

# Iraqi Art

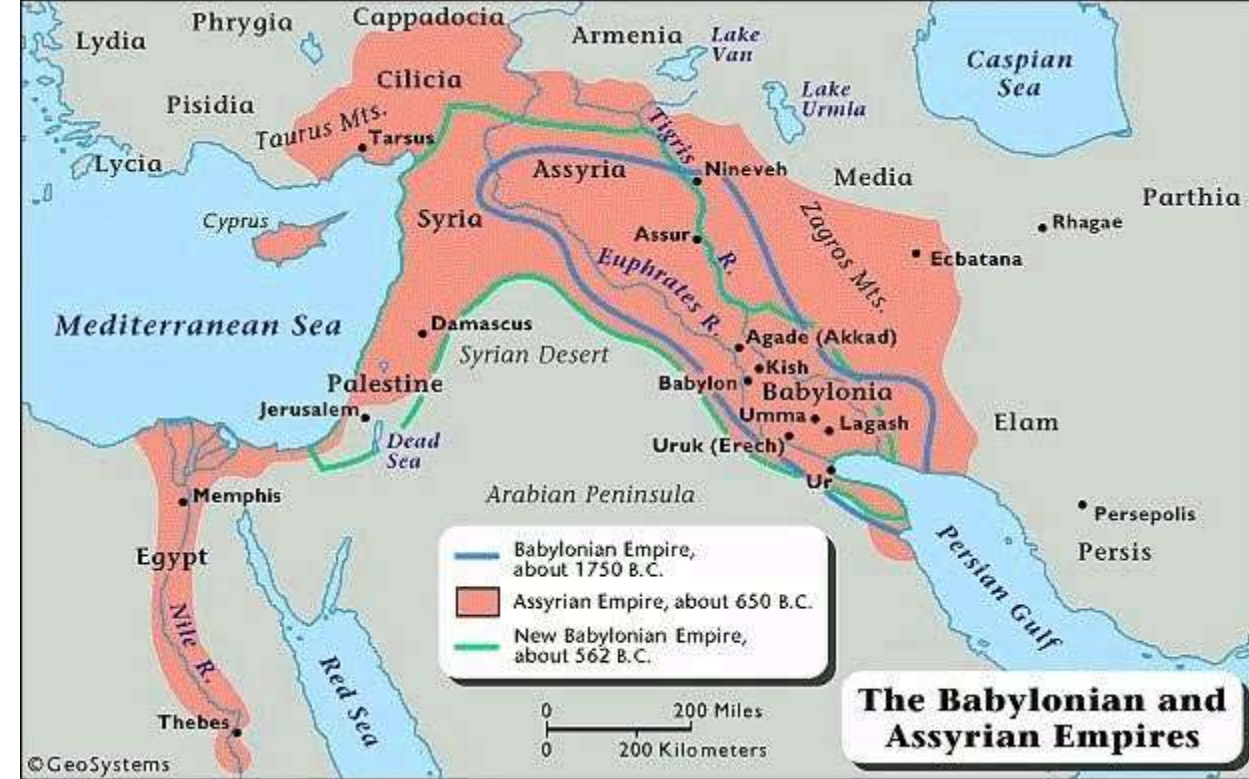
Then and Now

# Assyrian Art

Assyria, also called the Assyrian Empire, was a Mesopotamian kingdom and empire of the Ancient Near East that existed as a state from perhaps as early as the 25th century BC until its collapse between 612 BC and 609 BC; thereby spanning the periods of the Early to Middle Bronze Age through to the late Iron Age.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J1GF\\_8l97xU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J1GF_8l97xU) (Overview)

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWP4V562cnc&t=1s> (Getty overview of art and history 2.5 mins)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2GrvBLKaRSI> (Assyrian sculpture Lammassu—good—5 mins)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EbPrIb3mB1k> (MET 3 mins)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZG6oYuUKApI> (retrieved from Nimrud 3 mins--good)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dxk\\_FtZnb7w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dxk_FtZnb7w) (no)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U2iZ83oIZH0> (Ishtar gate)

















































# Michael Rakowitz

[Michael Rakowitz](#) was born in 1973 in Great Neck, NY. The artist draws upon extensive research on cultural objects and events, in order to weave together complex histories and unlikely symbols in his sculptures, installations, participatory workshops, films, and architectural interventions. His Iraqi-Jewish heritage and the damage caused by long conflicts between the West and the Middle East also serve as important influences for his work. Rakowitz critiques the ongoing forces of colonization, bringing attention not only to the value of cultural artifacts that have been lost, looted, or destroyed but also to the people who have suffered from continuing violence. His work asks viewers to reconsider the relationships between hospitality and hostility, and provenance and expropriation, and to confront the complicity of cultural institutions and audiences in geopolitical matters.

- <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-37992394> (Destruction of Nimrud)
- <https://art21.org/watch/extended-play/michael-rakowitz-haunting-the-west-short/>





















“[Michael Rakowitz: Nimrud](#),” the [Wellin Museum of Art](#)’s exhibition that opened in October, focuses on the loss of Iraq’s art and cultural wealth via colonization, archaeological exploration, and war. The centerpiece of the exhibition is the recreation of Room H of the Northwest Palace of the ancient Assyrian city of Nimrud (Kalhu), constructed between 883 and 859 BCE, first excavated between 1845 and 1851 and thought to have included nearly 200 rooms.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MWqxHE5ed2I&t=30s>





# Modern and Contemporary Iraqi Art

## Iraqi Modern and Contemporary Art

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C46zoqfmcME>

Our Modern & Contemporary Middle Eastern Art sale on 2 June in London will feature the important collections of renowned Iraqi architects, Mohammed Makiya (1914-2015) and Said Ali Madhloom (1921-2017). Featuring works by the pioneers of Iraqi Modernism – including Jewad Selim, Dia Azzawi, Kadhim Hayder, Faeq Hassan and Shakir Hassan Al-Said – the collection is one of the most significant in modern Middle Eastern art.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T62wEI04C3E> (20<sup>th</sup> century art) Bagdad

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PxJ9ko-j9xY> (Christie's Middle Eastern art)

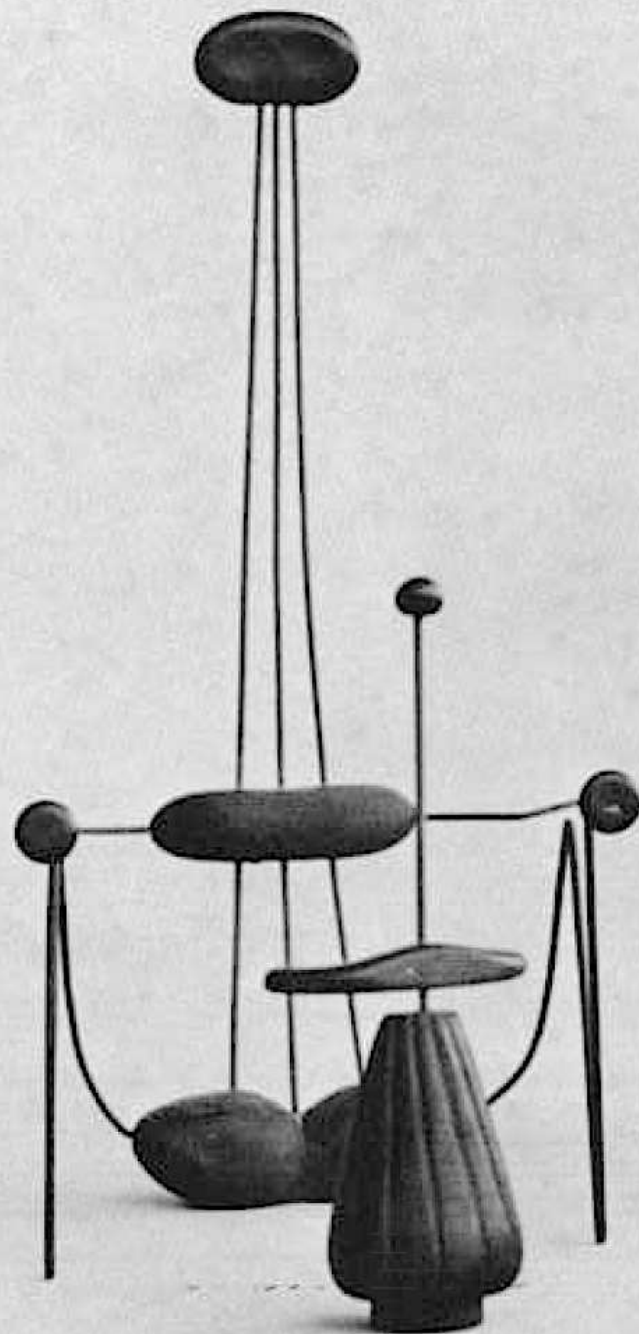


# Jewad Selim (1919-1961)

Jewad Selim was an Iraqi painter and sculptor born in Ankara in 1919. He became an influential artist through his involvement with the Iraqi Baghdad Modern Art Group, which encouraged artists to explore techniques that combined both Arab heritage and modern art forms.



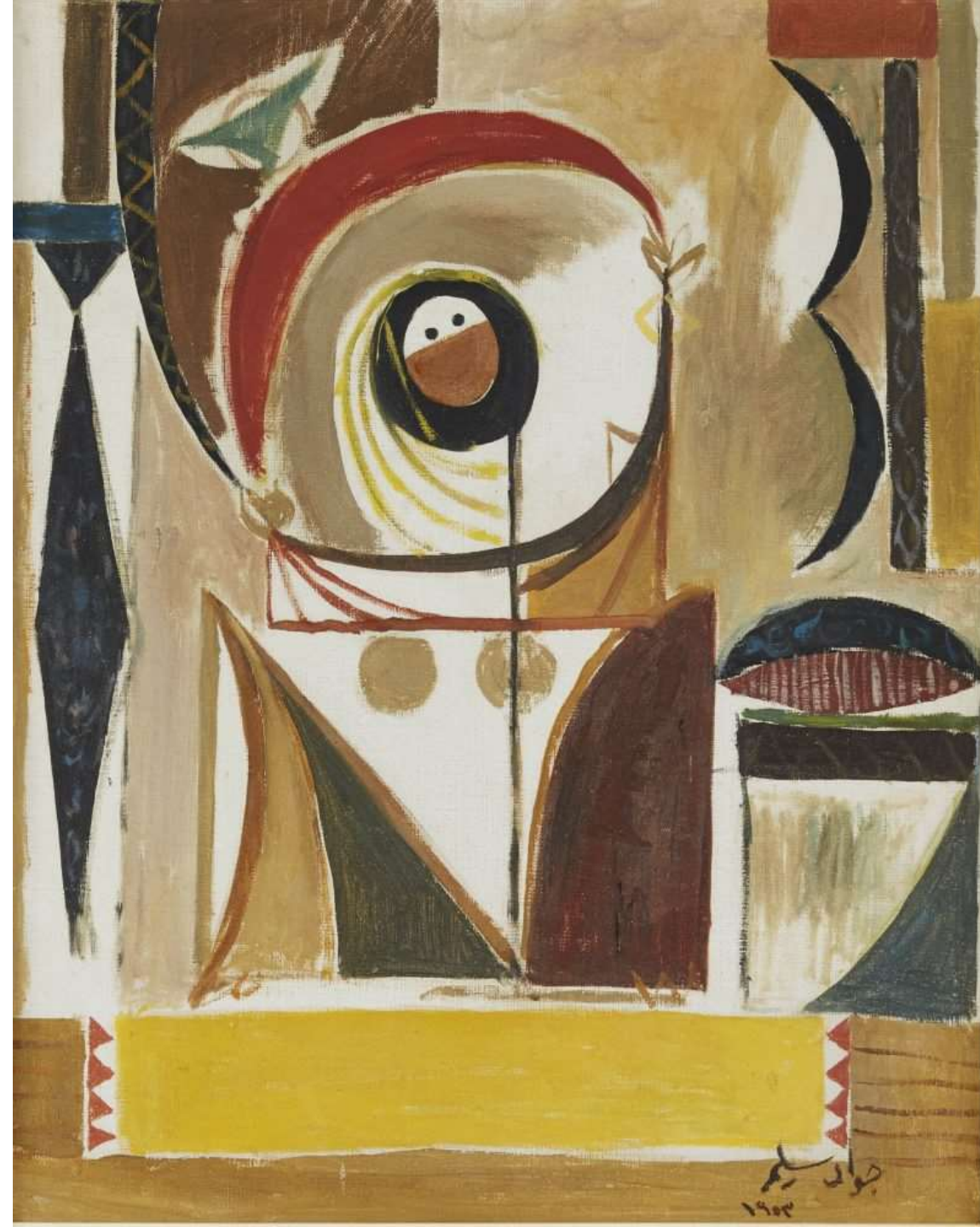








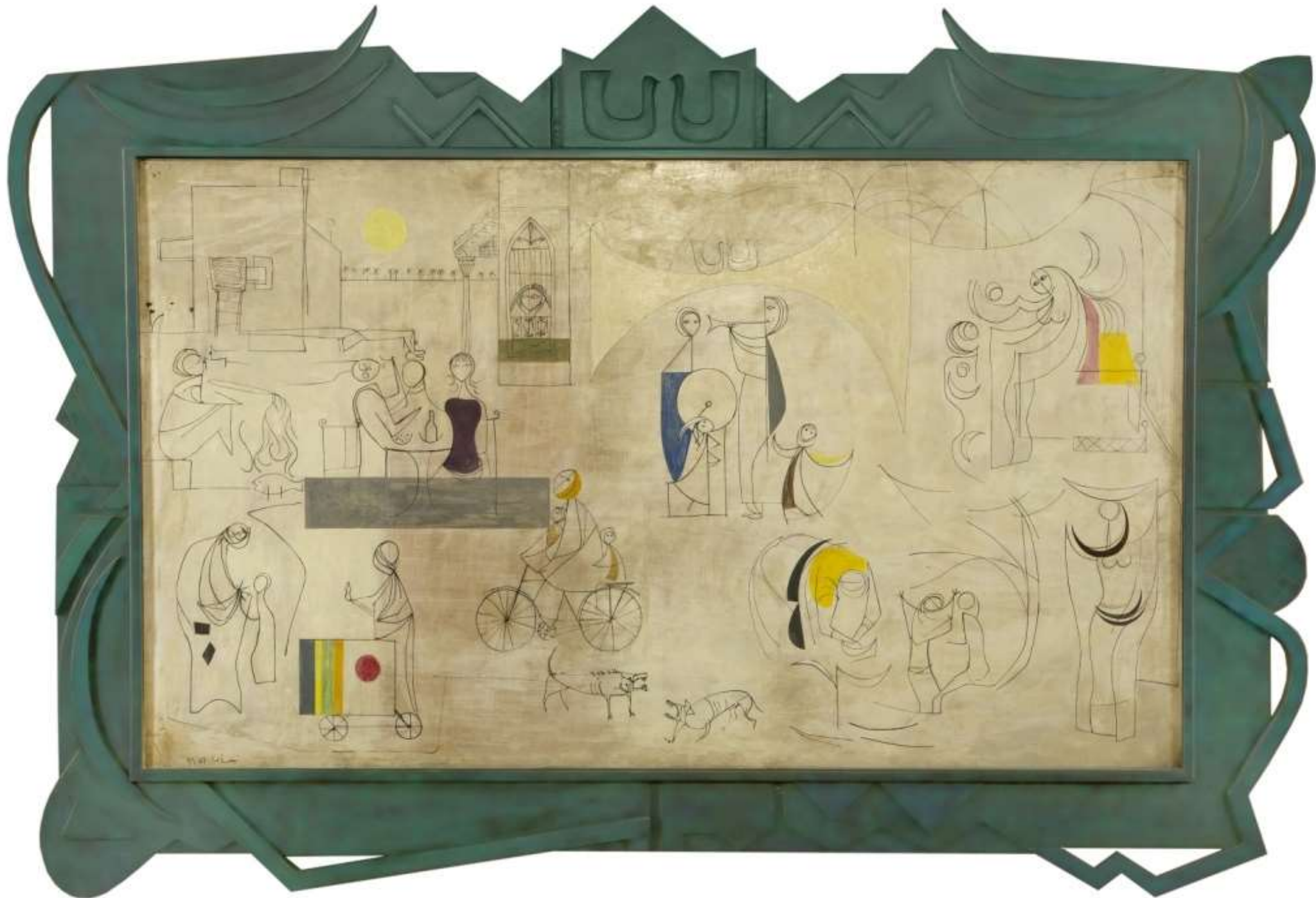




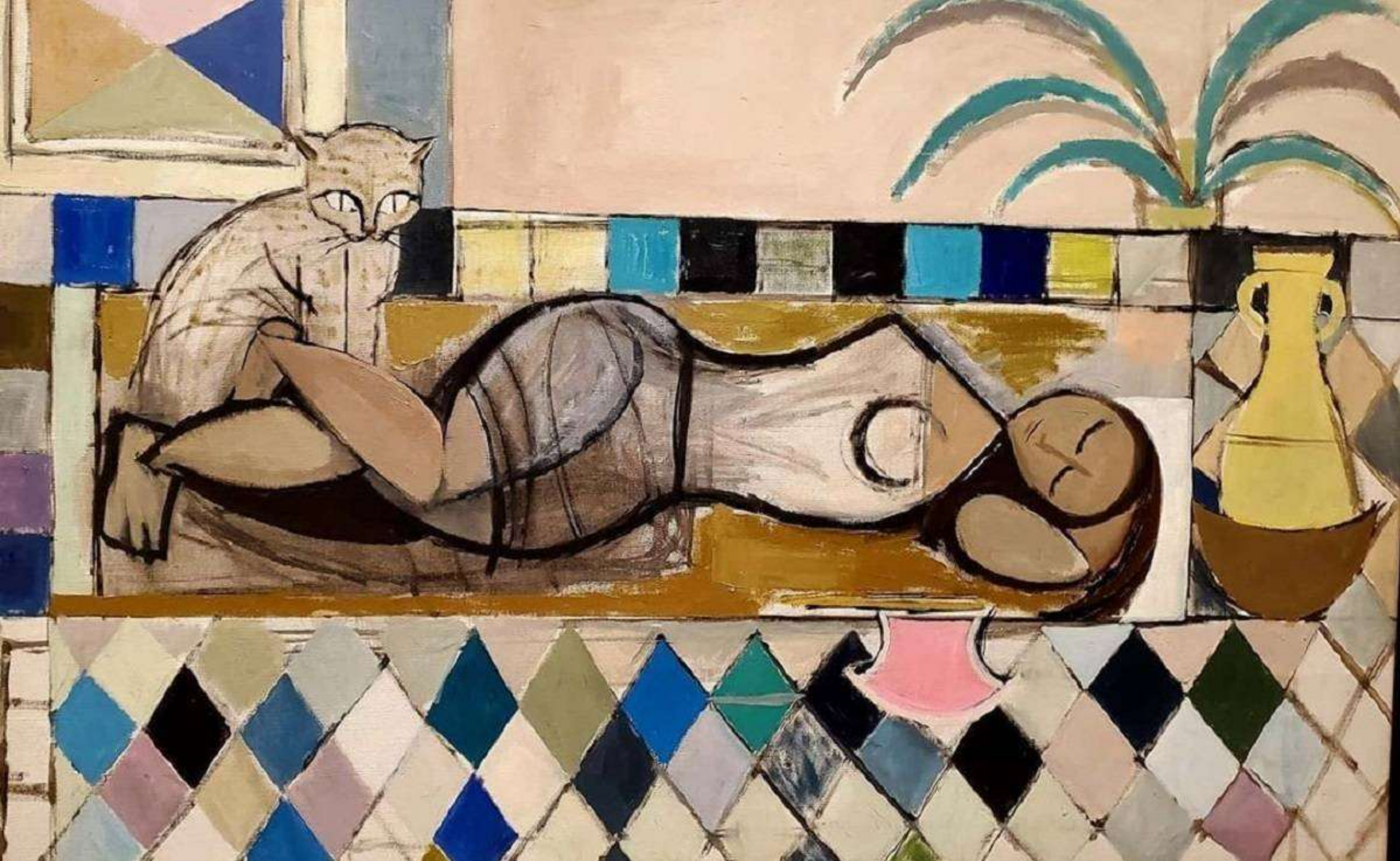














# Rifat Chadirji (1926-2020)

Rifat Chadirji was an Iraqi architect, photographer, author and activist. He was often referred to as the father of modern Iraqi architecture, having designed more than 100 buildings across the nation.

Father of Iraqi architecture [Rifat Chadirji](#) has passed away at 93, on April 10 in [London](#), after contracting the novel coronavirus. Born in 1926 in Baghdad, he is responsible for more than 100 buildings across Iraq.

Some of his most iconic works include the Tahrir Square's Freedom Monument, the Tobacco Monopoly Headquarters in 1965, the Central Post Office in Baghdad in 1975 and the Unknown Soldier Monument, one of his most culturally significant intervention designed in 1959, demolished in 1982 and then replaced by a statue of Saddam Hussein in 2003.

<https://tamayouz-award.com/rifat-chadirji-receives-the-2015-tamayouz-architectural-lifetime-achievement-award/> (no)



















# Zaha Hadid

Often known as the "Queen of the Curve," Zaha Hadid was one of the most admired and extraordinary architects of her time. Forbes even named her among the 100 most powerful women in the world. Her daring and unconventional buildings tiptoe the line between fantasy and reality, changing our understanding of what architecture can do. She has won some of the world's top honors in the realm of architecture, including the Pritzker Prize. So, why are Zaha Hadid's buildings so extraordinary? What influences her signature style? Finally, Is it true that her inspiration comes from the 'Black Square' author, Kazimir Malevich?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FwOqd5Rf0tc>



























# Firyal Al-Adhamy



Born in Baghdad in 1950, she began her artistic endeavours as a hobby, crafting jewellery, costumes, textiles and woodwork, all inspired by Iraq's ancient cultural history. Later, when some of her jewellery was acquired by museums, she began to see her work as a potential career.<sup>[2]</sup>

Although she graduated from the [University of Baghdad](#), she did not study arts<sup>[3]</sup> and is a self-taught artist.<sup>[4]</sup>

Her aim is to faithfully reproduce ancient objects, thereby preserving Iraq's heritage.<sup>[5]</sup> Firyal's latest collection, *Postcards from Mesopotamia*, is inspired by her reaction to the tragic looting of the museum of Baghdad in 2003.<sup>[6]</sup>

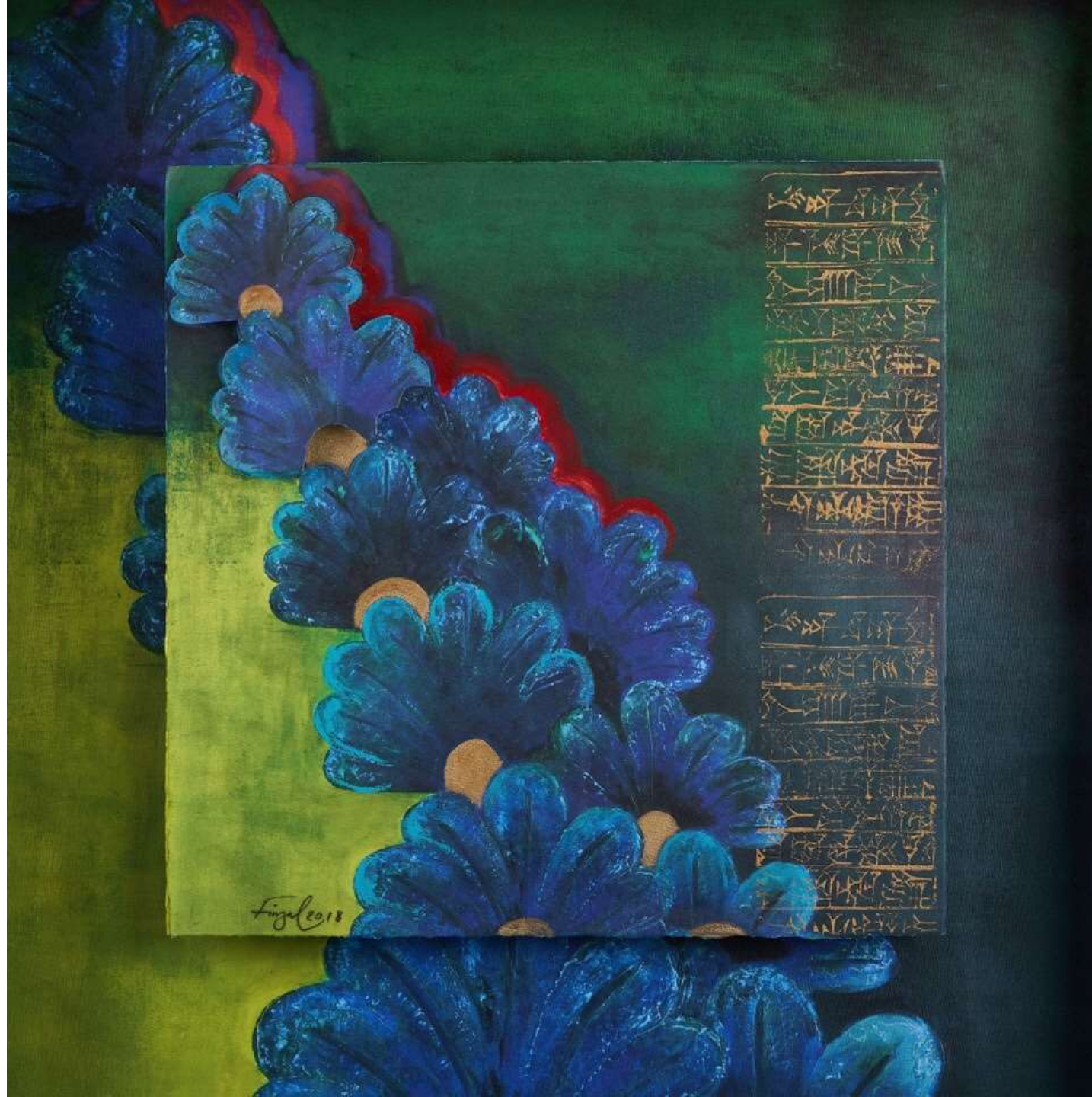
She has participated in both solo and group exhibitions, in [London](#) and in the [Persian Gulf](#).

<https://alchetron.com/Firyal-Al-Adhamy>



























# Layla Al-Attar (1965-1993)

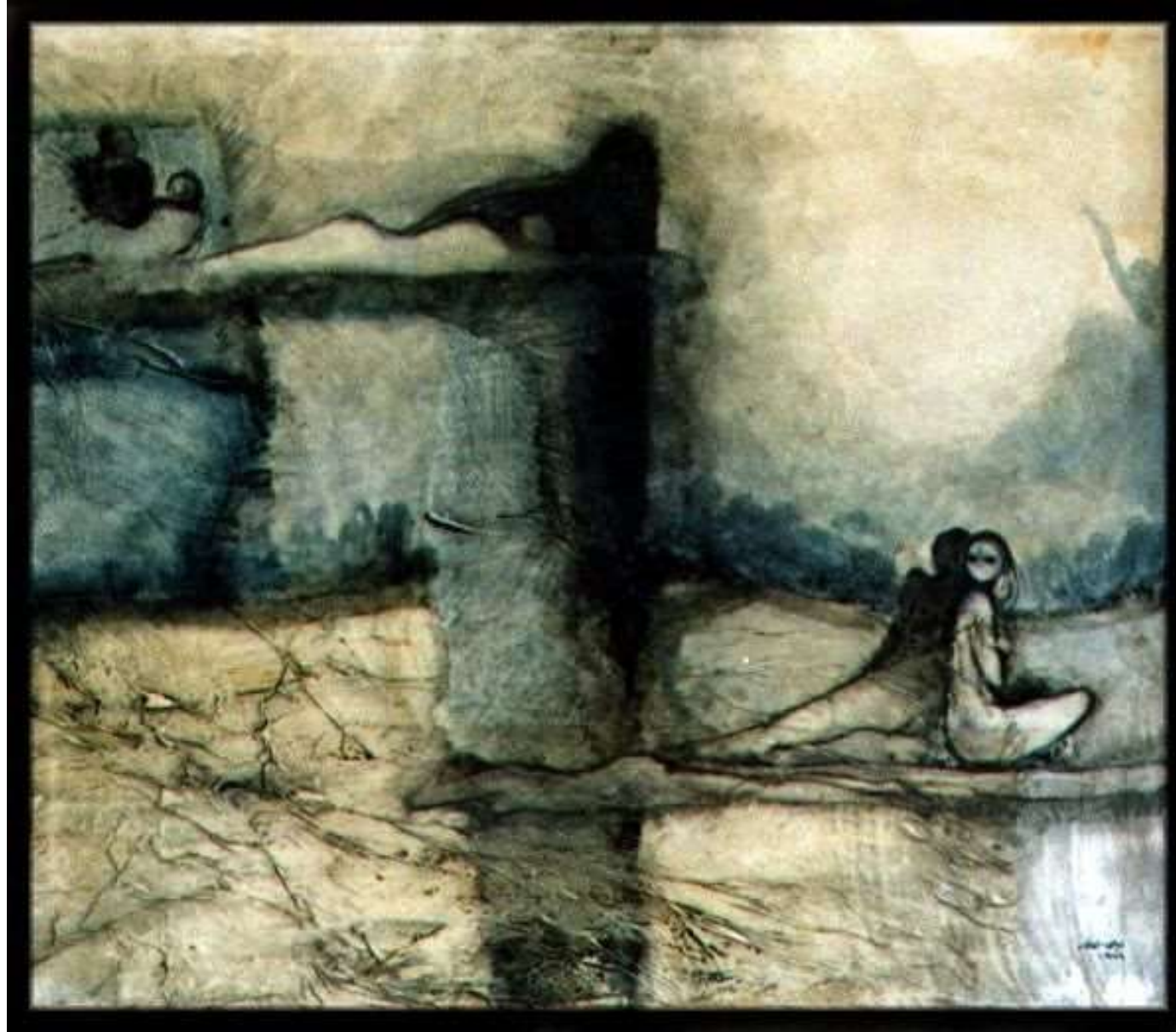
Layla Al-Attar was an Iraqi artist and painter who became the Director of the Iraqi National Art Museum. Through her art, al-Attar expressed ideals that attempted to recognize the importance of women in all spheres of society.

On 26 June 1993, US warships launched a Tomahawk cruise missile attack on Baghdad in retaliation for an alleged April 1993 assassination attempt on George H.W. Bush in Kuwait. The attack killed 8 civilians, including the world-renowned artist Layla al-Attar. The audio featured here is from a Democracy Now! commentary by Dennis Bernstein, broadcast on 20 February 1998. The text was later published in Salon as "Uncle Sam regrets," and it includes information gathered by Bernstein in an interview with Layla al-Attar's daughter, Rema.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AgF914EHmeg>



















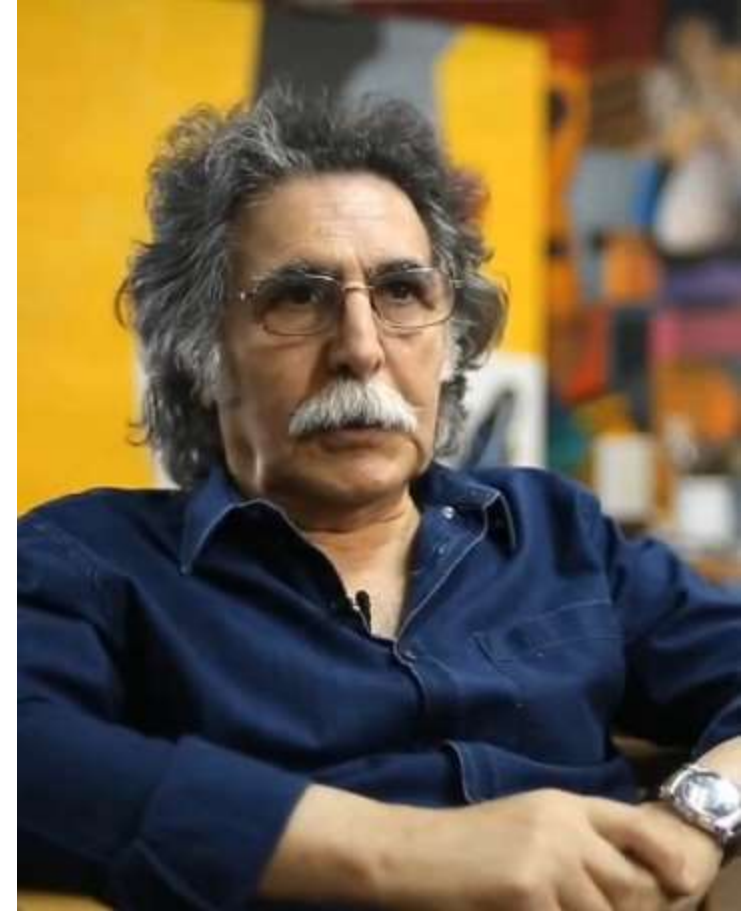


# Dia Al-Azzawi

**Dia Al-Azzawi** is an Iraqi painter and sculptor, now living and working in [London](#) and one of the pioneers of modern Arab art. He is noted for incorporating [Arabic script](#) into his paintings. Active in the arts community, he founded the Iraqi art group known as *New Vision* and has been an inspiration to a generation of young, [calligraffiti](#) artists.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f8LDv2kthzw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xjFXv7jqWYU&t=24s> (shorter)



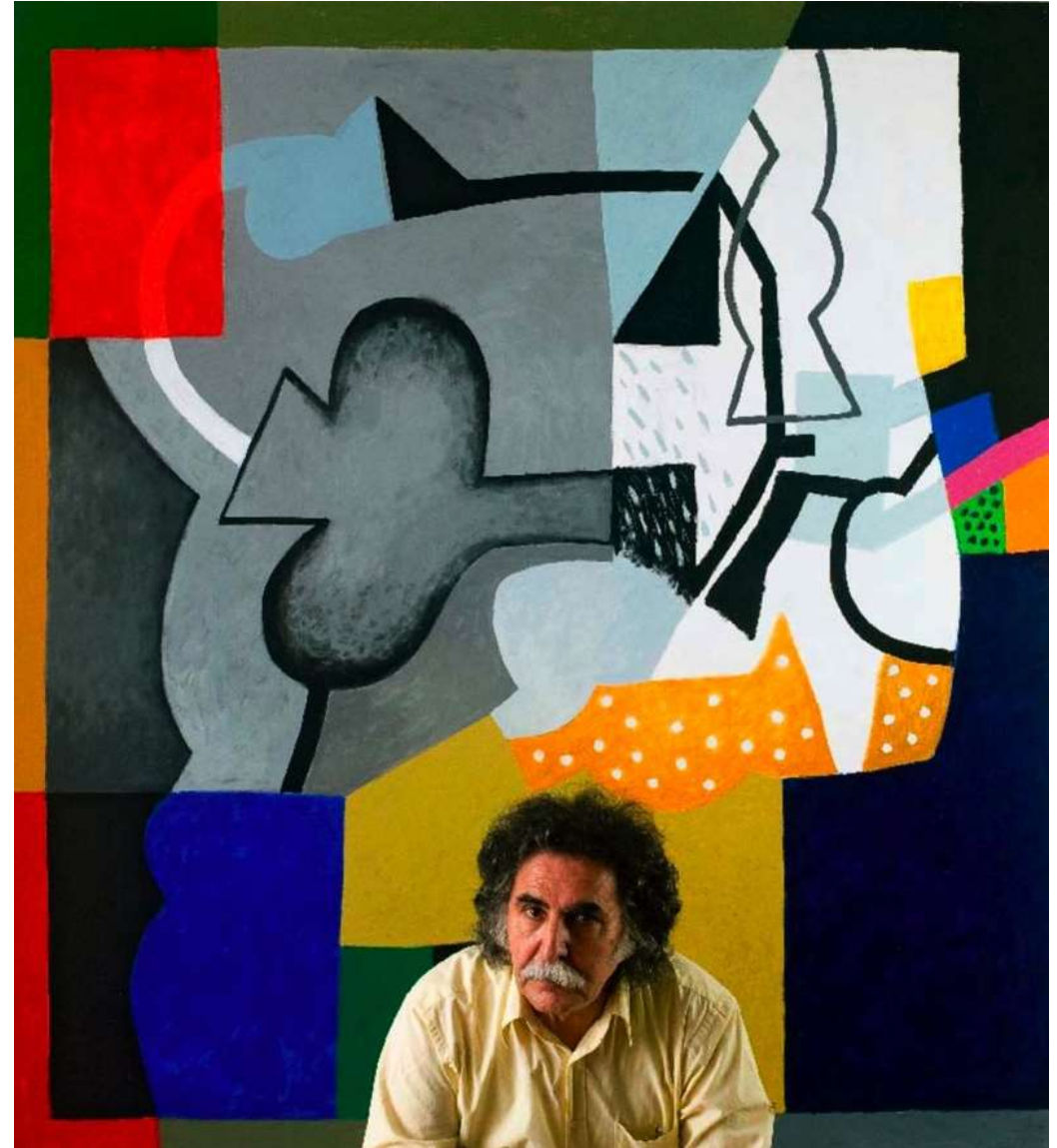










































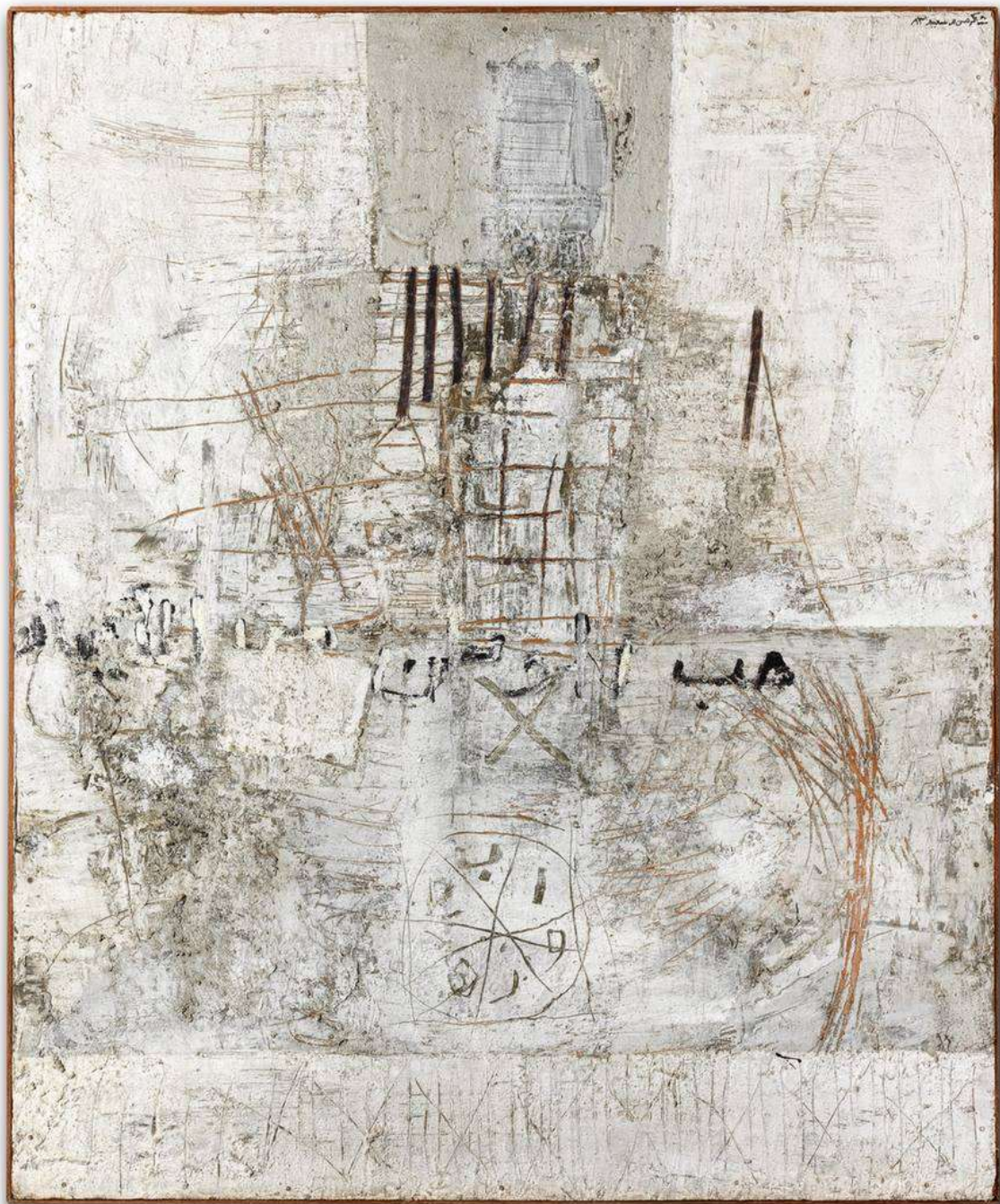
# Shakir Hassan Al-Said (1925-2004)

Shakir Hassan Al Said, an Iraqi painter, sculptor and writer, is considered one of Iraq's most innovative and influential artists. An artist, philosopher, art critic and art historian, he was actively involved in the formation of two important art groups that influenced the direction of post-colonial art in Iraq.

[Shakir Hassan Al Said](#), the founder of the Baghdad Modern Art Group, wanted to create a distinctive Iraqi cultural identity, picking up the thread of Iraqi art from where it had been cut short by the Mongol invasion in the 13th century. He later formed the mystical One Dimension Group that sought to reveal, through Arabic symbols, the hidden essence of being.

































# Kadhim Hayder (1932-1985)

Kadhim Haydar is among the most revered members of Iraq's modernist movement and was a member of a number of artists groups. Merging his interests in literature, symbolism and daily life, Hayder articulated multiple levels of readings in his painting practice. He studied painting at the Institute of Fine Arts in Baghdad and later attended the Royal College of Art in London to study theatre design and printmaking from 1961 to 1962. After his return to Iraq and infused with a sense of pan-Arab identity, he introduced a new paradigm to his representational style. He focused on the eighth century Battle of Karbala, which resulted in the death of Prophet Muhammad's grandson Hussein ibn Ali, creating a series of paintings known as *Melhamet al-Shahid*, or *The Martyr's Epic*. An analysis of Hayder's approach suggests that he re-contextualised the practice of taziya (mourning) through poetry and theatrical re-enactments of the battle. Hayder's work was exhibited frequently in the 1970s, including at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris and Baghdad's First Arab Biennial in 1974.



























# Faeq Hassan (1914-1992)

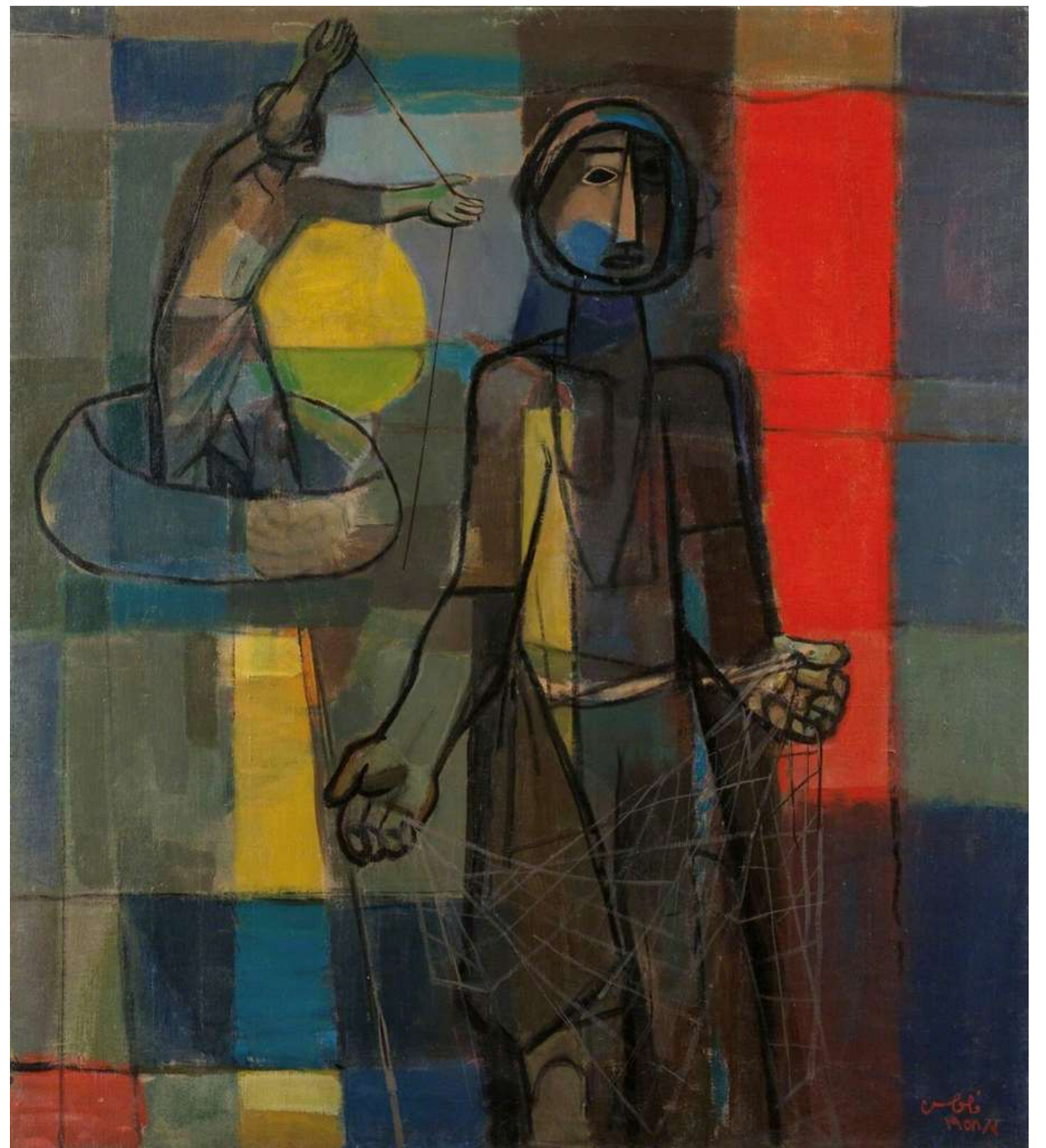
**Faeq Hassan** (also known as Faiq Hassan, Fayiq Hassan or Faik Hassan) (1914–1992) was an Iraqi [painter](#) noted for founding several 20th century art groups, which collectively were responsible for bridging the gap between Iraqi heritage and traditional art and modern art. He is often called the 'father of Iraqi modern art.'

















# Hayv Kahraman

Born in Baghdad and educated in Europe, [Hayv Kahraman](#)'s focus on the aesthetics of beauty have thrown her into the limelight of contemporary art. By using the conventions of formal attractiveness, Kahraman negates the visual her audience sees, and instead her canvases deliver messages about current issues. Kahraman's work embodies her personal nomadic life mediating between Islamic art, [Italian](#) renaissance styles and even [Japanese](#) art. Kahraman's native Iraq has always impacted her work: 'I have of necessity inherited a host of issues that find expression in my work', she says.

Hayv Kahraman is a Los Angeles-based Kurdish-american artist. She primarily paints, but also sculpts and sketches. Her works reflect the controversial issues of gender, specifically concerning female identity in relation to her experiences as a refugee, and all issues that plague her home country of Iraq.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3JTIVB32JcA>

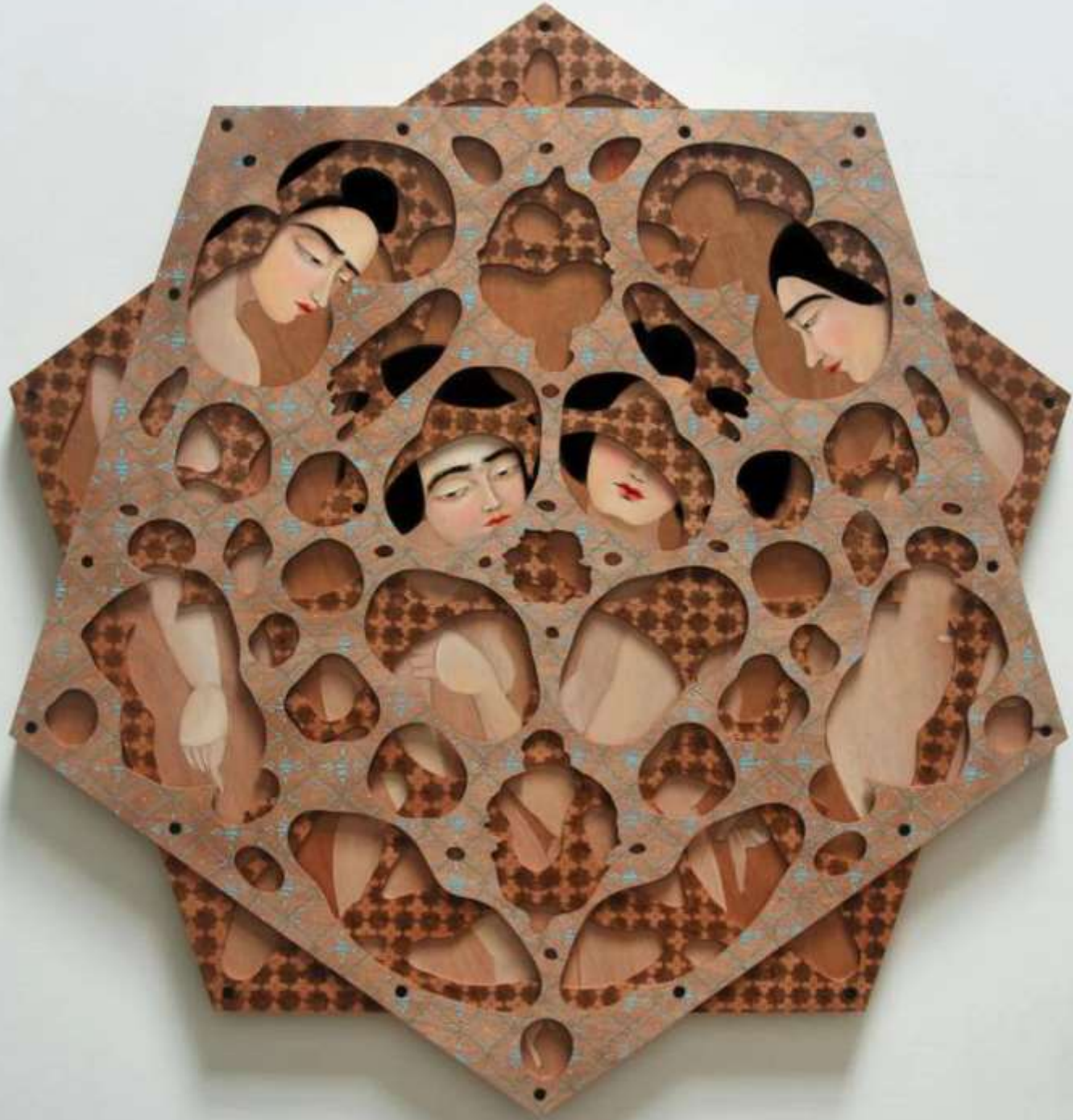
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TIxB2E6PSBw&t=16s>



















واحد اشعل باخرمن اوطلى كنلوه هدا بندخ كنهن بنشى بالندرخ  
 بعدا نسده (منه بخون) نكنده فان واحد سده افند كنلوه بسن  
 كان آنى هدا اندل بيه بعد موصول سده نس









# Hassan Massoudy

Hassan Massoudy, born in 1944, is an Iraqi painter and calligrapher, considered by the French writer Michel Tournier as the "greatest living Calligrapher", currently lives in Paris. His work has influenced a generation of calligraffiti artists.

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5-WSaPq\\_B8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5-WSaPq_B8)  
(short)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fD4XnXMnUgw>  
(short)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-hA2A4yrirM>



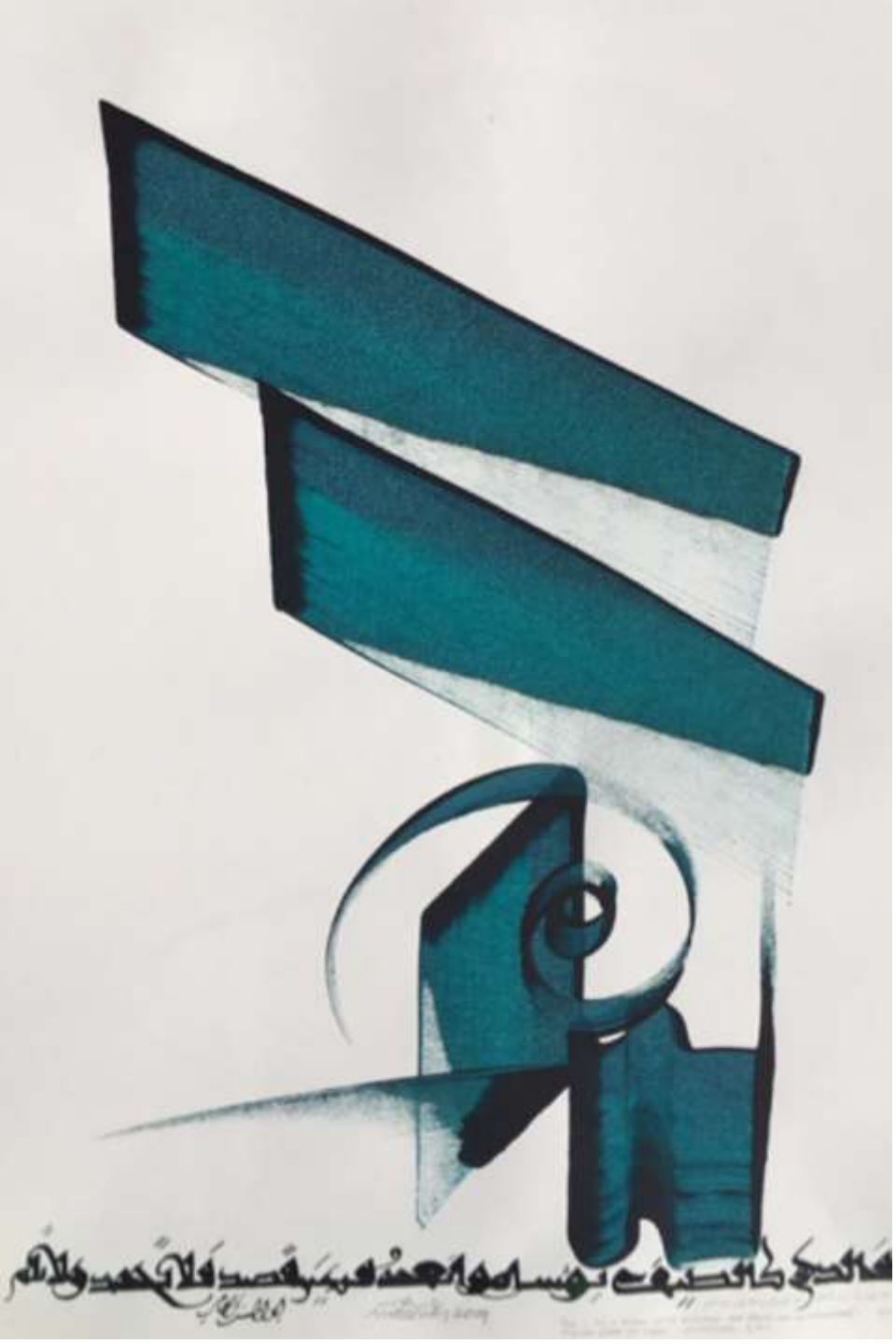














# Suad Al-Attar

Suad al-Attar is an Iraqi painter whose work is in private and public collections worldwide, including The British Museum and the Gulbenkian Collection. She has held over twenty solo exhibitions, including one in Baghdad that became the first solo exhibition in the country's history for a woman artist.













# Assignment Suggestions...

- Reimagine a ruined object.
- Take a broken object and “restore” it artistically.
- Practice with curves.
- Abstract an element from Assyrian/Babylonian bas relief.