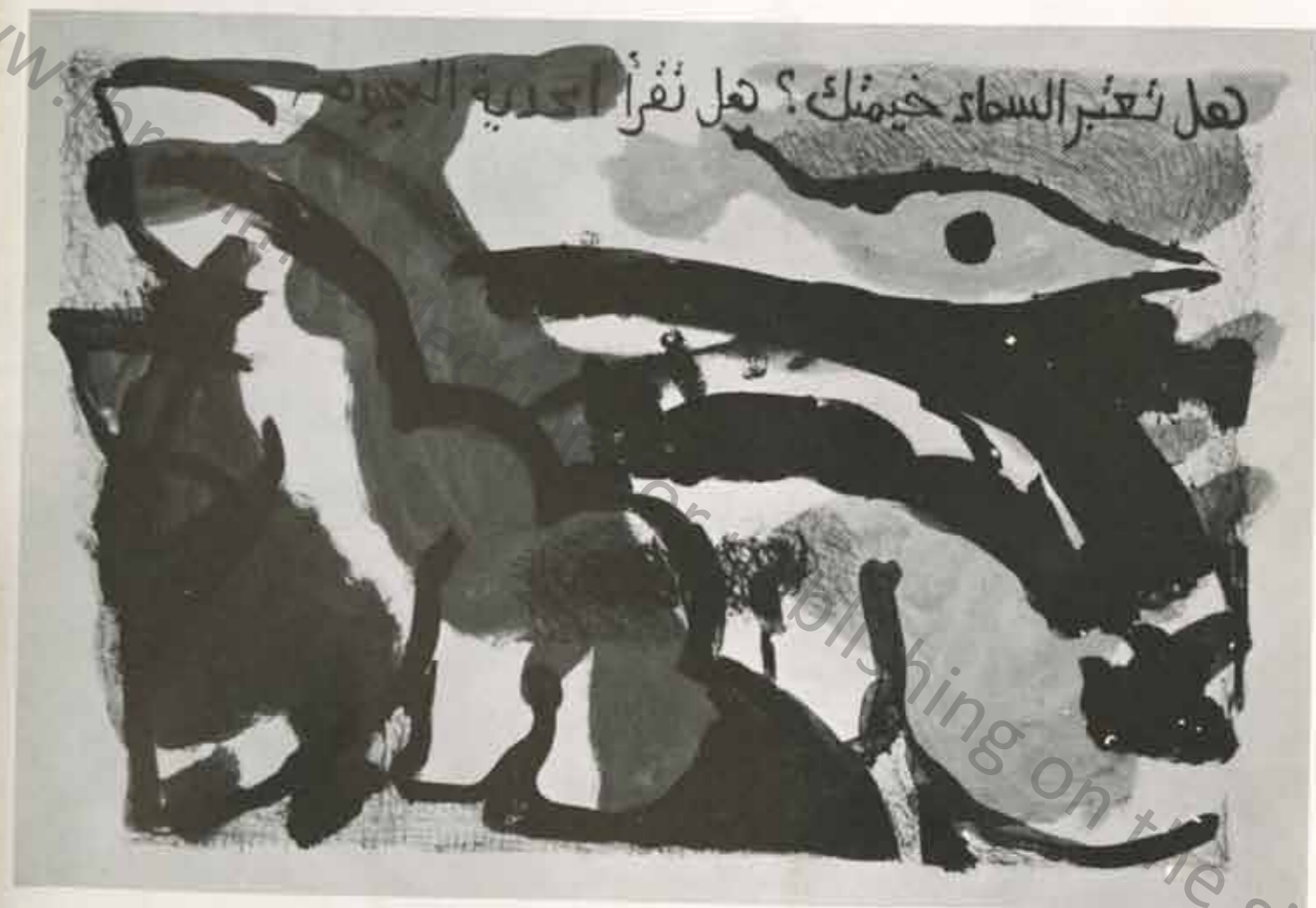


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# AZZAWI



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# AZZAWI

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## Words and Images

*There is between word and picture a visible sensuous relationship and an intelligible spiritual marriage.*

*Ibn 'Arabi*

"Magnificent," replied Azzawi, when recently asked about his little girl Tala, whose name refers also to the offshoot of a palm-tree. He said it, to be sure, with the enthusiasm of a proud father, but said it also with an emphasis that, for a complex man like him, could only have come from exhilaration, the exhilaration of a man who has finally found what he has been looking for.

That was the time in 1991, when he had just finished *The Crane*. One had to wonder what else was this creator, who sees and works in symbols and equivalencies, looking for, and what else had he found. It is axiomatic that serious artists living in exile, albeit voluntarily, often have to search for a new identity. Azzawi is no exception, but whereas most fail, Azzawi has found his identity, or rather created it. The problem of the Arab artist has been how to remain true at once to the old self and to the new, a self that sees with Arab eyes but also sees with Western eyes, being trained by the way Western artists have successfully depicted twentieth century reality.

Azzawi knew from the beginning that Arab art evolved basically as the art of the book, calligraphy and ornamental painting, which became the main elements of the other arts, such as metalwork, glass, stucco, and textiles. Given the Arab love of the word and the particular genius of the Arabic script, calligraphy became a major form of art. The variety of relationships between the vertical and horizontal shafts, on the one hand, and between these and the width and mass of the loops, on the other, enabled the artist to improvise on rhythm and plasticity of form, geometric as well as naturalistic, thus creating at once a sense of mass and of motion. To the eye, the words assume an autonomous aesthetic form, while to the mind, they retain their inner meaning, and by doing so, create a sense of aesthetic tension by wedding image to idea.

In his paintings, Azzawi has consistently experimented with this traditional idiom. The letters are sometimes used as signs, sometimes as symbols, but always as essential parts of the formal pattern of a painting which, though abstract, is always suggestive of an experience, a feeling, or a tonality. They are used in a painterly Baroque fashion in which each is accorded a distinct mass of colour. And colour is Azzawi's distinctive genius, having been fortunate to inherit from his two Iraqi mentors, Faiq Hasan and



Gallery Hittite  
5 - 28 March 1992

Alif Gallery  
10 March - 4 April 1992

the site

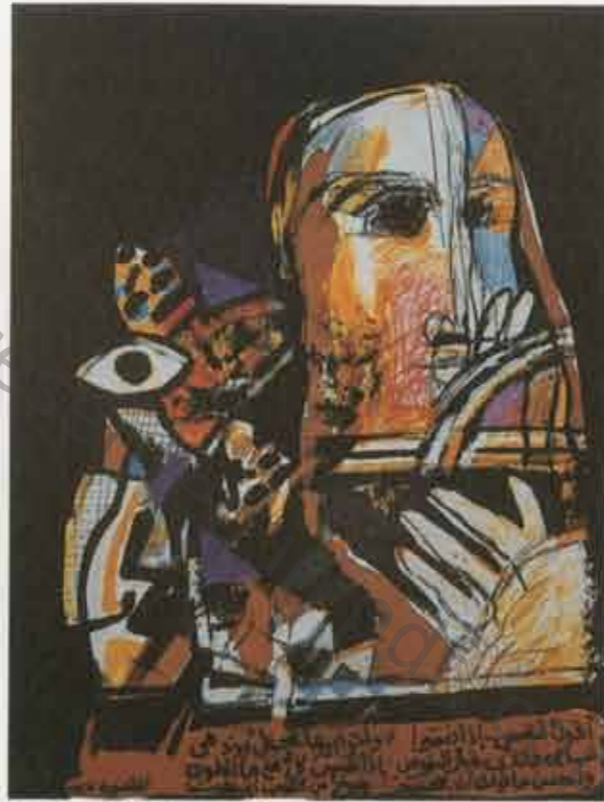
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Al - Jawahiri Verses 1989  
Hand-Coloured Lithograph, 50 x 66cm.

publishing on the site

courtesy of the artist pre



Al - Jawahiri Verses 1989  
Hand-Coloured Lithograph, 50 x 66cm.

**Al -Jawahiri Verses**

Ten Poems by M. Al - Jawahiri

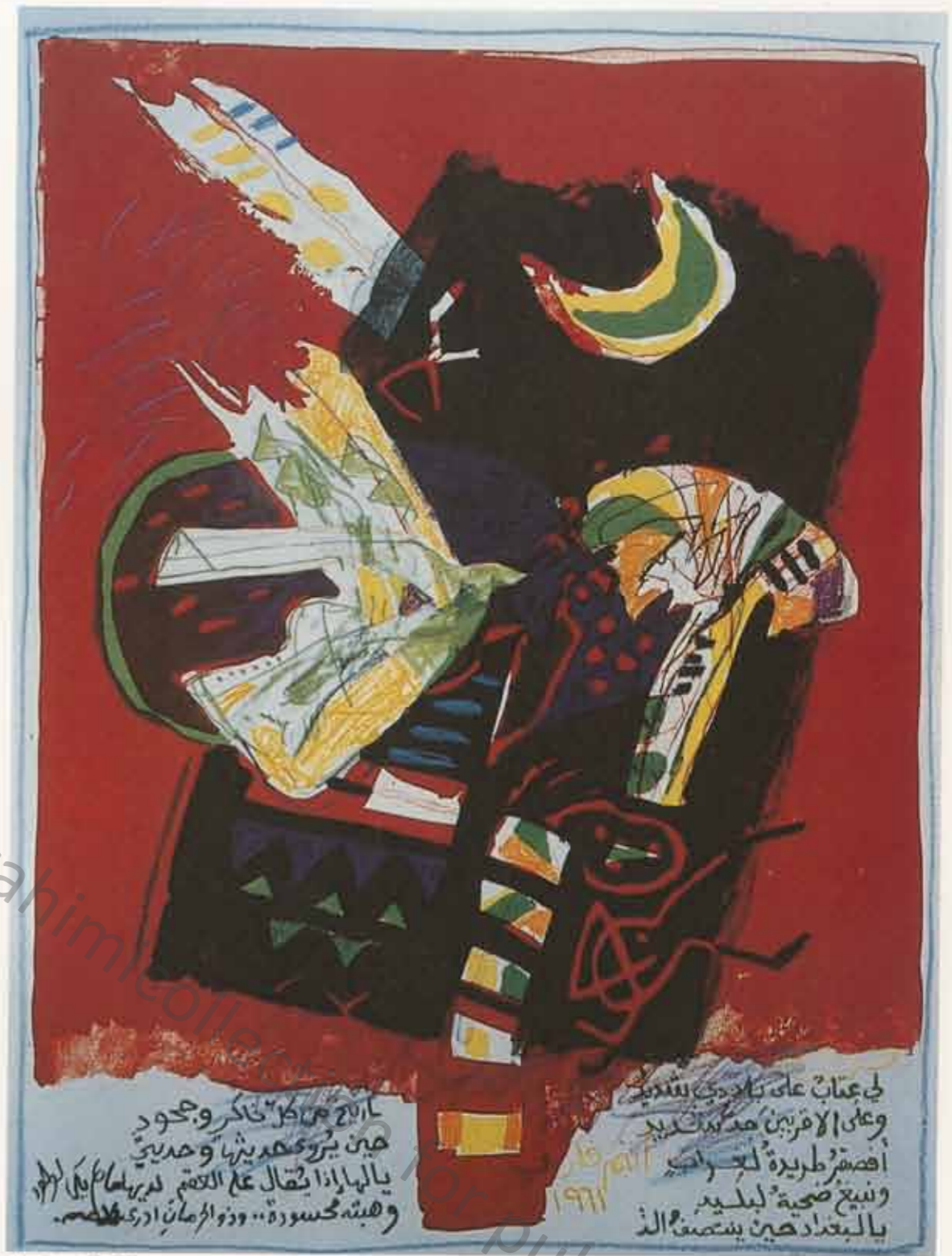
*This edition is limited to eighty-nine numbered sets, signed by the artist and the poet, with six numbered in Roman numerals for the poet and artist and their collaborators.*

*The paper used for the prints and text is Vellin Cuve BFK Rives Blanc, mould-made 250gsm. The images were printed at the Print Centre Ltd, London.*

Published by Arabesque Publishing, August 1989

**MUHAMMED MAHDI AL-JAWAHIRI (1900- )**

*He was born and brought up in Najaf, Iraq, by a learned family. He studied traditional Islamic sciences and learnt a good deal of classic Arabic poetry. He was often persecuted on account of his political views, and was forced to live in exile more than once. Al-Jawahiri is without doubt the most celebrated classical poet in the Arab World.*



Al - Jawahiri Verses 1989  
Hand-Coloured Lithograph, 50 x 66cm.

Published on the site

*Jawad Salim, the unerring directness of the first and the daring harmonies of the second.*

*It is no accident then that Azzawi should devote his efforts to the production of books. From the mid-sixties, he started with illustrations in water-colours to **The Thousand and One Nights, Gilgamesh, and The Martyrdom of Hussein**. Then he began to experiment with graphics, silk-screen, etching, and lithograph, and in 1978 issued **The Mu'allaqat**, followed by **The Body's Anthem, The Thousand and One Nights, al-Jawahiri, The Crane**, and the **Beirut Suite**. Recently, going farther back to his origins in al-Wasiti's illustrations to **Maqamat al-Hariri**, he has produced a series of manuscripts, illustrating the poetry of the leading modern Arab poets, such as al-Shabi, al-Sayyab and al-Haidari.*

*In these books, Azzawi's art begins to assume a new freedom. The forms are liberated from geometric rigidity, becoming more representational. The words are interspersed with the drawings on the page, as on an Assyrian relief. The calligraphy is cursory, and the words seem jotted down hastily, as if Azzawi was himself the poet jotting down notes for a poem to be finished later. In this case, the words are his notes for a painting in which he has made the poem his own child. Indeed one cannot help thinking that in his next incarnation, Azzawi would be a poet.*

*He is well on his way, as he continues to transform mass into motion, to draw a yellow line on a page and make it sing, while Tala teases her father into laughter, and the old palm-tree sways toward the new.*

Husain Haddawy

January 1992

courtesy of the  
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The Crane 1990  
Hand-Coloured Lithograph, 38 x 55cm.

### The Crane Excerpts

Text by: Halim Barakat

*This edition is printed in English and Arabic. The hand-printed lithographs are on Somerset mould 300gsm paper, hand-coloured by the artist (Dimensions: Eight images are 38 x 55cm, and Two images are 38 x 110cm).*

*The text and illustrations are encased in a solander box, designed by the artist. This book is published in an edition of Twelve and printed at Sky edition, London. All copies are signed by the artist and the writer. The individual prints are signed and numbered by the artist.*

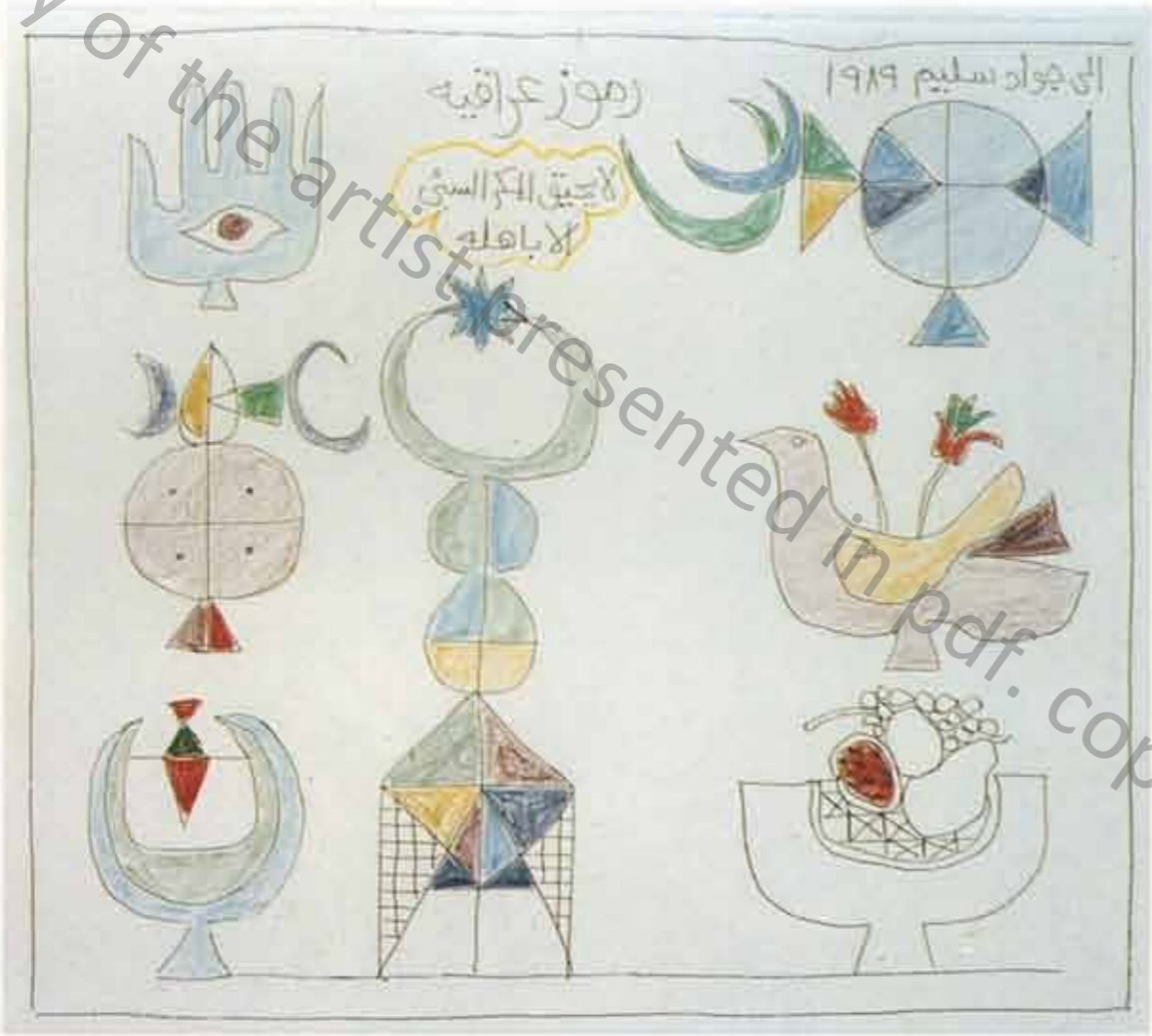
Published by Serif Graphics, London. September 1991

### HALIM BARAKAT (1936- )

*Born in Syria, he was educated at the American University of Beirut. He has published five novels, the first in 1956. He has also published a collection of short stories. As a social researcher he has published several works in Arab Society and Culture in Arabic and English. He works now as professor at Georgetown University, Washington DC.*



The Crane 1991  
Hand-Coloured Lithograph, 38 x 55cm



**Homage to Jawad Salim 1989**  
Hand-Coloured Etching, 50 x 52cm.

**Homage to Jawad Salim**

Text by : Azzawi

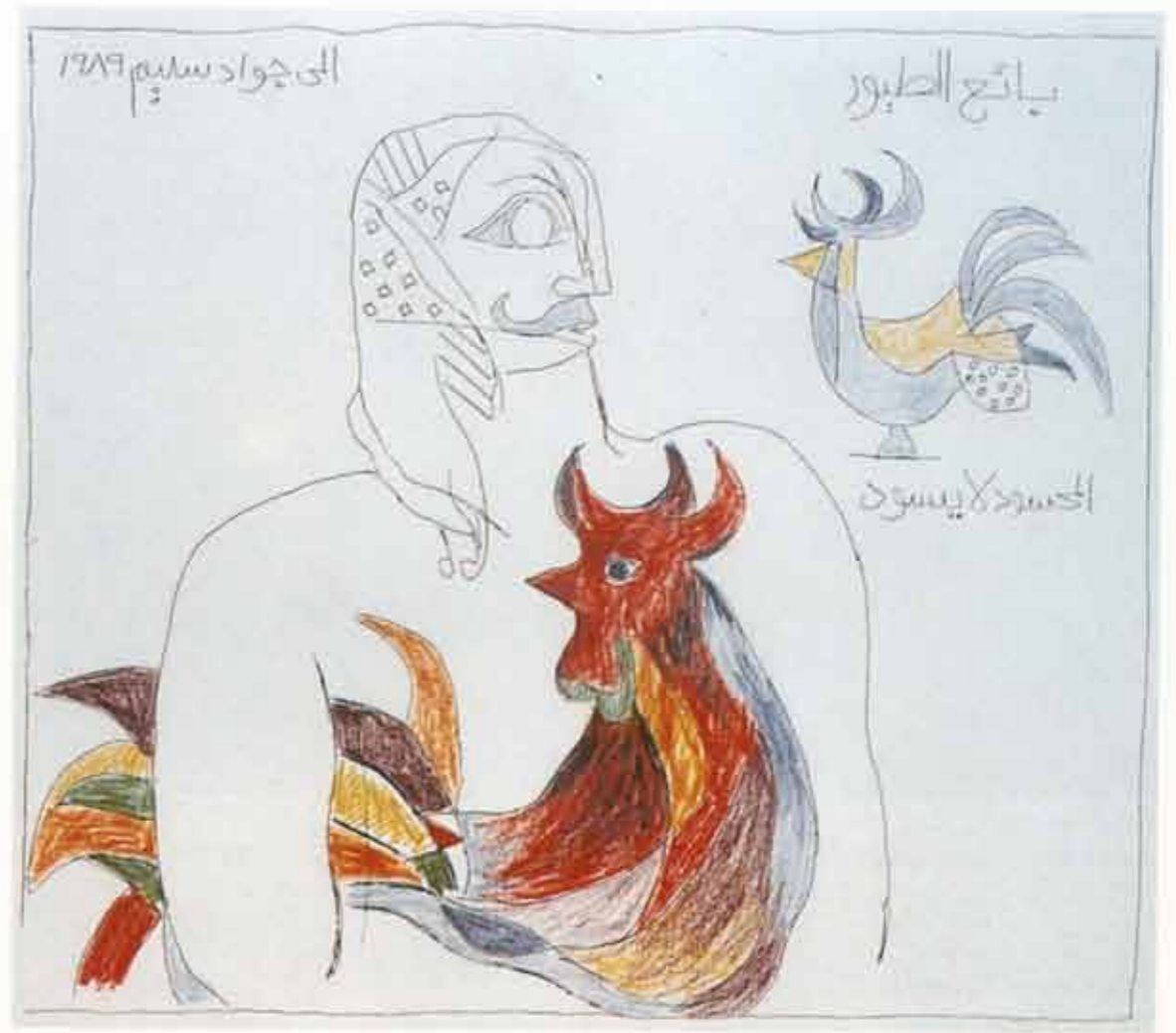
*This edition of eight original hand-coloured etchings, is limited to fifty numbered copies, signed by the artist, plus five artist proofs.*

*The paper is Vellin Cuve BFK Rives Blanc, mould-made 250gsm. The images printed at the Print Centre Ltd, London.*

Published by Serif Graphics, London. June 1989

**JAWAD SALIM (1919-1961)**

*Born in Anqara, Turkey from Iraqi parents. Studied art in Roma and London. He is widely regarded as the most original Iraqi artist who managed to put together the elements of Western art and selective elements from his history.*



**Homage to Jawad Salim 1989**  
Hand-Coloured Etching, 50 x 52cm.

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Beirut Suite 1991  
One of two pages of poems in Arabic  
Hand-Coloured Lithograph, 50 x 67cm.

### Beirut Suite

Poems by: Al-Jawahiri, Adonis, Buland Al-Haydarie, Nazar Qabanie, Khalil Haawi, Mahmoud Darwish.

This edition is printed in English and Arabic. The hand-printed lithographs are on Somerset mould 300gsm paper, hand-coloured by the artist (Dimensions: Ten images are 50 x 67cm).

The text and illustrations are in a box, designed by the artist. This collection is published in an edition of sixty with ten numbered in Roman numerals and printed at Sky edition, London. All copies are signed and numbered by the artist.

Published by Serif Graphics, London, November 1991

#### BULAND AL-HAYDARIE (1926- )

Born in Iraq, of Kurdish origin, in his poems he gives expression to his inner private world as much as to his social conscience. He has published many volumes of verse.

#### NAZAR QABANIE (1923- )

Born in Damascus, he has held several positions in the Syrian diplomatic service. Later he resigned his post and set up a publishing house in Beirut. One of the most popular poets in the Arab World. He has produced a large number of volumes of verse, the first in 1944

#### KHALIL HAAWI (1925-1982)

Born in Lebanon he read philosophy at the American University of Beirut, obtained a doctorate from Cambridge. His political and philosophical convictions are obliquely expressed in powerful but subtle symbolist verse.



Beirut Suite 1991  
Mahmoud Darwish poems  
Hand-Coloured Lithograph, 50 x 67cm.

#### MAHMOUD DARWISH (1942- )

Born in Palestine. He worked as a journalist in Haifa until he left Israel in 1971 for Beirut. He wrote many volumes of poetry.



Adonis 1990  
A Grave for the Sake of New York  
Hand-Coloured Lithograph, 38 x 110cm



#### Adonis LX

Five poems by: Adonis

*This edition is printed in Arabic. The hand-printed lithographs are on Somerset mould 300gsm paper, hand-coloured by the artist (Dimensions: Five printed images are 38 x 110cm, and One original work in gouache and cryon is 38 x 28cm).*

*The poems and illustrations are encased in a solander box designed by the artist. This book is published in edition of six with three numbered in Roman numerals and printed at Sky edition, London. All copies are signed by the artists and the poet. The individual prints are signed by the artist.*

Published by Serf Graphics, London, February 1990

#### ADONIS (1930- )

*Born in a village near Latakia, Syria, he has educated in the University of Damascus. Since 1956 he has been living in Beirut. His symbolist poetry, which is of great subtlety and at times unique purity, expresses at once his political and social as well as his mystical and metaphysical concerns. He has produced a large number of volumes of verse, the first in 1945, as well as many books on literary critic. He has also produced an anthology of Arabic poetry from early times.*



Original book of two poems by Fadwa Toaqan 1990  
*Gouache on Hand-Made Paper, page size 295 x 395mm.*

One of ten volumes, 52 pages each. (one copy, original book),  
for a distinguished Arab poet, painted between 1989 - 1991  
*Inside: Gouache on Hand-Made Paper,*  
*page size 395 x 395cm.*  
*Cover and Box: Painted in Acrylic.*

**FADWA TOAQAN (1917- )**  
*Born in Nablus, Palestine, she comes from an intellectually gifted family. She published the first volume in 1955.*  
*Since then she has written many volumes.*



Original book of two poems by Fadwa Toaqan 1990  
*Gouache on Hand-Made Paper, page size 295 x 395mm.*

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Nazhat Zaman 1991  
Hand-Coloured Lithograph, 50 x 67cm



Nazhat Zaman 1991  
Hand-Coloured Lithograph, 50 x 67cm.

### Nazhat Zaman

Poems by: Talal Haidar

*This edition is printed in Arabic. The hand-printed lithographs are on Somerset mould 300gsm paper, hand-coloured by the artist (Dimensions: Three images are 38 x 110cm and Six images are 38 x 55cm)*

*The poems and illustrations are encased in a solander box designed by the artist. This book is published in an edition of Ten and printed at Sky edition, London. All copies are signed by the artist and the poet. The individual prints are signed and numbered by the artist.*

Published by Serif Graphics, London. November 1991

### TALAL HAYDAR (1937- )

*Born in Balabek, Lebanon, he read philosophy in Paris. He published two volumes of poetry and one play. He is widely regarded as one of the most important Arab poets in spoken language.*

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Artists, Iraqi Cultural Centre, London. 1979 Collective Exhibition, Tunis; Three Iraqi Artists, Al-Riwaq Gallery, Baghdad. 1980 The Influence of Arabic Calligraphy on Modern Arab Art, Iraqi Cultural Centre, London; Twelve Arab Artists, Faris Galerie, Paris. 1982 Collective Arab Artists, Gallery Graffiti, London; Collective Arab Artists, Faris Galerie, Paris. 1983 Collective Arab Artists, Iraqi Cultural Centre, London; Collective Arab Artists, Graffiti Gallery, London. 1984 Collective Arab Artists, Graffiti Gallery, London. 1985 Collective Arab Artists, Graffiti Gallery, London. 1986 Semitic Museum, Harvard University; Contemporary Arab Art, The Mall Gallery, London. 1988 Four Arab Artists, Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris; Three Iraqi Artists, Kufa Gallery, London. 1989 Homage to Jawad Salim Exhibition, Kufa Gallery, London; Arab Graphic Art; National Council for Art and Culture Gallery, Kuwait. 1991 Contemporary Iraqi Art, Nevada University, Reno .

#### **LIMITED-EDITION PUBLICATIONS**

1979 Seven Golden Odes ( 8 images, silkscreen ). 1980 Body's Anthem ( 16 images, silkscreen ). 1983 We Are Not Seen But Corpses ( 8 images, etching & aquatint ). 1986 One Thousand and One Nights ( 27 Images, lithograph & etching ). 1989 Homage to Jawad Salim ( 8 images, etching ); Al-Jawahiri Verses ( 10 images, lithograph ). 1990 Adonis ( 5 images, hand-coloured lithograph ). 1991 The Crane ( 10 images, hand-coloured lithograph ); Beirut Suite ( 10 images, hand-coloured lithograph ); Nazhat Zaman ( 9 images, hand-coloured lithograph).

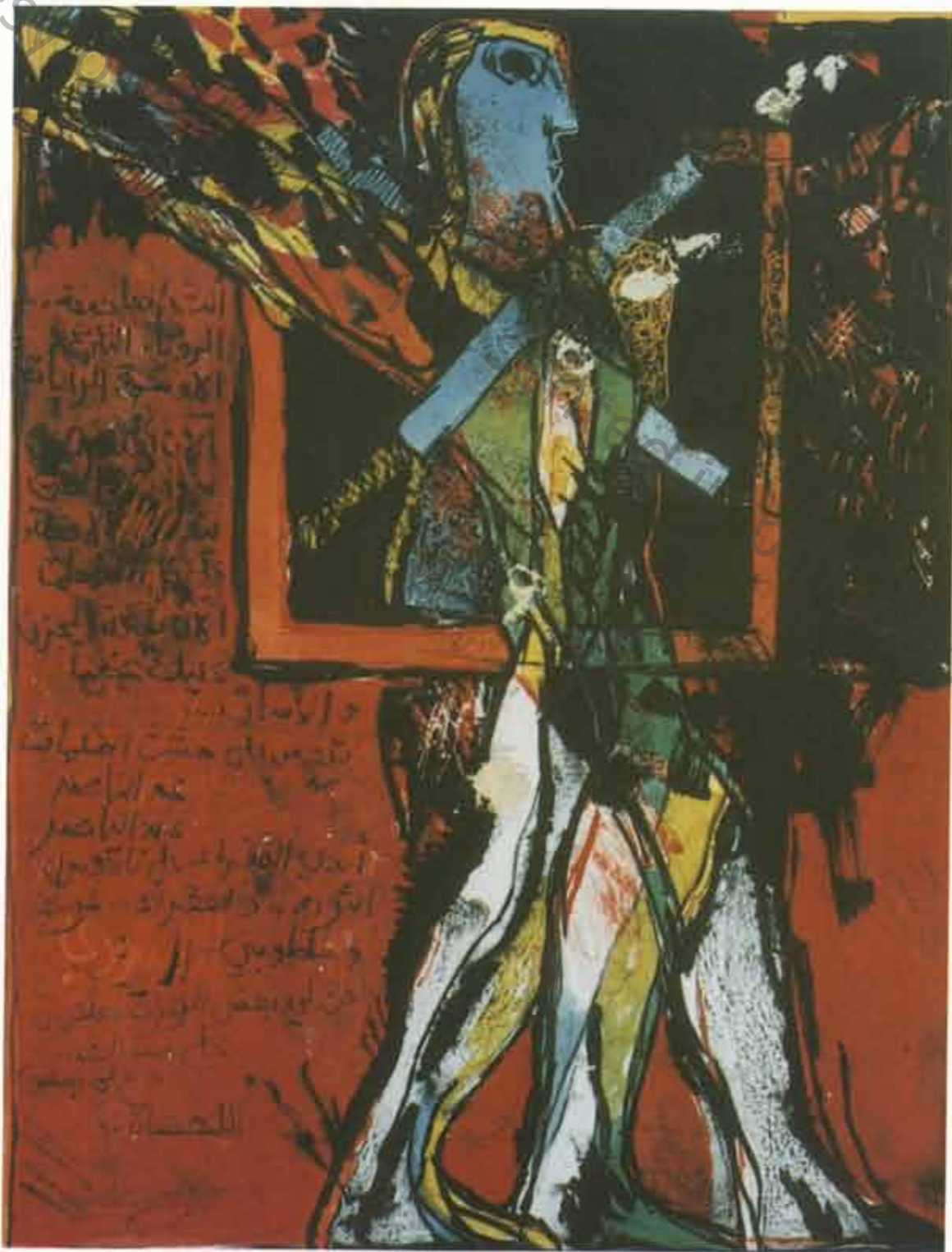
#### **PUBLIC COLLECTIONS**

Museum of Modern Art, Baghdad. Museum of Modern Art, Damascus. Museum of Modern Art, Amman. Museum of Modern Art, Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris. British Museum, London. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Jeddah International Airport. Gulbenkian Collection, Barcelona. Arab Monetary Fund, Abu Dhabi. Development Fund, Kuwait. The World Bank, Washington DC. The Saudi Bank, London. The United Bank of Kuwait, London.

#### **PRIVATE COLLECTIONS**

France, Germany, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, United Kingdom, United States.

Collection for publishing on the site



M. Al-Faytourie 1989  
Hand-Coloured Lithograph, 50 x 66cm.

MUHAMMED AL-FAYTURI (1930- )  
Born in Alexandria, Egypt, to a Sudanese father and an Egyptian mother. He published his first volume of verse in 1955, which brought him instant fame

## AZZAWI

Born in Baghdad in 1939, Dia Al - Azzawi graduated with a degree in archaeology from Baghdad University in 1962, followed by a degree in fine art in 1964. He has lived in London since 1976.

### ONE-MAN SHOWS

1965 Al-Wasiti Gallery, Baghdad. 1966 Gallery One, Beirut. 1967 Iraqi Artists Society Gallery, Baghdad. 1968 National Museum of Modern Art, Baghdad. 1969 Sultan Gallery, Kuwait; Gallery One, Beirut. 1971 National Museum of Modern Art, Baghdad. 1973 Galerie Raslan, Tripoli, Lebanon. 1974 Sultan Gallery, Kuwait; Contact Gallery, Beirut. 1975 National Museum of Modern Art, Baghdad. 1976 Galerie Nadhar, Casablanca. 1977 Sultan Gallery, Kuwait. 1978 Patrick Seale Gallery, London. 1979 Al-Riwaq Gallery, Baghdad. 1980 Galerie Faris, Paris; Galerie Centrale, Geneva. 1981 Basle Art Fair (Galerie Faris); FIAC (Galerie Faris), Paris. 1982 Intercontinental Hall, Abu Dhabi. 1983 National Council for Art and Culture Gallery, Kuwait. 1984 Alif Gallery, Washington DC. 1985 Meridian, Abu Dhabi; Royal Cultural Centre, Amman. 1986 Galerie Faris, Paris. 1988 Galerie Planque, Lausanne. 1989 Graphic Studio, Baghdad. 1990 Alif Gallery, Washington DC; Nakita Gallery, Stockholm; Vanzaff Gallery, Gothenburg; Galerie des Art, Tunis. 1991 Galerie des Art, Tunis; Galerie 50x70, Beirut. 1992 Alif Gallery, Washington DC; Gallery Hittite, Toronto.

### INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITIONS

1967 First International Triennial, New Delhi. 1975 International Cagne-sur-Mer Exhibition; International Summer Academy, Salzburg. 1976 Second Arab Art Biennial, Rabat; Venice Biennial; Fifth International Exhibition of Drawings, Rijeka. 1979 Sao Paulo Biennial. 1980 Sixth International Exhibition of Drawings, Rijeka; Salon de Mai, Paris; FIAC (Galerie Faris), Paris; Salon d'Automne (Galerie Espace Cardin), Paris; Salon de Mai, Paris. 1981 Salon de Mai, Paris; Seventh International Print Biennial, Bradford; First Arab Contemporary Art Exhibition, Tunis. 1985 Musee Hubert d'Uckerman, Grenoble. 1986 Salon de Comparaisons, Grand Palais, Paris. 1987 Third International Biennial Exhibition, Taiwan. 1988 Olympiad of Art, National Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul. 1989 Contemporary Art from the Islamic World, Barbican Centre, London. 1991 Collecting 20th Century Art, British Museum, London.

### GROUP EXHIBITIONS

1965 Gallery One, Beirut; Contemporary Iraqi Art, Beirut, Rome, Vienna, Madrid. 1971 Four Iraqi Artists, Museum of Modern Art, Baghdad. 1972 Three Iraqi Artists, Gallery One, Beirut; Four Iraqi Artists, Museum of Modern Art, Baghdad; Five Iraqi Artists, Museum of Modern Art, Baghdad; Contemporary Arab Art, Nicosia. 1973 Six Iraqi and Syrian Artists, Museum of Modern Art, Baghdad, Arab Cultural Centre, Damascus. 1974 Seven Iraqi Artists, Museum of Modern Art, Baghdad. 1975 Iraqi Graphic Art Exhibition, Iraqi Cultural Centre, Beirut; Collective Graphic Art Exhibition, L'Atelier, Rabat; Collective Graphic Art Exhibition, Museum of Modern Art, Baghdad. 1977 Six Iraqi Artists, Museum of Modern Art, Baghdad; Contemporary Iraqi Art, Paris, London, Tunis. 1978 Contemporary Arab Graphic Art, Iraqi Cultural Centre, London; Seven Iraqi

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Toronto, Ontario M5R 1G4  
Tel: (416) 962 - 7057

**Alif Gallery**  
1204 31st Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20007  
Tel: (202) 337 - 9670