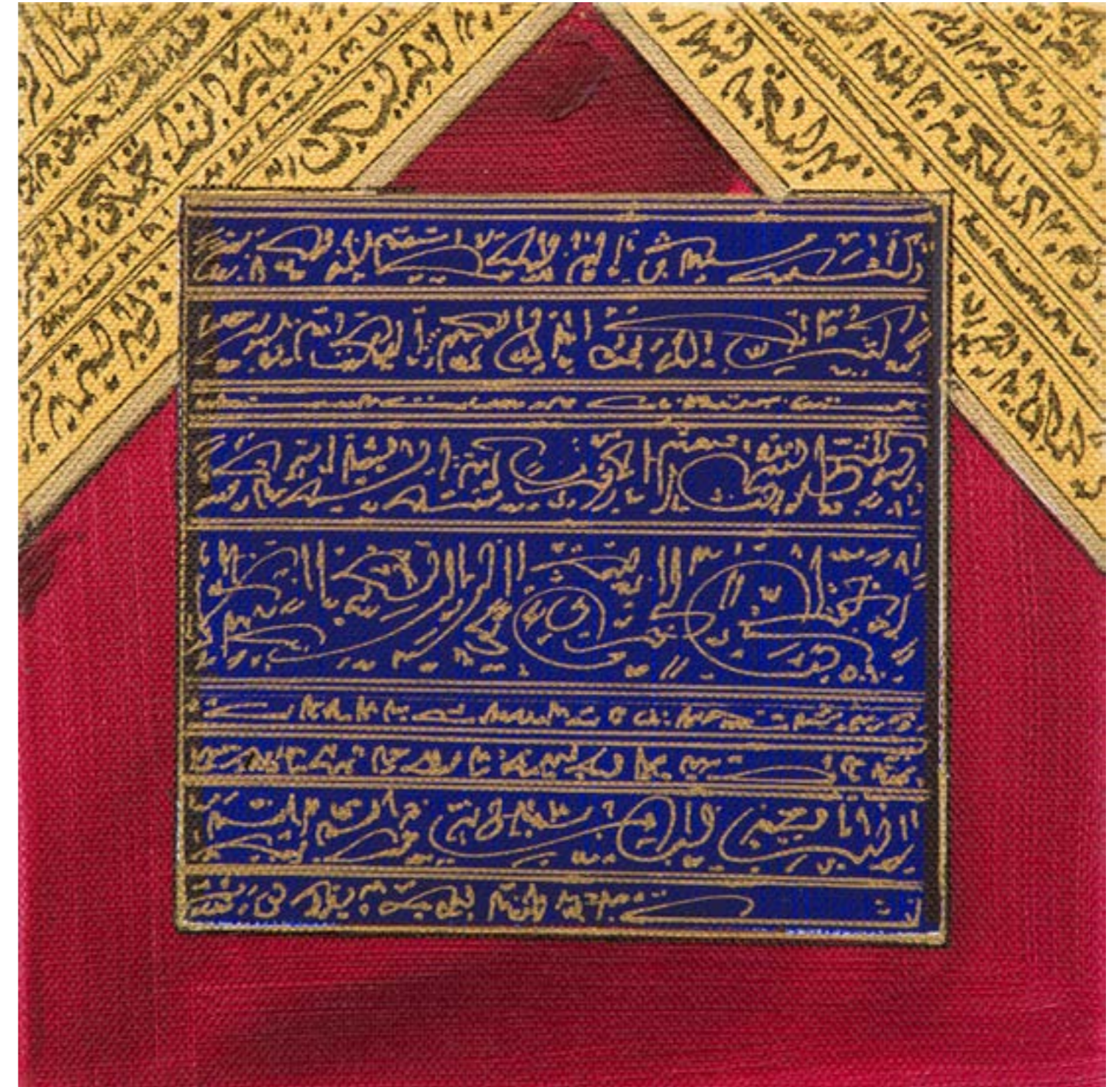
2015, “Jafr. The alchemy of signs”, Elmarsa Gallery, Dubai, UAE

2014, “Word & Illumination” in collaboration with the British Museum, Meridian Exhibition Hall, Saudi Arabia

2009, “Sajjil: A Century of Modern Art”, Inaugural Exhibition, Mathaf, Doha, Qatar

THE MERE DIMENSION OF HIS LETTERING DRAWS UPON A POETIC GRANDEUR AND THE RHYTHMIC ELEMENT TRANSPORTS THE VIEWER’S MIND INTO A MEDITATIVE STATE. HE CHOOSES TO ILLUSTRATE SACRED MYTHS, TALES AND MANUSCRIPTS.

Acrylic on canvas





Acrylic on canvas

**Selected exhibitions:**

2017, "1.54 Contemporary Art Fair", London, UK

2017, "Mort-vivant", Elmarsa Gallery, Tunisia

2001, "Corpus", Galerie du Palais Royal Paris, France

Born in 1973, Tunisian artist **Omar Bey** graduated from L'Institut Supérieur des Beaux-arts in 1998 and completed a residency at Cité Internationale des Arts in 2012. Through painting, collage and found object assemblages, he developed an innovative manner of manipulating material which evokes surprise, humour, and contemplation. The themes revolve around the paradoxical excess of human existence. Each work explores an absurdity, mainly brought forth by the choice of material. Elemental attributes such as texture seem to contrast and clash, creating the "quirk" in his final product. His work is akin to "art brut" and is characterised by his juxtaposition of solid heavy objects with light airy materials.

ELEMENTAL ATTRIBUTES SUCH AS TEXTURE SEEM TO CONTRAST AND CLASH, CREATING THE "QUIRK" IN HIS FINAL PRODUCT.



Born in 1983 in Sidi Bouzid, **Slimen Elkamel** is a young visual artist and an extensively published art critic for newspapers, publications, and art catalogues. He has participated in numerous group exhibitions across his native Tunisia, including the Spring of the Arts in 2009 and in the UAE. In 2011, he held a solo exhibition at Artyshow gallery in El Marsa. Elkamel was an art resident at the Living Arts Centre at Rades in 2010 and paid multiple artistic and research visits to Paris, Algeria, and Bahrain. He has also been involved in the theatre in scenography and creative direction. Elkamel has spoken of the spontaneous way in which the Tunisian revolution, in which he was an active participant, has infiltrated his work, which, he says, questions social constraints and the absurdity of violence. He has a master's degree in Visual Arts, specialising in Painting and Techniques of Science and Art. In 2010 he began his Ph.D. thesis at the Institut Supérieur des Beaux-Arts of Tunis. He currently teaches at the Higher Institute of Fine Arts of Sousse.

Selected exhibitions:

2019, "Pulse", Kloser Contemporary Art, Online solo exhibition

2019, "Contemporary Tunisian Aesthetics", Museum of Modern Art Kuwait, Kuwait

2018, "1-54 Contemporary Art Fair", – London (Agorgi), London, United Kingdom

2016, "Biennale d'Art Contemporain de Cachan", Paris, France

ELKAMEL HAS SPOKEN OF THE SPONTANEOUS WAY IN WHICH THE TUNISIAN REVOLUTION, IN WHICH HE WAS AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT, HAS INFILTRATED HIS WORK, WHICH, HE SAYS, QUESTIONS SOCIAL CONSTRAINTS AND THE ABSURDITY OF VIOLENCE.



Acrylic on canvas



Selected exhibitions:

2016, "Only Byrds move the sky" at the Visual Therapy Gallery, Kuwait

2014, Group show "Not Just a Pop-up" Vol. II at Dar Al Funoon, Kuwait

Born in Kuwait, **F160** is an artist that stands out for his current, "street" and comedic approach. He studied Advertising and Communication at the University of Oregon, USA. His graphic style thrives on its lightheartedness yet is not shy of dark material. His bold use of colour and composition creates a strange harmony of order and chaos. His style lends itself perfectly to his book publications. Each piece is a story unto itself, accentuated by the use of words within the composition.

HIS GRAPHIC STYLE THRIVES ON ITS LIGHTHEARTEDNESS YET IS NOT SHY OF DARK MATERIAL. HIS BOLD USE OF COLOUR AND COMPOSITION CREATES A STRANGE HARMONY OF ORDER AND CHAOS.



Acrylic on canvas



Selected exhibitions:

2019, "Displacement", Contemporary Art Platform, Kuwait

2015, "A Retrospective", Contemporary Art Platform, Kuwait

2010, "JAMM Contemporary Arab, Iranian and International Art Auction", Kuwait

Sami Mohammad is a Kuwaiti artist and sculptor considered one of the pioneers of cultural movements in Kuwait and throughout the region. He is best known for his bronze sculptures and for addressing themes related to humanity and human suffering. One of the leading founders of the Free Atelier, his continuous dedication to his work helped push the boundaries of society and greatly contributed to the artistic history of the Arab world. His work was featured in the Kuwaiti Pavilion of the 55th Venice Biennale and internationally. For this, he has received numerous awards throughout his career.

HE IS BEST KNOWN FOR HIS BRONZE SCULPTURES AND FOR ADDRESSING THEMES RELATED TO HUMANITY AND HUMAN SUFFERING.



Acrylic on canvas



Acrylic on canvas

**Selected exhibitions:**

2017, "Until", the Contemporary Art Platform, Kuwait City, Kuwait

2010, "JAMM Contemporary Art Auction", Kuwait City, Kuwait

2007, "Approaches to Figurative Practices", the Third Line Gallery, Dubai, UAE

2006, "Femmes Artistes Du Koweït", Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, France

Ghadah Alkandari is an artist living and working in Kuwait, born in India in 1969 with a BA in Mass Communications from the American University in Cairo (1992).

It was her six-week painting course at the School of Visual Arts in New York that shaped her current style, which was also influenced early on by both classical painters: Cezanne, Matisse, Modigliani and Klimt, and comic books: Mad Magazine and Asterix.

Her work ranges from large-scale acrylic portraits to smaller, more intimate pen and ink drawings. Her paintings are primarily figurative, exploring the wide spectrum of human emotion and familial complexities.

Whereas her paintings are visceral and highly personal, her sketchbook drawings are more detached and focus on everyday happenings with a twist.

Alkandari has had numerous solo and group exhibitions locally and internationally. In 2014 she completed a residency and two-month exhibition at Doha's Mathaf Museum's Project Space.

HER WORK RANGES FROM LARGE-SCALE ACRYLIC PORTRAITS TO SMALLER, MORE INTIMATE PEN AND INK DRAWINGS.





Born in Tehran, Iran in 1945, **Fereydoun Ave** is a central figure in the Iranian art scene as he is one of the most important and influential contemporary artists of Iran. He received his BA in Applied Arts for Theatre from Arizona State University and studied Film at New York University. During his career, which spans over five decades, he successfully took many different roles including artist, designer, art director, collector, curator, gallerist and art patron. For many Iranian artists, he is an inspiration and a mentor. As a visual artist, he puts a lot of effort into his work and he participated in numerous exhibitions around the world. The artist is best known for his depictions of the macho-mystic Iranian hero Rostam, which explore masculinity and virtue in Iranian culture. His artworks exist in the collections of the British Museum, London; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Cy Twombly Foundation, New York; and Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art.

Selected exhibitions:

2019, The Breeder Gallery. Condo Unit. Athens, Greece

2019, "Rostam 2019", A Dastan: Outside Project. V-Gallery. Tehran, Iran

2018, Emrooz Art Gallery in Collaboration with Dastan. Isfahan, Iran

2018, "Sohrab & the Bees & the Rose & the Nightingale" with Mohsen Ahmadvand. Dastan's Basement. Tehran, Iran

FOR MANY IRANIAN ARTISTS, HE IS AN INSPIRATION AND A MENTOR. AS A VISUAL ARTIST, HE PUTS A LOT OF EFFORT INTO HIS WORK AND HE PARTICIPATED IN NUMEROUS EXHIBITIONS AROUND THE WORLD



Selected exhibitions:

2018, Art Abu Dhabi, Salwa Zeidan Gallery, Abu Dhabi, UAE

2011, "Exhibition of Video", Katara Gallery, Qatar

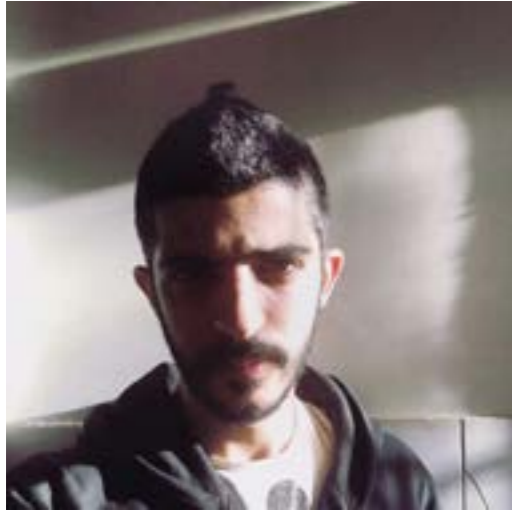
2009, "Turquoise Letters" at Ideal Generation Gallery, London.

Born in Khuzestan, Iran and raised in London, **Kourosh Salehi** studied traditional Persian painting as a child and later attended art school in the UK. He is based in Abu Dhabi.

After leaving Iran for the UK, he joined the local art college. Three years later, he received his MA in Art and Architecture in London. From an early age, his father influenced him, taking him to galleries and encouraging him to paint. Since the early 1990s, he practised architecture, but his work as a visual artist was always his primary form of self-expression.

The artist is considered one of the most significant painters of his generation. He is also part of the group of post-revolution Iranian Visual Artists who merged Eastern-Western traditions. In 2009, a collection of his paintings and video art films were exhibited at the Idea Generation Gallery in London. His works have also been exhibited in several solo and group exhibitions in Europe and the Middle East.

THE ARTIST IS CONSIDERED ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT PAINTERS OF HIS GENERATION. HE IS ALSO PART OF THE GROUP OF POST-REVOLUTION IRANIAN VISUAL ARTISTS WHO MERGED EASTERN-WESTERN TRADITIONS.



Selected exhibitions:

2019, "Sin", Dastan+2. Tehran, Iran

2017, "Update 5.0", Dastan+2 and V-Gallery, Tehran, Iran

2014, "Crucified", Dastan's Basement. Tehran, Iran

Born in Sari, Iran in 1992, **Sina Choopani** considers himself an experimental artist. He studied Sculpture at the University of Tehran. In his work, he mainly experiments with destruction and combines different materials, inspirational ready-made objects and vintage imagery. His radical approach defies the boundaries of traditional media, resulting in a constant redefinition of subject matter. With a knack for screen printing, he puts novel technologies to use. Themes of body, death and language are always present. He has participated in many solo and group exhibitions in Tehran, Iran. Choopani does not shy away from all that is "POP"; from celebrity depictions to fluorescent green goo sculptures, the artist seems to favour fun in his creative process.

Acrylic on canvas



HIS RADICAL APPROACH DEFIES THE BOUNDARIES OF TRADITIONAL MEDIA, RESULTING IN A CONSTANT REDEFINITION OF SUBJECT MATTER.



Born in Tehran, Iran in 1982, **Mohsen Ahmadvand** received his BA in Painting from the Faculty of Fine Arts at Tehran University. He prefers drawing over painting for its efficiency and directness. His satirical themes are a mix of present-day events acted out by characters extracted from the past. The details in his works demonstrate the influence of Persian miniature painting. The artist participated in several solo and group exhibitions in Iran, France, London, Dubai, China and the USA. Ahmadvand's style is distinctive, first of all, for its graphical prowess, its surrealist accents mixed with mythological elements, his ability to convey three-dimensional form through his line work, the subtly comedic arrangements of his collages. It is as if ancient myths have gotten a make-over so as to abide by the darkness of present times.

Selected exhibitions:

2019, "Flower/Pure Paradox", INJA Gallery, Tehran, Iran

2018, Art Dubai, "Mossavar Nameh", A Dastan Project, Dubai, UAE

2014 – "LION & BANANA", Etemad Gallery, Tehran, Iran

HIS SATIRICAL THEMES ARE A MIX OF PRESENT-DAY EVENTS ACTED OUT BY CHARACTERS EXTRACTED FROM THE PAST.



Acrylic on canvas

41.

Nariman Farrokhi



Nariman Farrokhi was born in Tehran, Iran in 1985. He has created a unique approach to language, using words for visual impact, favouring simplicity and directness. He is a self-taught artist who has a fascination for primitivism and mythological topics. Even though his choice and application of colour seems to be quite meditated, the quality of his shapes doesn't fall short of any spontaneity. He has abandoned/unlearnt any kind of academic convention. He is an artist that draws substance from his unfiltered instinct. Totems, cows and dogs are repetitive themes. Unusual, unconventional surfaces are not dismissed. This openness not only seems to convey his personal dedication to freedom but allows the viewer to be freed as well from any artistic preconceptions.

Selected exhibitions:

2022, "Chromatic" at +2, Tehran, Iran
2021, Nature of Things, selected by Bita Fayyazi, Tehran, Iran
2017, "Black and Yellow" at Dastan's Basement, Tehran, Iran

THIS OPENNESS NOT ONLY SEEMS TO CONVEY HIS PERSONAL DEDICATION TO FREEDOM BUT ALLOWS THE VIEWER TO BE FREED AS WELL FROM ANY ARTISTIC PRECONCEPTIONS.



Acrylic on canvas

**Selected exhibitions:**

2021, "Nature of things", +2, Tehran, Iran
 2021, "Rest" at Parallel Circuit, Tehran, Iran
 2018, "Interview" at Dastan Outside
 Projects, Tehran, Iran

Born in Tehran, Iran in 1986, **Sepideh Zamani** completed her BFA in Sculpture at the Art University of Tehran. She began her artistic venture as a graphic designer, working in advertising companies. Having joined "Tehran Carnival" in 2008, an art collective of five individuals, Zamani explored the underbelly of the artworld, the alternative crowds, the spicy edge of Iranian contemporary culture. Her installations have an ebullient feel to them, inviting that "choose your own adventure" frame of mind. The budget and speed of creation are primary components of her process, which is why she keeps the agility of papier-mâché.

HER INSTALLATIONS HAVE AN EBULLIENT FEEL TO THEM,
 INVITING THAT "CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE" FRAME
 OF MIND.



43.

Mirmohammad Fattahi



Selected exhibitions:

2021, "Space: Chapter One", Oliva Gallery, Chicago USA

2020, "Wordless", Dastan's Basement, Tehran, Iran

2019, "A Close View of Far Field Representations", Sanati Contemporary, Kerman, Iran

"Parking", the Iran House of Cartoon, Tehran, Iran

Born in Karaj, Iran in 1987, **Mirmohammad Fattahi** obtained a diploma in painting from the School of Fine Arts in Iran, followed by a BA in painting from Soore Art University of Tehran. During that time, he had already started developing his career as a background artist for several magazines, companies and publishers. He later created books for the "Iran Language Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults". Using pastel, watercolour and oil, Fattahi focuses a great deal on the depiction of animals. If it weren't for its painterly vibrance, the realism of the artist's work could be categorised as scientific illustrations.



USING PASTEL, WATERCOLOUR AND OIL, FATTAHI FOCUSES A GREAT DEAL ON THE DEPICTION OF ANIMALS.

Acrylic on canvas



Selected exhibitions:

2013, ""Tajreed - A Selection of Arab Abstract Art 1908-1960", CAP Kuwait

2012, "Caravan", Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah, UAE

2008, "Iraq's Past Speaks to the Present " at the British Museum, London, UK

Born in Theeqar, Iraq in 1958, London-based **Hanaa Malallah** is a visual artist and educator. She received a bachelor's degree in Painting from the Academy of Fine Arts in Baghdad, an MA in Painting, a Ph.D. in the Philosophy of Painting from the University of Baghdad and a post-graduate certificate in Islamic and Modern Art from SOAS, London. She taught at the Institute of Fine Arts and the University of Fine Arts in Baghdad and holds a fellowship at the Chelsea College of Arts.

According to Malallah, destruction is an intrinsic part of the human condition. By "ruining" found objects, disfiguring the physical element, Malallah contemporised ancient Mesopotamian culture. She has taken interest in the negative space within landscapes. In a changing world, ruled by technology, her exploration seeks to bridge the divide between the virtual and the spiritual.

Her work was included in the 2008 group show "Iraq's Past Speaks to the Present " at the British Museum and is also part of the museum's permanent collection. She is also on display in Jordan's Museum of Fine Arts Amman, the Centre for Modern Art in Baghdad, the Arab Museum of Modern Art Doha, and the Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah. The artist was the recipient of a prize awarded by the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation.

IN A CHANGING WORLD, RULED BY TECHNOLOGY, HER EXPLORATION SEEKS TO BRIDGE THE DIVIDE BETWEEN THE VIRTUAL AND THE SPIRITUAL.



Acrylic on canvas



Acrylic on canvas

**Selected exhibitions:**

2019, "Eyes East Bound", the 13th Cairo Biennale, Cairo, Egypt

2014, "Mathaf Collection Summary, Part 1", Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha, Qatar

2008, "Inaugural exhibition", Artsawa Gallery, Dubai, UAE

Born in Baghdad, Iraq in 1966, **Mahmoud Obaidi** is an Iraqi-Canadian globally exhibited Avant-garde artist who deals with any medium that would best represent his concept: painting, sculpture, photography, installation. After leaving Iraq in 1991, he obtained his master's in Fine Arts at the University of Guelph in Canada, and completed diplomas in New Media and Film from Toronto and Los Angeles. A lot of Obaidi's work deals with the ruin of war as an empirical phenomenon, objects that hold significance transformed into a fanciful aesthetic composition. The artist has a particular knack for conceptual, satirically subdued ideas. He has been shown at the Qatar Museums Gallery (Doha), Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art (Doha), Saatchi Gallery (London), the National Museum of Bahrain, the Institut du Monde Arabe (Paris), the National Gallery of Fine Arts (Amman), Station Museum of Contemporary Art (Texas), the Musée d'Art Contemporain de Baie-Saint-Paul (Quebec).

A LOT OF OBAIDI'S WORK DEALS WITH THE RUIN OF WAR AS AN EMPIRICAL PHENOMENON, OBJECTS THAT HOLD SIGNIFICANCE TRANSFORMED INTO A FANCIFUL AESTHETIC COMPOSITION.



Resme Al Kafaji was born in Diywania, Iraq in 1945. He earned a degree in Art from the Institute of Fine Arts of Baghdad, then later a diploma in Fine Arts in painting from the Accademia di Belle Arti of Florence, Italy. His work is a merging of Iraqi and European culture. Since 2003, he has exclusively chosen to work in black and white. His watercolours on paper depict abstract shapes that suggest recognisable objects, yet remain one step veiled from any bona fide identification. His sculptures and installations seem to rely on the poetics of light and shadow, using contrast as an elemental component. He is the first Arab artist to have his work on display at the Napoli Museum. His works are in the collections of C.A.O.S. Museum- Terni, the Museum of Contemporary Art of Casoria- Casoria (CE), and Museum of Arts and Antiquities – Al-Qadissiya University (Iraq) and in private art collections in Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Great Britain.

Selected exhibitions:

2021, "Menart Fair", Paris, France
2019, "Pathways", Albareh Art Gallery, Manama, Bahrain
2015, "Art 15", London Global Art Fair, London UK
2008, "Thirty years of distance", ZincExpositives, Bergen, Norway

HIS WORK IS A MERGING OF IRAQI AND EUROPEAN CULTURE. SINCE 2003, HE HAS EXCLUSIVELY CHOSEN TO WORK IN BLACK AND WHITE.



Acrylic on canvas



Selected exhibitions:

2019, "We Scream, But Nothing Changes", Naves Matadero–International Living Arts Centre, Madrid, Spain

2019, "The 13th Cairo Biennale", Palace of Arts, Cairo, Egypt

2017, "Seasons of Lost Baghdad", Maraya Art Center, Ayyam Gallery booth, Art Dubai, UAE

2015, "Eye of the Thunderstorm: Effervescent Practices from the Arab World", 56th Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy

Born in Baghdad, Iraq in 1960, **Sadik Kwaish Alfaraji** lives and works in Amersfoort, Netherlands. In 1987, he received a bachelor's degree in Fine Arts from the Academy of Fine Arts in Baghdad and a diploma in Graphic Design from CHK Constantin Huygens in the Netherlands. Sadik Kwaish Alfaraji explores what he describes as 'the problem of existence' through drawing, painting, video, animation, art books, graphic art and installations. He has held solo shows in Sharjah, Antwerp, Munich, Beirut, Dubai, London, Utrecht, Houston and Den Bosch. His group exhibitions are numerous and include the Iraq Pavilion of the 57th Venice Biennale (2017), the British Museum in London (2017, 2015) and many others spreading from the US all the way to Japan, the UAE, Argentina and France. Alfaraji's works are housed in private and public collections including the British Museum in London, National Museum of Modern Art, The Art Center in Baghdad, National Gallery of Fine Arts, Shoman Foundation, Royal Association of Fine Arts in Amman, Novosibirsk State Art Museum in Russia, Cluj-Napoca Art Museum in Romania, Los Angeles Country Museum, Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art in Doha, and Museum of Fine Arts in USA. A monograph on the artist edited by Nat Mueller was published in 2015 (Schilt Publishing, Amsterdam).

SADIK KWAISH ALFRAJI EXPLORES WHAT HE DESCRIBES AS 'THE PROBLEM OF EXISTENCE' THROUGH DRAWING, PAINTING, VIDEO, ANIMATION, ART BOOKS, GRAPHIC ART AND INSTALLATIONS.



Acrylic on canvas



Selected exhibitions:

2021, "Between the Walls", Contemporary Art Platform, Kuwait

2021, "The Lebanon Works", Meem Gallery, Dubai, UAE

2016, "I am a cry, who will give a voice to me?" at Mathaf: The Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha, Qatar

Born in Baghdad in 1939, **Dia Azzawi** started his artistic career in 1964, after graduating from the Institute of Fine Arts in Baghdad. In 1969, Azzawi formed the New Vision group (al-Ru'yya al-Jadidah), uniting fellow artists prioritising the ideological and cultural aspects of art above any aesthetic premise. His focus was mainly on the demise of the Palestinian tragedies and nationalistic commitment. From 1968-1976, Azzawi was the director of the Iraqi Antiquities Department in Baghdad. In London, Azzawi was an art advisor to the city's Iraqi Cultural Centre from 1977 to 1980. His move to London led him to rediscover book art (dafatir), a venture that has encouraged many of his contemporaries to explore the possibilities of the medium. His art is featured in international collections, including the Museums of Modern Art in Baghdad (Damascus and Tunis), Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts (Amman), Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art (Doha), Barjeel Art Foundation (Sharjah), Kinda Foundation (Saudi Arabia), Una Foundation (Casablanca), Arab Monetary Fund (Abu Dhabi), Development Fund (Kuwait), Jeddah International Airport, the British Museum, Tate Modern, and Victoria & Albert Museum (London), Institut du Monde Arabe, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Colas Foundation (Paris), Harba Collection (Iraq and Italy), Gulbenkian Collection (Barcelona) and Library of Congress and the World Bank (Washington DC). In 2016, Mathaf: The Arab Museum of Modern Art in Qatar held Azzawi's retrospective from "1963 to tomorrow" entitled "I am a cry, who will give a voice to me?", which comprised works from over 50 years of his career.

HIS FOCUS WAS MAINLY ON THE DEMISE OF THE PALESTINIAN TRAGEDIES AND NATIONALISTIC COMMITMENT.



Acrylic on canvas



Born in Baghdad in 1968, Serwan Baran is a graduate of Fine Arts from Babel University, a member of AIAP, the Iraqi Fine Art Association, and the National Art Association. The artist's style is recognisable for its impressionistic realism; the subject matter: portraiture, depictions of military figures, local "common folk", scenes of individuals in uniform. As of 2003, while preserving his signature brushstroke, the artist shifted his style into abstraction, which led him to turn his attention inward, allowing the subject matter to be more driven by impulse than premeditated composition. Baran was chosen to represent Iraq at the 58th International Venice Biennale in 2019. Baran's awards for art include the first prize for youth, Baghdad, 1990, the second prize at the Iraqi Contemporary Art Exhibition, 1994, the golden prize at the Iraqi Contemporary Art Exhibition, 1995, an honorary medal at the Cairo 7th Biennial, 2002 and a discretionary award at Baghdad Pinal 2002. He has lived in Iraq, Jordan and Beirut.

Selected exhibitions:

2022, "Works on Paper", Agial Art Gallery, Lebanon

2021, "Cities Under Quarantine: The Mailbox Project" at Villa Romana, Italy

2020, "A Harsh Beauty" at Saleh Barakat Gallery, Lebanon

2018, "Canines", Agial Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon

THE ARTIST'S STYLE IS RECOGNISABLE FOR ITS IMPRESSIONISTIC REALISM.



Nedim Kufi was born in Baghdad in 1962. Since 1994 he has been residing and working permanently in the Netherlands as a multidisciplinary visual artist. Kufi completed his education in Graphic Design and Multimedia with distinction at the HKU in the Netherlands in 2002. As a conceptual artist, he has put serious energy into many international events around the world. His work often compares Middle Eastern culture and European culture through images and thoughts vested in ambiguity and paradox. He is a strong believer in minimalism and through this he hopes to influence the audience's perception through repetition and overlapping structures. He wishes to remind the viewers of their identities, cognition and social experiences. Kufi's recent works manifest the narration of cultural identity in a historical dimension.

Selected exhibitions:

2020, "Personal Dictionary", the Fire Station, Doha, Qatar

2018, "Selections of Cultural Narratives", Alserkal Avenue, Dubai, UAE

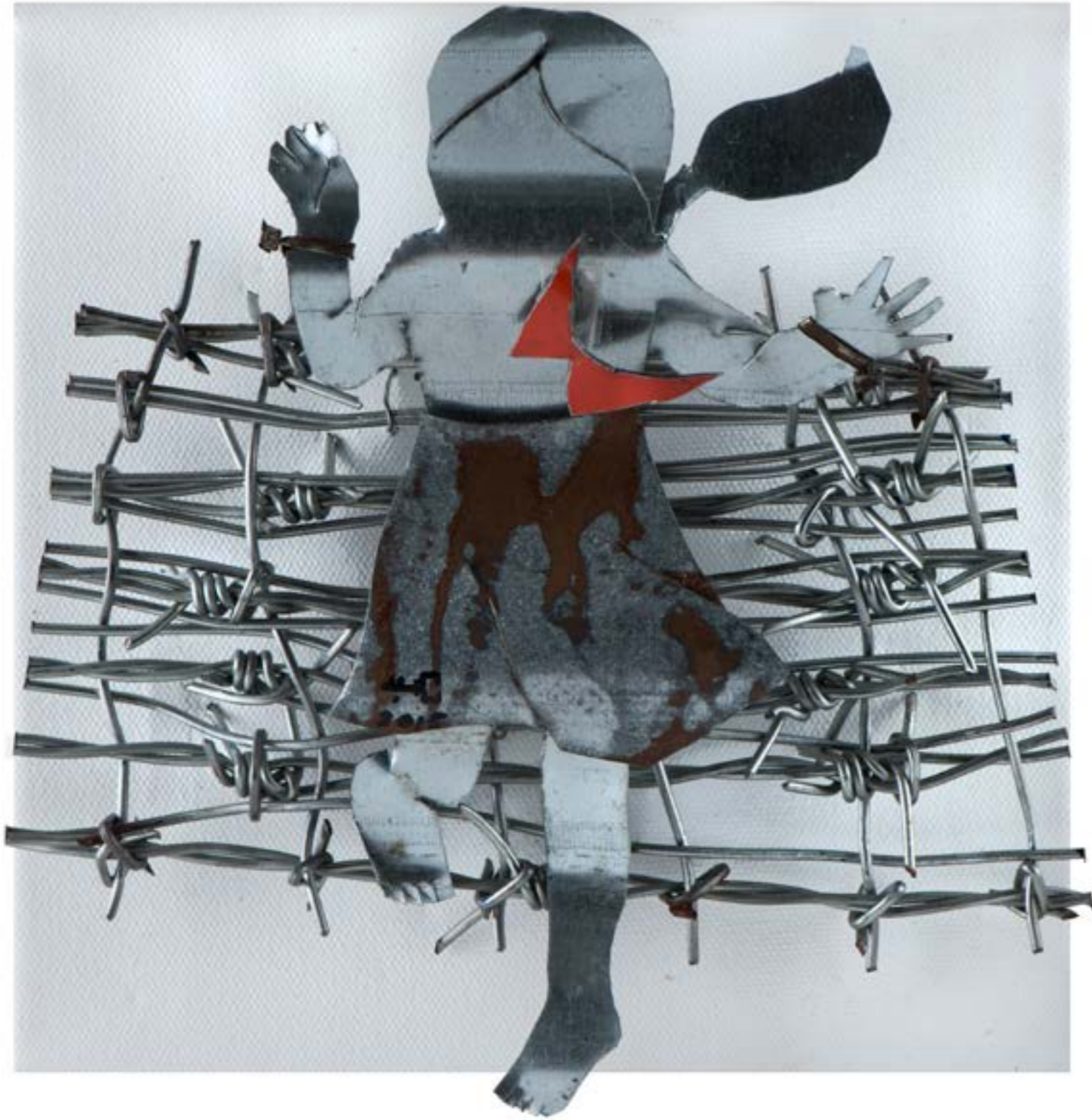
2014, "The Perfumer", Albareh Art Gallery, Manama, Bahrain

2007, "Recognize", the Contemporary Art Platform, London, UK

HIS WORK OFTEN COMPARES MIDDLE EASTERN CULTURE AND EUROPEAN CULTURE THROUGH IMAGES AND THOUGHTS VESTED IN AMBIGUITY AND PARADOX.



Acrylic on canvas



Acrylic on canvas

**Selected exhibitions:**

2016, "Jardin d'Orient", Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, France

2015, "Softness of a Circle, Knife Edge of a Straight Line", Agial Art Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon

2014, "Kids, Barbed Wire and a Dream", Galerie Tanit, Munich, Germany

2011, "Rebirth: Lebanon 21st Century Contemporary Art", Beirut Exhibition Center, Beirut, Lebanon

Born in 1983, **Abdulrahman Katanani** was raised in the Sabra refugee camps (Beirut, Lebanon). He is a third-generation refugee since his grandparents fled their hometown, Jaffa in Palestine, settling in Shatila after the Nakba in 1948. His early life is imprinted with the traumatic aftermath of the 1982 massacre that took place in Sabra and Shatila.

Katanani uses his artistic gift as a means of alleviation, favouring positivity over devastation. Early on, he painted graffiti murals in the refugee camp and drew caricatures such as "al-fida'i", the freedom fighter. He received his diploma in Fine Arts from the Lebanese University in Beirut in 2007 and an MFA on Palestinian contemporary art in 2012.

The artist collects discarded fragments from the camp, such as barbed wire, pieces of metal shutters and car parts. While preserving the materials' rawness, Katanani creates sculptures and installations which transcend the medium's physical property. His exploration of movement through the manipulation of rigid objects that hold culturally oppressive meaning reveals his ability to rise above the trenches. In 2009, he was awarded the Young Artist Prize at the Autumn Salon organised by the Sursock Museum in Beirut. His work was included in many institutions around the world, such as the Abu Dhabi Biennale, the Royal College of Arts in London, the Cité Internationale des Arts and the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris. His works are also present in public (Mathaf, Doha) and private collections.

KATANANI USES HIS ARTISTIC GIFT AS A MEANS OF ALLEVIATION, FAVOURING POSITIVITY OVER DEVASTATION.



Born in Kuwait in 1981, **Amer Shomali** holds a bachelor's degree in Architecture from Birzeit University in Palestine and an MA in Animation from Bournemouth University in the UK. He also teaches at the Faculty of Art, Music and Design at Birzeit University. He is a visual artist, filmmaker, animator and cartoonist with a dry humour and a critical approach to Palestinian sociopolitical realities. He has shed light on the manipulative use of popularised iconography repurposed by the collective body involved in the Palestinian revolution. He works as an animator and children's book illustrator. Amer also produced a short film entitled "Dying of the Light", which was screened in the UK, Belgium, Lebanon and Palestine. His works can be found in public collections including the British Museum and Birzeit University Museum, as well as private collections.

Selected exhibitions:

2020, "Gohyang: home", the Seoul Museum of Art, South Korea

2018, "House...Houses", the Gallery of the Walled Off Hotel, Bethlehem, Palestine

2013, "Museum of Manufactured Response to Absence", the Modern Art Museum of Algiers, Algeria

HE IS A VISUAL ARTIST, FILMMAKER, ANIMATOR AND
CARTOONIST WITH A DRY HUMOUR AND A CRITICAL
APPROACH TO PALESTINIAN SOCIOPOLITICAL REALITIES.



Acrylic on canvas



Selected exhibitions:

2020, "Contemporary Heritage", Tabari Artspace, Dubai

2019, "Power Does Not Defeat Memory", Sabsay Gallery, Copenhagen, Denmark

2018, "The Everlasting Presence of an Excluded Memory", Art Berlin, Germany

Born in Palestine in 1980, **Hazem Harb** is a visual artist who has lived in Gaza, Rome and the UAE. He received his MFA from the European Institute of Design, Rome in 2009. He identifies as a painter although photography has been a persevering interest since childhood. He is inspired by academia, architecture and European art traditions; matters that negotiate complex social and cultural relations. His art combines photographic collages and drawing.

Harb draws his subject matter from the history of Palestine: heritage and power dynamics. Intrigued by the complexities of memory: selective memory, lost and mutilated factualisation, the artist steers away from romanticism, favouring the sheer impact of truth telling; knowing his homeland's important history is depreciated by fanciful nostalgia. He was awarded a residency at The Delfina Foundation, London; Cite des Arts, Paris and Satellite, Dubai. Harb's work is in the collections of the British Museum, Sharjah Art Foundation, Centre Pompidou, the Oriental Museum Durham University, Salsali Private Museum and Al Qattan Foundation among others.



Acrylic on canvas

THE ARTIST STEERS AWAY FROM ROMANTICISM, FAVOURING THE SHEER IMPACT OF TRUTH TELLING.



Samia Halaby is a leading figure in the abstraction movement within the Arab world and a preeminent scholar of Palestinian Art. Best known for her colourful, large-scale abstract expressionist paintings, her geometric still lifes and experiments with Arabo-Islamic architectural form are an exploration of texture and spatiality. Drawing inspiration from the abstract movements of the American and Russian avant-garde, as well as the visual culture of Palestine, Halaby has said: 'I do not paint subject matter; I do not start with words or themes. I start with my eyes. I paint the beautiful things we all see with our eyes'. Born in Jerusalem in 1938, and fleeing to Lebanon following the Nakba of 1948, Halaby relocated to the US in 1951, where she received her training from American universities. She was the first full-time female associate professor at the Yale School of Art, a position she held for nearly a decade. Her work has gained critical acclaim and is held in public and private collections throughout the world, including the Guggenheim Museum of Art (New York and Abu Dhabi) and the British Museum.

Selected exhibitions:

2017, "Documentary Drawings of the Kafr Qasem Massacre", Birzeit University Museum, Ramallah, Palestine

2015, "Five Decades of Painting and Innovation", Beirut Exhibition Center, Beirut, Lebanon

2022, "Natasha", Singapore Biennale **2022**, Singapore

2015, "Self: Portraits of Artists in Their Absence", National Academy Museum, New York, USA

BEST KNOWN FOR HER COLOURFUL, LARGE-SCALE ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONIST PAINTINGS, HER GEOMETRIC STILL LIFES AND EXPERIMENTS WITH ARABO-ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURAL FORM ARE AN EXPLORATION OF TEXTURE AND SPATIALITY. DRAWING INSPIRATION FROM THE ABSTRACT.





Selected exhibitions:

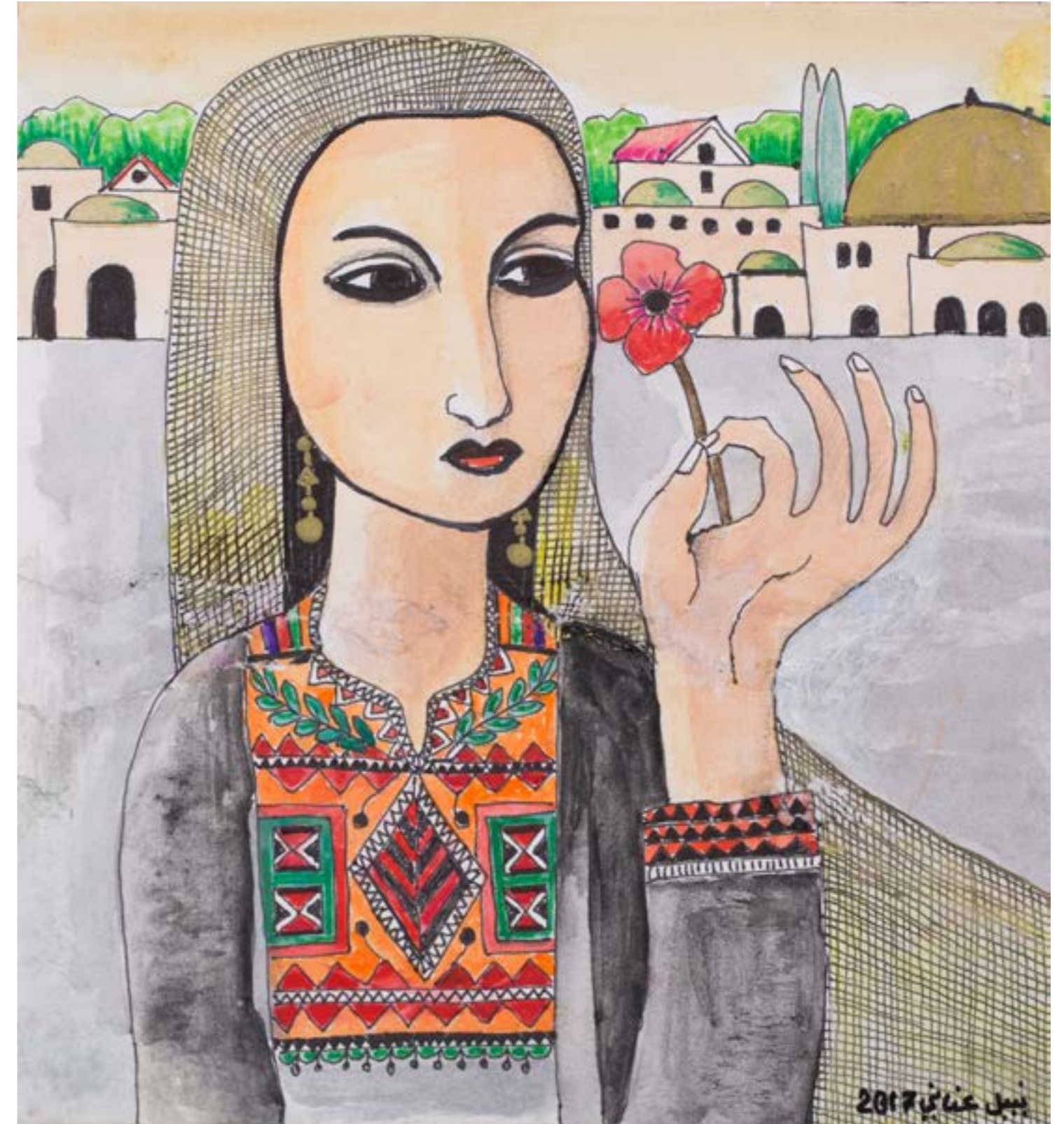
2021, "In Pursuit of Utopia", Zawyeh Gallery, Ramallah, Palestine

2018, "Jerusalem Lives", the Palestinian Museum, Ramallah, Palestine

2014, "Art of Memory: Life Before 1948", Zawyeh Gallery, Ramallah, Palestine

Nabil Anani is one of Palestine's most influential artists working today. Born in Latroun in 1943, Anani studied Fine Art at Alexandria University, Egypt and returned to his native Palestine, where he began a successful career as an artist and educator. As a painter, ceramicist and sculptor, his contribution to the Palestinian contemporary art scene has been extensive. His first exhibition was held in Jerusalem in 1972 and in 1988 he was appointed as the head of the League of Palestinian Artists. Over two decades later he helped establish the International Academy of Art Palestine. Anani was part of the New Visions group of Palestinian artists, which included Tayseer Barakat, Vera Tamari and Sliman Mansour, during which time he pioneered the use of local materials including leather, henna and natural dyes. His bold use of colour, unique perspectival landscape paintings and distinct figurative drawings bring Palestine's rich visual culture to the fore. In addition to winning the first Palestinian National Prize for Visual Art in 1997, Anani has participated in group and solo exhibitions in Palestine, Jordan, the United Kingdom, Russia and North America.

AS A PAINTER, CERAMICIST AND SCULPTOR, HIS CONTRIBUTION TO THE PALESTINIAN CONTEMPORARY ART SCENE HAS BEEN EXTENSIVE.



Acrylic on canvas



Selected exhibitions:

2019, "Alnasek", The Corner Art Space, Amman, Jordan

2019, "Belt and Road" International Printmaking exhibition, The Palace Museum, Forbidden City, Beijing, China

2018, "An open eye on the Arab world", Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, France

2016, "Nowhere – Silent Screen", La Fontaine Centre for Contemporary Art, Manama, Bahrain

Bashar Alhroub is a Jerusalem-born artist known for his eclectic artistic practice, which includes collage on paper; sculpture; autobiographical photography; figurative paintings depicting haunting figures; detailed line drawings of Jerusalem and its surroundings. Palestine is central to Alhroub's artistic exploration, presenting a diverse body of work that deals with the psychological and pathological symptoms of living under occupation. Inviting a reflection on martyrdom; migration; religiosity; and the socio-political trappings of colonisation and resistance to it, Alhroub offers a refreshingly critical perspective on a highly politicised nation. His work has been widely exhibited internationally, including biennials, art fairs and museums in Paris, London, Dubai and across North America and the United Kingdom. Having achieved widespread interest and commercial success, his work has been acquired by a number of international collections and museums including the Imperial War Museum, London; Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah; Bengal National Gallery, Bangladesh; Birzeit University Museum collection, Palestine; Orni Art Center, New York; Michael Abbate collection, New York; Bank of Palestine collection, Palestine, as well as private collections.

PALESTINE IS CENTRAL TO ALHROUB'S ARTISTIC EXPLORATION, PRESENTING A DIVERSE BODY OF WORK THAT DEALS WITH THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PATHOLOGICAL SYMPTOMS OF LIVING UNDER OCCUPATION.



Born in 1979, in the unique maritime and desert climate of Algiers, Algeria, **Hamza Bounoua** is a visual artist capable of putting you in a trance through the mastery of his visual techniques. Shapes, overlapping, creating patterns, mostly in circular motions, seem to create portals for the viewer to enter. He uses mystical script as gestural repetition. Bounoua chooses a very distinct colour palette ranging from black and white, earthy tones and blues; basically, the unique colours that are most encountered in the Algerian landscape. At the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Algiers, he was mostly inspired by the Berber traditions and the Islamic and Arab arts. He is interested in the abstractions of letters, the formation of faces using geometric patterns. In 2020, he was chosen to participate in the 2nd Biennale of oil painting in the Dafen Art Museum in Shenzhen, China with a piece entitled "Reformat 4". He is the founder of Diwaniya Art Gallery in Algiers, which aims to showcase Contemporary Arab and Islamic art. The gallery's mission is to support progressive emerging artists, expose the local crowds to the latest trends in the art world at large and give opportunities to devoted artists who are hungry for innovation. He is an Art Curator for the Nordic & Art Cultural Biennial of Malmö (Sweden). Since 2010 the record price for this artist at auction is 19,000 USD for a piece called "Untitled", sold at Albahie in 2019.

Selected exhibitions:

2020, "2nd Biennale of oil painting",
Dafen Art Museum, Shenzhen, China

2018, "Summer Collection 2018",
Albareh Gallery, Adliya, Bahrain

HAMZA BOUNOUA IS A VISUAL ARTIST CAPABLE OF
PUTTING YOU IN A TRANCE THROUGH THE MASTERY OF
HIS VISUAL TECHNIQUES.

**Selected exhibitions:**

2010, "Peripheral Vision", Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah, UAE

Born in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE), **Fatima Al Mazrouie** received a degree in Visual Arts and Design from Zayed University, UAE. Her work seeks to interrogate notions of womanhood, specifically what it means to be a Muslim woman in the Arab region. Islamic calligraphy features heavily in her mixed-media canvases upon which she applies images or found objects that have come to signify representations of women in the region. More recently her mixed-media collages have focused on the broader socio-cultural history of the UAE. Al Mazrouie's career as an artist began when she participated in a group exhibition at Salwa Zeidan Gallery in 2009. Four years later, she was the gallery's featured 'Signature Artist' (2013) at Abu Dhabi Art. Her work was auctioned in 2010 at Sotheby's in Doha, Qatar, and acquired by public and private collectors including the Zayed National Museum. In 2013, she was chosen to represent the UAE-Germany Art Exchange Programme hosted by Damen and the Lepsien Art Foundation's residency programme. The artist has exhibited widely internationally and in her native UAE.

ISLAMIC CALLIGRAPHY FEATURES HEAVILY IN HER MIXED-MEDIA CANVASES UPON WHICH SHE APPLIES IMAGES OR FOUND OBJECTS THAT HAVE COME TO SIGNIFY REPRESENTATIONS OF WOMEN IN THE REGION.



Acrylic on canvas



Selected exhibitions:

2019, "The Silence Is Still Talking", Athr Gallery, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

2018, Albukhary Foundation Gallery at the British Museum

2018, "Ala: Ritual Machine", Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin, Germany

Born in 1977, visual artist **Muhannad Shono** completed his education from King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals in the year 2000 with a bachelor of arts in Architecture. His use of multiple sleek materials combined and incorporated into natural and urban spaces defies the conventional frame. It is as if he is drawing the world's energetic essence through his aesthetic interventions, creating visual and graphical effects in a physical environment. Shono is passionate about thwarting boundaries. It is as if he is set on breaking the moulds the art world has imposed upon us all. Neo-relics and neo-symbology belonging to an unknown world oscillate between two-dimensional and three-dimensional perceptions.

His ancestral memories of migration led him to dissect the definition of boundary, as if his sense of creation has given him an outlet for freedom. Art has always felt like the ultimate solution to defy confinement. His works have been presented across the world from intimate drawings to large-scale sculptural works, robotic and technological pieces, all of which illuminate a journey he would like to take us on.

HIS USE OF MULTIPLE SLEEK MATERIALS
COMBINED AND INCORPORATED INTO NATURAL
AND URBAN SPACES DEFIES THE CONVENTIONAL
FRAME.



Acrylic on canvas



Selected exhibitions:

2018, "Cultural Narratives", Alserkal Avenue, Dubai, UAE

2017, "Portrait of a Nation", me Collectors Room, Berlin, Germany

Hussain Sharif is one of the United Arab Emirates' foremost conceptual artists, who has contributed widely to the development of art in his native country, founding the Emirates Fine Art Society in Sharjah along with his brother, Hassan Sharif, and Mohammed Kazem, Mohammed Ahmed Ibrahim and Abdullah Al Saadi.

His body of work, which includes painting, drawing, collage and installation, is conceptual and experimental. Central to his work is an engagement with Emirati identity, with Sharif using collected materials found in the streets, to speak to the socio-political and economic shifts his region has witnessed since the mid-seventies. In the artist's words: 'I believe that artists should not simply search for old materials used many years before...The streets of our cities are really crowded with materials and the sanctity of any kind of individual material is lost. I like to recycle my art'.

Born in Dubai in 1961, Sharif received a degree in Theatre Design from the High Institute of Kuwait, after which he worked as the head designer at Sharjah TV. He has exhibited widely in the UAE, Egypt, Russia, Holland, France and Germany.

CENTRAL TO HIS WORK IS AN ENGAGEMENT WITH EMIRATI IDENTITY, WITH SHARIF USING COLLECTED MATERIALS FOUND IN THE STREETS, TO SPEAK TO THE SOCIO-POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SHIFTS HIS REGION HAS WITNESSED SINCE THE MID-SEVENTIES.





Selected exhibitions:

- 2022**, Artist Residency, Majaz:
Contemporary Art Qatar, Mathaf, Doha,
Qatar
2020, "2030, Part 1", Al Markhiya Gallery,
Doha, Qatar
2018, "Dual Inspiration", the Garage
Gallery, Doha, Qatar

Born in 1980 in Qatar, **Yasser Al Mulla** is an architectural engineer and a visual artist. His monochromatic line drawings are reminiscent of the Sufi cultural and traditional aesthetics. The intricate line work, done in ink, expresses visual poetry through round, straight, curved continual strokes. His repetitive drawing technique conveys the artist's meditative personality, progressively revealing hidden figures as the viewer's eye adjusts to detail. Each piece begs the question: What is it that we do and don't see in our immediate reality? What does one's subjective and objective impression mean? How do our senses translate impulsively versus analytically?

Al Mulla once said: "In 2016 I had a dream. That night I woke up scared of something that I had never experienced before. It was a tsunami that blew my head. The next day I found myself buying a piece of canvas and some black pens and I started painting nonstop. Now I draw my endless lines on everything; walls, doors, clay, paper, canvas, boxes, anything I can put my hand on. I seriously believe I found myself and I am happier than at any time of my life."

HIS REPETITIVE DRAWING TECHNIQUE CONVEYS THE ARTIST'S MEDITATIVE PERSONALITY, PROGRESSIVELY REVEALING HIDDEN FIGURES AS THE VIEWER'S EYE ADJUSTS TO DETAIL.

**Selected exhibitions:**

2020, "2030, Part 2", Al Markhiya Gallery, Doha, Qatar

2017, "Beirut Art Fair", Beirut, Lebanon

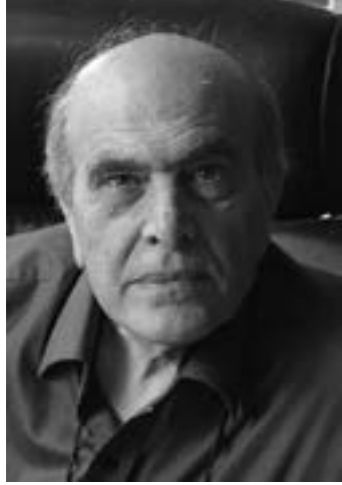
2006, "Langages du desert", Institute du Monde Arabe, Paris, France

With more than two decades of experience as a painter, sculptor, and video artist, **Fatima Al Shebani** is widely considered a pioneering contemporary artist in Qatar and the Gulf region. Her paintings are coveted and acquired by top collectors and institutions.

Al Shebani draws inspiration from her surrounding environment and its history. She believes that new approaches to visual art can change the way we see and think, not only within the realms of aesthetics but in the sphere of teaching, technology, climate change, and social relationships.

SHE BELIEVES THAT NEW APPROACHES TO VISUAL ART CAN CHANGE THE WAY WE SEE AND THINK, NOT ONLY WITHIN THE REALMS OF AESTHETICS BUT IN THE SPHERE OF TEACHING, TECHNOLOGY, CLIMATE CHANGE, AND SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS.





Selected exhibitions:

2020, "Taking Shape: Abstraction from the Arab World, 1950s–1980s", New York University's Grey Art Gallery, New York, USA

2019, "Mohanna Durra: The Pioneer of Jordanian Modern Art", the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, Amman, Jordan

Born in Amman, Jordan in 1938 to a Lebanese father and a Turkish mother, **Mohanna Durra** is a Jordanian painter widely regarded as a pioneer of the Jordanian Arts Movement and for being the first to introduce Cubism and abstract art into the Jordanian visual arts community. He is a professor at the Faculty of Fine Art and Design at the University of Jordan and serves as the President of the Jordan Association of Fine Arts. At a young age, his father sent him to study art with the former Russian officer George Allief, who taught him the basics of watercolour, drawing and painting, as well as the conventions of perspective drawing. In 1954, he attended the Academy of Fine Arts in Rome. He claims that the academy caused a great deal of unwelcome notions, which led him to find solace in self-motivated discoveries: studying the classics through art in museums and churches. After graduating in 1958, Durra returned to Amman to teach history of art at the Teachers' Training College. In 1964, Durra established the Fine Arts Section at the Department of Culture and Art, Amman, and then established the Jordan Institute of Fine Arts in 1970. Durra is best known for his portraits and also for the way he treated shifting masses of colour.



DURRA IS BEST KNOWN FOR HIS PORTRAITS AND ALSO FOR THE WAY HE TREATED SHIFTING MASSES OF COLOUR.



Ali Hassan was born in Doha, Qatar in 1956. He has a BA from Qatar University in history, but his long involvement with Arabic calligraphy began in 1972 with work as a calligrapher for several local newspapers. Pursuing his interest in calligraphy, Hassan attended a workshop by the Arabic & Islamic Restoration Legacy at the University of Lovan, Belgium in 1984 and, subsequently, graphic arts courses in Cairo in 1986. A year later, Hassan held his first exhibition at the Sheraton Hotel in Doha and thus began his career in contemporary Arab art. Today he has exhibited extensively internationally, including a solo exhibition in Tokyo and group shows in Zurich, Paris and New York. He is Chairman of the Doha organisations, the Youth Creative Art Centre and the Girl's Creativity Art Centre.

Hassan's earliest works were black-and-white Arabic calligraphic lithographs on paper, mainly showing surahs from the Qur'an, Arabic poetry, and passages from the book "1001 Arabian Nights". Arabian Nights. He then began to add hue to his black-and-white works, using watercolour, which in turn led him to the next, celebrated phase in his artistic development, explorations of the Arabic letter 'noon'.

Selected exhibitions:

2020, "Lived Forward: Art and Culture in Doha from 1960-2020", Mathaf, Arab Museum of Modern Art, Qatar

2012, "Written Images: Contemporary Calligraphy from the Middle East", Sundaram Tagore, Hong Kong, China

2011, 12th International Cairo Biennale, Cairo, Egypt

HASSAN'S EARLIEST WORKS WERE BLACK-AND-WHITE ARABIC CALLIGRAPHIC LITHOGRAPHS ON PAPER, MAINLY SHOWING SURAHS FROM THE QUR'AN, ARABIC POETRY, AND PASSAGES FROM THE BOOK 1001 ARABIAN NIGHTS.



**Selected exhibitions:**

2018, "21, 39", by the Saudi Art Council, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

2016, "Door of Barlik", Athr Gallery, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Born in Saudi Arabia, in 1984, **Moath Alofi** is known to be an explorer as well as an artist. He works as an exhibition manager and programmer at the Diriyah Gate Development Authority. With a passion for adventurous exploration, Alofi established a group specialised in safari trips, aerial photography and any documentation related to expeditions. He received a BA in Environmental Management and Sustainable Development from Bond University in Gold Coast, Australia, after which he returned to Madina. Upon his return, Alofi chose to interact with his homeland as a creative platform, alleviating the cultural dissonance he was experiencing from his travels. As a seeker of adventure, the artist takes interest in ancient artifacts, hidden treasures and any item imbued with culturally magical energy. Throughout his artistic career, Moath has exhibited works in Jeddah, Riyadh, Dammam, Bahrain, Oman, London, Paris, Brussels, Moscow, New Mexico, and Utah. At the "Hams, Tils and Hilla", exhibition held in 2021, his work exposed and examined the pre-Islamic cults and practices and raised questions to provoke one's imagination. It depicted a chart of comparison between the pre-Islamic cults that existed in Mecca, and how some of the Islamic practices are linked and relate in one way or another to these cults.

AS A SEEKER OF ADVENTURE, THE ARTIST TAKES INTEREST IN ANCIENT ARTIFACTS, HIDDEN TREASURES, AND ANY ITEM IMBUED WITH CULTURALLY MAGICAL ENERGY.

