



# **An Overview of the History of Modern Art in Iraq The Ibrahimi Collection**

by May Muzaffar

## Introduction

I was honored to accept the kind request from Hasanain Jafar Al-Ibrahimi to review his private art collection of Iraqi artists at his headquarters. I was delighted to be introduced to his project for the establishment of a center for Iraqi artists, which would form a nucleus of an Iraqi museum in the diaspora. Al-Ibrahimi has also taken the initiative to document his collection in a publication that will serve as a frame of reference for the Iraqi modern art movement. The Ibrahimi Collection is a living, growing body of work.

## The Ibrahimi Collection

The collection includes works that chart the Iraqi modern art movement from its inception in the 1920s to the present day. It paints a vivid picture of continuous creativity and growth, despite the fact that most of the artists are now living in the diaspora all over the world. It also demonstrates that the communication between Iraqi artists across the generations continues apace, albeit on a personal level or through exhibitions held in Amman, Beirut and the Arab Gulf capitals.

The collection as a whole portrays a century of modern Iraqi art, showcasing its achievements at both national and international levels. While it reflects the ongoing interactions between the different generations of artists and their diverse styles, and highlights the constant intellectual growth of Iraqi modern art, the collection encompasses works of a variety of economic and artistic value. It would benefit from the addition of significant works by some of its main exponents at different stages in their development. Thus, my introduction is a modest effort to review the collection in light of the various phases of the Iraqi modern art movement as it is currently represented.

## The Beginnings

The works of the early twentieth century, considered the founding stage, represent the nature of that period, which saw the development of an appreciation for the arts on the part of the Iraqi people. Subsequent stages are encapsulated by further works mapping the shift towards modernism, with the emergence of a specific

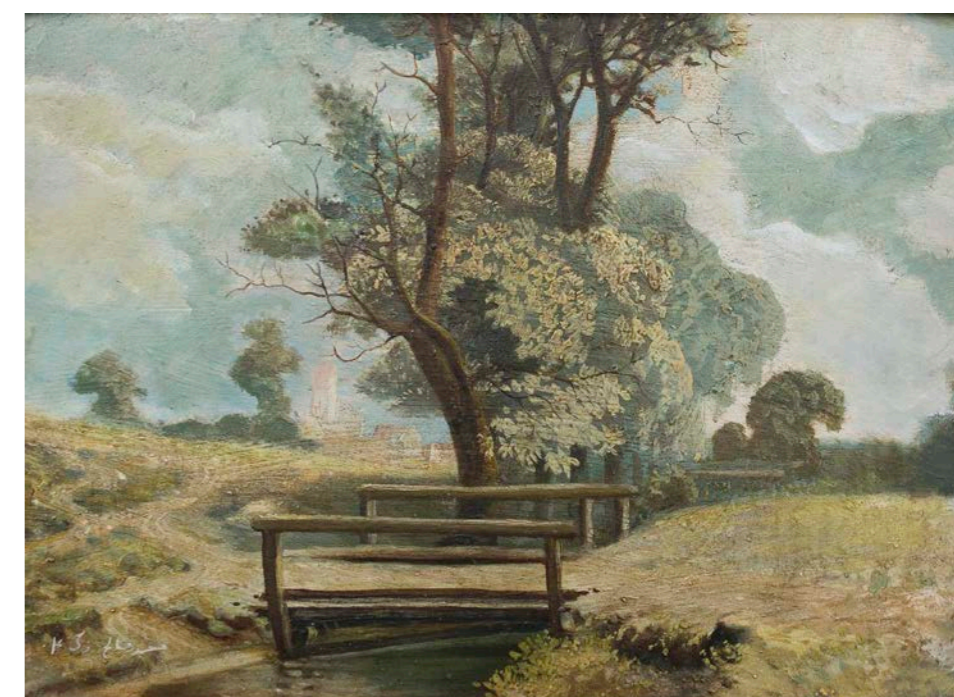
identity through different styles and techniques. Furthermore, the works represent outstanding courage and daring in the search for modern concepts – an effort abetted in part by Ibrahimi Collection’s appearance on the Iraqi art scene when introduced to some of its torchbearers, which helps to explain the significant presence of works by younger generations.

It is a fact that artistic, literary and cultural creativity is often bound up with periods of stability. With the independence of Iraq in 1932, the country witnessed political and economic development and intellectual and cultural growth. This was when modern art came to the fore, capturing the attention of the educated elites in society. This period also coincided with the return of Iraqi officers from Turkey, who had studied photography in Istanbul whilst on military duty. They duly set about creating art and photographing scenes of life around them, taking care to maintain a “local” touch, and they played a significant role in spreading appreciation for art in an endeavor to build a new aesthetic whereby beauty would take the place of the previous melancholy that had been persistent for centuries. The enthusiasm of amateur art lovers and teachers led to their participation in raising the profile of art and in teaching the use of oil paints to young artists, who would later be at the forefront of the shift towards modernism.

Abdul Qadir Rassam was the primary artist and the most creative member of this group. He was a true Baghdadi, whose art concentrated on the various facets of daily life during the first two decades of the twentieth century. He was also the first artist to paint natural landscapes directly from the reality around him. The main style of this phase was traditional realism depicting the Iraqi environment and its people, forming the core of the art movement that would then develop in due course.



**Abdul Qadir Rassam (1882 - 1952)**  
*Batas Village in Rawanduz, Northern Iraq, 1930*  
Oil on Canvas, 60 x 100 cm  
Signed Lower Left



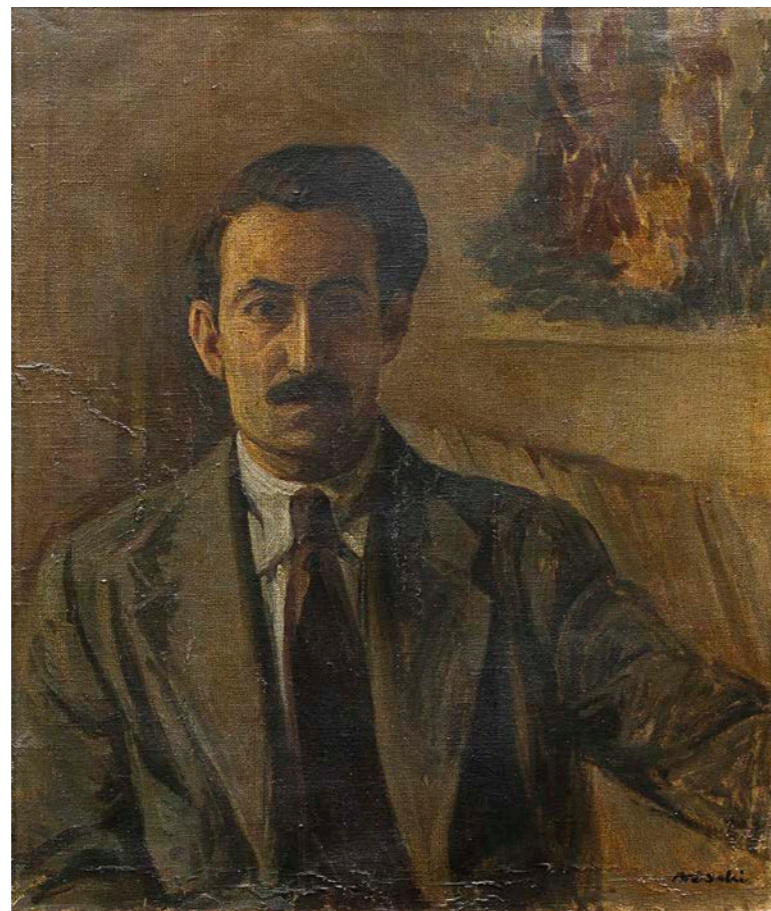
**Mohamed Saleh Zaki (1888 - 1973)**  
*From Istanbul, 1918*  
Oil on Board, 50 x 60 cm  
Signed Lower Left

Two other factors contributed to the spread of the arts in Iraq: first, the inclusion of painting (drawing) in the curricula adopted by the Iraqi Ministry of Education, and second, the introduction of art studies in government-sponsored scholarships, initiated by the scholar Sati' Al-Husari (later Minister of Education). Akram Shukri was the first to obtain a scholarship to the UK in 1931, followed by Ata Sabri. On their return, they taught their students modern techniques that had never been seen in Baghdad until then. In addition, others went to study abroad at their own expense, namely Qassim Naji and Shawket Al Khaffaf, who played an important role in teaching art, in addition to Nasser Awni, Abdul Karim Mahmoud and Suad Selim. All of these artists staged art school exhibitions with a view to identifying outstanding talents. The first Agricultural Industrial Exhibition was held in 1931, and it saw the participation of teachers and students, including the twelve-Jewad Selim. From these beginnings, artistic creativity continued to grow and ended up attracting future generations. In next to no time, it became the most prominent modern art movement in the Arab world.



**Jewad Selim (1919 - 1961)**  
*A Boy as Pierrot, after Jean-Honoré Fragonard's Painting, 1930s*  
 Oil on Canvas, 40 x 30 cm  
 Signed Lower Left

**Ata Sabri (1913 - 1987)**  
*Self Portrait, 1950s*  
 Oil on Canvas, 65 x 55 cm  
 Signed Lower Right



**Suad Selim (1918 - 2001)**  
*Summer Night Dream, 1942*  
 Oil on Board, 55 x 75 cm  
 Signed Lower Right

**Akram Shukri (1910 - 1983)**  
*A Mosque in Baghdad, 1960s*  
 Mixed Media on Board  
 45 x 55 cm  
 Signed Lower Left



## Modernism and the Pioneers' Generation

By the 1940s, Iraqi artists were searching for an "Iraqi" character in art by adopting modern techniques. In a lecture in 1941, having been selected as the first president of the Friends of Art Association, Akram Shukri stated that "while we have an active art movement in Iraq today, I do not believe that there is an 'Iraqi school' or 'character.'" He also outlined that "the character of art will come to fruition with the growth of the personality of a society capable of encompassing art."



A memorial photo of the founding Friends of Art Group members on 8 February 1941, the day of the group's elections in Akram Shukri's House. Hajj Muhammad Salim, Abdul Qadir Rassam, Suad Selim, and Shawkat Al-Rassam appear in the next row. Seated, Hafidh Al-Droubi, Ata Sabri, and Jewad Selim. After this date, other artists joined the group.

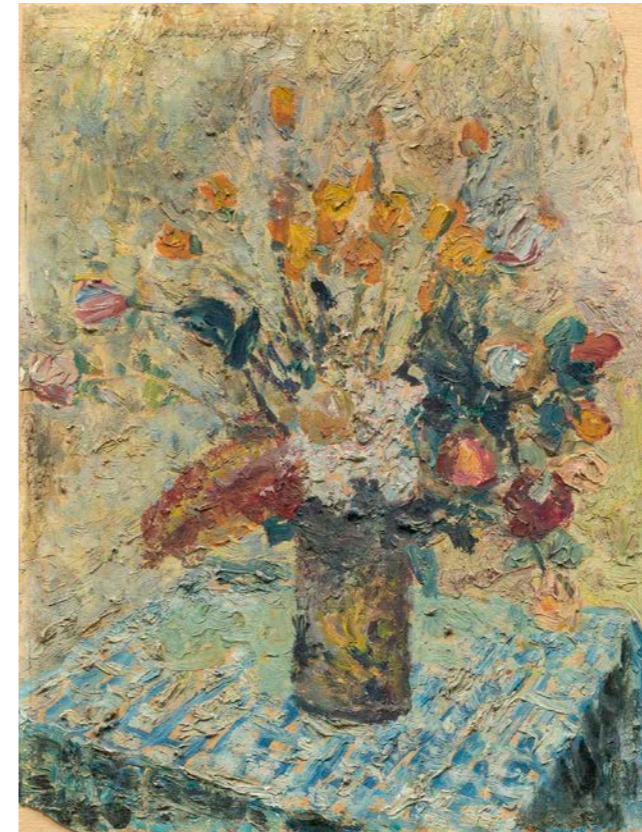
The Association held its first art exhibition in 1941, with 272 works on display. However, the character remained elusive as there were divergent takes on the subject. This was likely due to the idea, shared by most members, that the function of art was to picture reality, and depicting the Iraqi environment was sufficient to imbue the painting with character. In a private interview with Suad Selim in 1991, I found him differentiating between the study of art and amateur efforts. He believed that "intuitive art" is the accurate measure of talent.



A unique photo representing the Friends of Art Association in their first exhibition, appears from the artist Karim Majeed (fifth from the right), a well-known cinematographer and one of the association's founders. Akram Shukri (thirteenth from the right), Ata Sabri (fifteenth from the right), and photographer Interran (sixteenth from the right) are also in the photo. In the bottom row, Jewad Selim, Hafidh Al-Droubi, and Issa Hanna are seated on the floor.

The most influential phase in the modern art movement came with the advent of the teachers Faik Hassan, Jewad Selim, Shakir Hassan Al-Said, Hafidh Al-Droubi, Khalid Al-Rahhal and Mahmoud Sabri. These pioneers were the creative leaders who paved a direct way forward for future generations. They founded "art groups" representing the various directions being taken by Iraqi artists, and imparted traditional artistic standards, which they followed through by establishing the painting and sculpture departments at the Institute of Fine Arts.

The generation of Jewad Selim was not isolated from the previous one, mainly because some had studied art under the pioneer artists while others had trained in Europe. Jewad Selim and Issa Hanna admired the artistic techniques evident in the output of Abdul Qadir Rassam. Selim studied the use of oils in painting natural landscapes and "learned the technique of light and shadow from Qassim Naji," as Issa Hanna put it in an interview with me in 1991.



**Jewad Selim (1919 - 1961)**  
*Flower Vase, 1940*  
Oil on Carton, 31 x 24 cm  
Signed Upper Left



**Hafidh Al-Droubi (1914 - 1991)**  
*Still Life, 1940s*  
Oil on Canvas, 40 x 50 cm  
Signed Lower Left



**Faik Hassan (1914 - 1992)**  
*Picnic, 1940s*  
Oil on Masonite, 35 x 38 cm



**Shakir Hassan Al-Said (1925 - 2004)**  
*The Quern, 1958*  
Watercolors and Ink on Carton, 20 x 30 cm  
Signed Lower Right

In 1948, UNESCO – in the first initiative of its kind – organized an exhibition of modern Arab art accompanied by a catalogue at their new regional premises in Beirut. This show was held on the margins of a meeting of the foremost educators from the Arab League States, namely Iraq, Egypt, Lebanon and Syria. Some of the top Iraqi artists participated, led by the pioneers Faik Hassan and Jewad Selim. It was the first time Iraqi artists had exhibited outside of Iraq, and the results were outstanding. The Iraqi pavilion caught the public’s attention for its presentation, technique, expressiveness and variety. It also raised important questions vis-à-vis the source of this creative ability and excellence, given that the Iraqi art movement was relatively young.

The 1940s and 50s were a period of extraordinary creativity, as reflected in Iraq’s social and cultural life. There was a fervent interaction between European ideas, art and literary movements, and Arab culture and civilization. This was met with an intense desire to relate Western concepts to Arab culture in order to move on from a period of stasis on the art scene. Meanwhile, social and political awareness proliferated due to increasingly challenging social and political issues in the Arab world. By the late 1940s, the political stability was shattered by a wide range of conflicting issues. There was an increase in political protest, making manifest the public reaction to the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, which led to a mass exodus of the Palestinian population. Furthermore, it paved the way for the eventual overthrow of the monarchy in Iraq ten years later, in 1958, which was in turn followed by a series of violent, bloody coups d’état.

The historical events and conflicts left their mark on the young generations, especially its most creative members. It was a period of intense cultural activity, with a prolific production of creative artworks and significant exchanges with Arab personalities visiting Iraq. It was the age when cultural and literary figures met in cafés, with a mix of Iraqis and foreigners living in Iraq at the time, thus enabling the modern art movement to develop yet further.

There was a marked maturity in the modern movement by the early 1950s, with additional art groups emerging. At the forefront was the Pioneers Group, and one of the symbols of this turning point was the first professor, Faik Hassan, who

taught solid basic art principles to generations of artists. Hafidh Al-Droubi was also distinguished by his innovative educational approach, teaching “free art” and adopting modernist styles. He established the first “free art” studio in Baghdad and led the Impressionists Group. During these decades, numerous artists either joined various groups or carried on working independently, one example being Khaled Al-Jadir, who played a key role amongst his generation through his teaching methods, artistic character and influence on his students.



**Faik Hassan (1914 - 1992)**  
*Man Sitting in a Café*, 1952  
 Pastel on Carton, 60 x 42 cm  
 Signed Lower Right



**Jewad Selim (1919 - 1961)**  
*Motherhood and The Street Vendor*, 1958 - 1959  
 Silkscreen Print on Greeting Card, 17 x 12 cm (Each)  
 (As per the family, it's a collaborative work between Jewad Selim and Lorna Selim)



**Shakir Hassan Al-Said (1925 - 2004)**  
*The Café*, 1958  
 Mixed Media on Carton, 25 x 30 cm  
 Signed Lower Left

**Shakir Hassan Al-Said (1925 - 2004)**  
*Dates Seller*, 1959  
 Watercolors on Carton, 70 x 55 cm  
 Signed Upper Right

Within a year, Jewad Selim and Shakir Hassan Al-Said formed the Baghdad Group for Modern Art. This group stood out as it comprised various intellectual types – artists, art critics, architects, and literary personalities, among others. One prominent member was Jabra Ibrahim Jabra, an author, artist, and critic who occupied a significant position in the literary and artistic movement. The group was unique in that the artists in it transcended previous limitations, whereby they had been forced to portray their local environment in a European style; instead, they were encouraged to develop a vision of subjects relating to the local and Islamic heritage. Jewad Selim was undoubtedly the first to touch upon this concept and strove to disseminate it. Shakir Hassan Al-Said also adopted this concept and created works inspired by the village and aspects of life around it. He employed its symbols and decorations in his exemplary artworks. His specialization in social studies led him to theorize about the modern art movement and to participate in enriching its literary scope. This helped to increase awareness, as did the writings of Jewad Selim, which were published later in his memoirs.

The Ibrahim Collection owns works representing the generation of the 1950s, but not a sufficient number of them to provide a comprehensive overview of that generation's achievements. This lack could be attributed to the difficulty of finding such works that are currently unavailable. Several watercolors and a small nude sculpture represent the output of Jewad Selim. The absence of Mahmoud Sabri's works constitutes a significant gap, especially as he played a highly influential role through his outstanding experience. Although considered an amateur painter, Sabri joined the Baghdad Group for Modern Art on his return from London, armed with a degree in Social Studies and Economics. His participation was crucial as he fostered ideas and explored existential issues concerning the meaning of art, its function and its place in society. Despite the short time he remained in Iraq (he left in 1959), he triggered debates on various issues concerning the function of art, aesthetics and craftsmanship, as well as other social issues. His influence remained strong, especially amongst his followers, who developed a third way whereby the features of art became the basis of the social role of art.



**Shakir Hassan Al-Said (1925 - 2004)**  
*Um Al-Abaya, 1962*  
Mixed Media on Canvas, 100 x 80 cm

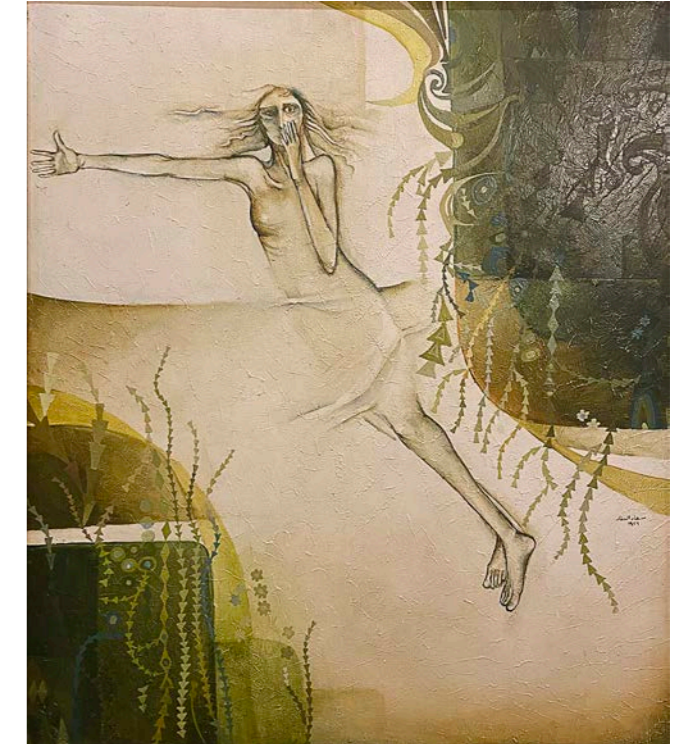
## The Generation of the 1960s and Beyond

At the end of the 1950s, the art circle rebelled against the static nature of the arts and began to bring about change. The Iraqi artists had an intense awareness of the continuity of their country's history and civilization and, at the same time, were enamored with modernism. The 1960s generation of artists, who studied under the modernist pioneers, all chose to continue their studies in major capitals in Eastern and Western Europe. They felt a deep sense of estrangement from the centralized Western vision of art and adopted different concepts informed by their individual visions. A considerable driver for this change was the establishment of the Academy of Fine Arts in 1962, with several art teachers being brought in from Eastern Europe.

The mix of political currents and the publication of modern critical art studies proved essential in disseminating humanistic concepts. This had a profound effect on the crystallization of the awareness of this generation in terms of their push toward challenging experimentation. This, in turn, led to further formation of groups based on their different thinking, such as the Innovationist Group in 1965, as well as the short-lived Corner Group. Another major group was the New Vision, whose manifesto was published in 1969. Certain artists remained members of these groups for many years, continuing to experiment and forging an ongoing connection with subsequent generations.



**Ali Talib (1944)**  
*Villager, 1976*  
Oil on Canvas, 70 x 70 cm  
Signed Lower Right

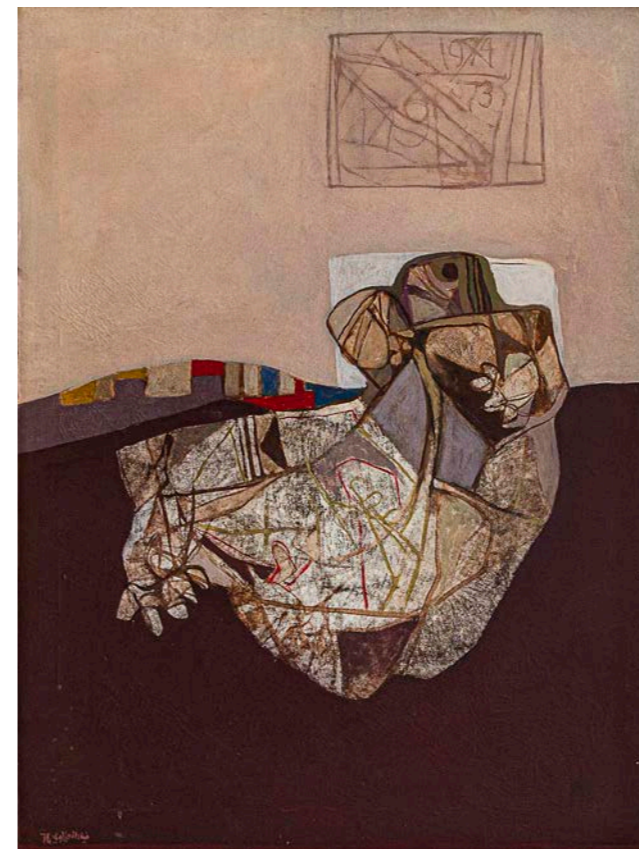


**Suad Al-Attar (1942)**  
*A Suppressed Scream, 1977*  
Oil on Canvas, 70 x 60 cm  
Signed Mid Right

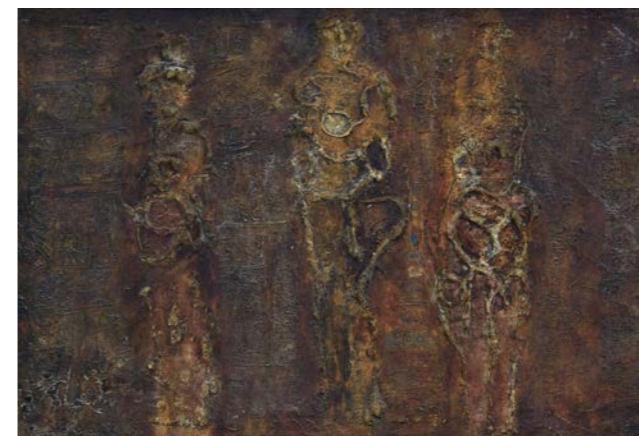
The Ibrahimi Collection is home to an array of works that embody the variety, methods and visions of the generation of the 1960s. It includes iconic works by these artists, who stood out thanks to their artistic outlook, which saw them portraying Iraqi creativity in the Arab world and beyond. There are some forty artists, painters, sculptors and ceramists who have had an impact on subsequent generations as the Iraqi art movement rippled outwards from Iraq; Ibrahimi himself moved from Baghdad to Amman, affording him the opportunity to get to know these artists directly, since most are currently living in Amman, which is frequently visited by those living overseas.

In exploring the works of art produced in the 1960s contained within the collection, one can note the various innovative experiments that had an impact on the art movement. The leading lights of painting in that decade included Ismail Fattah Al-Turk, Lisa Fattah, Dia al-Azzawi, Rafa Nasiri, Mohammed Muhraddin, Ali Talib, Saadi Al-Kaabi, Salim Al-Dabbagh and Ala Bashir. The range is quite exceptional, although certain artists are not comprehensively covered, such as Suad Al-Attar, represented only by her early works. In terms of notable sculptors, aside from Ismail Fattah, there are works by Mohammed Ghani Hikmat, Abdul Raheem Al-Wakeel, Miran Al-Saadi, Talib Mekki, Eidan Al-Sheikhli and Itihad Kareem. The collection also features works by artists who had left Iraq earlier on – such as Yahya Al-Sheikh, Faik Hussain, Mahdi Moutashar, Ibrahim Zayer, Ardash Kakafian and Mohamed Arif, to name but a few. The collection also includes notable ceramic works by Saad Shaker, Shanyar Abdullah, Tareq Ibrahim, Siham Al-Saudi, Nuha Al-Radi, and others.

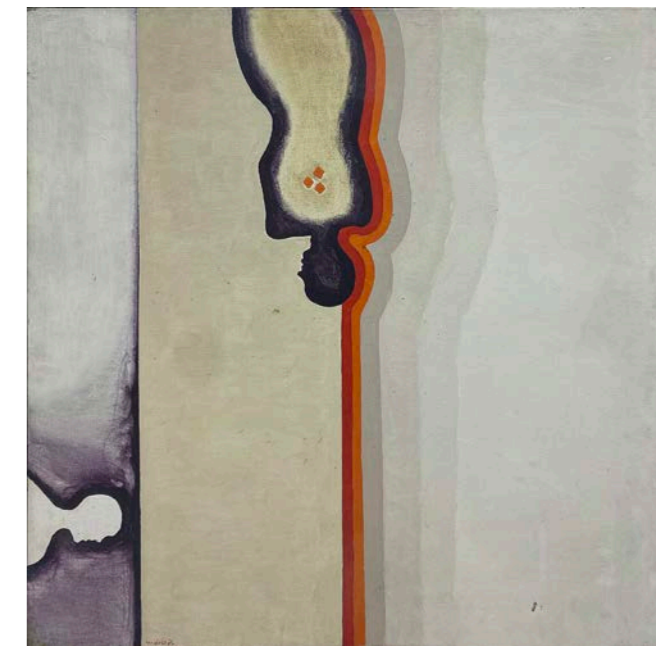
By the 1970s, the modern art movement was expanding extraordinarily. There were many outstanding solo and group exhibitions and participation in Arab and international shows. At the same time, during the second half of the decade, several artists and literary and cultural figures of the 1960s and 70s left Iraq due to the complex political situation. This migration continued and reached its apex after the USA-led Iraq invasion of 2003.



**Dia al-Azzawi (1939)**  
*Travail of a Man*, 1976  
 Acrylic on Canvas, 85 x 65 cm  
 Signed Lower Left



**Saleh Al-Jumaie (1939)**  
*Old Wall*, 1969  
 Aluminum, Acrylic and Oil on Canvas, 60 x 90 cm



**Rafa Nasiri (1940 - 2013)**  
*Dimensions*, 1972  
 Acrylic on Canvas, 90 x 90 cm  
 Signed Lower Left



**Ardash Kakafian (1941 - 2000)**  
*Sans Titre*, 1969  
 Acrylic on Canvas, 50 x 50 cm  
 Signed Lower Right

**Mohammed Muhraddin (1938 - 2015)**  
*Composition 2, 1971-1972*  
Mixed Media on Board, 116 x 93 cm  
Signed Lower Right



**Mohamed Arif (1937 - 2009)**  
*Take-off, 1966*  
Oil on Board, 80 x 95 cm  
Signed Lower Left



**Saadi Al-Kaabi (1937)**  
*Indignant, 1962*  
Mixed Media on Board, 65 x 85 cm  
Signed Lower Left



**Faik Hussain (1944 - 2003)**  
*Cafe, 1962*  
Mixed Media on Canvas, 60 x 80 cm  
Signed Lower Right

**Yahya Al-Sheikh (1945)**  
*Distance, 1970*  
Oil on Board, 80 x 60 cm  
Signed Lower Left



**Lisa Fattah (1941 - 1992)**  
*A Room Inside the House, 1973*  
Oil on Canvas, 75 x 75 cm  
Signed Lower Right





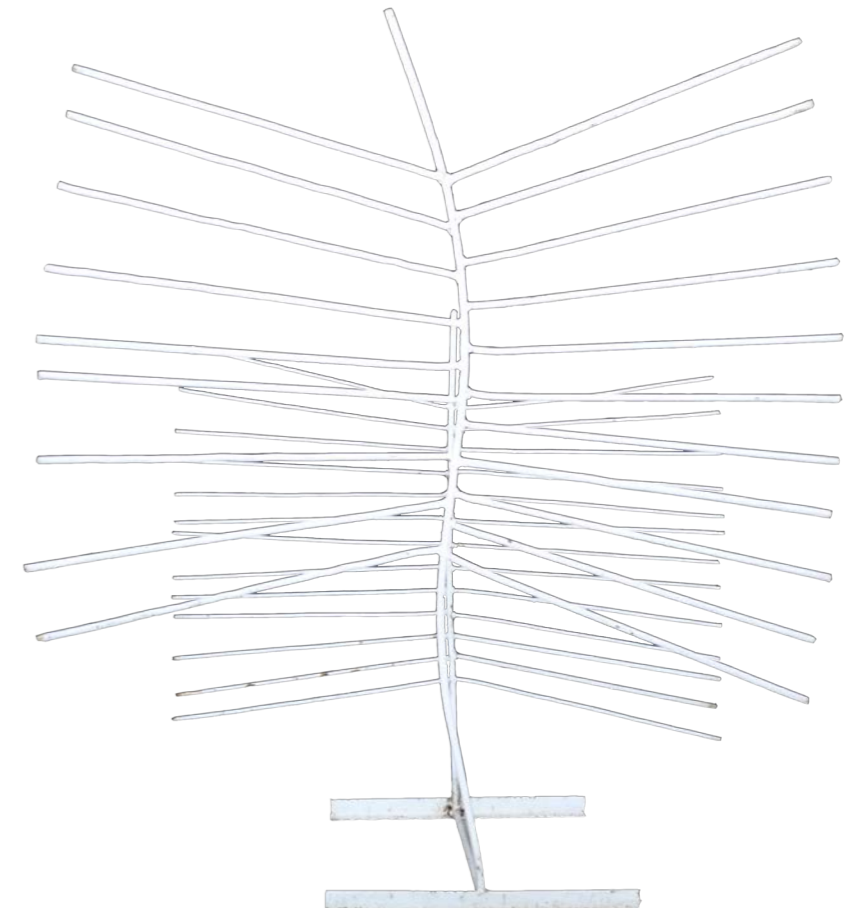
**Mohammad Ghani Hikmat (1929 - 2011)**  
*Medical City*, 1969  
 Gypsum Relief, 30 x 115 cm  
 Signed Lower Mid



**Eidan Al-Sheikhli (1932 - 2005)**  
*Untitled*, 1964  
 Bronze Sculpture, 35 x 7 x 8 cm  
 Signed on Base



**Miran Al-Saadi (1934 - 1987)**  
*Untitled*, 1970s  
 Bronze Sculpture - One Edition  
 30 x 33 x 7 cm



**Talib Mekki (1936 - 2022)**  
*Two Doves*, 1966  
 Colored Iron Sculpture, 135 x 112 cm  
 Signed Lower Right



**Nuha Al-Radi (1941 - 2004)**  
*Untitled, 1980s*  
 Ceramic Plate, Diam. 26 cm  
 Signed on Back



**Saad Shaker (1935 - 2005)**  
*Untitled, 1984*  
 Ceramic Sculpture, 46 x 36 x 28 cm  
 Stamped on Right



**Siham Al-Saudi (1941 - 1994)**  
*Untitled, 1980s*  
 Ceramic Sculpture laid on Board, 72 x 28 x 5 cm  
 Signed Lower Mid

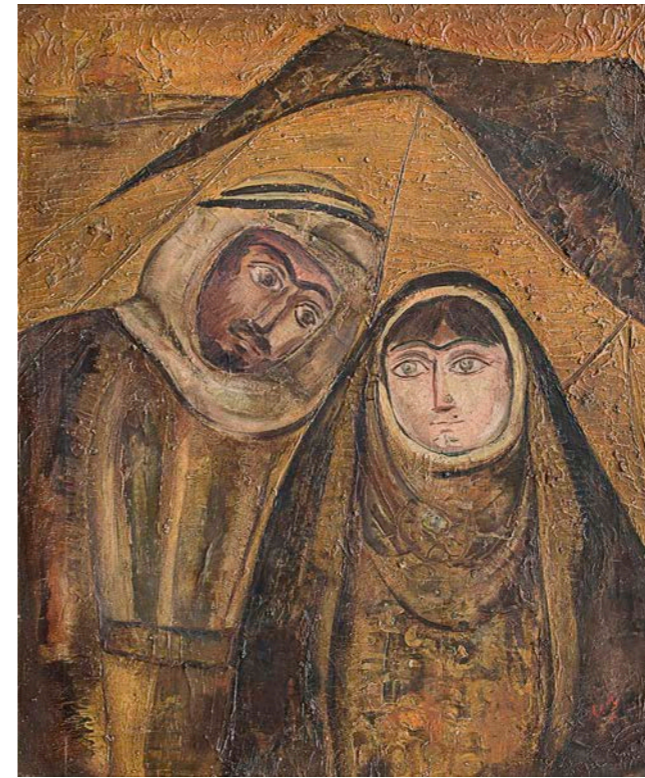


**Tareq Ibrahim (1938 - 2021)**  
*Abstract Form, 1980s*  
 Ceramic Sculpture, 47 x 20 x 16 cm

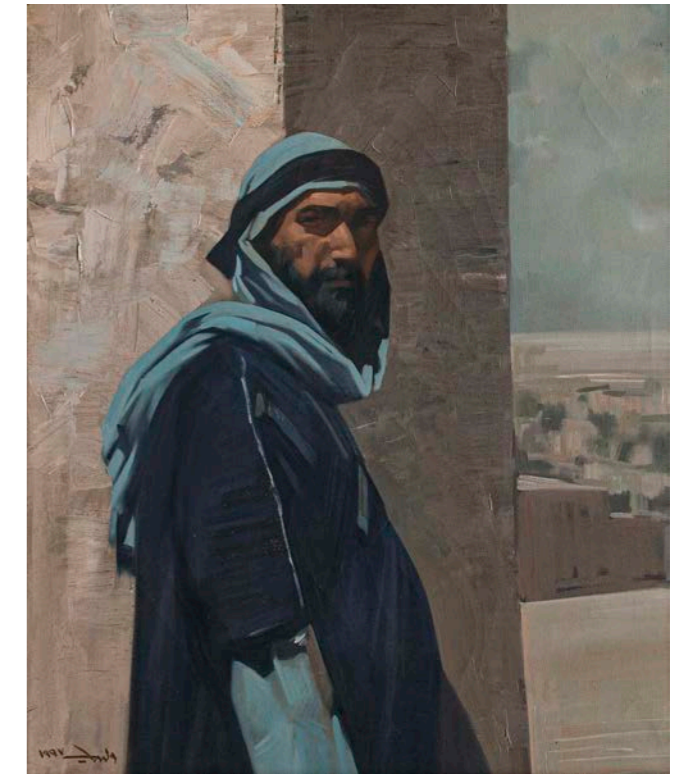
The collection has works representing the 1970s generation through some thirty artists (both women and men) who engaged in various degrees of experimentation. The most outstanding of these are Hashim Al-Tawil, with his graphics; Dr. Fakher Mohammed, with several oil works covering his whole career; and Fouad Jihad and Faisal Laibi Sahi, with works representing their early experience. The collection is home to one of Jawdat Haseeb's early creations, as well as works by Balasim Jassam, Jaber Alwan, Ismail Khayat, Asem Abdul Amir, Walid Sheet Taha, Semira Abdulwahab, amongst others. It also includes sculptures by Abdul Karim Khaleel and Amer Khalil and ceramics by Akram Naji and Maher Al-Samaraie.



**Ismail Khayat (1944 - 2022)**  
*Contemplation on Land of Gornica, 1984*  
 Oil on Board, 120 x 120 cm  
 Signed Lower Left



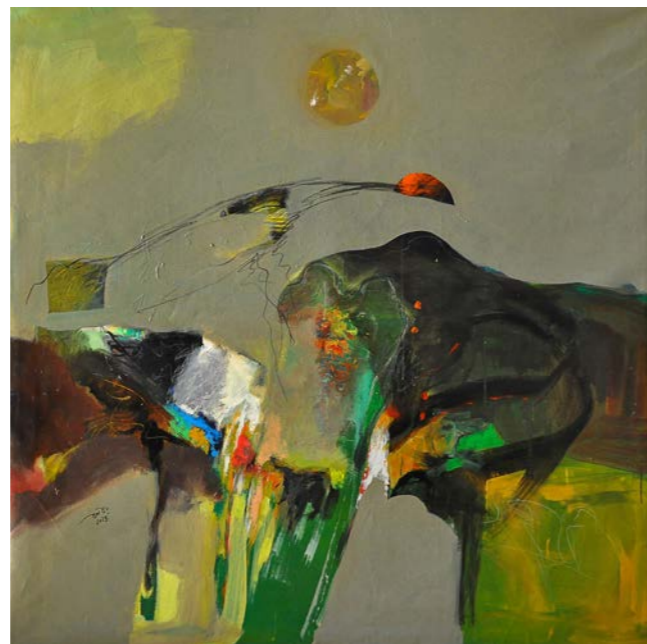
**Fouad Jihad (1948 - 2004)**  
*Untitled, 1969*  
 Mixed Media on Canvas, 70 x 60 cm  
 Signed Lower Right



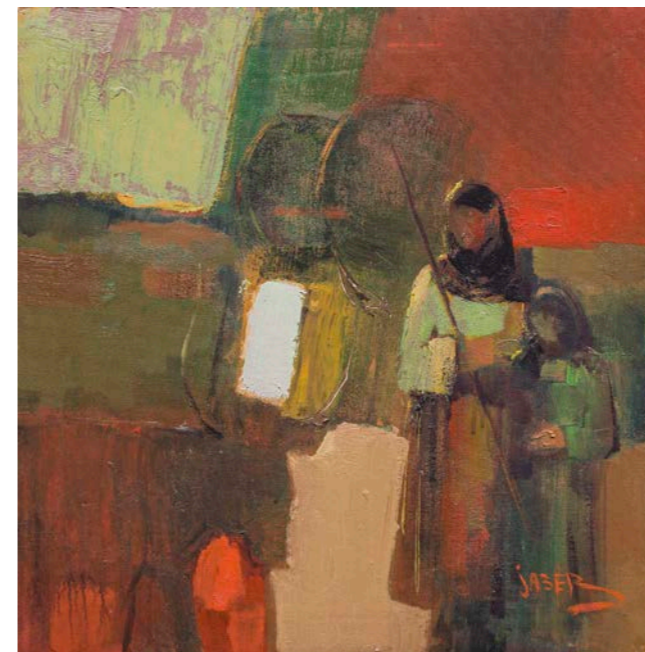
**Walid Sheet Taha (1947)**  
*A Bedouin, 1997*  
 Oil on Canvas, 55 x 46 cm  
 Signed Lower Left and on Back



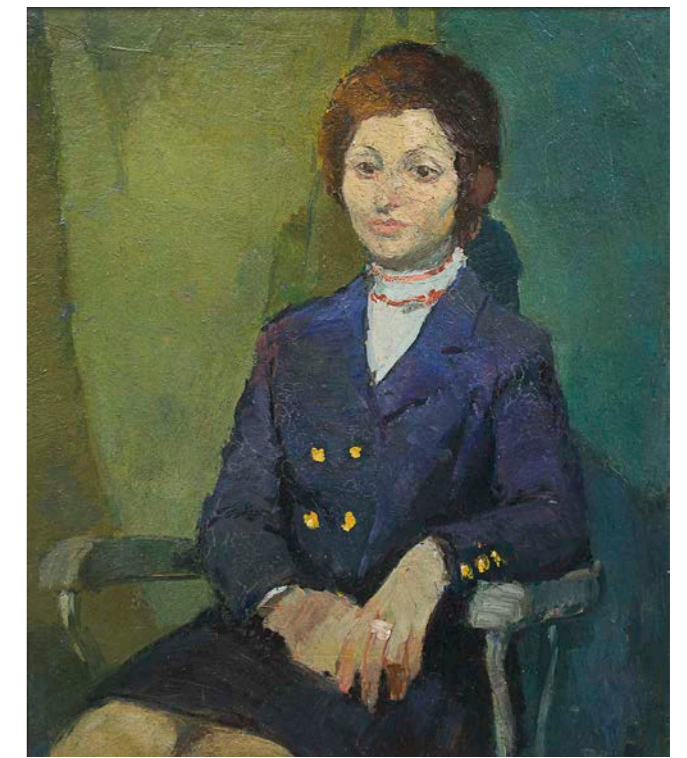
**Fakher Mohammed (1954)**  
*Untitled, 2019*  
 Acrylic on Canvas, 155 x 130 cm  
 Signed Lower Right



**Balasim Jassam (1954 - 2021)**  
*Recollection, 2018*  
 Acrylic on Canvas, 150 x 150 cm  
 Signed Lower Left



**Jaber Alwan (1948)**  
*The Waiting Villagers, 1960s*  
 Oil on Canvas, 50 x 50 cm  
 Signed Lower Right



**Faisal Laibi Sahi (1945)**  
*Portrait of artist's friend "Zabyour", 1970*  
 Oil on Canvas, 60 x 51 cm  
 Signed Upper Left and on Back



**Amer Khalil (1957)**  
*Untitled*, 1999  
Wooden Sculpture, 150 x 18 x 16 cm  
Signed on Back



**Abdul Karim Khaleel (1960)**  
*Fallen Warrior*, 1997  
Marble Sculpture, 34 x 16 x 20 cm  
Signed on Leg



**Akram Naji (1945)**  
*Untitled*, 2015  
Ceramic Sculpture, 20 x 42 x 5 cm  
Signed Lower Mid and on Back



**Maher Al-Samaraie (1949)**  
*Untitled*, 2022  
Mixed Media, 25 x 12 x 6 cm (Each)  
Signed on Each Side

The collection includes as many artists from the 1980s as it does from the 60s. The 80s artists constitute the war generation since they lived through the Iraq-Iran war in the 1980s, followed by the Gulf War in 1991, and finally, the USA-led invasion of Iraq in 2003. They studied in Baghdad, but their harsh experiences posed severe challenges. The works of some fifty creative painters, ceramists, and sculptors in the collection portray the complexities of their age. There are parallels between this generation and that of the 1990s, who themselves lived through continuous wars and were subject to severe moral and material tensions. Despite the challenging conditions, they detached themselves. They moved toward more serious art, creating works based on their experiences and using non-traditional techniques while applying what they had gleaned from their unfettered imagination. This drove them towards modernism, even though they had never left Iraq before the 1990s. Through ongoing communication, they maintained continuity with the older masters wherever they were. They continue to produce artworks both inside and outside Iraq, which are regularly exhibited and well-represented in the collection, which features works by Mahmoud Obaidi, Himat Mohammad Ali, Ali Jabbar, Kareem Risan, Hanaa Malallah, Ghassan Ghaeb, Amar Dawod, Muayad Muhsin, Hassan Haddad, Nazar Yahya, Mohammed Al-Shammarey, Ahmed Al-Bahrani, and others. The Ibrahimi Collection hopes to increase the number of works it holds of the younger generations from the 1990s onwards, who have managed to take their place wherever they may be. Certain artists from this generation, such as Adel Abidin, have made their presence felt in international circles.

The Ibrahimi Collection project is building up a store of memories to serve as a resource on the modern Iraqi movement, representing the whole panoply of Iraqi art both inside and outside the country. At present, it provides a representation of the various generations that have come and gone, and whose members continue to communicate with each other, wherever they are in the diaspora. This collection thus makes it possible for researchers to chart the movement through the constant engagement of the generations across the course of their development.



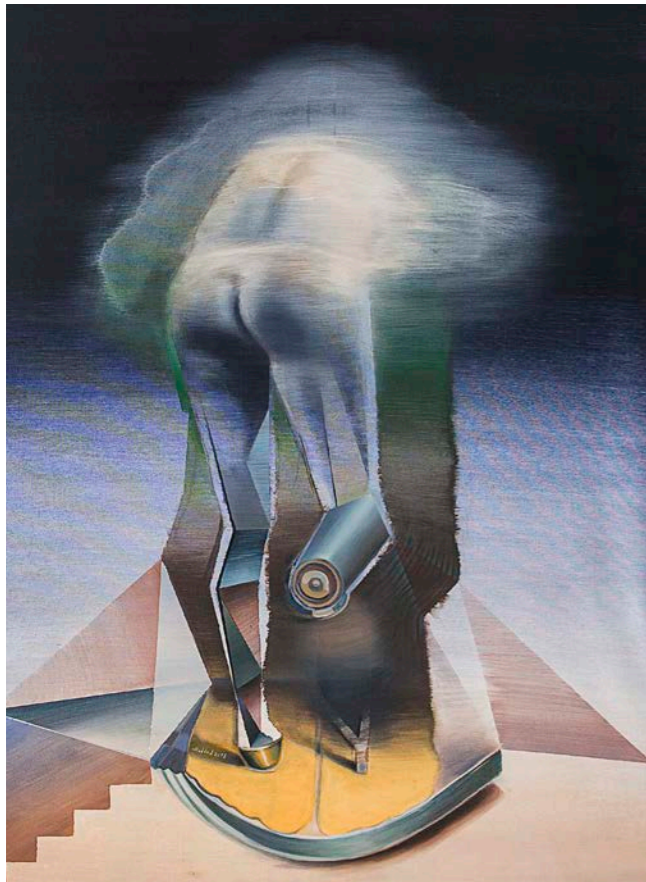
**Mahmoud Obaidi (1966)**  
*Untitled*, 1995  
 Mixed Media on Carton, 75 x 55 cm  
 Signed Lower Right and Left



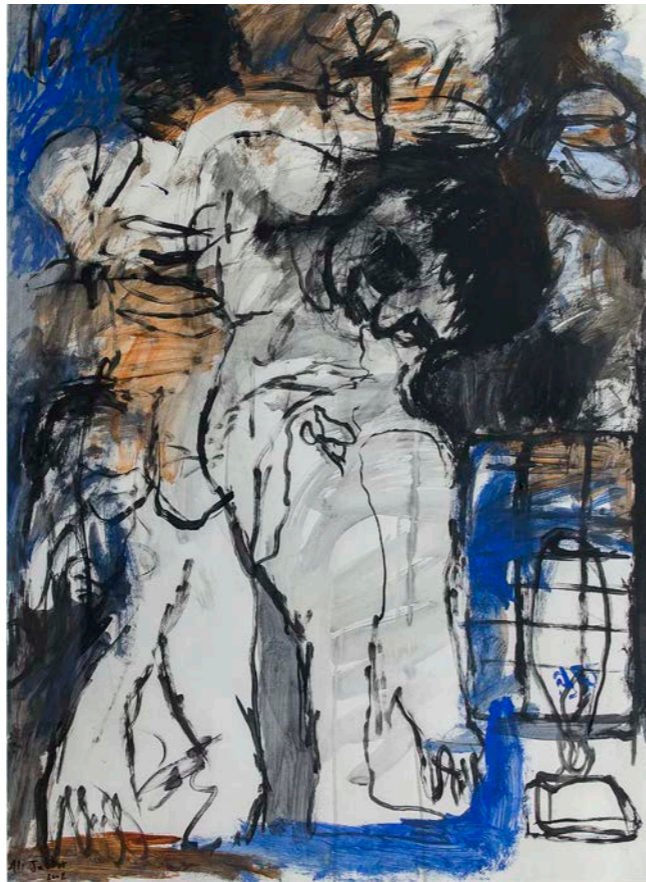
**Amar Dawod (1957)**  
*Repercussions*, 2011  
 Oil on Canvas, 200 x 250 cm  
 Signed Upper Right



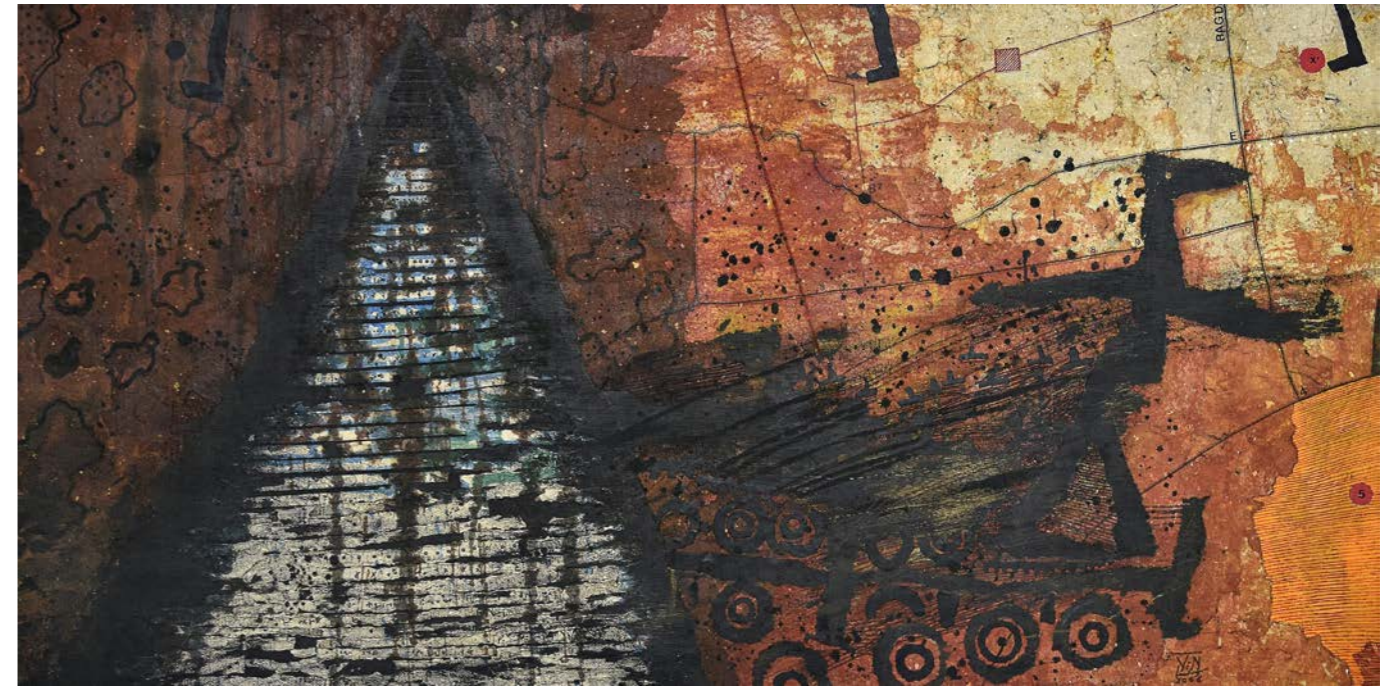
**Himat Mohammad Ali (1960)**  
*Untitled*, 1993  
 Acrylic on Canvas, 60 x 60 cm  
 Signed Lower Right



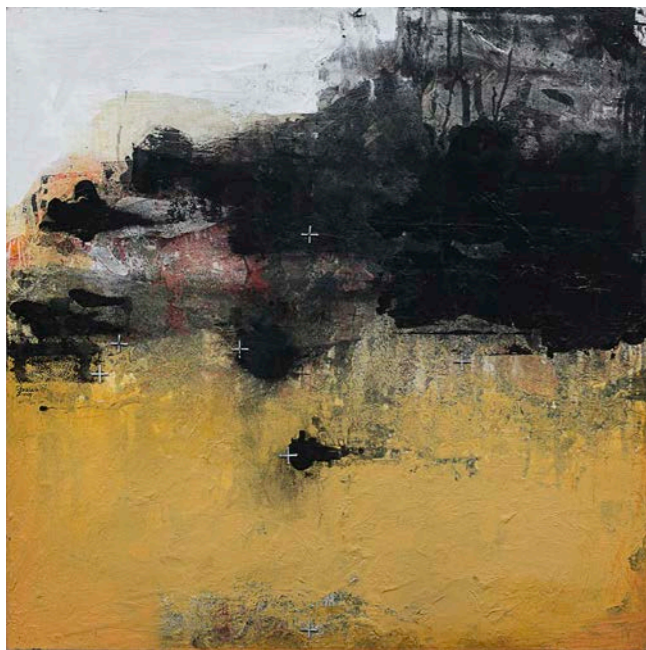
**Hassan Haddad (1962)**  
*Uprooting*, 2018  
Acrylic on Canvas, 140 x 100 cm  
Signed Lower Left



**Ali Jabbar (1963)**  
*The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*, 2002  
Oil on Carton, 100 x 70 cm  
Signed Lower Left



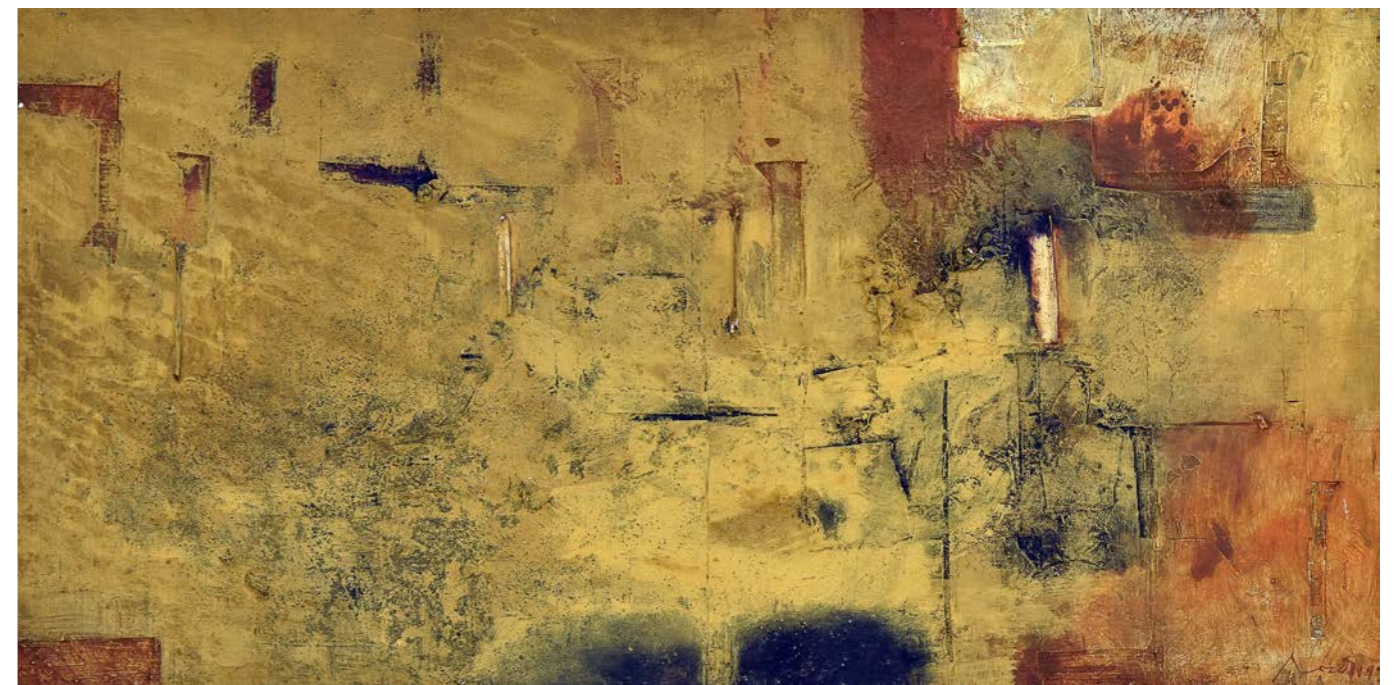
**Kareem Risan (1960)**  
*Baghdad is an Occupied City*, 2006  
Mixed Media on Board, 100 x 200 cm  
Signed Lower Right



**Ghassan Ghaeb (1964)**  
*Map*, 2009  
Mixed Media on Board, 100 x 100 cm  
Signed Mid Left



**Hanaa Malallah (1958)**  
*Pattern and Chaotic Surface*, 2000  
Mixed Media on Board, 100 x 100 cm  
Signed Lower Left



**Nazar Yahya (1963)**  
*Untitled*, 1998  
Mixed Media on Board, 60 x 120 cm  
Signed Lower Right



**Ahmed Al-Bahrani (1965)**  
*Binary Figure, 2005*  
Metal Sculpture, 85 x 35 x 17 cm  
Signed Lower Left



**Adel Abidin (1973)**  
*Relic # 23, 2017*  
Fiberglass Sculpture, 32 x 68 x 26 cm  
Signed Lower Right

### **Mrs. May Muzaffar**

Born in Baghdad, B.A. English literature, Baghdad University. Full time writer, living and working in Amman, Jordan. Poet, short story writer, art critic and translator.

Sponsor of Rafa Nasiri Studio Amman. Sponsor of Rafa Nasiri Annual Award for Graphic Arts, initiated 2014. Published books in Baghdad, Beirut and Amman.

Authored, since 1970: 6 collections of poetry. 5 collections of short stories, 6 Books translated from English to Arabic, related to art and literature.

Safarun fil -Mada, on life and work of Prof. Nasser Din al Assad, Beirut 1998.

Rafa Nasiri, His Life and Art, by Sabah al Nasiri and May Muzaffar, Beirut 2010,

Story of Water and Fire, Rafa Nasiri and May Muzaffar, Beirut 2021, Rafa Nasiri, The Cosmic Painter, Beirut 2010, Modern Art in Iraq, Continuity and Differentiation, Beirut 2015. The Manifestations of Arabic Letter in Rafa Nasiri Art Works - Misk Art Institute -Riyadh (S.A.-Pub by Rizzoli-Italy 2021. English and Arabic).

Editor: The Artistic Memoires of Surgeon and Artist Dr. Khaled al Qassab, Arabic, London 2007. Rafa Nasiri, 50 Years of Printmaking, Skira Milano. 2013-English, Rafa Nasiri Artist Books, with Sonjia Mejcher Atassi, SKIRA 2016 – English. Rafa Nasiri, The River and I, Baghdad 2014 - Arabic, Rafa Nasiri 50 Years between East and West, (collected and edited) Beirut 2018. Essays and articles (English) published in collective books:

Modern Art in Iraq, Roots and Development: Iraq, History, People and Politics, ed. Shams Inati, Humanity Books, USA 2000.

Art in Iraq Today, published by Meem Gallery, Dubai, 2011.

Articles and essays on art and poetry presented in different cultural events and seminars, in Arabic and English.

Front Cover:  
**Hafidh Al-Droubi (1914 - 1991)**  
*Al-Mahalla (Baghdadi District), 1979*  
Oil on Canvas - 70 x 50 cm  
Signed Lower Right



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