

A keynote conversation with
SAEB EIGNER
on

Artists of the Middle East 1900 to Now

Chaired by
EUGENE ROGAN

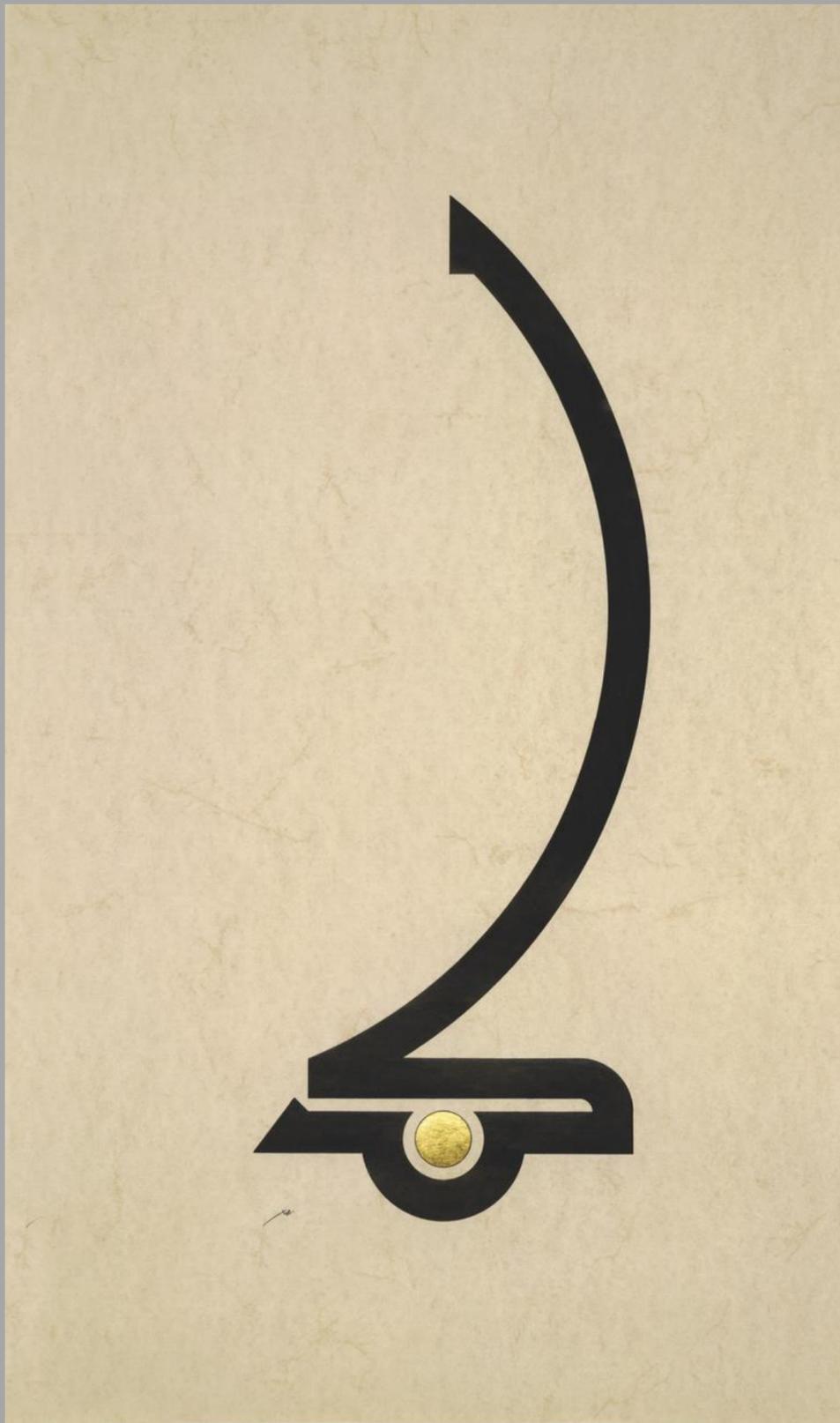
Thursday 5 March 2026, St Antony's College, Oxford

The birth and primacy of the written word

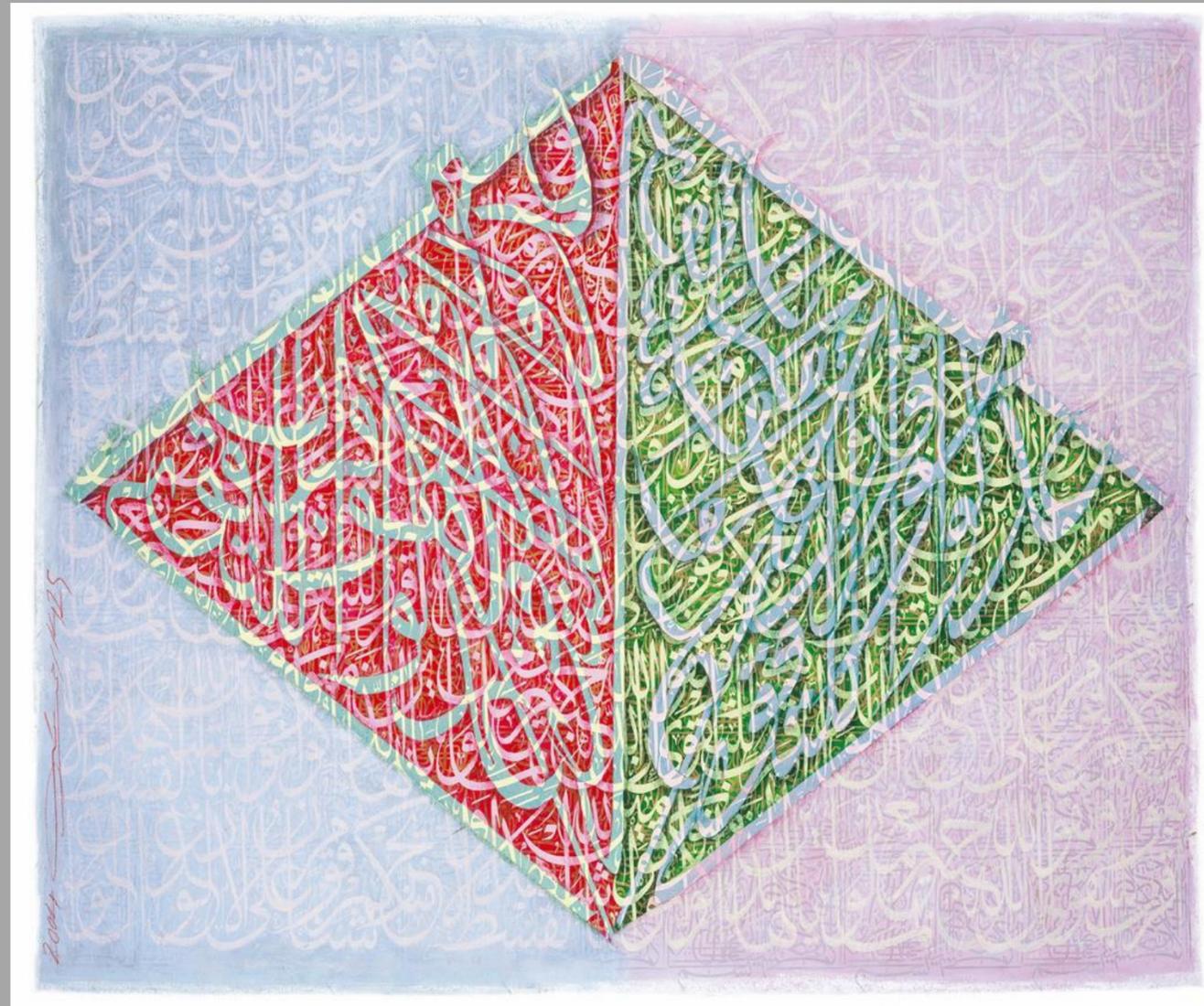


Top: Leaf from a Qur'an, North Africa, 10th century
Museum of Islamic Art, Qatar.

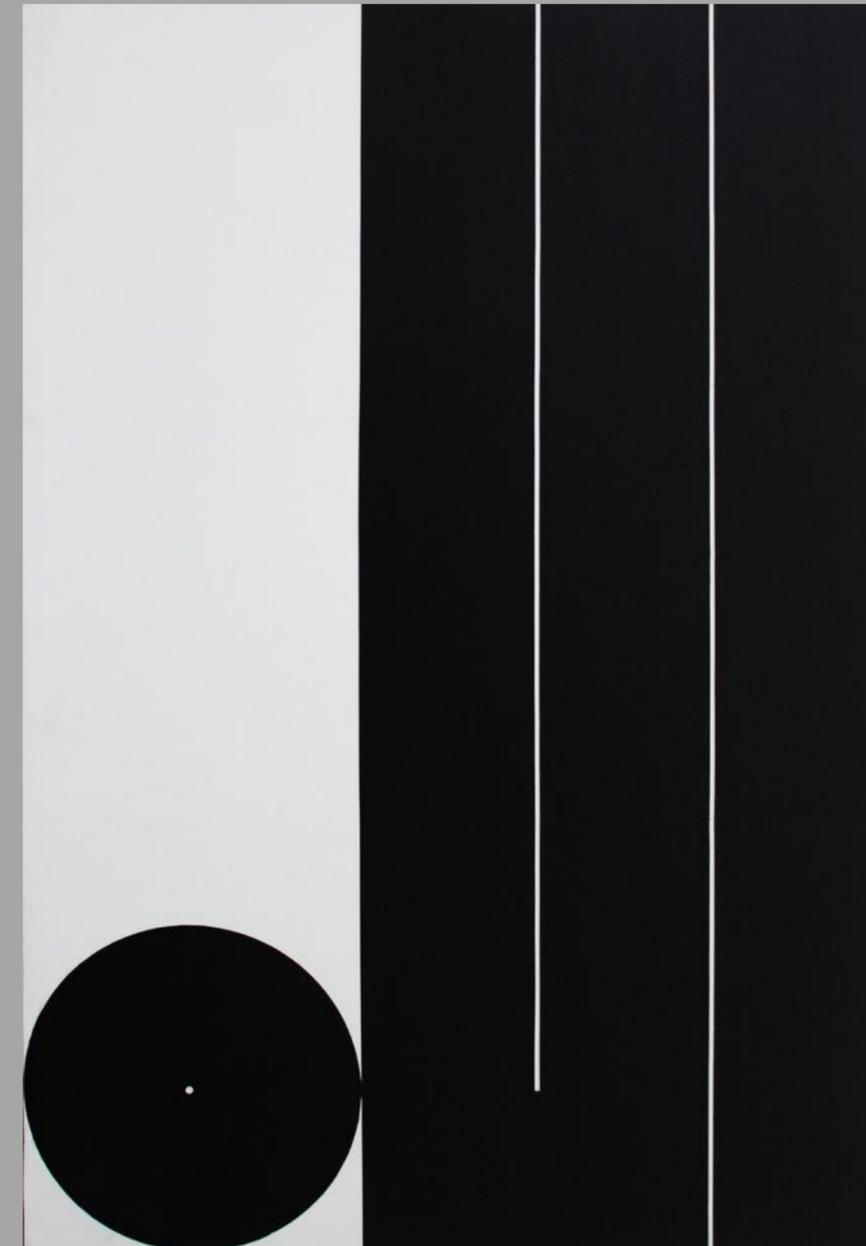
Left: Birmingham Qur'an, c. 568–645
University of Birmingham.



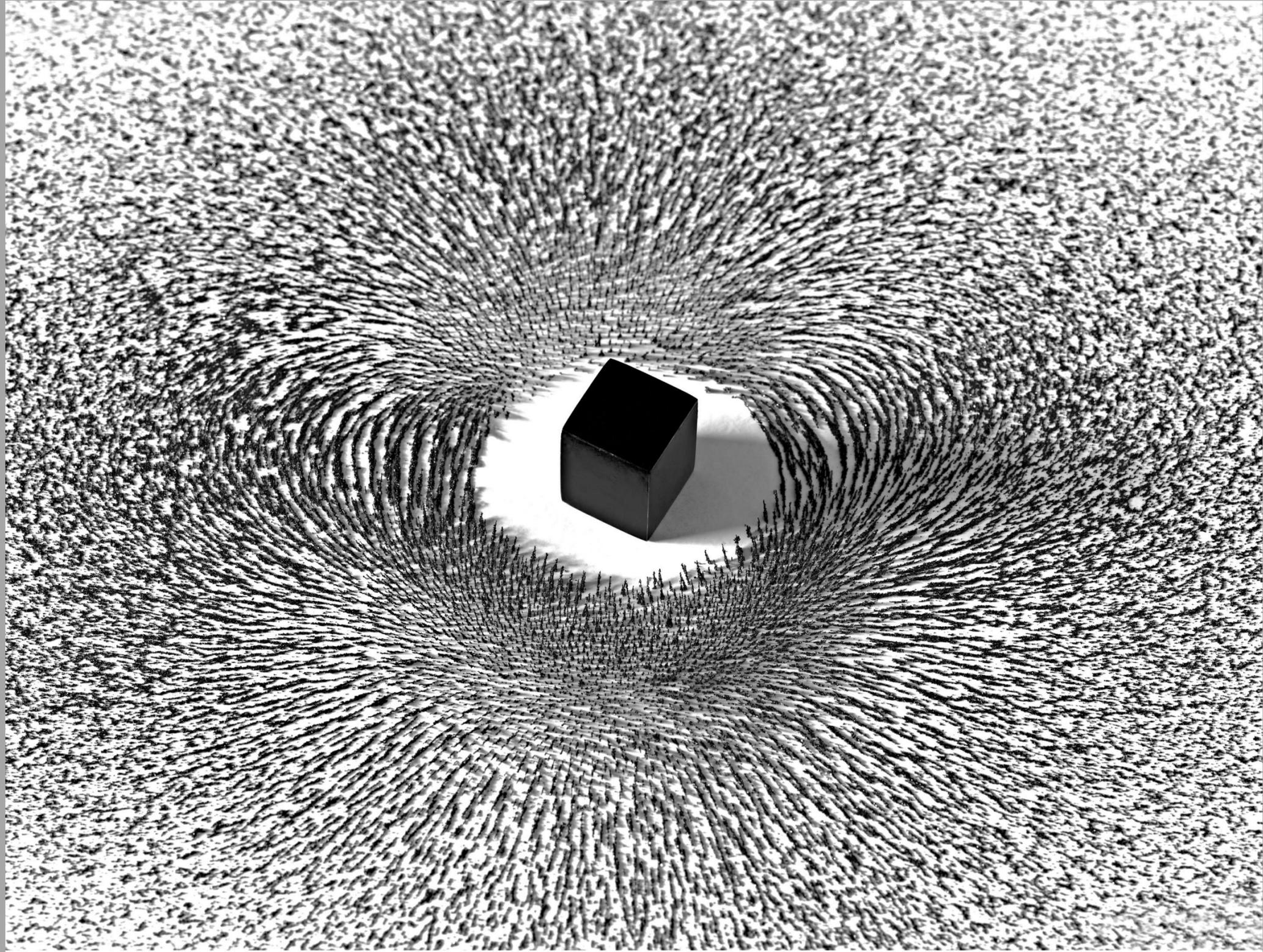
Nassar Mansour
Kun I (Be), 2002.



Ahmed Moustafa
Ubiquitous Dot of Cosmic Justice, 2004/1425.

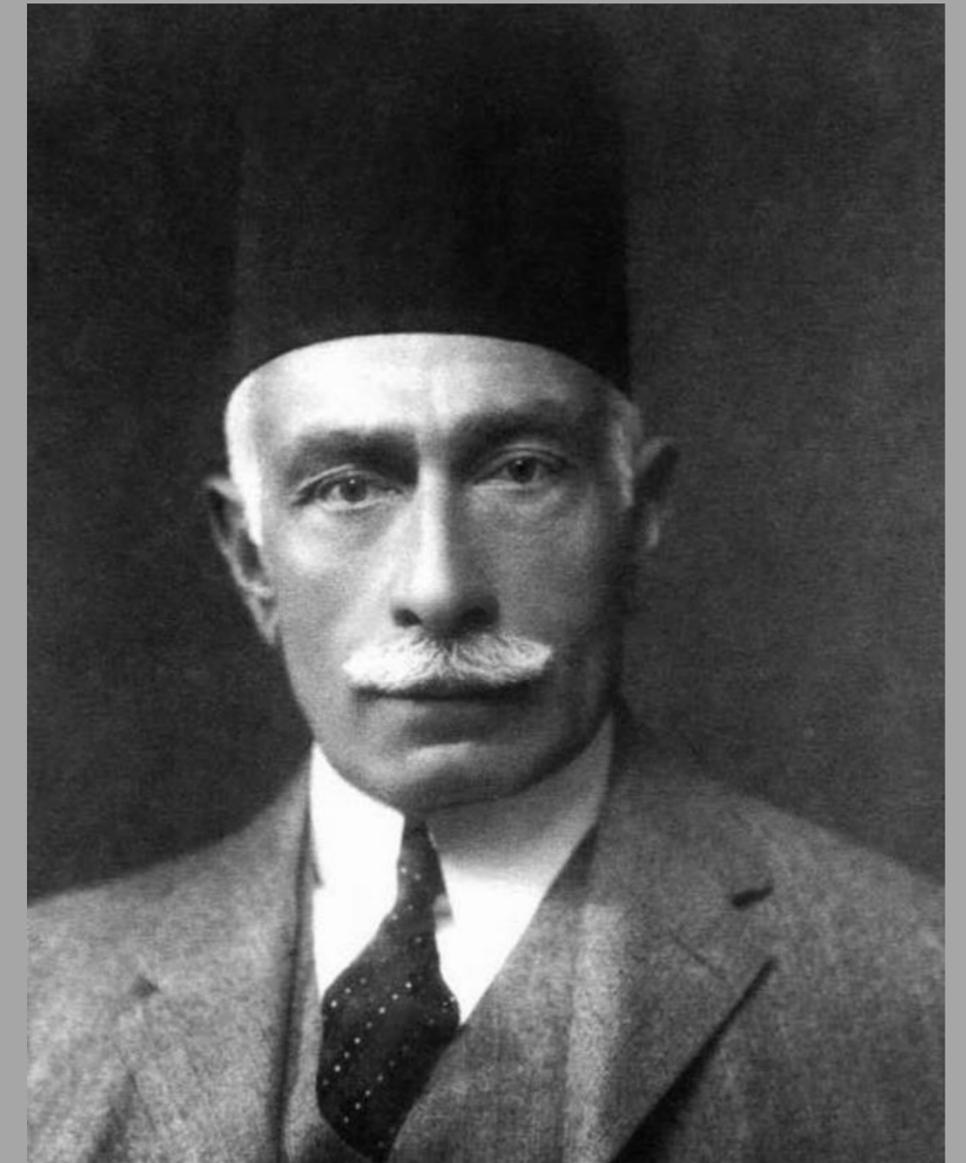


Samir Sayegh
Allah I, 2014.



Ahmed Mater
Magnetism IV,
2012.

Empires, courts and artistic patronage



Prince Youssef Kamal (1882-1966), who, in 1908, promoted the establishment of the School of Fine Arts in Cairo.



King Fuad I at the inauguration of the Salon du Caire at Palais Tigrane, known as the Palais des Arts, with Prince Youssef Kamal, Mohammed Mahmoud Khalil, 29 January 1929.

Artist Youssef Kamel was among the first class to graduate from Egypt's first Fine Arts School, established in 1908 by Prince Youssef Kamal.

Encounter with modernity: the birth of modern art



Mahmoud Moukhtar's exhibition at Bemheim Jeune in Paris, 1930.



Mahmoud Moukhtar in his studio in Paris.

"We owe everything to Egypt, and, first of all, the sense of greatness. This grace which continues to be at the service of monumentality."

Lhote, André. *Traité de la figure*, Paris 1950, p.125.

"Who will speak of the misdeeds of European academism in the world? [...] Who will show (more luminously than I could ever do) the extent of the loss experienced by Egypt in contact with this academism and the prodigious role it could have played in the artistic world if it had become aware of the profound virtues of its national art?"

Lhote, André. "Avenir de la Peinture Égyptienne." in *La Revue Du Caire*, XXIX, no. 150, pp.87–88.

Ibrahim El-Salahi at the Slade , 1956.



Left: Saloua Raouda Choucair at the atelier Fernand Léger, 1949.



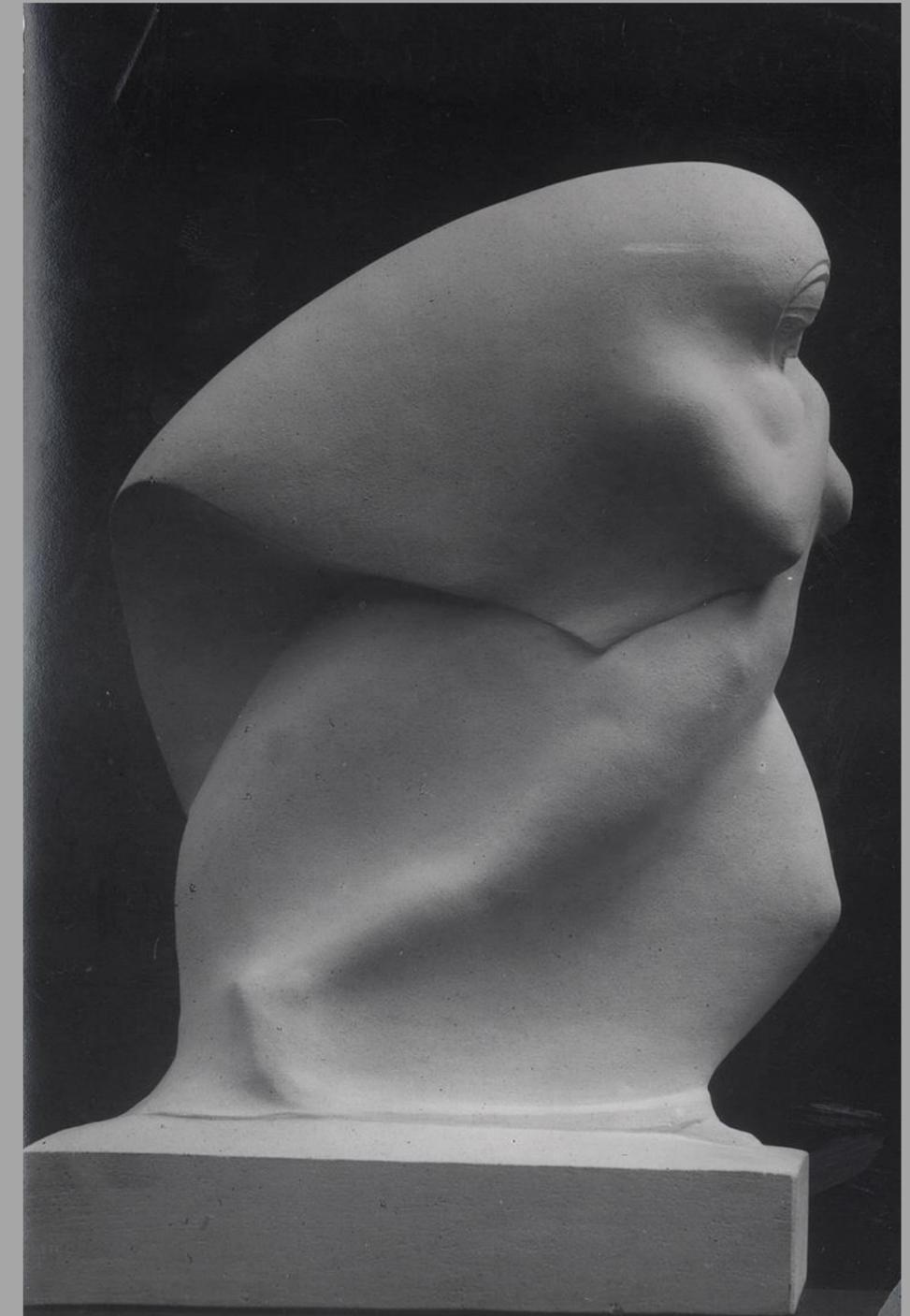
Right: Jewad Selim during an exhibition on his American tour in 1954.



Featured Artists

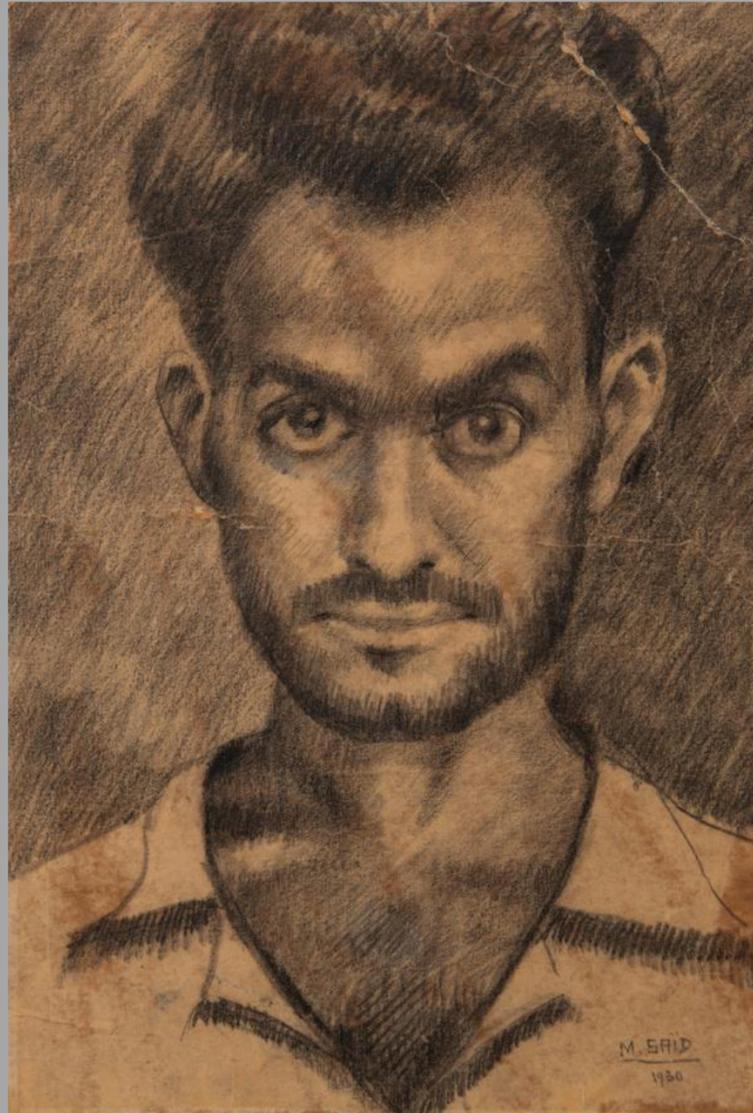


Mahmoud Mokhtar (1891-1934)



Centre: Mahmud Moukhtar supervising the achievement of *Nahdat Masr* (*Le Réveil de l'Égypte*) c.1928.
Right: *Khamasin* (*Khamsin Winds*), 1929.

Mahmoud Said (1897-1964)

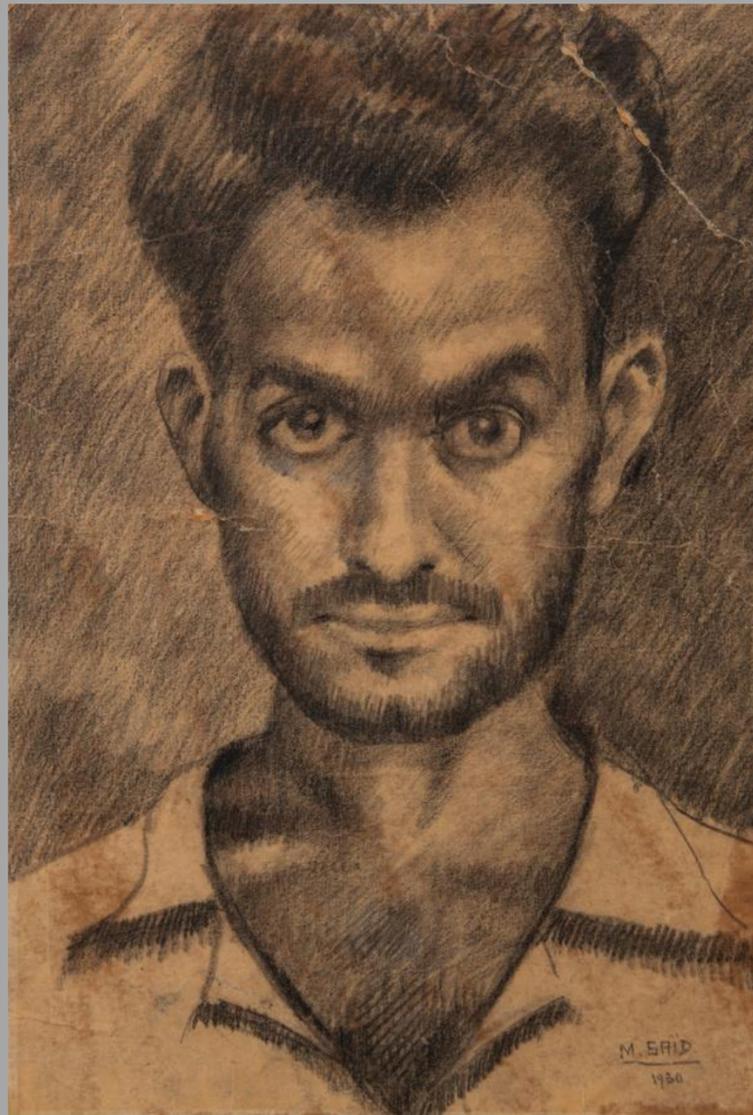


Self-Portrait (Introspection), 1930.



La Petite fille d'Assiout
(The Little Girl of Assiout), 1945.

Mahmoud Said (1897-1964)



Self-Portrait (Introspection), 1930.



Portrait de Nevine Mazloun, 1956-7.

Inji Efflatoun (1924-89)

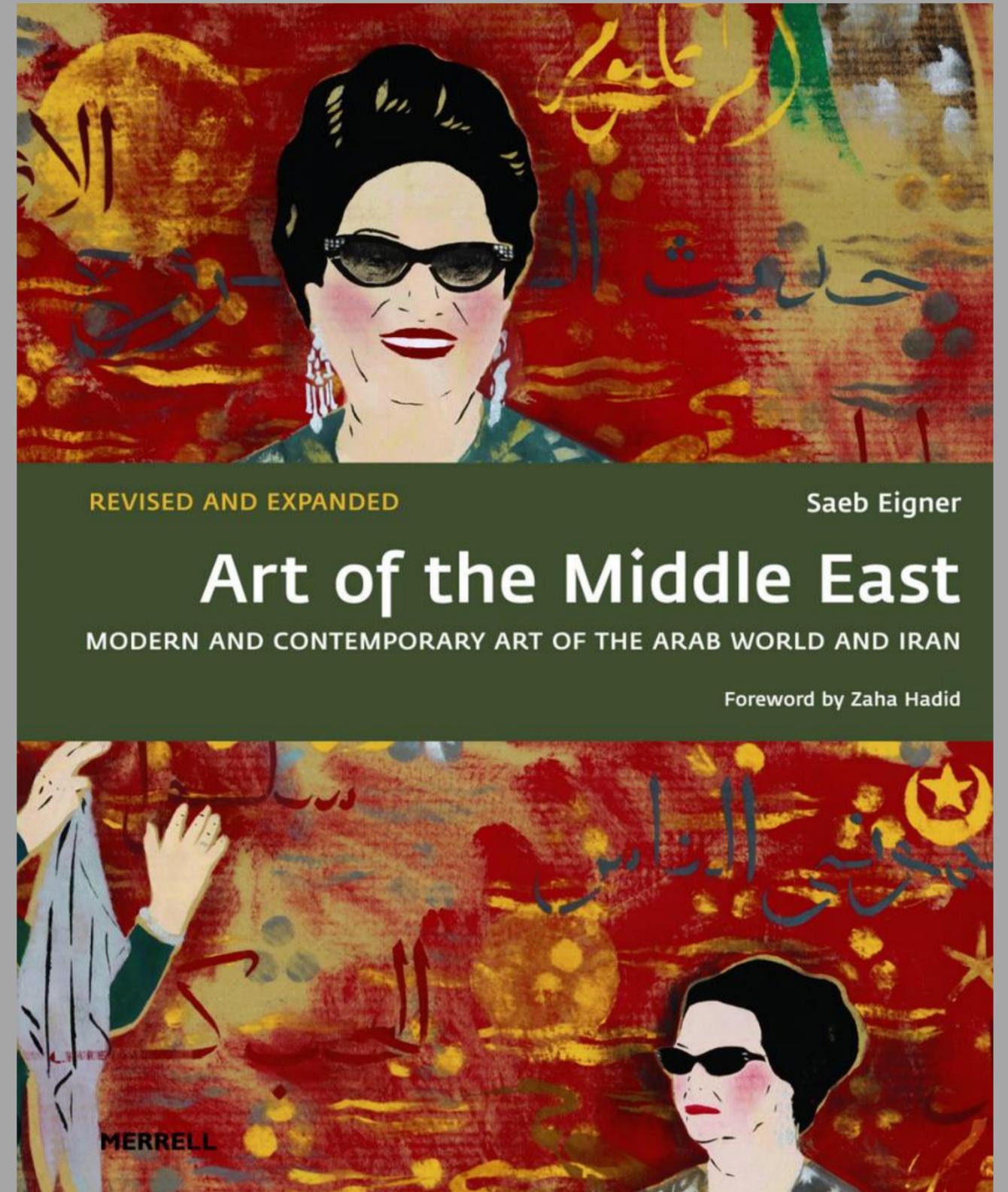


Dreams of the Detainee, 1961.

Chant Avedissian (1951-2018)



Great Wall 2 (Self-Portrait), c.1998.



Chant Avedissian (1951-2018)

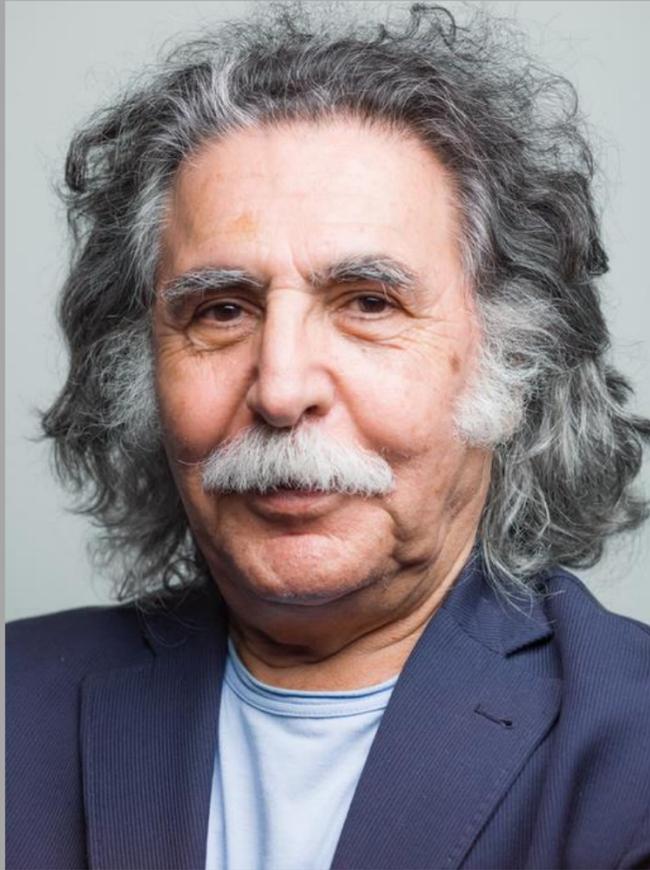


Great Wall 2 (Self-Portrait), c.1998.



Icons of the Nile, 1991–2005.

Dia al-Azzawi (b.1939)



Angry Man, 1975.





Sabra and Shatila Massacre, 1982–3.



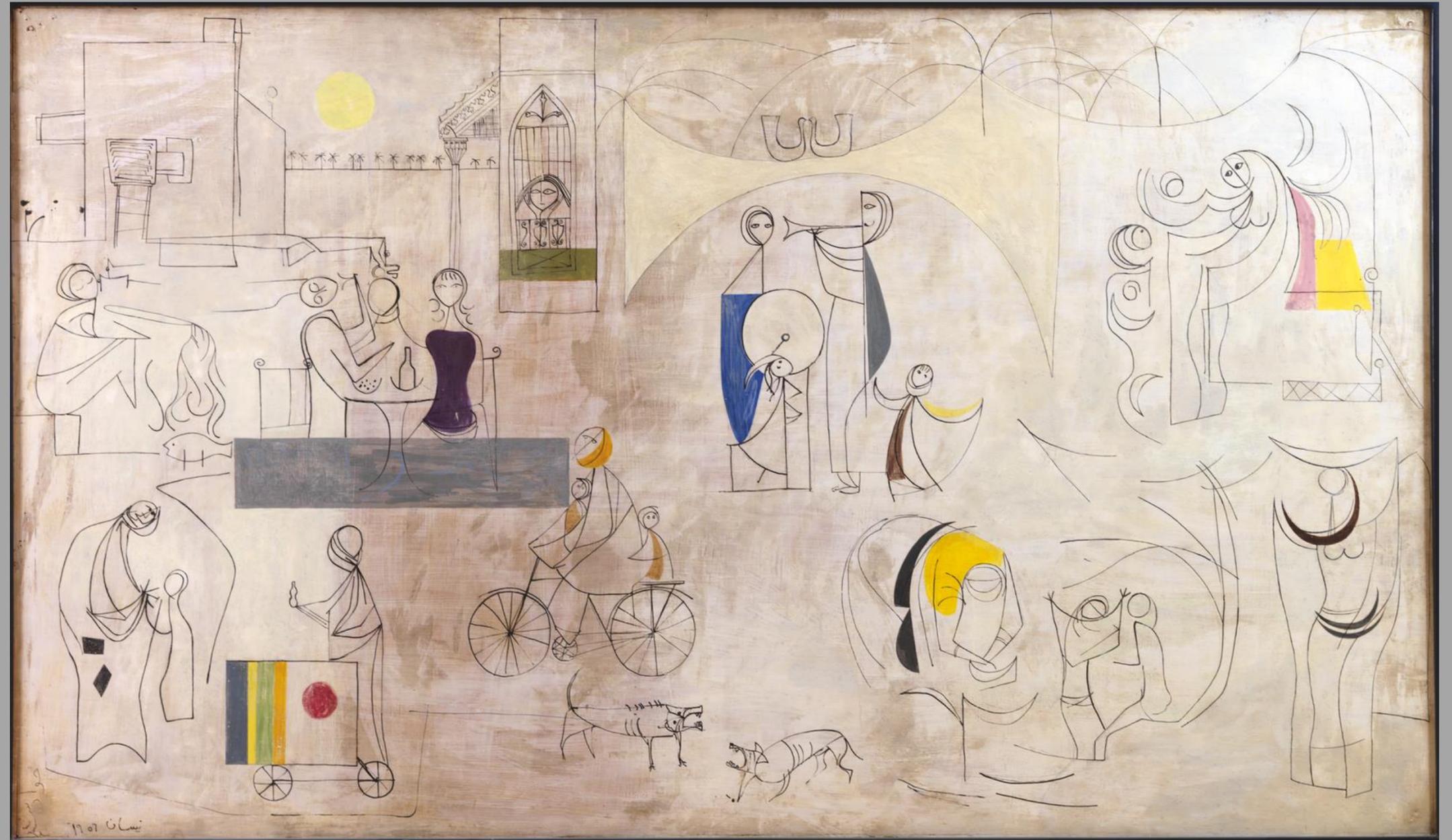
Blessed Tigris, 2006, British Museum.

Jewad Selim (1919-1961)



Mother and Child, 1953.

Jewad Selim (1919-1961)



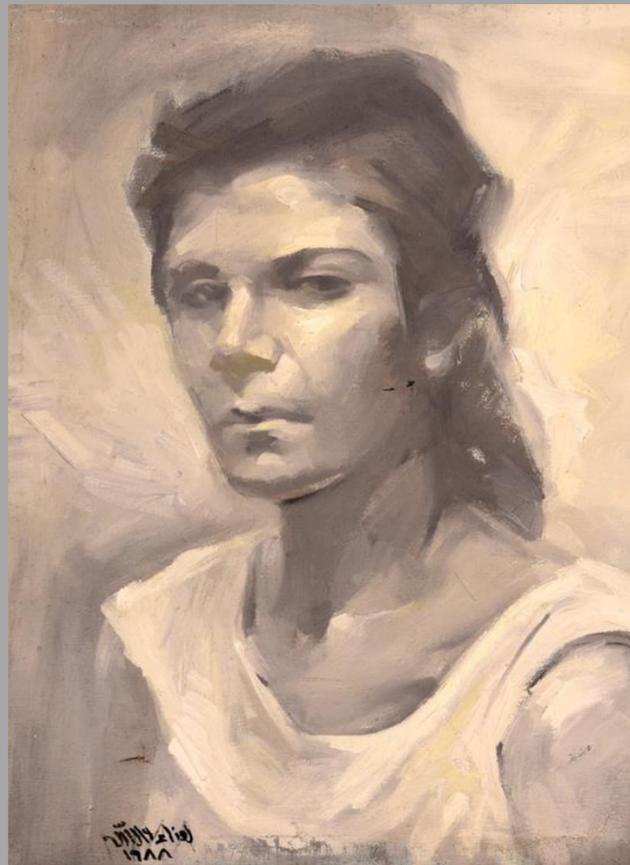
Baghdadiat, 1956.

Hanaa Malallah (b.1958)

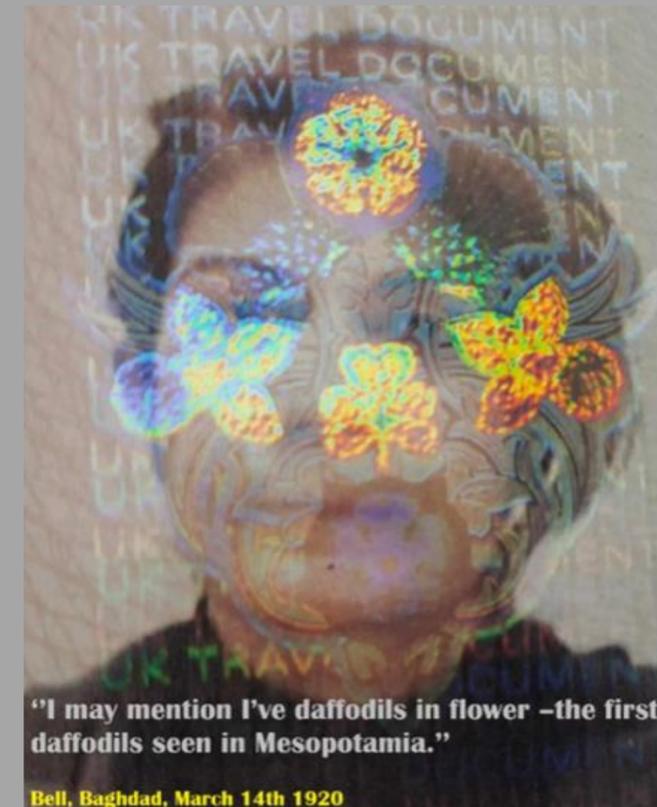


My Country Map, 2008.

Hanaa Malallah (b.1958)



The Daffodils أزهار النرجس البري
Similarities of Opposites



Helen Khal (1923-2009)



Tarek and Jawad, 1961.

Helen Khal (1923-2009)



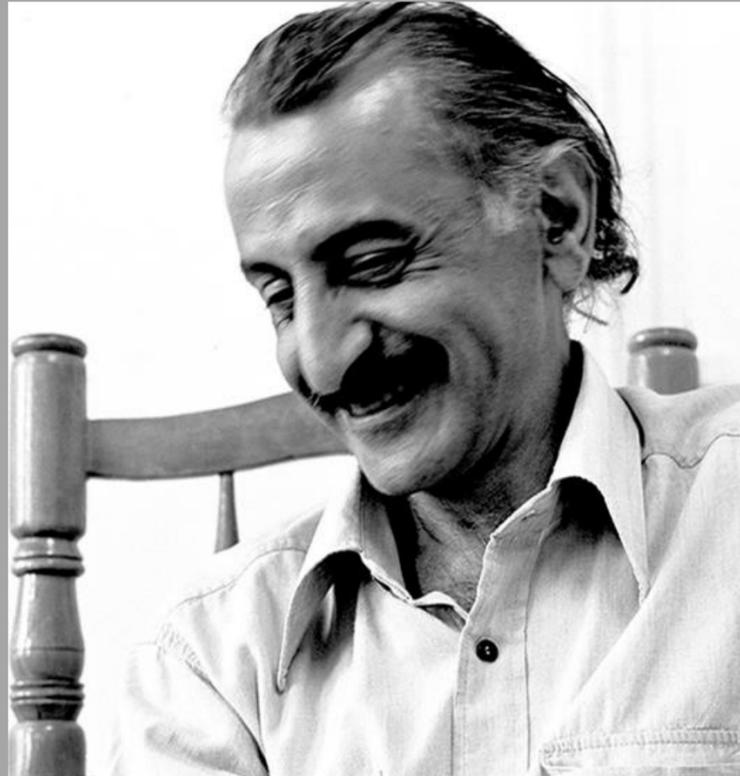
Blue Sea, 1999.

Shafic Abboud (1926-2004)



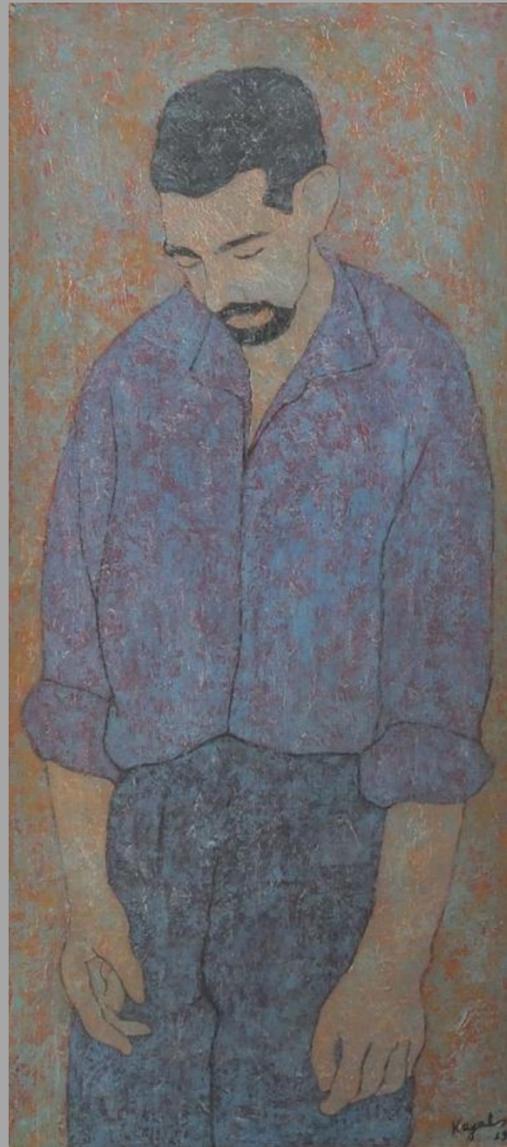
Composition, 1961.

Shafic Abboud (1926-2004)

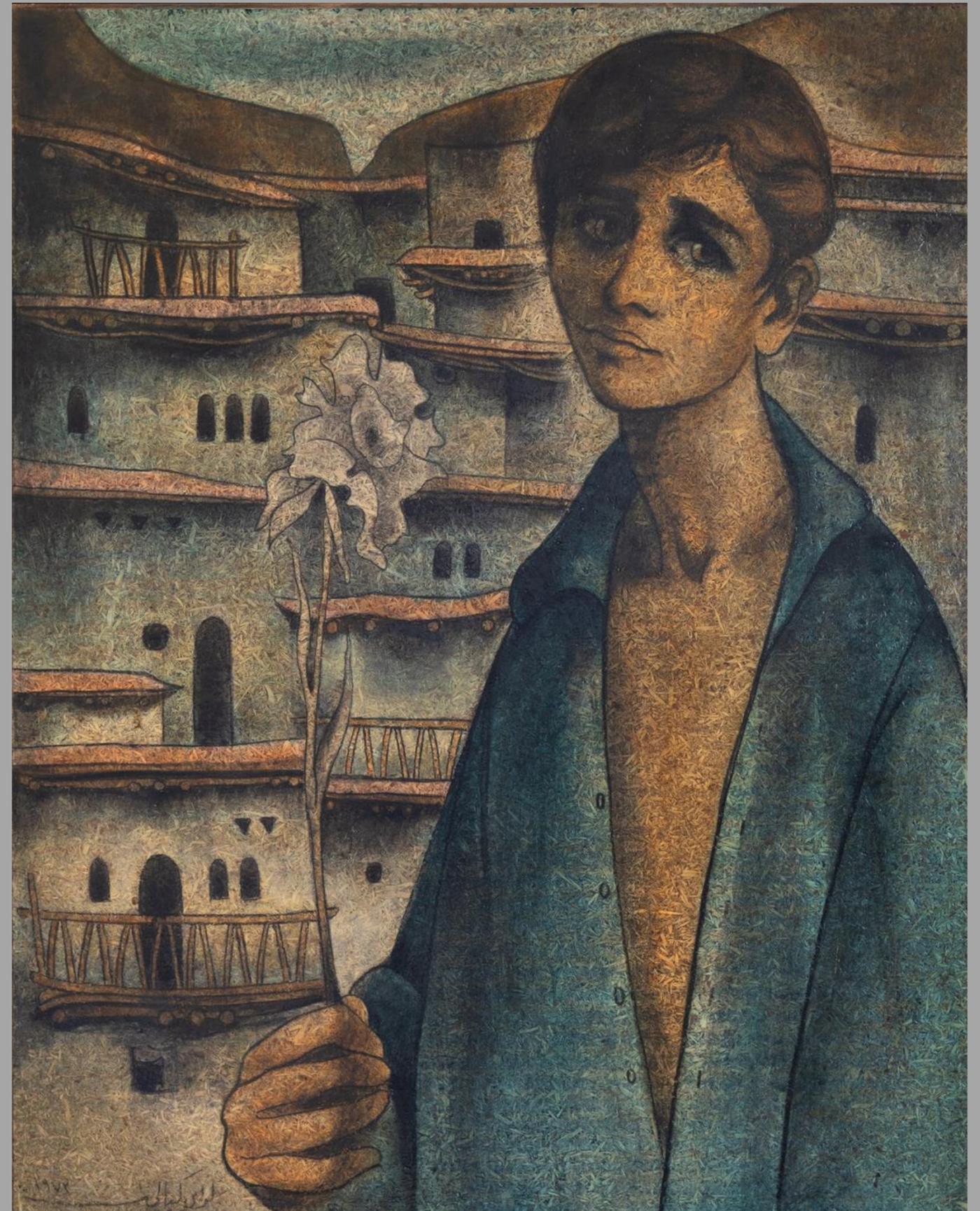


La main (The Hand), 1969.

Louay Kayyali (1934-78)

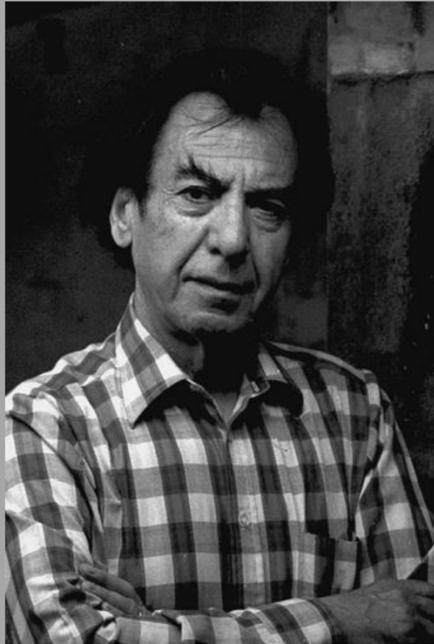


Self-Portrait, 1959.



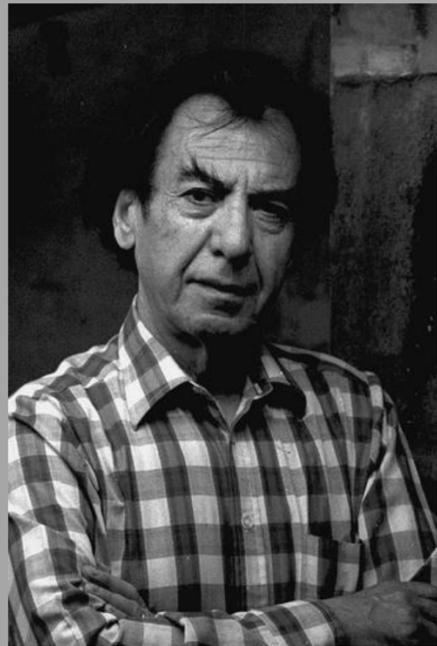
Maaloula Boy, 1973.

Fateh Moudarres (1922-1999)



Landscape, 1970.

Fateh Moudarres (1922-1999)



Untitled, 1985.

Mona Saudi (1945-2022)



Homage to Brancusi (The Lovers), 1968.

Mona Saudi at Frieze Masters 2025. Photo: courtesy of Lawrie Shabibi.

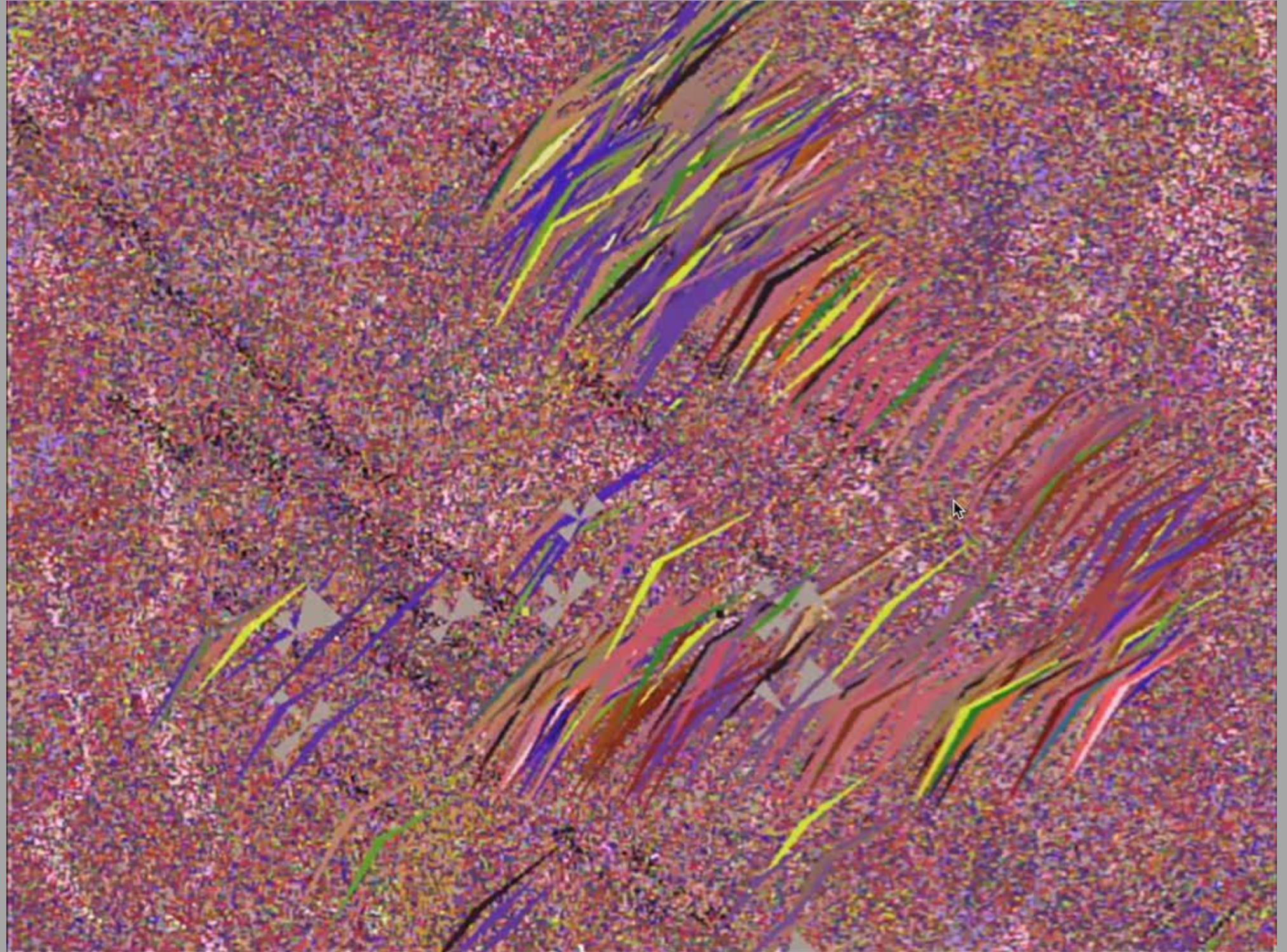


Samia Halaby (b.1936)



Rainbow Spirals, 1973.

Samia Halaby (b.1936)

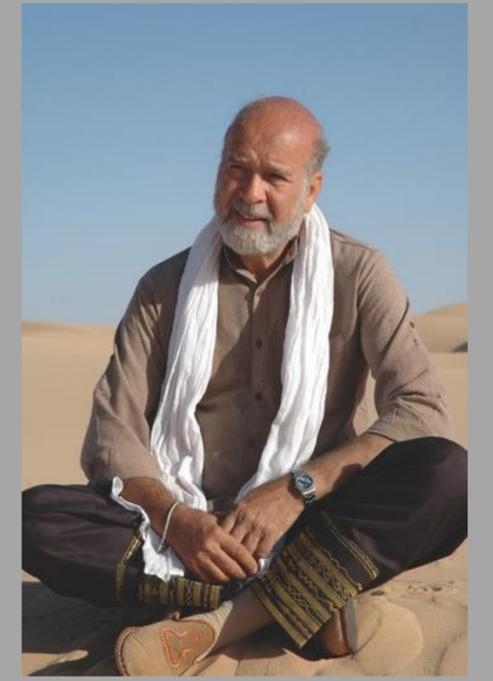


Kinetic painting group.
Silent Prairie, 1995/2019.

Farid Belkahlia (1934-2014)

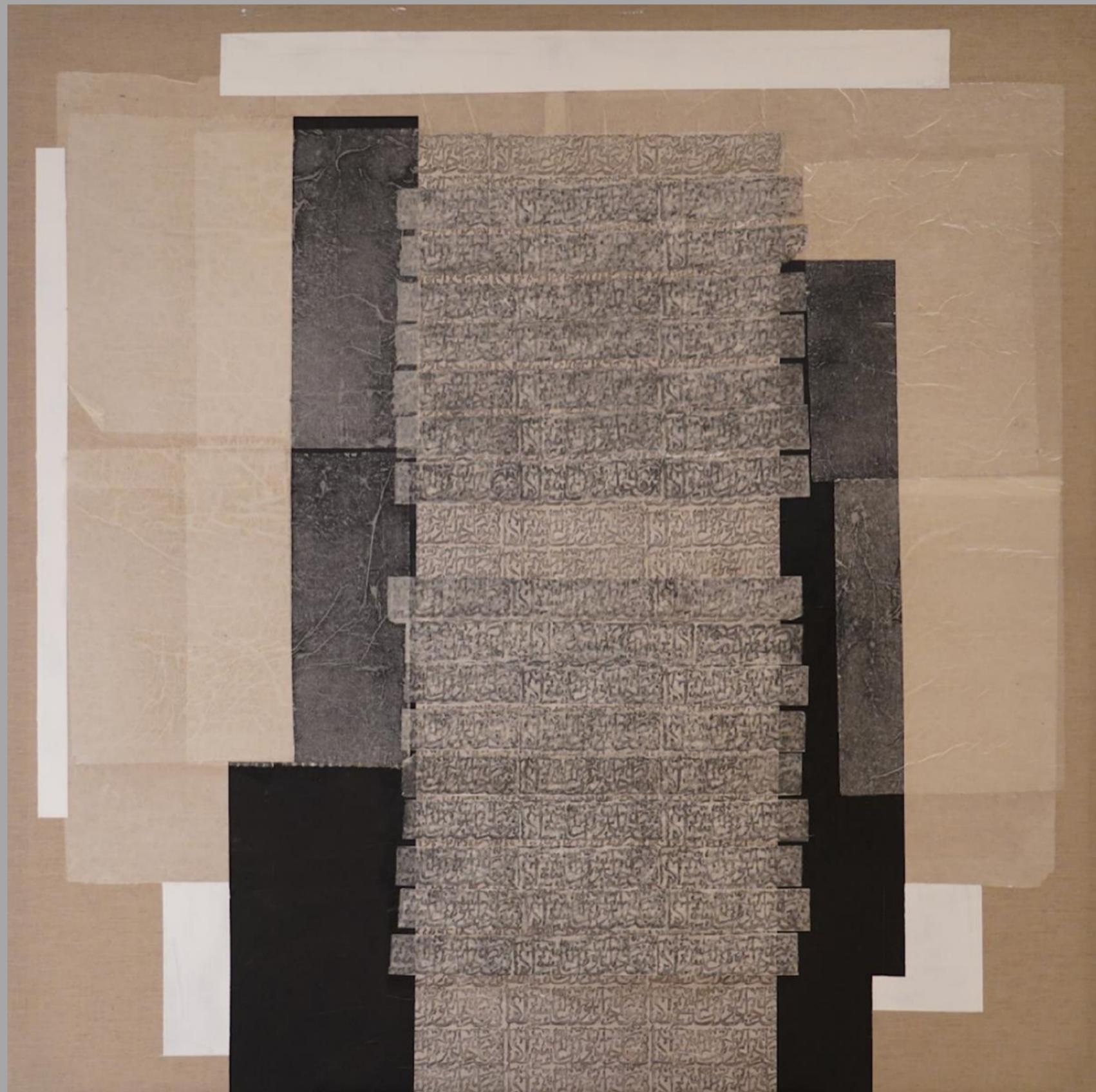


Rachid Koraichi (b. 1947)



Jardin d'Orient (Garden of the Orient), 2005
Installation. Château d'Amboise, Loire Valley, France.

Yousuf Ahmad (b.1955)



Oriental window 2, 2022.

Abdul Qader Al-Raes (b.1951)



Wind Tower in Dubai,
1995.



Untitled,
2007.

Mohammed Al Saleem (1939-97)



In the Light of Faith, You See Happiness, 1990.

Abdulhalim Radwi (1939-2006)



Hajj in Yellow, 1969–70.

Mohammad Ehsaei (b.1939)

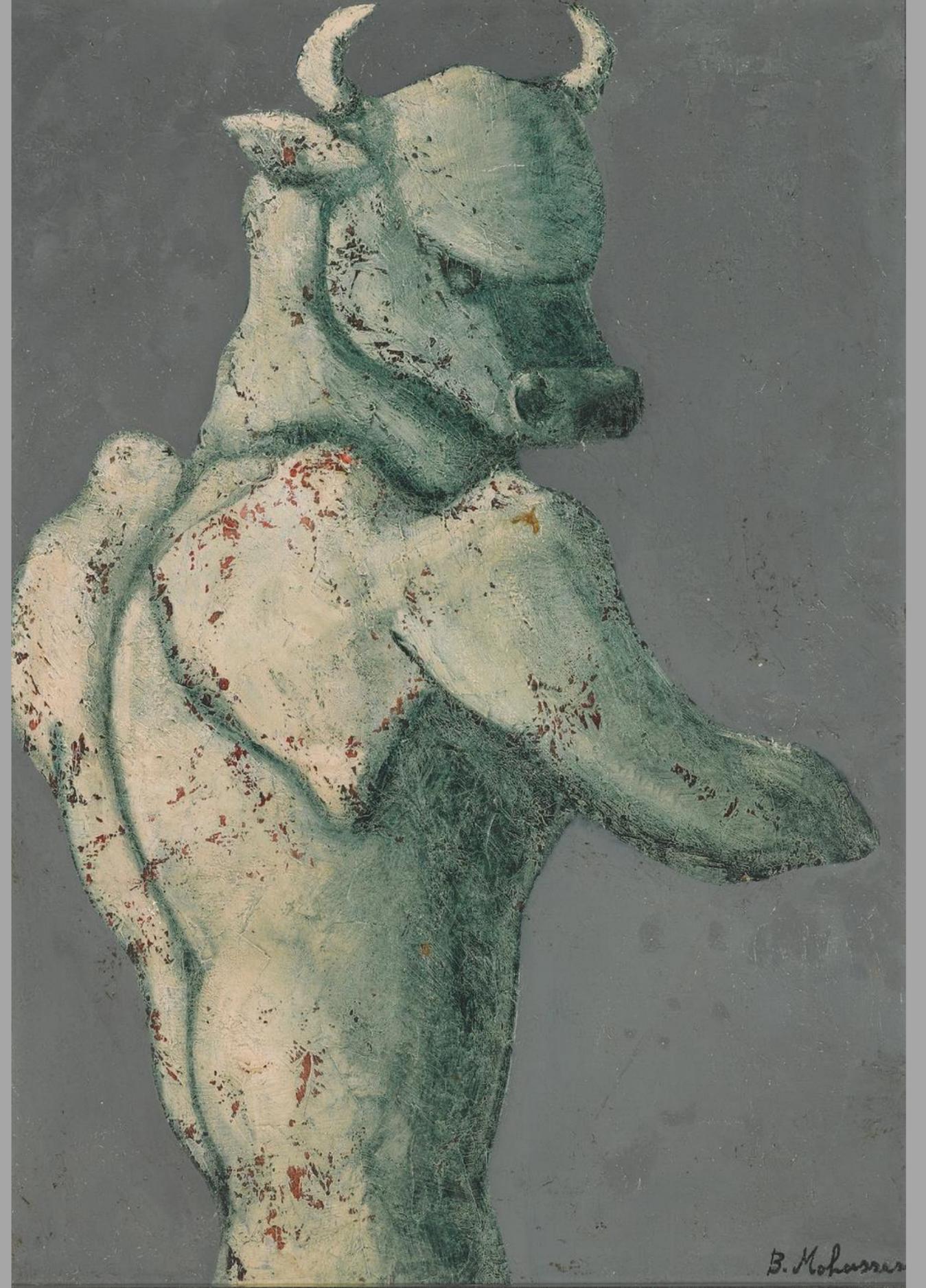


Top: Al Sabour, 1995.



Right: Mahabbat, 2009.

Bahman Mohassess (1931-2010)



Minotauro, 1966.

Parviz Tanavoli (b.1937)



Heech in a Cage, 2006.

Parviz Tanavoli (b.1937)



The Last Poet of Iran, 1968.

Sohrab Sepehri (1928-1980)

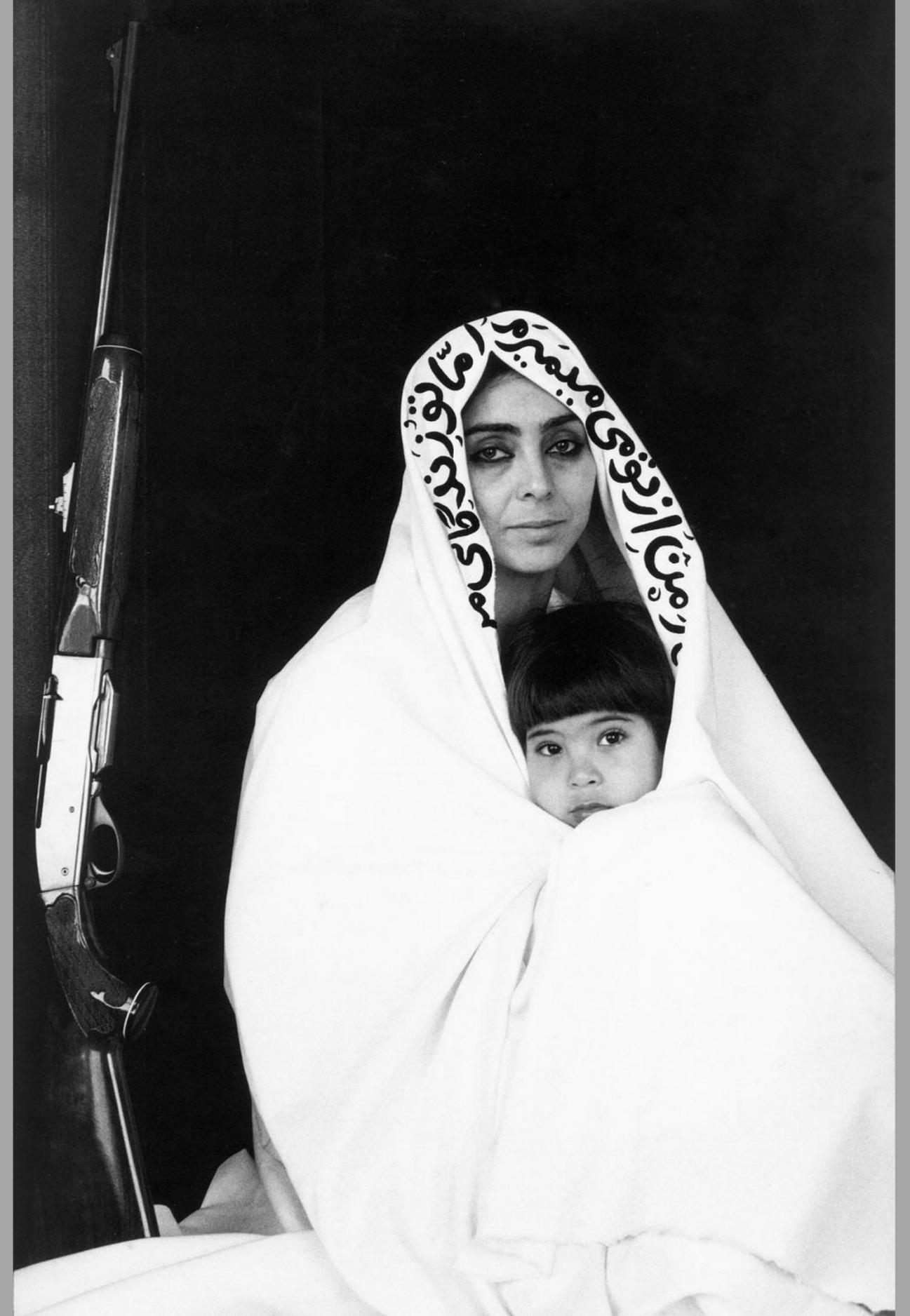


Tree Trunk, 1971.



Shirin Neshat

(b.1957)



My Beloved, 1995.

Farhad Moshiri (1963-2024)



Greetings to You, Oh Morning, 2003.



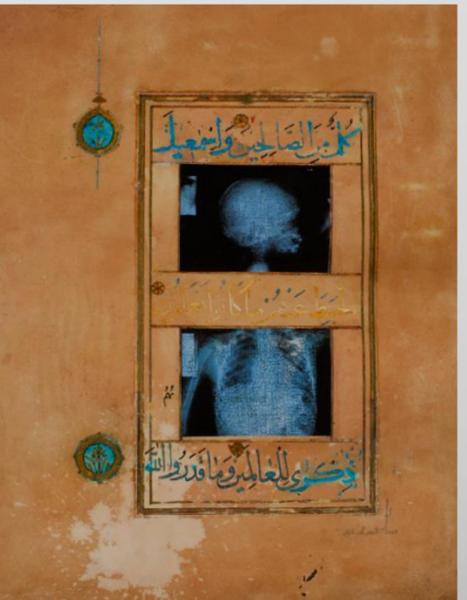
Cherry Orchard (bagh-e-gilas),
2008



Nazgol Ansarinia,
Article 48, Pillars, 2015.



Farhad Moshiri,
N3H, 2006.



Ahmed Mater,
X-Ray Illumination, 2008.



Hassan Massoudy,
Rumi, 2014.



Shadi Ghadrian,
From the Qajar series (#5)
and (#14).



Samira Alikhanzadeh,
#13 From the Family Album series, 2008.



Shirin Aliabadi,
Miss Hybrid 2, 2007-8.



Shirin Aliabadi,
Miss Hybrid 3, 2007-8.



*Shirazeh Houshiary
East Window, 2008
St Martin-in-the-Fields, London*

