



traces

A TESTIMONY TO MEMORY

2014

Traces

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Sometimes, it only takes a subtle reminder, a fragment or a remnant, to evoke a feeling, a thought or a memory so powerful, that we must consider the importance of its existence.

Whether a torn piece of paper, your mother's wedding ring, a childhood toy, an old photograph, your birth certificate or the smell of your father's cologne; these traces are evidence to the existence or passing of something; a testimony to our memory.

Why are traces relevant? They tell us something about the time in which they existed or about the entity that they were once part of. They help us document our past and enable us to reconnect with our origins. Such an acknowledgment of our history helps us move on into the future.

In this exhibition, over 40 artists from Gaza explore the concept of 'traces' by contemplating its personal significance. Their resulting work considers issues related to memory, remains, evidence and reminders. Collectively, they convey the importance of documentation by providing insight into the present cultural condition in Palestine. In doing so, they remind us of the necessity of the protection of Palestinian culture and heritage as a means towards Palestinian self-preservation.

Palestine Development and Investment Ltd. (PADICO HOLDING)

Palestine Investment and Development Ltd. (PADICO HOLDING) was established in 1993 as a limited public shareholding company traded on the Palestine Exchange (PEX) with paid-in-capital of USD 250 million. The Company was incepted as an initiative by distinguished Palestinian and other Arab businessmen, for the purpose of building and developing the Palestinian economy through implementing projects in vital sectors. PADICO HOLDING has grown its portfolio of investments to include almost every sector that is vital to building the Palestinian economy and nation, through its subsidiaries and affiliates that cover sectors such as: telecommunications and services, tourism, real estate, infrastructure, agriculture, and industry.

Artist Pension Trust®

Artist Pension Trust® (APT) offers both long-term financial security and international exposure to select artists around the world based on a unique tailor-made financial model. Over the past ten years, APT has amassed the largest curated collection of contemporary art, comprising 10,000 artworks from 2,000 select artists in 75 countries. APT only accepts the most promising and talented artists, selected by APT's distinguished international Curatorial Team. Artworks from the APT collection have been used to curate exhibitions for museums including the MoMA, Tate Modern, Hirshhorn Museum, as well as for art fairs such as the Venice Biennale, Art Basel, Documenta and Manifesta.

United Nations Development Programme Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (UNDP/PAPP)

UNDP's Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (PAPP) derives its mandate from the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 33/147 of 20 December 1978 "to improve the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people by identifying their social and economic needs and by establishing concrete projects to that end".

UNDP/PAPP is a responsive development agency that works together with the Palestinian people to fulfill their aspiration for sustainable human development based on self-determination, equality and freedom. UNDP/PAPP's support addresses many sectors including democratic governance and rule of law; economic empowerment and private sector investment; environment; and public and social infrastructure. Since its establishment in 1978, the programme mobilized over one billion Dollars worth of projects in support of the Palestinian people and generated thousands of workdays in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip.

The French Institute in Jerusalem ("Institut Français de Jérusalem"- IFJ)

The institute is active in Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza. As a service of the Consulate General of France in Jerusalem, it runs a network of five centres in East and West Jerusalem, Gaza, Ramallah and Nablus, and cooperates closely with partner institutions in Bethlehem and Hebron.

Besides French classes and the promotion of French culture, the IFJ offers a varied cultural program of concerts, lectures, film screenings, exhibitions, and more. As a key actor of the local cultural scenes, it also focuses on promoting the works of Palestinian artists.

Curator

Yasmin Sharabi is a curator, artist and art consultant. She believes that through their work, artists can facilitate positive discourse, thereby dissolving the barriers of communication between societies and nations. Born in Greece, Yasmin is originally American Palestinian. Raised in Bahrain, she completed her BA in Studio Art/Art History at Concordia University, Montreal, CA (2004) and then went on to complete her MA in Art Business from Sotheby's Institute of Art, London, UK (2006). Having managed various exhibitions within Bahrain and abroad, she will soon be launching a project based in Bahrain, dedicated to supporting emerging and experimental artists and creators within the region.



Nabil Abu Ghanima, Myth of Traces I, 80 x 80 cm, Acrylic on Canvas

Nabil Abu Ghanima

The Myth of Traces

Nabil Abu Ghanima recalls the stories his mother would tell him and his siblings at bedtime- legends from popular culture. However, her memory now faltering, she is unable to recount these stories in such detail. And so, Abu Ghanima aims to revive and document these tales, by visually capturing remnants of his mother's memory.

Born in Gaza in 1984, Nabil Abu Ghanima holds a BA in Art Education from Al Aqsa University, Gaza. He has taken part in numerous art workshops and training courses in Gaza as well as various group and solo exhibitions, including the UNDP's annual Art Auction supporting artists from Gaza, and the 'Tenth Art Festival' at the South Valley University, Egypt (2008).



Ibrahim Al Awadi, The Plumber, 70 x 100 cm, Oil on Canvas, 2014

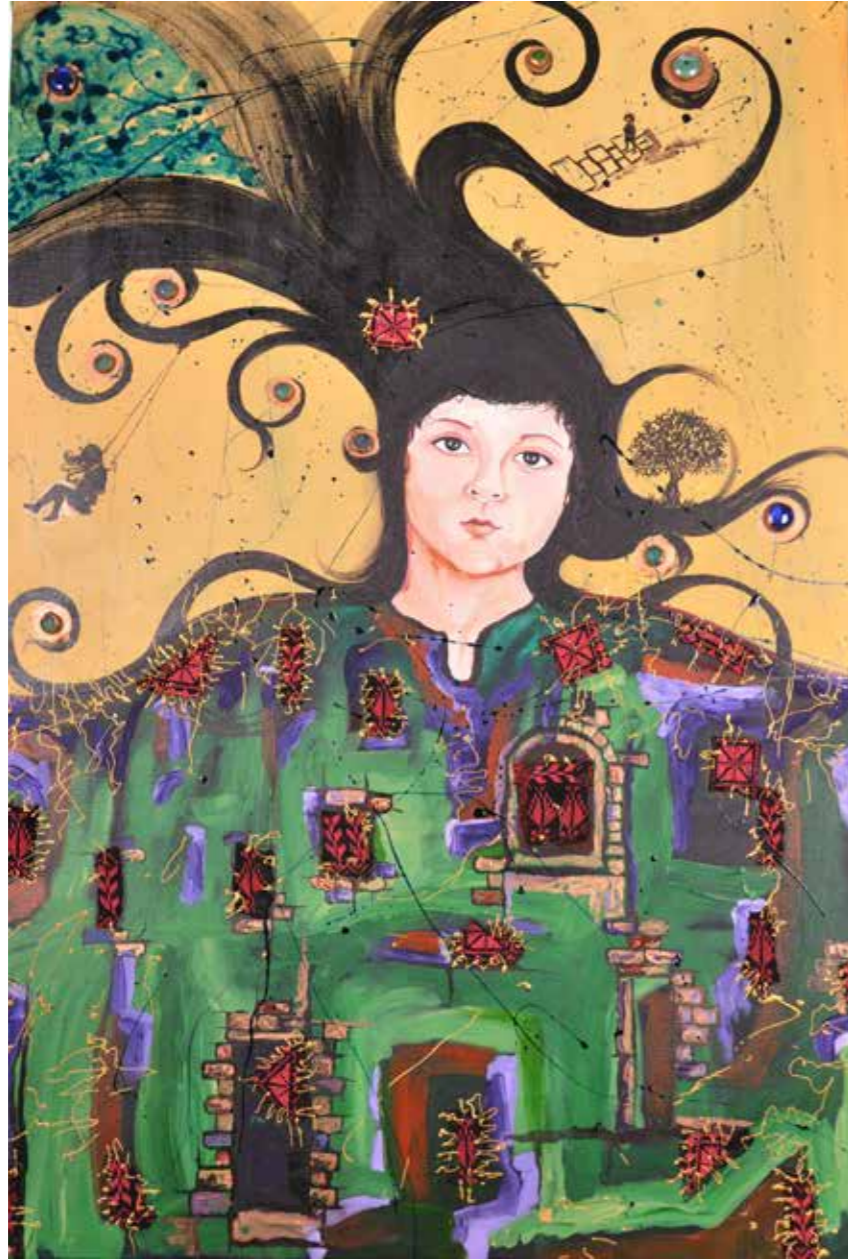
Ibrahim Al Awadi

The Plumber

Ever since he was a child, Ibrahim Al Awadi was preoccupied with observing people's faces, namely the features of the 'underprivileged'. The humble plumber, from the refugee camp in which he used to live, was one of those whose faces showed traces of hardship- life's woes manifested through the cracks on his skin.

Al Awadi recalls the way this man appeared as he sat in his workshop- a ray of light creeping in through the door left ajar. Resting in his chair with an expression of contemplation-seemingly remorseful for time lost- the sight of this plumber, with his modest clothes and hands stained black, remains vivid in Al Awadi's memory.

Ibrahim Al Awadi was born in Gaza in 1976. After completing his BA in Art Education from Al Aqsa University in 2001, he established the Art Department in the 'General Federation of Trade Unions of Palestine'.



Maysaa Al Bardaweal, Pertinence, 120 x 80 cm, Mixed Media on Canvas, 2014

Maysaa Al Bardaweal

Pertinence

By combining signs of her homeland with elements from her upbringing, Maysaa Al Bardaweal creates a lyrical self - portrait of her as a child. Illustrations of her childhood memories swirl above her body- formed of bits of Palestinian fabric combined with suggestions of the foundations of old buildings.

Born in 1986, Maysaa Al Bardaweal holds a BA in Fine Art from Al Aqsa University, Gaza. She is a member of the Palestinian Artist Association and has worked on various arts related projects with UNRWA as well as programs related to creativity and art for children.



Mohammed Musallam, Dying Jerusalem , 50 x 60 cm, Oil on Canvas, 2014

Mohammed Musallam

Dying Jerusalem

Unable to obtain a permit to leave Gaza, Mohammed Musallam was prohibited from attending his last solo exhibition, 'Geography Torn', in Jerusalem. He recently received a permit to enter Jerusalem for a few hours so that he could attend his visa interview at the US consulate, yet by this time his exhibition had come to a close. It had been 15 years since he had last seen Jerusalem.

The sorrow he felt when he was prevented from going to his exhibition is expressed in 'Dying Jerusalem'. Employing torn bits of the 'Al Quds Newspaper', Palestine's most renowned and oldest newspaper (which is currently banned in Gaza) indicates his frustration with the current situation- one that prevents communication and enforces punishment on those who simply desire the right to visit other cities within their country.

Born in Gaza in 1974, Mohammed Musallam completed his BA in Painting at the College of Fine Arts, Al Najah University, Nablus. He then obtained a Higher Diploma in Fine Art from Helwan University and Al Aqsa University, Gaza in 2000. Musallam went on to pursue his MA in Painting from Helwan University, Cairo in 2006 on a scholarship, where he wrote his Thesis on the Influence of Modern Art on Contemporary Palestinian Painting. Musallam is currently in the process of writing his PHD through Al Minia University, Egypt, the topic of his thesis focusing on experimentation in contemporary Palestinian painting. He currently lives in Gaza and lectures on Painting and the History of Palestinian Art at the College of Art, Al Aqsa University.



Shareef Sarhan, Remains of a Battle (Series of 9), 30 x 30 cm (each), Acrylic on Canvas

Shareef Sarhan

The Remains of a Battle

Shareef Sarhan considers the manner in which a soldier's role differs depending on their objective, as well as how the kind of weapons that remain after battle are often suggestive of accountability. One 'side' takes on the role of conqueror, employing modern weaponry whilst the other assumes the role of protector, utilizing whatever they have available. But who defines these roles and who determines their classification?

Born in Gaza in 1976, Shareef Sarhan works as a freelance photographer with UNRW, the UNDP, the WHO, the WFP and the AFD. He is also a Graphic Designer. Between 1998 and 2002 he lectured and taught at Gaza College as well as Al Azhar University. He holds a diploma in art from ICS University, USA (2001), is a member of the Palestinian Fine Arts Association and is a founding member of 'Windows from Gaza', a contemporary art collective. He has participated in numerous workshops and residency programs in Palestine and abroad.



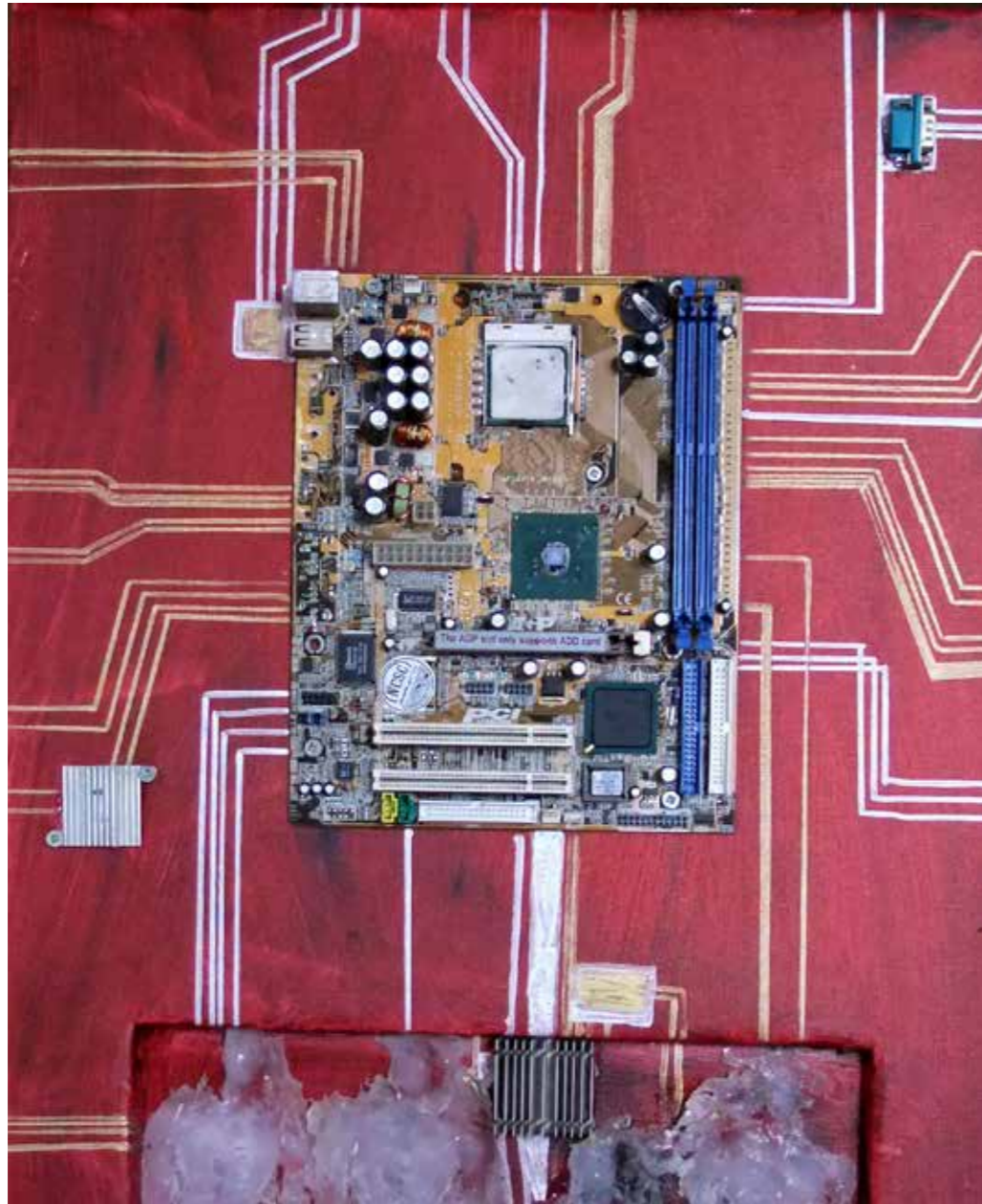
Rufaida Sehwal, Pianoforte, 100 x 80 cm, Mixed Media on Canvas, 2014

Rufaida Sehwal

Pianoforte

Collaging bits of old phone cards, paper and other scraps found around her city, Rufaida Sehwal creates an image that is suggestive of the remnants of human connectivity within an urban landscape.

Born in Gaza in 1987, Rufaida obtained her BA in Fine Art from Al Aqsa University, Gaza, in 2013. She currently works as a Graphic Designer and photographer. She has participated in group and solo exhibitions both regionally and internationally and has participated in mural design in Gaza alongside other Palestinian artists.



Iyad Sabbah, *Alternative Memory*, 70 x 45 cm, Mixed Media on Canvas, 2014

Iyad Sabbah

Alternative Memory

The word 'memory' generally elicits thoughts pertaining to personal rather than to collective memory. Iyad Sabbah decided to consider 'memory' as a continual state of mind- owing to today's technology that has enabled us to preserve it before it begins to fade.

Employing a circuit board connected to organic, wax-like material that resembles ice melting, Sabbah juxtaposes human and electronic memory and in doing so, indicates our dependency on technology to record and document memory. In this way, Sabbah also begs the question: why do we so deeply fear losing our memory of the past?

Iyad Sabbah holds an MA in Fine Art (Sculpture) from Helwan University, Cairo as well as a BA in Fine Art (Sculpture) from Fateh University, Libya. He is a member of the Gaza Artists Association as well as the General Union of Artists. He currently teaches art at Al Aqsa University, Gaza.



Dina Mattar, The Wedding Night, 125 x 200 cm, Oil on Canvas, 2014

Dina Mattar

The Wedding Night

Whenever we hear the phrase “what remains”, what often comes to mind are images of ashes or remains after destruction. However, in ‘The Wedding Night’ Dina Matter gives new meaning to this phrase by highlighting part of the social and cultural heritage of Palestine- that which consists of many neglected customs and traditions.

‘The Wedding Night’ is a folkloric work that sheds light on the customs of the wedding party, an event that had special social significance and particular arrangements. Two weeks prior to this day, people would start their preparations for the celebration as feasts were prepared and a lamb was sacrificed as a bridal gift.

To add to the occasion, traditional music was played and excited children accompanied ululating women, adorned with henna on their hair and foreheads, as they carried flowers and scented plants for the bride. Through the vibrancy of this work, Dina Mattar documents these wonderful customs, a small number of which have persevered.

Born in Gaza in 1985, Dina Mattar was awarded a Bachelors degree in Art Education from Al-Aqsa University, Gaza in 2007. Mattar has collaborated on several projects with international artists and has participated in several local exhibitions and workshops in Gaza in cooperation with A.M Qattan Foundation and the French Cultural Centre. Her work has been shown in various international exhibitions.



Ismail Dahlan, Hamamah I, 100 x 60 cm, Acrylic on Canvas, 2014

Ismail Dahlan

Hamamah

Despite currently living in Gaza, Ismail Dahlan's parents were displaced from a Palestinian village named 'Hamamah'. Dahlan's work is a visual interpretation of his parent's memories of their village, where the stories, characters, customs and superstitions are presented with distorted vibrancy.

Born in Gaza in 1987, Ismail Dahlan obtained his BA in Art Education from Al Aqsa University in 2007. He has taken part in art workshops and group exhibitions in Gaza and has also been involved in theatre work.



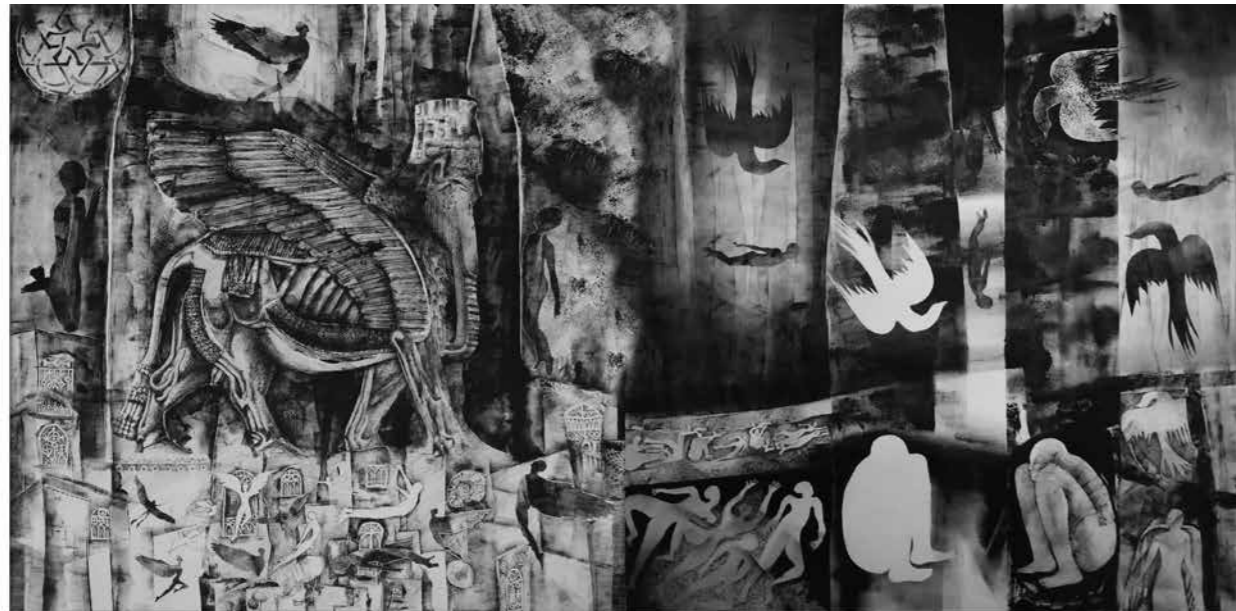
Rasha Abu Zayed, Fawda (Chaos), 100 x 80 cm, Oil on Canvas, 2014

Rasha Abu Zayed

Fawda (Chaos)

Inspired by her memories of past experiences with various people, Rasha Abu Zayed's 'Chaos' is an expression of the extreme and often chaotic emotion that one can feel in the face of hardship.

Born in 1987, Rasha Abu Zayed studied Fine Art at Al Aqsa University, Gaza. She has obtained various certificates through centres and institutions based in Gaza and has participated in various exhibitions, murals and workshops aimed at supporting and promoting the arts in Palestine.



Maisara Baroud, The Return, 100 x 200 cm, Ink on Paper, 2014

Maisara Baroud

The Return

Infused with symbolism, Maisara Baroud's 'The Return' is a mythological portrayal of the return to a homeland. Most prominent is the Sphinx, typically symbolic of a guardian to a temple or a sacred place, here positioned amid flying and falling birds as well as avian humans. Such whimsical and mystical imagery is both a prelude to the battles of the past and what was lost, as well as an aspiration for what shall be regained.

Born in 1976 in Gaza, Maisara Baroud holds a BA in decoration from Al Najah University, Nablus (1998) and an MA in Fine Art from Helwan University, Cairo (2010). He is a Member of the Palestinian Artists Association (Ramallah), the Artists Association (Gaza), the General Union of Fine Artists (Palestine) and the National Union of Cultural Arts (Algeria). He currently works as both an interior designer and a lecturer within the department of Engineering Science and Applied Art, School of Science and Technology, Khan Younis, Gaza.



Dalia Abdelrahman, My Doll, 100 x 50 cm, Mixed Media on Canvas, 2014

Dalia Abdulrahman

Doll

Combining materials that she typically experimented with as a child, such as coloured clay and glue, Dalia Abdulrahman playfully recreates her childhood toy, in turn reminiscing about the simplicity and joy of her youth.

Born in Egypt in 1985, Dalia Abdulrahman currently lives in Gaza. She obtained a BA in Fine Art from Al Aqsa University in 2006 and then went on to obtain a BA in Decoration in 2012 from the same university. Dalia previously taught art in public schools in Gaza between 2006-7. She currently teaches at the Tamer Foundation for Community Education.



Mohammed Harb, The Memory of Old Homes, 100 x 70 cm, Mixed Media on Canvas, 2014

Mohamed Harb

The Memory of Old Homes

Mohamed Harb's grandmother always told him stories about her homeland in as much detail as she could remember. Harb recalls her description of the colours and the structure of the homes that surrounded her. Currently living under 'house arrest' in Gaza, Harb has witnessed the events of the Palestinian uprising, the blockade and the affects of war first-hand. In his work, he aims to express both his grandmother's memory as well as to reflect on his own experiences, resulting in work that appears vibrant in colour, yet tormented and congested in structure and composition.

Born in Gaza in 1979, Mohamed Harb holds a BA in Fine Art (Major in Decoration) from Al Najah University, Nablus (2001). He has been a member of the Palestinian Plastic Artists Association since 2003 and currently works as a Director for the Palestinian Satellite Channel in Gaza. He participated in numerous exhibitions, festivals as well as local and international workshops internationally.



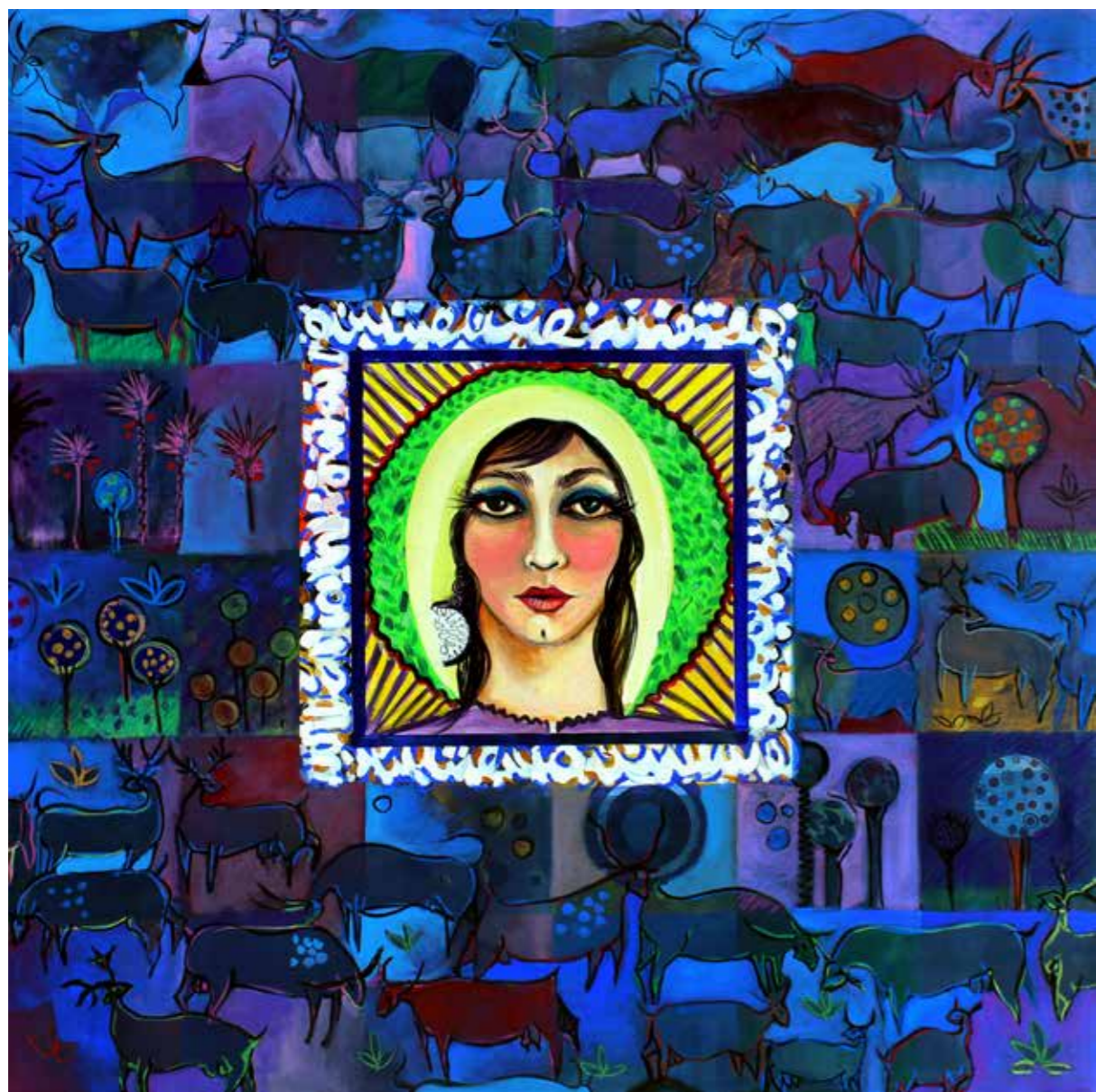
Nareman Faraj Allah, Untitled, 100 x 80 cm, Mixed Media on Canvas, 2014

Nareman Faraj Allah

Untitled I

Employing various symbolic characters, Nareman Faraj Allah's work pulsates with tribal iconography. Yet most of these icons are symbols that she has devised; references to her life and upbringing. The central, prominent figure is likely a self-portrait and also a statement on the significance of the woman's position and role in Palestinian culture and tradition.

Born in 1978, Nareman Faraj Allah holds a BA in Art Education from Al Aqsa University, Gaza (2004). She is a member of the Palestinian Artists Association, the Federation of Trade Unions in Palestine, the Paletta Fine Art Group and the Roots Fine Art Group; all based in Gaza.



Mohammed Al Hawajri, Maryam and the Rest of Memory, 150 x 150 cm, Acrylic on Canvas, 2014

Mohammed Al Hawajri

Maryam and the Rest of Memory

Maryam was a Palestinian peasant who would tend to her animals near Hawajri's home by the Wadi Gaza. She would walk to the orange grove daily, a very green and fertile area, to pick various plants for feed. Hawajri recalls the conversations they would have and the smell of the orange trees and flowers during spring. He continues to have vivid recollections of those moments, especially when contemplating his present condition. Currently, the same area is now barren wasteland as a result of the occupation: the trees have been uprooted and destroyed, the flowers are gone and the wells have dried up. All that remains are images in his memory.

Born in Gaza in 1976, Mohammed Al Hawajri is a founder of Gaza's Red Crescent Society Fine Art Programme as well as one of the founders of Eltiqa Contemporary Art Collective. He has taken part in numerous arts residency programs and workshops in Paris, the UK, Jordan and Palestine and in 2000 was awarded 1st prize from the Khaled Shoman Foundation, Darat Al Funun, Amman, Jordan.



Nidal Abu Oun, Roots, 120 x 100 cm, Oil on Canvas, 2014

Nidal Abu Oun

Roots

'Roots' is an unmistakable reference to Palestinian land, particularly to the olive tree and the Palestinian woman's connection to it. Here, these women are represented as trees, their bodies made of bark and the baskets they carry, symbols of fertility: all indicative of Palestinian steadfastness despite adversity.

Born in Jabaliya Refugee Camp, Gaza in 1971, Nidal Abu Oun currently works at the Palestinian Ministry of Culture. A member of the Union of Palestinian Plastic Artists, he has participated in exhibitions in Palestine and internationally.



Ismail Kloub, An Old Love Story, 70 x 100 cm, Oil on Canvas, 2014

Ismail Kalloub

An Old Love Story

Ismail Kalloub was greatly affected by the death of his horse when he was only six years old. Upon this tragedy, he remembers his grandfather's comforting words about how horses, unlike humans, have an intuitive ability to choose the time, place and manner of their death. Here, Kalloub depicts the enchantment of a horse, illustrating the way in which a warrior's horse reflects the positive aspects of their character strength, endurance and loyalty.

Born in Jabaliya Refugee Camp, Gaza in 1978, Ismail Kalloub obtained his BA in Art Education from Al Aqsa University in 2001. He is a member of the Federation for Palestinian Fine Artists and currently teaches art at the Ministry of Education. Ismail has worked on various murals throughout Gaza particularly illustrative murals for children.



Salem Awad, Relationship, 70 x 100 cm, Acrylic on Canvas, 2014

Salem Awad

Relationship

Salem Awad's grandmother's dress is still hung in one of their house's closets and continues to elicit strong memories whenever they come across it. The dress, embroidered with various colours, makes Awad feel as if his grandmother is still present among them and that Palestine is as it once was.

The colours used in Palestinian embroidery tend to be inspired by the landscape and also reflect the social status of the Palestinian woman. A bride's dress typically has different shades of red, whilst a widowed woman's is created with dark blue to mark her mourning. Once remarried, she would usually wear a dress with shades of bright blue, as if to announce the end of her mourning. Here, Awad expressively employs each of these colours as a sign of appreciation for Palestinian dress and its role in preserving Palestinian heritage.

Salem Awad Holds a BA in Fine Art From Al Aqsa University, Gaza with a specialization in filmmaking (2008). He is a member of the Palestinian Fine Artists Association and has held several positions teaching Fine Art to Palestinian youth.



Irina Naji, Dream, 130 x 170 cm. Acrylic on Canvas, 2014

Irina Naji

Dream

A trio of women stand together, their heads bowed and adorned with olive branches, wheat spikes, oranges and birds- elements that reflect the culture, traditions and heritage of Palestine. This work is not simply a reflection on, or longing for the past, but is also a prayer for peace and the right to fulfil the dream to truly live.

Born in 1965, Irina Naji obtained her BSc at the Academy of Art and Architecture, St Petersburg, Russia in 1989. Irina has taught at both the 'Our Home' Association and the Al Qattan Association, Gaza. She currently teaches at the Community Empowerment Centre, Gaza.



Maheer Naji, The Remaining Memory, 175 x 135 cm, Acrylic on Canvas, 2014

Maheer Naji

The Remaining Memory

The hand mill is for Maheer Naji, a tool that elicits such powerful memories of the home that he was raised in, in the village of Al Sawafir, Gaza. In this dreamlike depiction entitled, 'The Remaining Memory', Naji visually interprets his mother's recounting of the hand mill and the manner in which it was used to grind wheat grains as she conversed with the women that surrounded her.

Born in 1963, Maheer Naji currently lives in Jabaliya Camp, Gaza. He obtained his BSc at the Academy of Art and Architecture, St. Petersburg, Russia in 1989 and then went on to complete his PHD in Architecture in 1994 from the same institution. He has taken part in numerous international group and solo exhibitions.



Mohammed Al Madhoun, Housh, 120 x 80 cm, Acrylic on Canvas, 2014

Mohammed Al Madhoun

Housh

'Housh' is Mohammed Al Madhoun's visual interpretation of the house he was raised in, in Jabaliya Refugee camp, Gaza. It still exists as it was prior to 1948 despite the demolition and rebuilding of the homes that surrounded it. This particular view, a simple corner of the building with its cracked walls and subtle lighting, evokes Al Madhoun's desire to depict, in detail, the many layers of its foundation- layers that also reflect the time-honoured traditions of the family that lived within its walls.

Born in Gaza in 1979, Mohammed Al Madhoun holds a BA in Art Education as well as a Diploma in Illustration. He is a member of the Palestinian Fine Arts Association and has previously worked at UNRWA. Mohammad has supervised various arts related training courses and was granted an arts residency in Paris between 2012 and 2013. He currently works for the Ministry of Education, Gaza.



Hazem Abu Zomor, Weaving Memory, 70 x 100 cm, Acrylic on Canvas, 2014

Hazem Abu Zomor

Weaving Memory

A sewing machine, inherited from Hazem's grandmother, has long played a central role in the Abu Zomor family. Its significance is due not only to the fact that it is their main source of income but also because of its position within the household, whereby family members would long gather around it to sew, engage and enjoy each other's company.

Born in 1989, Hazem Abu Zomor holds a BA in Fine Art. He is a Member of the Palestinian Association for Fine Artists and has taken part in a significant amount of volunteer work in Gaza through arts related projects.



Ashraf Sahwiel, Homeland, 100 x 80 cm, Oil on Canvas, 2014

Ashraf Sahwiel

Homeland

As these faceless Revolutionists follow one another towards an unknown destination, we are reminded of the ultimate goal of freedom fighters - to return to and protect their homeland. However, as they disappear into the distance, ghostly apparitions consumed by a muddy fog, we ask ourselves, to where are they returning?

Born in Gaza in 1973, Ashraf Sahwiel holds a BA in Media and Public Relations from Al Aqsa University (2004). He has previously held positions such as the Director of the Gaza Association for Culture and Art, Chairman of ABNANA Development Association and Board Member of the General Union of Cultural Centres.



Majed Shala, A Love Letter, 100 x 100 cm, Acrylic on Canvas, 2014

Majed Shala

Love Letter

Majed Shala recalls a time as a child seeing his grandmother elated after the receipt of a letter from one of her sons, who was living abroad. As the letter was read aloud, the emotional response that arose amongst the visitors that surrounded her was evident - even the neighbours came to congratulate her on the receipt of this letter, which had taken approximately one month to reach her. Shala felt the same joy visiting the post office as a teenager in order to send or receive a letter to or from his cousin that lived in Amman.

'Love Letter' is a parable for a longing for and an appreciation of the simplicity of life in the past; for the deep bond that was felt between people, despite distance; and for the inner strength that grows as one learns patience, even the patience required whilst waiting for a letter.

Born in 1960 in Gaza, Majed Shala holds an MA in Art from Scranton University, USA (2001). He is a member of the Palestinian Artist Association; a founding member of 'Windows from Gaza', a contemporary art collective based in Gaza and also a founding member of 'Al Mohtaraf'. He has taken part in numerous group and solo exhibitions in Palestine and abroad.



Diana Al Hosary, A Woman's Memory, 100 x 100 cm, Mixed Media, 2014

Diana Al Hosary

A Woman's Memory

Employing various decorative elements found within her household, Diana Al Hosary illustrates her desire to maintain a sense of femininity within her work as well as to show her appreciation for the possessions that represent her past.

Born in 1988 in Gaza, Diana Al Hosary obtained her BA in Fine Art from Al Aqsa University Gaza in 2010. She has coordinated various arts-related projects- specifically with the youth of Gaza. Diana has worked both in a University and school setting in both administrative and teaching roles- teaching both Fine Art and Graphic Design. She currently teaches art at Hashim Sha-wa Atta, Secondary School for Girls.



Mohammed Al Dabous, Silent Faces (Triptych), 100 x 100 cm (each), Acrylic on Canvas, 2014

Mohammed Al Dabous

Silent Faces

'Silent Faces' speaks of the brutal Israeli blockade on Gaza and its impact on the people and the landscape. Clouds of smoke billow around buildings, resulting in highly emotive imagery. Al Dabous rarely depicts people in his work, however the atmosphere itself resonates human emotion.

Born in 1978 in Jabaliya Refugee Camp, Gaza, Mohammed Al Dabous holds a BA in Fine Art from Helwan University, Cairo (2002). He has previously held positions teaching Fine Art at Al Aqsa University, Gaza and at the Palestinian Red Crescent Society. He is a member of the Contemporary Art Collective 'Eltiqa'.



Abdelraouf Alajouri, The Bitter and Bitterness, 120 x 300 cm, Oil on Canvas, 2014

Raouf Al Ajouri

The Bitter and the Bitterness

Raouf Al Ajouri's work is recognized for its emblematic characters that are consistently portrayed as otherworldly, curious, childlike beings. This desire to illustrate a sense of innocence is perhaps a form of escapism- of reminiscing about a time prior to becoming influenced by society's restrictions, or tainted by humanity's shortcomings.

Born in Jabaliya Refugee Camp, Gaza, Raouf Al Ajouri holds a BA in Art Education from Al Aqsa University, Gaza (2008). He has undertaken various courses in calligraphy, drawing and animation and is a founding member of 'Eltiqa', a collective of contemporary artists based in Gaza. He has previously held positions teaching art and is currently the art coordinator for Eltiqa Artists House.



Raed Issa, Dabka, 110 x 270 cm, Oil on Canvas, 2014

Raed Issa

Dabka

The Dabka, a traditional Palestinian line dance, is typically performed at weddings and joyous occasions, as it is an extremely important part of Palestinian popular culture. After 1948, the Dabka, like the Keffiyeh, also became a symbol of struggle and resistance.

Raed Issa was born in Gaza in 1975. He is a founder of the Fine Art Program within the Palestinian Red Crescent Society as well as a founder of Eltiqa- a contemporary art collective based in Gaza. He holds a Diploma in Computer Science from Al Aqsa University, Gaza. Raed has taken part in numerous group and solo exhibitions internationally.



Fayeze Al Hasani, Embrace I, 80 x 60 cm, Oil on Canvas, 2014

Fayeze El Hasani

Embrace

Fayeze Al Hasani's work resonates with 'ethnic' undertones and the symbolism that he employs typically holds a dual meaning. In 'Embrace', the orange, often a symbol of love and marriage, also represents nostalgia for the strength and perseverance of the past.

Born in 1952 in Gaza, Fayeze Al Hasani holds a BA in Fine Art from Cairo University. He currently teaches Fine Art in the Education department at UNRWA and previously taught art at the Teachers Institute in Algiers. Fayeze has participated in a number of exhibitions in Algeria, Jordan and Palestine and is one of the founders of the Plastic Arts Association, based in Gaza.



Maha El Daya, Khlidah, 121 x 92 cm, Acrylic on Canvas, 2014

Maha Al Daya

Khlidah

In 'Khlidah', Maha Al Daya presents us with a typical Palestinian embroidered purse and reflects on the importance that embroidery plays in Palestinian culture and the lives of Palestinian women; their resulting work often passed down through generations.

Born in Gaza in 1976, Maha Al Daya holds a degree in Political Science from Al Azhar University, Gaza. She has taken part in artist residency programs through the Qattan Foundation, Ramallah as well as Dar Al Funun, Amman and has participated in numerous group and solo exhibitions in Palestine and abroad.



Bassel El Maqosui, Palestinian Dress, 100 x 80 cm, Acrylic on Canvas, 2014

Bassel El Maqosui

Palestinian Dress

In the 19th and early 20th Century, Foreign Travellers to Palestine often commented on the great variety of costumes worn by the Palestinian village women. Many of these garments were richly embroidered and the creation of them played a very important role in the lives of the women that wore them. Until the 1940s, traditional Palestinian costume reflected a woman's economic and marital status as well as her town or district of origin. Experts would discern this information from the fabric, colours, cut and embroidery motifs (or lack thereof) on the apparel.

In this work, Bassel El Maqosui reflects on the costume itself- showing his desire to document its elaborate nature in a rather contemporary manner.

Born in Gaza in 1971, Basel El Maqosui is a painter, photographer and video artist. He completed an art course in Gaza City in 1995 and in 2000, 2001 and 2003, Basel attended the summer Academy of Art at Darat al Funun, run by the Khalid Shoman Foundation, in Amman, Jordan. In 2003, he was awarded the Charles Asprey award for Palestinian Artists and was shortlisted for the A.M. Qattan Foundation's Artist of the Year award. Basel has participated in a number of local and international group and solo exhibitions and currently teaches art at the Jabaliya Rehabilitation Centre for deaf and dumb children.



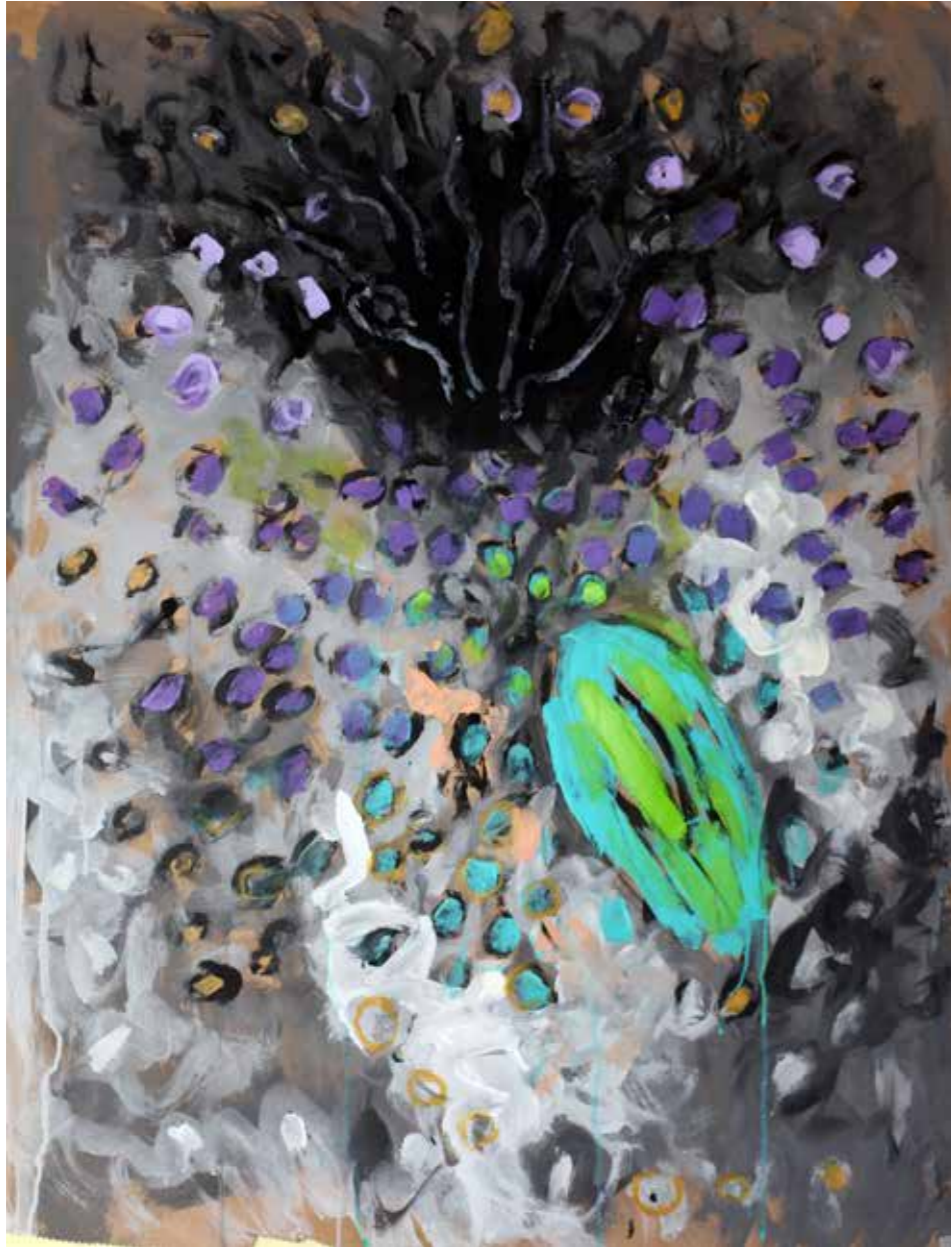
Mohammed Abu Hashish, The Other, 30 x 30 x 170 cm, Cast Aluminium and Porecelain 2014

Bassel Aklouk

My City

Bassel Aklouk recalls a time when he was seven years old and living in Damascus and he was struck by a vision of a beautiful woman. However, he was only left with a dreamlike memory of that moment. This incident was one of many that influenced his highly surrealist work that often depicts ethereal forms pirouetting through illusory landscapes.

Born in Damascus, Syria in 1973, Bassel Aklouk obtained his BA in Fine Art from Al Najah University, Nablus in 1998. In 2001, he completed a Higher Diploma in Art at Al Aqsa University, Gaza. Bassel has organized numerous exhibitions in Palestine and has had an active career lecturing and teaching art with the Ministry of Culture as well as within a university setting. He is a member of the Palestinian Association of Plastic Artists and is currently Director of Fine Art at the Ministry of Culture- a position he has held for the past 7 years.



Mohamed Abusal, Passive, 110 x 80 cm, Acrylic on Paper, 2014

Mohammed Abusal

Passive

Since his childhood, Mohammed Abusal has been drawn to the unique form and features of the cactus- with its individuality, oddness, unhurried growth and resilience. He continues to surround himself by cacti within his home as to him the cactus is a symbol of strength, patience and determination.

Born in 1976 in Gaza, Mohamed Abusal completed his BA in Accounting from the Islamic University of Gaza in 1999. He undertook various courses in art and design including a Graphic Design Course in 2001 through the University of Macromedia (USA) as well as courses in photography. He was awarded the AFAC Production Award for 'Shambar' in 2012. Abusal has exhibited extensively around the world over the last decade, notably in France where he has held several solo exhibitions, in addition to the US, the UK, Australia and Dubai. In 2005, Abusal was awarded the Charles Asprey Prize for Contemporary Art. He is also a founding member of 'Eltiqā', a collective of contemporary artists from Gaza, established in 2002.



Mohammad Lubbad, Transference, 50 x 70 cm, Mixed Media on Paper, 2014

Mohammed Lubbad

Transference

By gathering old pieces of newspaper, magazine and scraps of paper-remnants of the past- Mohammed Lubbad rearranges this material into imagery that portrays a pivotal point in the history of the Palestinian people-their transference in 1948. Lubbad's method reminds us of the importance in piecing together information, as doing so ensures a holistic view of a story.

After completing a course in Graphic Design in Norway (1999), Mohammad Lubbad obtained his BA in Fine Art from Al Najah University, Nablus in 2000. He then went on to study Art Criticism at Helwan University, Cairo, where he graduated in 2009. Mohammad has worked at the Ministry of Education, Gaza, as well as both Al Aqsa and Gaza University where he currently delivers lectures on Art. He is a member of the Association for Plastic Artists as well as a founding member of 'Roots' a group of artists based in Gaza.



Abdallah Rozzi, Memory of Our Village, 80 x 100 cm, Oil on Canvas, 2014

Abdullah Rozzi

The Memory of Our Village

Through Abdullah Rozzi's work, we are able to gain a sense the importance of the existence of the olive tree as a symbol of national heritage and endurance- where every leaf, branch and root, resonates throughout the landscape. Through the subtlety of his painting technique, Rozzi presents us with an impression of his environment- of the colours, the light and the general atmosphere of a place that exists neither in the present nor in the past but almost as an idyllic daydream.

Born in 1982 in Gaza, Abdullah Al Rozzi holds a BA in Art Education from Al Aqsa University, Gaza. He has been extremely active with various arts institutions in the Middle East and in 2010 was awarded the Hassan Hourani Young Artist Award.



Ayman Issa, Dialogue, 130 x 150 cm, Oil on canvas, 2014

Ayman Issa

Dialogue

These two women, with their angular features and voluptuous figures, are characteristic of women within Ayman Issa's work. Here they are seated within a room of a house, alit with a simple lamp. Their body language is relaxed, yet their gaze drifts towards us, the viewer, as if we have interrupted them in mid-conversation. Awash with a rich hue of blue, these women are ageless; representing the past, present and future; symbols of strength, femininity, motherhood and fertility.

Born in Gaza in 1974, Ayman received his BA in Fine Art from Al Najah University Nablus, in 1999. He obtained his MA in Fine Arts from Helwan University, Cairo in 2011. He has participated in numerous group and solo exhibitions in Palestine and abroad and has also taken part in many workshops in Palestine, particularly with the Palestinian Red Crescent Society.



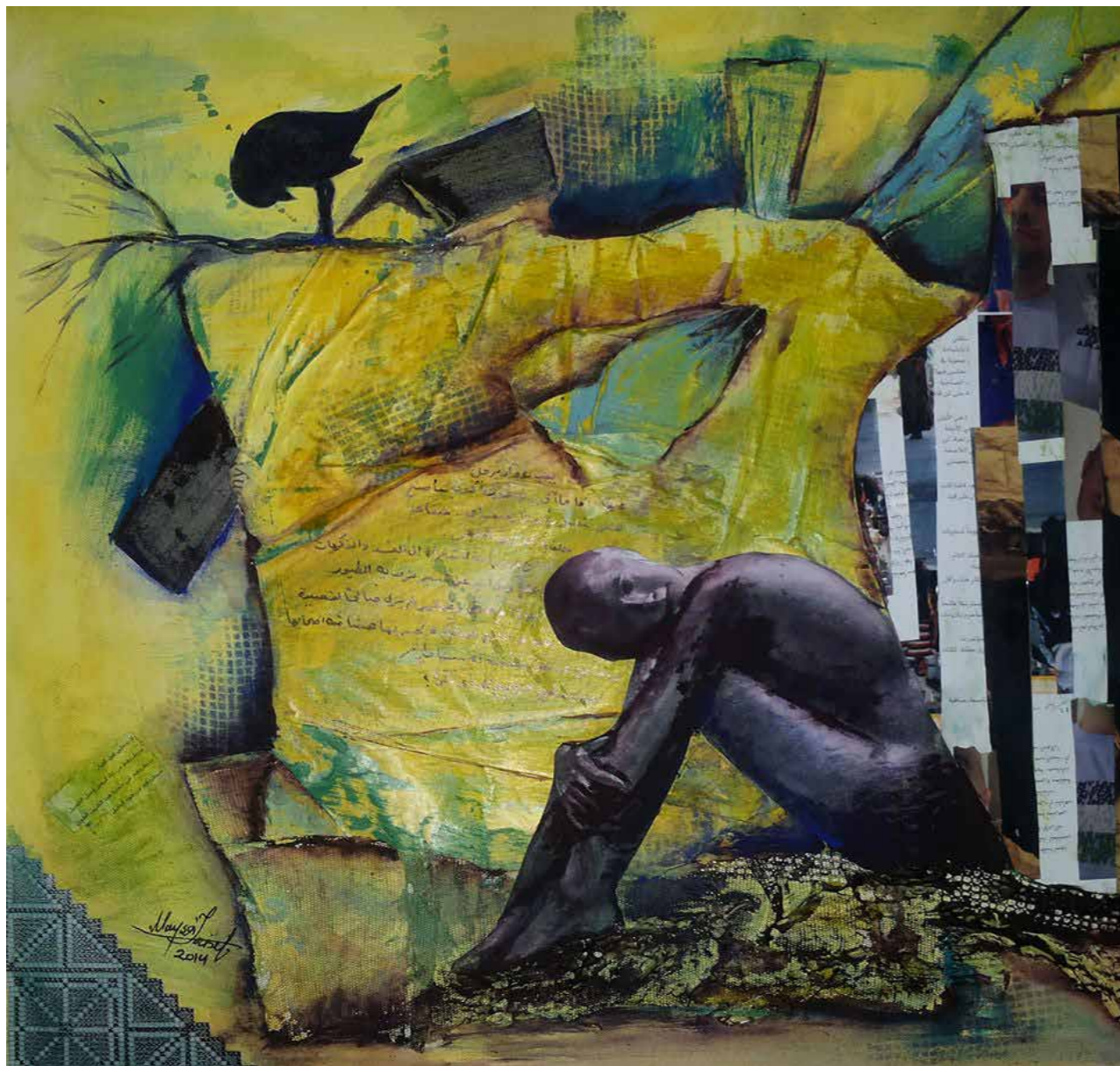
Sohail Salem, Part of Body, 100 x 220 cm, Oil on Canvas, 2014

Sohail Salem

A Part of A Body

Sohail Salem's 'A Part of A Body', is like the title implies, an allegory to the deep spiritual and physical connection that he, as a Palestinian, feels towards the landscape (both land and sea) of Palestine.

Born in Gaza in 1974, Sohail Salem obtained his BA in Fine Art from Al Aqsa University in 1999. He is a founder and member of Eltiqa Group for Contemporary Art and currently works as a Graphic Designer in Gaza.



Maysa Yousif, Identity of the Soul (Triptych), 100 x 140 cm (total), Mixed Media on Canvas

Maysa Yousif

Identity of the Soul

By collaging bits of found material including passages of text by the renowned writer Mahmood Darwish, Maysa Yousif's work speaks of national heritage and the importance of cherishing culture and tradition as a means of preservation of one's identity.

Born in Gaza City in 1984, Maysaa Yousif holds a BA in Painting from Al Aqsa University, Gaza. She has participated in numerous workshops, exhibitions and training courses in Palestine.



Sameer Hallaq, Building a Kite, 75 x 55 cm, Acrylic on Canvas

Sameer Hallaq

The Kite

Sameer Hallaq captures one of his fondest childhood memories: building kites. The colorful vibrancy of the kites he created reverberated the atmosphere that surrounded him. So at ease and focused in those moments of creation, Hallaq clearly remembers the inner peace and contentment that he felt as a child, unaware and unaffected by his humble beginnings.

Born in Jabaliya Refugee Camp, Gaza in 1971, Samir has BA in Art Education from Al Aqsa University, Gaza (1999). Samir currently teaches art in Gaza at various schools as well as UNRWA. He is both a member of the Palestinian Fine Arts Association and the General Union of Palestinian Fine Artists.



Marwan Nassar, Nostalgia, 100 x 80 cm, Acrylic on Canvas

Marwan Nassar

Nostalgia

Marwan Nassar remembers a time when he lived with his grandfather and would study him as he ground coffee while they sat together in a simple room amidst humble surroundings. His grandfather would burn the black coffee and then grind it by hand in a pottery bowl. Watching the process and inhaling the fragrance of freshly ground coffee was in itself therapeutic, and the expression on his grandfather's face was one of content concentration, unforgettable to Nassar.

Born in 1984, Marwan Nassar obtained his BA in art from Al Aqsa University in 2007. He currently teaches art at Ibrahim Al Maqadma Secondary School for Boys, Gaza. He also lectures part-time at the College for Applied and Professional Sciences.



Mohammed Al Haj, Gaza, Palestine (Traces), 70 x 50 cm, Mixed Media on Wood

Mohammed Al Haj

Gaza, Palestine (Traces)

Mohammed Al Haj's father recently obtained permission to visit the West Bank city of Hebron in order to see his daughter. He was also able to visit his hometown, the village of Kaokaba, now known as Kokhav Michael. When he finally arrived, faced with the landscape that he had not seen since his youth, memories of his childhood overwhelmed him and tears streamed down his face.

Using Raw materials, Al Haj aimed to recreate this sentiment and to fulfil his father's desire to document the village of his youth. As Al Haj explores the topography and contours of the land by interpreting his father's memory of it, we begin to question the concept of borders and land ownership. Who draws the maps and lines of division? What is to be said of those to whom ownership was not based on material gain but on the preservation of one's history and identity?

Born in Libya in 1982, Mohammed Al Haj obtained his BA in Fine Art from Al Aqsa University, Gaza in 2004. He has taken part in numerous collaborative arts projects, particularly mural work, with artists and youth from Gaza. In order to further hone his skills, he undertook various courses in art and design after completing university. Al Haj currently teaches art in various public schools in Gaza.



Mohammed Abu Hashish, The Other, 30 x 30 x 170 cm, Cast Aluminium and Porecelain

Mohammed Abu Hashish

The Other

Humans frequently wear hypothetical 'masks' as a means of concealing their true identity. This often arises due to a lack of confidence in oneself or a fear of being judged by others. However, what often happens, is that this guise which acts as a defence mechanism, allows the superficial aspects of one's ego to arise, thereby preventing the individual from fulfilling their true potential.

By creating a reflective mask, Mohammed Abu Hashish asks us to contemplate the role we have played in influencing and affecting others, as well as to consider 'the other's' impact on us.

Born in 1988 in Rafah refugee camp, Mohammed Abu Hashish currently lives in Maghazi Camp, Gaza. He holds a BA in Arts Education from Aqsa University (2010), where he undertook various courses in woodwork and ceramics. He has participated in the creation of numerous murals for public spaces around Gaza.

Mohammed Abu Hashish
Mohammed Al Haj
Marwan Nassar
Sameer Hallaq
Mohammad Lubbad
Mohamed Abusal
Sohail Salem
Bassel Aklouk
Raed Issa
Abdelraouf Alajouri
Mohammed Al Dabous
Diana Al Hosary
Mohammed Al Madhoun
Maher Naji
Irina Naji
Salem Awad
Ismail Kloub
Mohammed Harb
Dalia Abdelrahman
Maisara Baroud
Dina Mattar
Shareef Sarhan

Mohammed Musallam
Ismail Dahlan
Nabil Abu Ghanima
Maysaa Al Bardaweal
Iyad Sabbah
Basel El Maqosui
Majed Shala
Nidal Abu Oun
Maysa Yousef
Mohammed Al Hawajri
Nareman Faraj Allah
Maha El Daya
Rasha Abu Zayed
Ayman Issa
Rufaida Sehwail
Hazem Abu Zumor
Fayez Al Hasani
Ibrahim Al Awadi
Abdallah Rozzi
Abdelnasser Amr
Ashraf Sahwiel

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