

ARTIN**IRAQ**TODAY

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PART III

IN MEMORY OF JABRA IBRAHIM JABRA

# ART IN **IRAQ** TODAY: PART III

CURATED BY DIA AL-AZZAWI

HIMAT M.  
ALI

## ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE

A lot of the landmarks of my experience lie amidst ‘complete solitude’ as well as ‘the course of the invisible in painting.’ Indiscernible to the eye, this space contains my innermost thoughts, my painting techniques and all that I want to achieve through and by painting. Briefly, I can say that what provokes my visual sensitivity is that which gives the sky its meaning; the distance where creatures exist and whatever may explain the concept of hovering, exaltation and rapprochement, along with the lightness of being which is a feature of unseen entities.

There is a dual pledge within my art. I promise my paintings will have something resembling me, and I too will resemble something within the painting. We are two entities existing in a moment of engagement that has no direct meaning, and has no benefit except for being part of the act of creation.

In the flower, I have found my little fairies. They do not utter a sound, yet, they speak all the possible languages. What I dreamt of was not to be a linguistic creature, and that was what I have gained from painting. At one point, I felt more Japanese than Kurdish, for art can move the spirit to a deeper level of identification.

My painting techniques do not merely resemble me, rather they are who I am entirely. Nothing comes from without; everything springs from within. The surface is not a cover, it is a secret garden to which I extend my arm and clear the fog for the truth to come into sight.

When I paint, I follow my dreams, through my brushstrokes. As I paint, my hand also dreams as I do, it does so nervously and as it moves my dreams are cleared and refined. Painting does not dwell in my mind alone, painting is the act of my body. The imagination of that body creates a special distance, which I have identified as the space that leads up to the sky.

*Land & Human* was the title of the first exhibition I held in Baghdad in 1982. Since then, I have been searching in painting, through painting and with painting, for the meaning of ‘homeland’— the place where roots develop and a feeling of belonging is created. Sometimes I even wonder whether I even exist in reality or in the painting alone. How can I be partial to what I am not certain about? My land and my being are in a different place. Like the spot of light to which my paintings reach, I am emitted from my work and come to exist as I realise this renouncement of my land. Painting is not a mask; it is the truth, and I have been exposed to its magical effects.

Himat M. Ali

Paris

October 2010

**HIMAT MOHAMMED ALI**

b. Karkuk, 1960

**SOLO EXHIBITIONS**

- 1982** Gallery of Contemporary Art, Karkuk
- 1983** Al Rashid Gallery, Baghdad
- 1986** Al Rashid Gallery, Baghdad
- 1988** Tsubaki Gallery, Chiba
- 1990** Al Riwaq Gallery, Baghdad
  - Forms Gallery, Tokyo
  - Shofu Gallery, Tokyo
  - Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation, Amman
- 1992** Atagoyama Gallery, Tokyo
- 1993** Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris
- 1994** Galerie Shawar, Paris
- 1995** Mutsu Gallery, Chiba
  - Galerie Atagoyama, Tokyo
  - Galerie Via Fravia, Domu-Ems, Switzerland
- 1996** Darat al Funun, The Khalid Shoman Foundation, Amman
- 1997** Librairie Vendredi, Paris
- 1998** Salle des Expositions, UNESCO, Paris
- 1999** Kinokunya Gallery, Tokyo
  - Al Riwaq Gallery, Manama
- 2000** Centre d'Art et de Littérature L'Echelle, France
- 2001** 4 Walls Gallery, Amman
  - Sharjah Museum, Sharjah
- 2002** Kinokunya Gallery, Tokyo
  - Ezermann Gallery, Dokkum

- 2004** Agial Gallery, Beirut
- 2005** 4 Walls Gallery, Amman
  - Agial Gallery, Beirut
  - Galerie Le Patio, Tunis
- 2006** Al Riwaq Gallery, Manama
- 2007** 5 Lines Contemporary Art Gallery, Amman
- 2008** Sharif Exhibition Hall, Tunis
- 2010** Nabad Hall, Amman
  - Dar Al Funoon, Kuwait

**GROUP EXHIBITIONS**

- 1982** First Youth Festival, Baghdad
- 1983** *Contemporary Iraqi Art Exhibition*, National Gallery, Baghdad
- 1985** Fifth Al Wasiti Festival, Baghdad
- 1986** First Baghdad International Exhibition, Baghdad
  - Sixth Al Wasiti Festival, Baghdad
- 1987** Babel International Festival, Baghdad
- 1988** *Miniature Exhibition*, Al-Rashid Gallery, Baghdad
  - Second Baghdad International Exhibition, Baghdad
- 1989** *Contemporary Iraqi Art Exhibition*, Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris
  - Seventh Al Wasiti Festival, Baghdad
- 1990** Metropolitan Museum, Tokyo
- 1991** Bomon Gallery, Sur Waz, France
- 1992** Philippe Caz Gallery, Paris
- 1993** Darat Al Funun, Amman
  - Kufa Gallery, London
- 1994** Global City for Art, Paris

- 1995** Carl Strubel Gallery, Vienna  
Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris
- 1996** Bedford Gallery, Virginia
- 1999** Darat Al Funun, Amman
- 2001** Aya Gallery, London
- 2002** De Stad Historical Museum, Vienna  
Doyle University, Chicago, Illinois
- 2003** National Museum, Crocville, Poland  
Darat Al Funun, Amman
- 2004** Seventh Cairo Biennale, Cairo
- 2005** Asilah Festival, Asilah
- 2006** Al Muharess Festival, Tunis  
Bonn Museum, Bonn
- 2008** *Iraqi Artists in Exile*, Station Museum of Contemporary Art, Houston, Texas
- 2009** *Modernism and Iraq*, Wallach Art Gallery, Columbia University, New York
- 2011** *Art in Iraq Today: Part III*, Meem Gallery, Dubai

**PUBLIC COLLECTIONS**

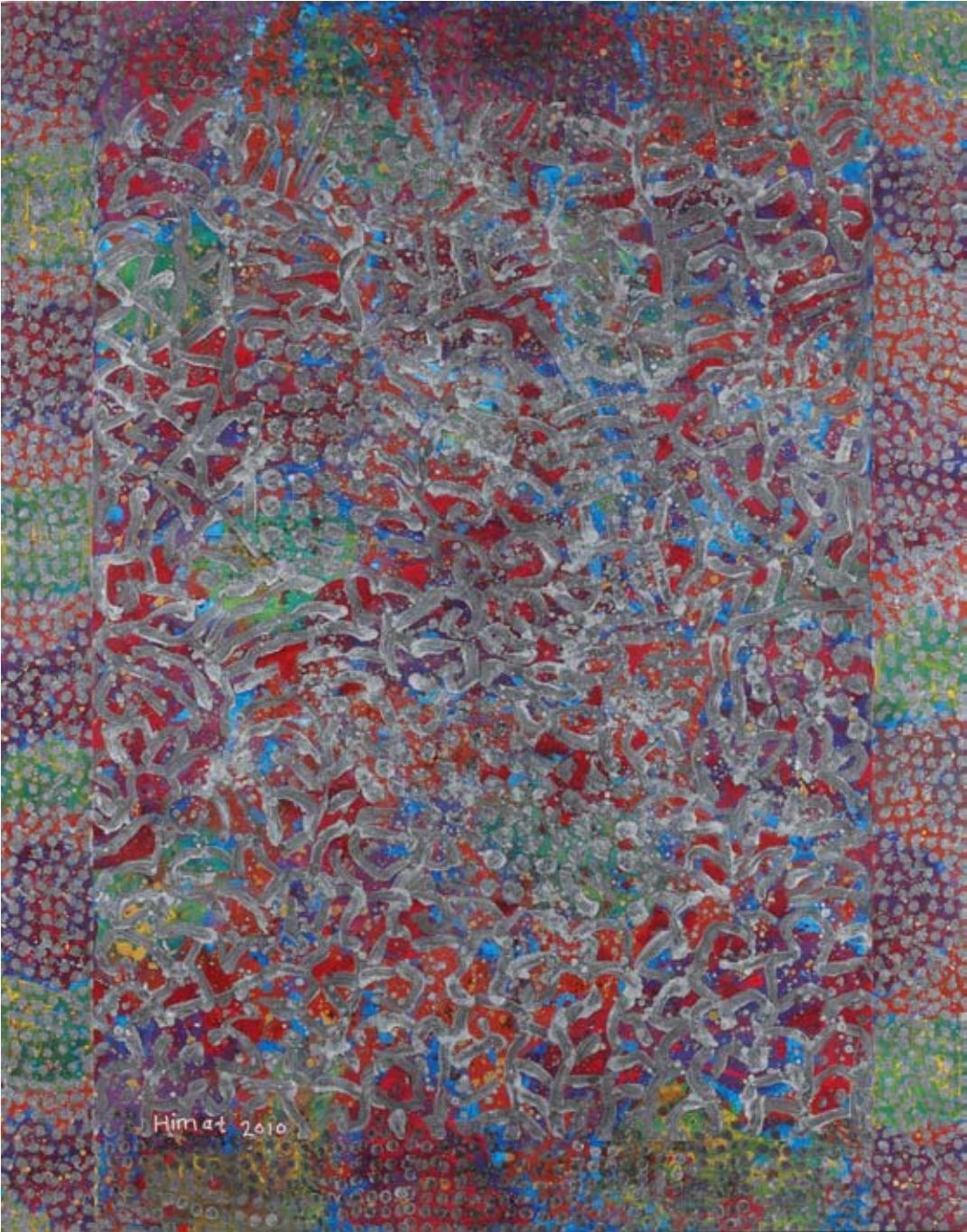
Bibliothèque de la Francophone, Limoges  
Bibliothèque National de France, Paris  
Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris  
Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, Amman  
Khalid Shoman Foundation, Darat al Funun, Amman  
Ministry of Culture, Tunis  
Museum of Modern Art, Baghdad  
Sharjah Museum, Sharjah

**AWARDS**

- 1983** Appreciation Award, Youth Festival, Bagdad
- 1985** Award in Graphics, Wasiti Festival, Bagdad
- 1989** First Award, Wasiti Festival, Bagdad

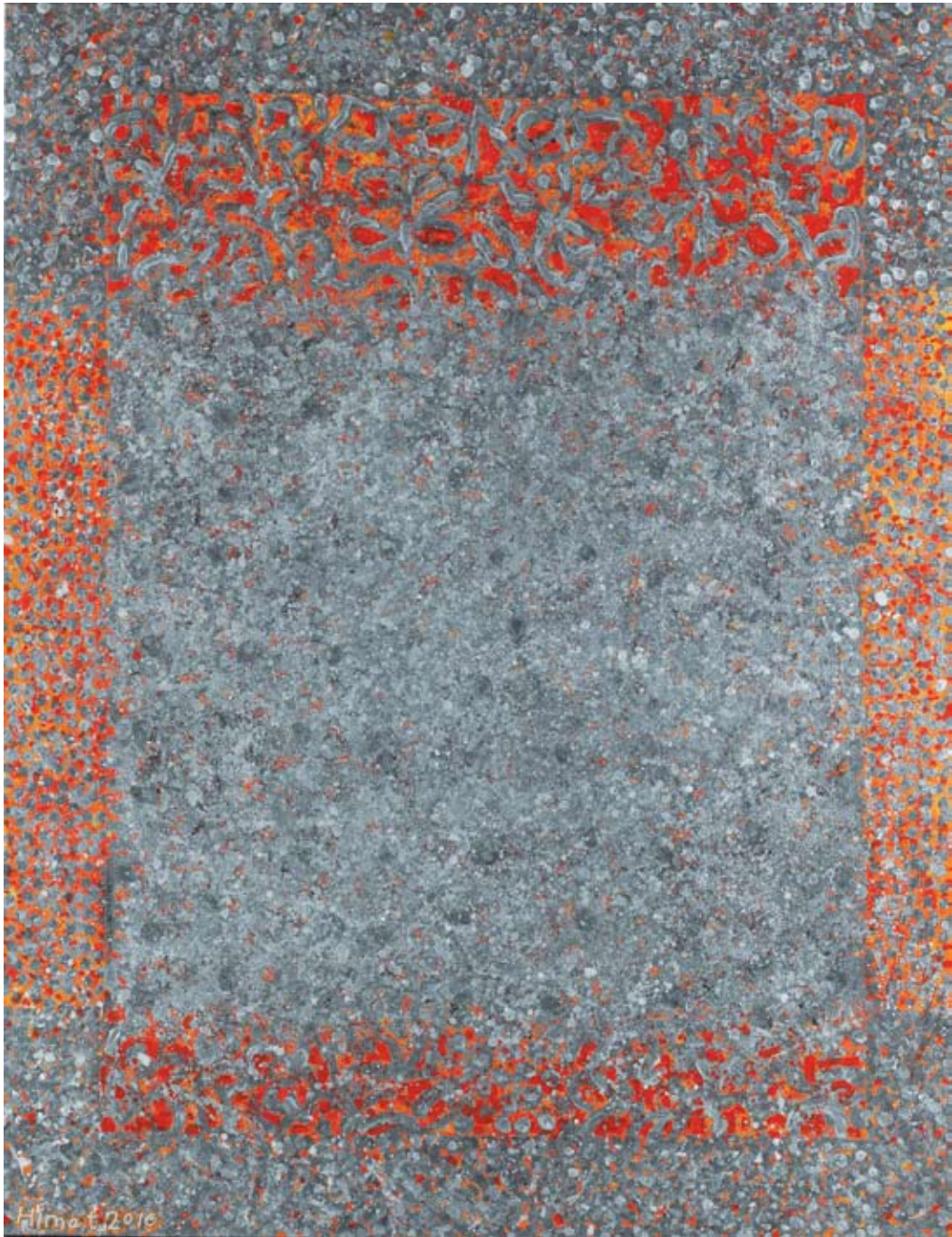


**Landscape** (2010)  
Mixed media on canvas  
191 \* 151 cm





**Orange Landscape** (2010)  
Mixed media on canvas  
191 \* 151 cm



**After Rain No.1** (2010)  
Mixed media on canvas  
190 \* 120 cm

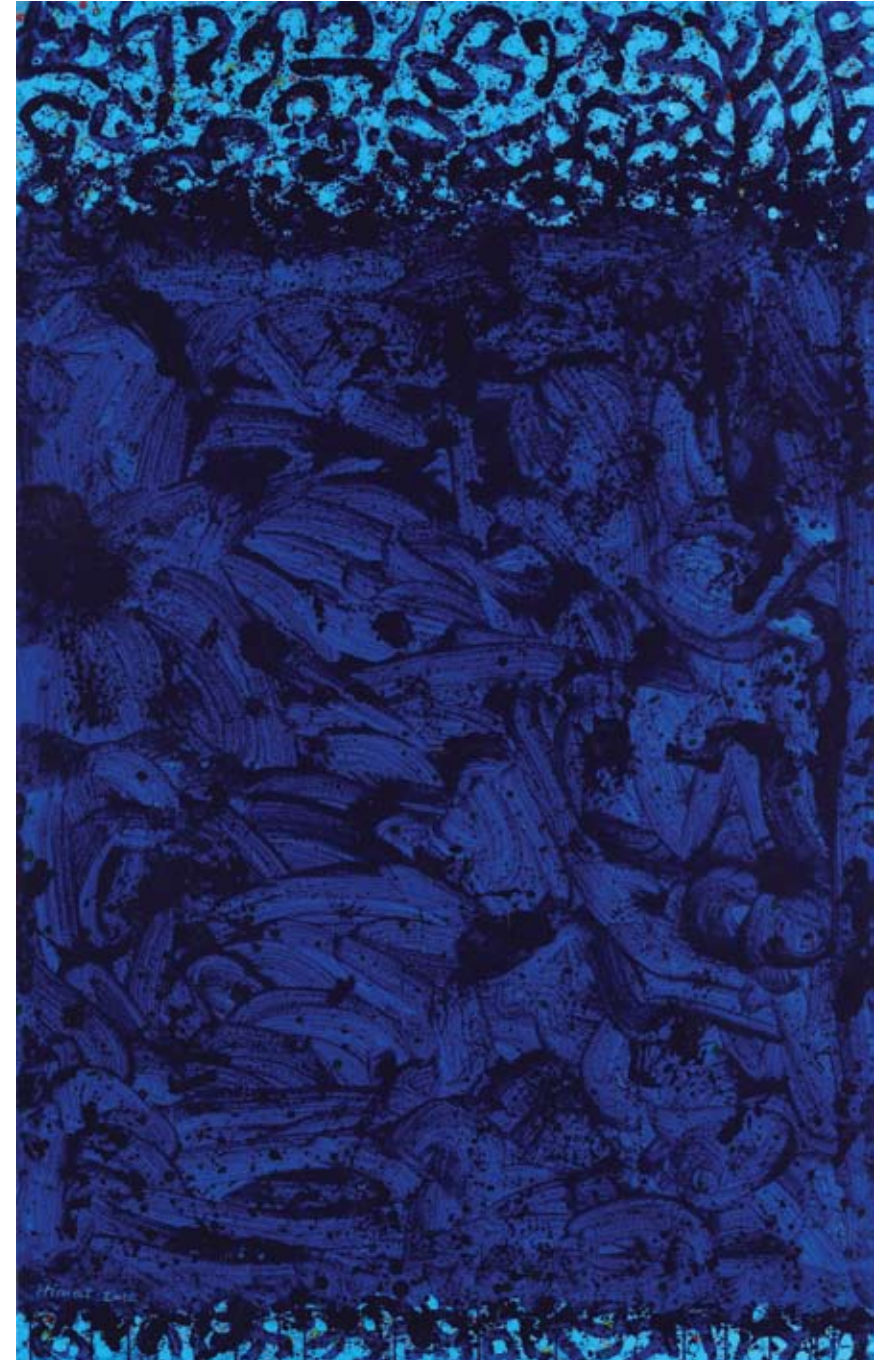




**After Rain No.2** (2010)  
Mixed media on canvas  
190 \* 120 cm



**Lake** (2010)  
Mixed media on canvas  
190 \* 120 cm







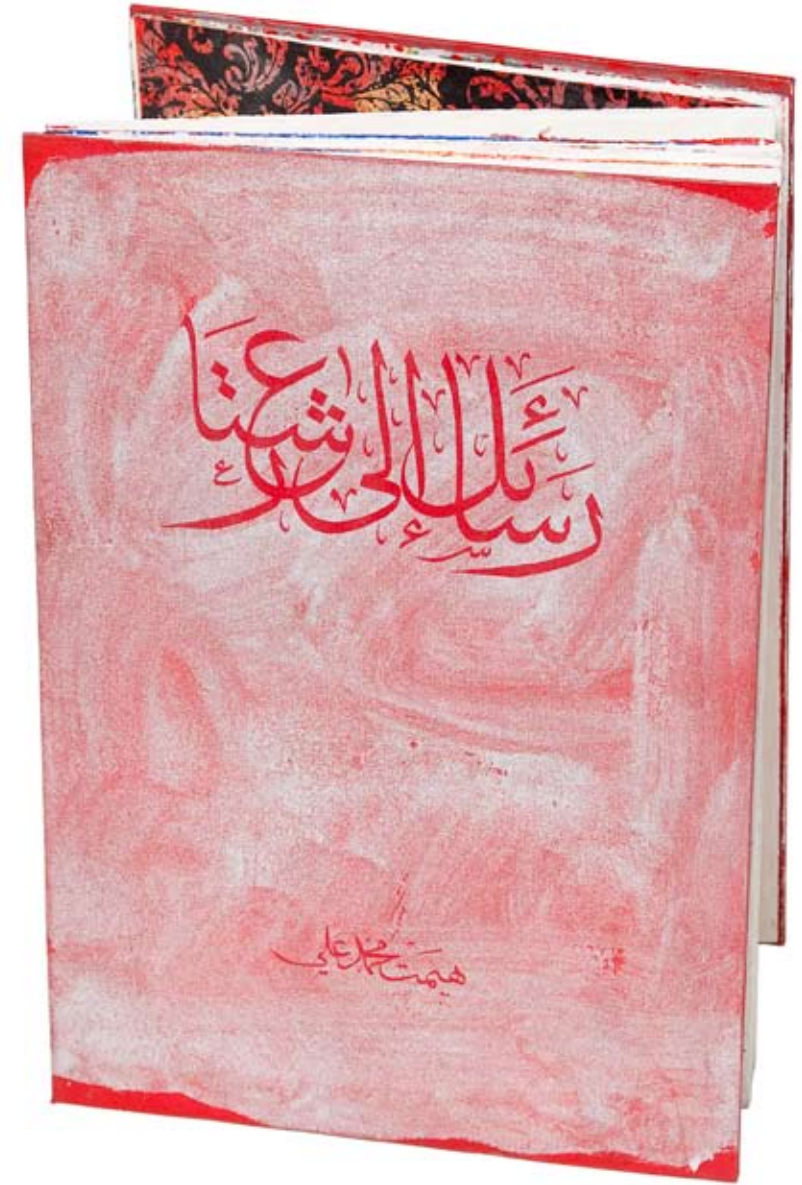
**Rain, Rain, Rain** (2010)  
Mixed media on canvas  
196 \* 420 cm





**The Sea** (2005-08)  
Mixed media on canvas  
200 \* 400 cm





Letter To Ishtar Art Book (2000-10)  
Mixed media





**Box of Letter To Ishtar** (2000-10)  
Bronze, gold paper, wood and acrylic  
48 \* 70 \* 12 cm

AMAR  
DAWOD

## ON THE ART OF PAINTING

‘If one day I decide to abandon painting, nobody will feel its impact; neither will society recognise the need for my work.’

That is what the great Danish artist Per Kirkeby said in reference to the art of painting. Here, I cannot but declare my full support for his position. We still have illusions, embedded in our imagination, about art. Many commentators portray art as an egoistic need, aiming to satisfy the painter and not necessarily an audience. In fact it is possible for painting to not even have an audience, even though, at its height, it proactively engaged in the making of civilisations, thus having a deep resonance with people and their lives. And then, on the other end of the spectrum, there are those who relegate the role of painting to a functional status, that of earning ‘bread and water.’

For those who believe that painting could go so far as to alter the course of history and change lives, I would say that indeed it can, but only for the seeker who wholeheartedly embraces it, assimilates its hidden secrets and claims the keys to unlock its inner world. The endeavour alone does not however guarantee the success of the quest. To further the analogy, some of the discovered keys could be ineffective; the unveiled secrets could be inconsistent with the core essence of painting and its accomplishments. Painting can be a unique and different translation of the world. Its function is not simply to turn perplexing and intriguing concepts into more graspable thoughts. From that which is ‘incomprehensible’ it is able to create a new visually tangible entity capable of numerous facets. It can be joyful or nightmarish, comforting or painful, hateful or pacifying, bewildering or nauseating, vague or obscure. It is all this whilst never manifesting itself as a comprehensible entity.

Those with an inflexible view of an ideal world – a utopia - may find the artist’s depiction of a magical world difficult to accept. The artistic depiction often extends beyond the boundaries of political and ideological walls, outside the limits and confines of accepted norms, traditions and the commonplace. Its subject may not pertain to our visible actions but rather it attempts to focus on and unravel areas and ideas which may be puzzling, or even absurd or meaningless. Understanding

the course of painting can be compared to the anticipation and thrill of climbing a staircase, winding endlessly into the unknown, to the heavens perhaps, into the realm of other things.

What I tell you now is no secret for I have expressed it often, not least in my work itself. My art, my painting, has in a way spared me the pain which I associate with human existence. Is it that I despise the world? If so, it is the means by which man has used the world to satisfy his needs that I hate. Consumed by the desire to have what he requires and craves - sometimes necessary, often frivolous - man has assaulted nature and destroyed it relentlessly, with scant regard to the means used, be it murder or devastation. Anguished by such thoughts, my preoccupation with painting becomes a sort of salvation, a path I tread in deep contemplation, despite its rough terrain.

Pleasure, in its physical and spiritual form, is among humanity’s central goals; the problem however lies in how to attain it! I tell you, there is a great deal of pleasure in painting, because it strives for man’s ultimate dream: the unity of the world’s phenomena, a unity structured on doing away with all existing dichotomies.

‘He who arrives at the object of his vision is no longer concerned with the vision’ (*The Book of Tawaseen*, Al Hallaj)

I do not rule out using intuition to tackle the essence of painting. It gives me the ability to return to my being, myself in an original and more innovative state. Freeing myself from the rules of authoritarianism, I am able to investigate the elements which construct a painting. Accordingly, this self-awareness leads me to neutralise the mind, to alleviate my perception of things, above and beyond the ordinary, as I face human destiny in all its manifestations, and reach out for the beauty within its continued and lingering decline. The pursuit of such beauty is now my means of achieving satisfaction. I am not a scientist examining the world in parts, rather I see the entire world transforming as I observe it. My own test of it brings me closer to myself, my fears, anxieties and feelings of uselessness, and leads me to my imagination as it aims to dominate the process of capturing and constructing my world of art. I believe that the imagination is free of the restrictions

of space and time, and beyond the control of norms and rules. As I visualise how objects unfold and materialise, I am led to a new and different rendering of the commonplace. I do not capitulate to the assistance of my mind in depicting the image it composes until it serves the purpose of composing my restless thoughts, tirelessly maneuvering between different formations.

Apollinaire said: 'When man wanted to imitate walking he created the wheel, which does not resemble a leg...'

Painting is no different from entering a labyrinth.

I can start from whatever point of departure I want:

from the circular shape of a ball,

a line,

an area, or even from

a period.

Initiating the starting point is an easy task, representing a sort of introduction. The real difficulty, in laying out the drawing, depends on the success of that introductory step which aims to capture the essence of the painting, striving to reach the goal of the original undertaking. It is not sufficient to know how to begin, but to understand how to get to the ultimate destination. In other words, you have to discover the picture prior to drawing it. For me, the aesthetics of a painting lie in the vagueness and recklessness of the content and the absence of a one-dimensional purpose. In themselves, shapes are incapable of avoiding one particular meaning. Elements that save a painting from the burden of characterisation are ambiguity and recklessness, or a certain lack of caution and courage. Such elements are a necessary feature in a painting. For me, a painting is not dissimilar to written text which has been eroded and destroyed so that though it is hardly legible but can still be understood through intuition. In this way, it reinvents itself through different interpretations, after each new reading. The more ways a painting is 'read,' the more effective and powerful it becomes.

Celebrating the dominance of a singular scene is not always a necessary approach. On the contrary, my aim is for many different scenes to swarm the canvas' surface, scrambling around to claim their presence without completely cancelling each other out. Using 'visual excavation,' this multilayered scene allows the eye to proactively:

drill rather than passively react,

retrieve rather than confront,

observe intuitively instead of factually.

And then, what part of myself appears in my painting? Is it my own self with its joy, pain and anxiety, my thoughts? Or perhaps the:

universe,

death,

spirit,

war.

Or that which my hand – hesitant, unsettling, harsh and charitable – has performed?

What appears of me on the canvas is like the sound reverberating against the walls of a valley or a thunderbolt illuminating a forest's darkness for a fleeting moment.

I should have turned into a massive centre of gravity, just like a spider dreaming of turning its cobweb into a net for everything. I too would like my inner web to lure all things in. Perhaps my paintings might breathe to create their own worlds encompassing diverse objects: the air in the earth's cracks, paper clippings, spilt mud or even things prone to forever disintegrate. I would happily have tended to millions of imaginary birds, which alone among all other things are aimlessly lost in our existence, equipped to generate the thunders of astonishment from the world's other shore. The result of astonishment is the unraveling of the true face of life from beneath the heavy dust of the

ambiguities hiding underneath that same face. What draws me to the eternal fellowship with the imagination is nothing, that persistently penetrating feeling against the injustice of the ways objects are being projected; what exists out there is only a pale reflection of the true potential inherent in the objects of observation. What we customarily call 'life' is merely a handful of posts for decoding the symbolism of a more welcoming world, posts left out at the sidewalk of our daily lives.

In order to step into this all embracing world, before all else, humanity must colonise the 'self,' occupy and settle it, to find the soul's untapped wealth as we search for the sanctuary of hope. We would have then a protection and a greater energy to change the existing order of things. New ideas spur us to the path of boundless freedom—a freedom, which I am able to achieve through my painting and which places me in a difficult and necessary confrontation with both myself and the world.

When I begin the act of creation, millions of imaginary birds haunt me, waiting in the distant horizon. I wait too, in the expectation of a single glimpse; they appear and then fly off again. Were I to gaze at them for hours on end, I would simply drop my tools and do nothing at all, for imagination is a commitment to achieve perfection. And if it was possible to capture this perfection with ease, the very act of creativity would extinguish forever.

Creativity derives its being from the suspense of the unpredictable, from unanticipated distractions. If I had sought after a specific artistic aesthetic, it would not have survived. The aesthetic expression is not what we create, although we are engaged in generating it. My friend, let the imaginary birds set in on your wasteland; but do not classify them. In the beginning, there never is a classification; there is no particular point where the creative experience ends. If I were an author, I would hang, next to my works, commentaries explaining what each could or could not accomplish. This is because I dream of figures with strikingly unfamiliar heads, and feeble, velvet hands. But, this is not always achievable. Many are wonders that are planted in the fields of the soul but they are not always easy to harvest.

I ask you, my friend, to contemplate this predicament. In the heart of every artist is a long-held passion for a work that he or she has failed to conjure up. If this was realised, the act of painting would die; for every single creator is a hunter, returning back to us with magical tales and wholesale lies, after miles of a long and difficult journey. Creativity is pure imagination and it can never be the complete realisation of what is imagined. It is a long journey. There is no destination to think of.

Amar Dawod  
Västervik  
September 2010

**AMAR DAWOD**

b. Baghdad, 1957

**EDUCATION**

- 1979** Diploma, Institute of Fine Arts, Baghdad
- 1987** Masters in Graphic Design, Art Academy, Lodz
- 1991** Animation, Animations House, Eksjö

**SOLO EXHIBITIONS**

- 1982** Art Academy, Lodz
- 1983** Gallery BWA, Lodz
- 1988** Gallery Linjen, Västervik  
Gallery Kretsen, Södertälje
- 1989** Kulturhuset, Västervik
- 1991** Gallery Linjen, Västervik  
Gallery Ängeln, Lund
- 1992** Gallery T, Lodz
- 1996** Kulturhuset, Västervik  
Galleri Majoren, Sollefteå
- 1997** Arch Gallery, Kalmar  
Galleri C Hjärne, Helsingborg
- 2000** Arch Gallery, Kalmar  
Galleri Storgatan 31, Västervik
- 2002** Oskarshamns Konsthall, Oskarshamn  
Falun City Library, Falun  
Konsthall, Vetlanda
- 2003** *Artist of the Month*, Kalmar Art Museum, Kalmar

- 2004** Högsby Konsthall, Högsby
- 2007** Gallery Storgatan 31, Västervik
- 2008** Gallery 55, Västervik
- 2009** Artist of the Month, Torsås Art Association, Torsås
- 2010** Karim Gallery, Amman

**GROUP EXHIBITIONS**

- 1983** *Small Graphic Form*, Gallery BWA, Lodz  
*Xylon 9*, Gewerbemuseum, Winterthur  
International Biennial, Petit format de Papier, Musée du Petit Format, Couvin
- 1984** Graphics Triennial 10, Krakow
- 1985** UMC Fine Art Center, Boulder, Colorado
- 1986** Graphics Triennial 11, Krakow
- 1987** *Xylon 10*, Gewerbemuseum, Winterthur  
International Biennial, Petit format de Papier, Musée du Petit Format, Couvin
- 1989** Graphics Triennial, Fredrikstad  
International Biennial, Petit format de Papier, Musée du Petit Format, Couvin
- 1990** *Xylon 9*, Gewerbemuseum, Winterthur  
International Graphics Triennial, Intergrafik 90, Berlin
- 1991** Primo Internationale Biella, Per Lincione, Italy  
Biennial of Graphic Art, Ljubljana  
International Biennial, Petit format de Papier, Musée du Petit Format, Couvin
- 1992** Graphics Triennial, Fredrikstad  
The Fifth International Drawing Triennale, Wroclaw
- 1994** *Relief, Plan, Images*, Centre de la Gravure et de L’image imprimée, La Louvière
- 1997** *Bilder vom Menschen*, Xylon Museum + Werkstätten, Schwetzingen
- 1998** International Biennial, Petit format de Papier, Musée du Petit Format, Couvin
- 2000** 5 Triennale mondiale de l’estampe petit format, Chamalières

- 2002** International Biennial, Petit format de Papier, Musée du Petit Format, Couvin
- 2003** *A propos de ‘La Résurrection’ de Piero della Francesca*, Musée du Petit format, Sansepolcro, Tuscany and Viroinval  
*Arab Illustrators of Childrens’ Books*, Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris
- 2004** 12e Biennale Internationale, Petit format de Papier, Musée du Petit Format, Couvin
- 2005** *Contemporary Iraqi Book Art*, University of North Texas Art Gallery, Denton, Texas  
*Five Artists from Västervik*, Eksjö Museum, Eksjö
- 2006** Gallery Sigma, Växjö  
*Contemporary Iraqi Book Art*, Carleton College Art Gallery, Northfield, Minnesota,  
*Summer of Love*, Virserums Konsthall, Virserum  
Light installation, Light Project, Kalmar  
Gränslös konst, Ronneby Kulturcentrum, Ronneby  
Biennale Internationale, Petit format de Papier, Musée du Petit Format, Couvin
- 2007** *Paintings by Lillemor Bokström, Amar Dawod and Jan Wiberg*, Gallery Järnet, Västervik  
*Contemporary Iraqi Art*, Pomegranate Gallery, Soho, New York
- 2008** *(H) ÄR – Art from the Kalmar Region*, Kalmar Art Museum, Kalmar
- 2009** *Three Scholarship Recipients*, Konstrum Gallery, Västervik  
*Autumn Salon*, Gamleby Gallery, Gamleby
- 2011** *Art in Iraq Today: Part III*, Meem Gallery, Dubai

**AWARDS**

- 1984** Mention Honorifique, Krakow
- 1986** Mention Honorifique, Krakow
- 1989** Graphics Triennial Award, Fredrikstad



**Fortification** (2010)  
Oil on canvas  
200 \* 250 cm



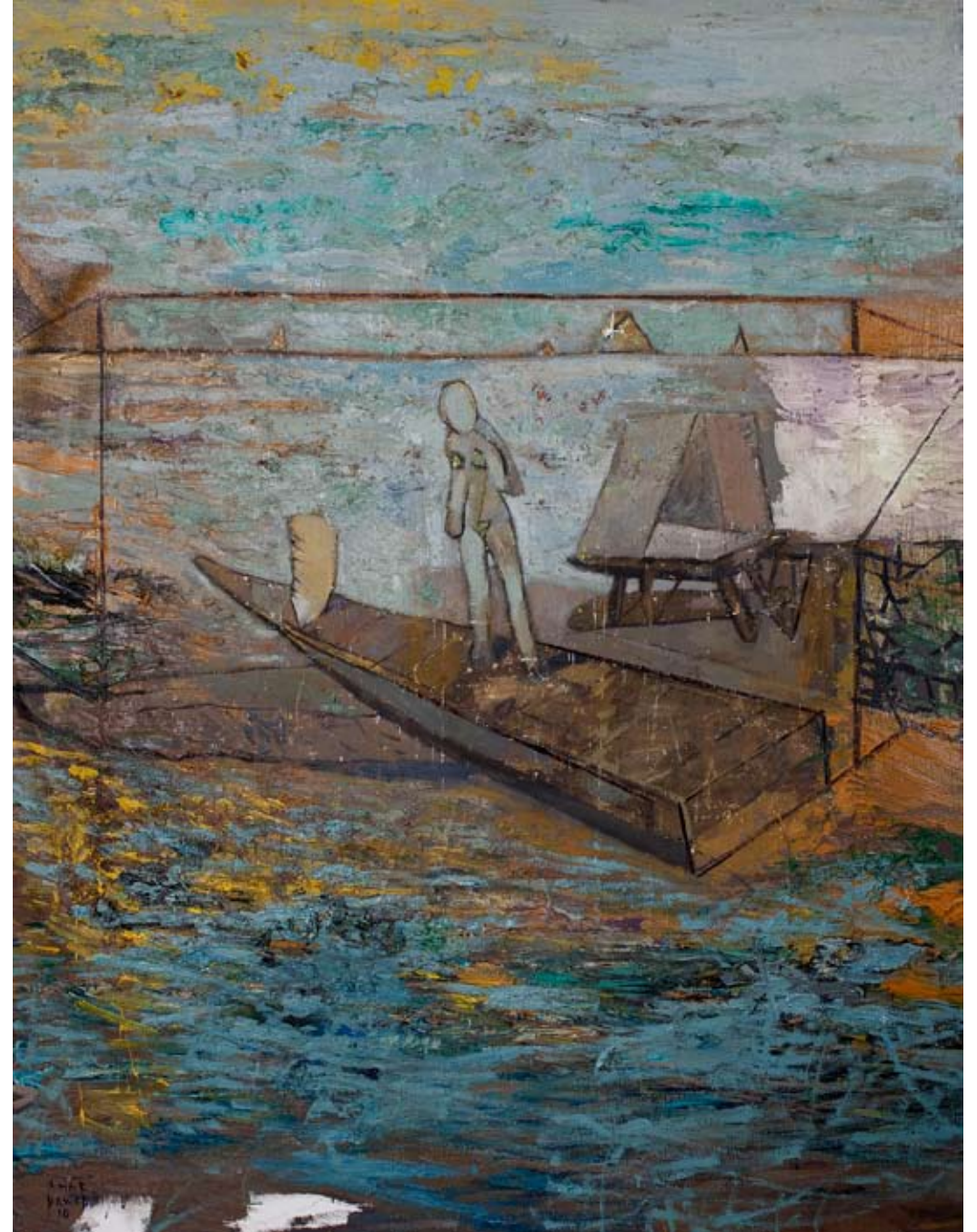


Kaleidoscope (2010)  
Oil on canvas  
260 \* 320 cm





**The Last Trip Which Ended Near The Ruins** (2010)  
Oil on canvas  
200 \* 157 cm





Repercussions I (2010)  
Mixed media on paper  
151 \* 166 cm





Repercussions II (2010)  
Mixed media on paper  
151 \* 166 cm





**Low Flight** (2010)  
Mixed media on paper  
157 \* 175 cm



**Sudden Events In The Final Hours Of The Day I** (2010)  
Mixed media on paper  
76 \* 57.5 cm





**Sudden Events In The Final Hours Of The Day II** (2010)  
Mixed media on paper  
76 \* 57.5 cm



**Sudden Events In The Final Hours Of The Day III** (2010)  
Mixed media on paper  
76 \* 57.5 cm





**Sudden Events In The Final Hours Of The Day IV** (2010)  
Mixed media on paper  
76 \* 57.5 cm



**Sudden Events In The Final Hours Of The Day V** (2010)  
Mixed media on paper  
76 \* 57.5 cm



**Sudden Events In The Final Hours Of The Day VI** (2010)  
Mixed media on paper  
76 \* 57.5 cm



DELAIR  
SHAKER



## TIME: CONSTANT CHANGE

My journey as an artist and as a man started in the land between two rivers. The Iraq that I grew up in was shaped by my father's hands and his unconditional love for his country. He showed me how to create art from the earth he considered hallow by turning its ancient soil into ceramic murals and sculpted pottery. In essence, my father imparted to me, and his country, the gift of transforming a common epithet into art.

Following my father's great footsteps, as a youth, my days in Baghdad were filled with ceramic studies in the Institute of Fine Arts and daily visits to our ranch. This was the place where my father's land, seven ancient trees, fruit orchids and animals, which gave the creative breath to my father's kiln, was transferred into my hands. Yet just as clay imparted to me its protean qualities, so did life.

During the Postmodernism of 1990s, when Iraq was being strangled under cultural and economic embargoes, I graduated from Institute of Fine Arts and continued working alongside my father as an artist. I participated in Al Wasiti Art Festival in Baghdad, for which I won first prize, and later partook in the Babel Art Festival. In 1994, after attending an international youth camp for artists in Beirut, with my father's urging and blessing, I moved to Jordan in order to explore new artistic directions.

For the next few years, as I matured as an artist, I began teaching art and later became the head of the art department at the renowned Ahliyyah School for Girls in Jordan. There I began using and experimenting with various mixed media such as paint, sand, Plexiglas, Styrofoam, gypsum and wax to create murals, paintings, sculptures and vessels for various school art projects. Teaching and realising large-scale projects and exhibitions, transformed my own art studio into an experimental laboratory of expression.

I sought to interact with my pieces through colour and form, while giving them alternate functions. I began creating mixed-media paintings and installations, which integrated metal, wood, Plexiglas and water with ceramic sculpture to create a seamless conversation between clay and painting,

between colour and shape, and especially between the natural and manmade. I began exhibiting my work in prominent Jordanian galleries alongside my father's contemporaries. Yet once again, just as my art refused to be still, so did my life.

In 2005, after the loss of my father, I moved to Phoenix, Arizona. Before leaving the Middle East, I travelled to Baghdad one last time to find its museums smouldering, my father's public installations broken, his works stolen and libraries destroyed. The country which was a cradle for my artistic development and my father's talent had all but disappeared. And with these profoundly disturbing memories which altered my work, I started to make new art in America.

In the following years, my compositions reflected Iraq as I saw it right before I left. I layered pieces of burnt, patterned cloth and mixed-media materials in between dark colours, scored with two lines arranged into a target. I created my paintings as if watching the destruction of war through a telescope belonging to the destructor, a soldier peering through his rifle, while the paintings themselves documented the war on the receiving end, through shards of glass, sand, thin strips of metal, burnt materials, colour and clay.

Gradually, however, as time went by and the war receded, the targets in my paintings disappeared and although burnt fabrics and mixed media still dominated compositions with their intricate, frayed patterns, colours started to flow back in. My paintings moved from paper onto canvas and eventually onto wood panels. As the compositions brightened from blacks and deep browns into crescendos of ever more present whites, pale greens, yellows and reds, the sizes of my paintings altered too. No longer could I describe each work through a landscape of internal experiences, but rather through the depth of layers of what was left behind, covertly weaved in between anthropomorphic forms. As a result, often what hides under and between what I subtracted by burning, is more important than what rests on the surface of my art.

For the *Art in Iraq Today* exhibition, I have created a body of work which concludes the series I started almost five years ago. The paintings presented in this exhibition are dominated by heuristic forms

and patterns, which slide off edges and collide with the next composition, reconnecting it with the next painting, very much like a jigsaw puzzle. For this body of work, I use form and perceived mass as a metaphor of not only my own journey as an Iraqi artist, but as the journey of my father's country which I saw in flames. For as all things that split apart must be mended and healed, so do my paintings strive to reunite and fuse together in colour, form and space.

Delair Shaker

Phoenix, Arizona

September 2010

**DELAIR SHAKER**

b. 1971, Baghdad

**EDUCATION**

**1990**    Diploma in Fine Arts, Department of Ceramics, Institute of Fine Arts, Baghdad

**SOLO EXHIBITIONS**

**2006**    *The Journey*, Solo Art Exhibition, Private Hall, Amman

**2008**    *Traces of Time*, Karim Gallery, Amman

**2010**    *Tales of Flames*, Olney Room Gallery, Phoenix, Arizona

**2011**    *Sand Trails*, Paul Scott Gallery, Scottsdale, Arizona

**JOINT EXHIBITIONS**

**2005**    *Dialogue of Generations*, Orfali Gallery, Amman

**2008**    Art People Gallery, San Francisco, California

**GROUP EXHIBITIONS**

**1989**    *The Comprehensive Exhibition*, Institute of Fine Arts, Baghdad

**1991**    The Iraqi Art Association, Royal Cultural Club, Amman

**1992**    Al Wasiti Art Festival, Baghdad

**1993**    Babel Art Festival, Baghdad

**1997**    *Exhibition for a Group of Arab Artists*, Orfali Gallery, Amman

**2001**    *Miniatures Exhibition*, Orfali Gallery, Amman

*Exhibition for the Support of Iraqi Children*, Orfali Gallery, Amman

**2002**    *Opening Exhibition*, Dar Alanda Gallery, Amman

**2003**    *Arab Ceramic Art*, Al Nahda Association, Riyadh

*The After War, Iraq Exhibition*, Orfali Gallery, Amman

**2003**    UNESCO Art Exhibition, Amman

**2004**    *Homage to Shaker Hassan and Ismail Fattah*, Athar Gallery, Baghdad

*Homage to Shaker Hassan*, Orfali Gallery, Amman

*Peace Exhibition*, InterContinental Hotel, Amman

*American Embassy Art Exhibition*, Sheraton Hotel, Amman

**2005**    *Homage to Shaker Hassan*, Khair Eddin Palace, Museum of Tunisia, Tunis

**2006**    *Summer Group Show: Iraqi Art Today*, Pomegranate Gallery, New York

*From Baghdad to New York: Part II of the Iraqi Phoenix Group*, Pomegranate Gallery,

          New York

**2007**    INNternationale House, Newark, Delaware

*Cab Calloway of the Arts*, Museum Gallery, Wilmington, Delaware

          International Cultural Arts Network (ICAN), Delaware

*Ramadan Art Festival*, Lines Gallery, Amman, Jordan

**2008**    *Gold Gate Exhibition*, Art People Gallery, San Francisco, California

**2009**    *Fall Reflections*, Phoenix Centre for the Arts, Phoenix, Arizona

*Beyond Boundaries*, Karim Gallery, Amman

*Modernism and Iraq*, Wallach Art Gallery, Columbia University, New York

**2010**    Art Santa Fe International Contemporary Art Fair, Santa Fe, New Mexico

*A Chair and a Painting Exhibition*, Albareh Gallery, Manamah

*The Contemporary Forum*, Phoenix Art Museum, Phoenix, Arizona

**2011**    *Art in Iraq Today: Part III*, Meem Gallery, Dubai

          Arizona Biennial 2011, Tucson Museum of Art, Tucson, Arizona

**AWARDS**

**1992**    First Place, Al Wasiti Arts Festival, Museum of Baghdad

**Outburst** (2010)  
Mixed media on board  
185 \* 244 cm







**Shattered Memories** (2010)  
Mixed media on board  
130 \* 250 cm



**Weeping Palms** (2010)  
Mixed media on canvas  
183 \* 152 cm





**Wings Of Hope** (2010)  
Mixed media on canvas  
152 \* 122 cm



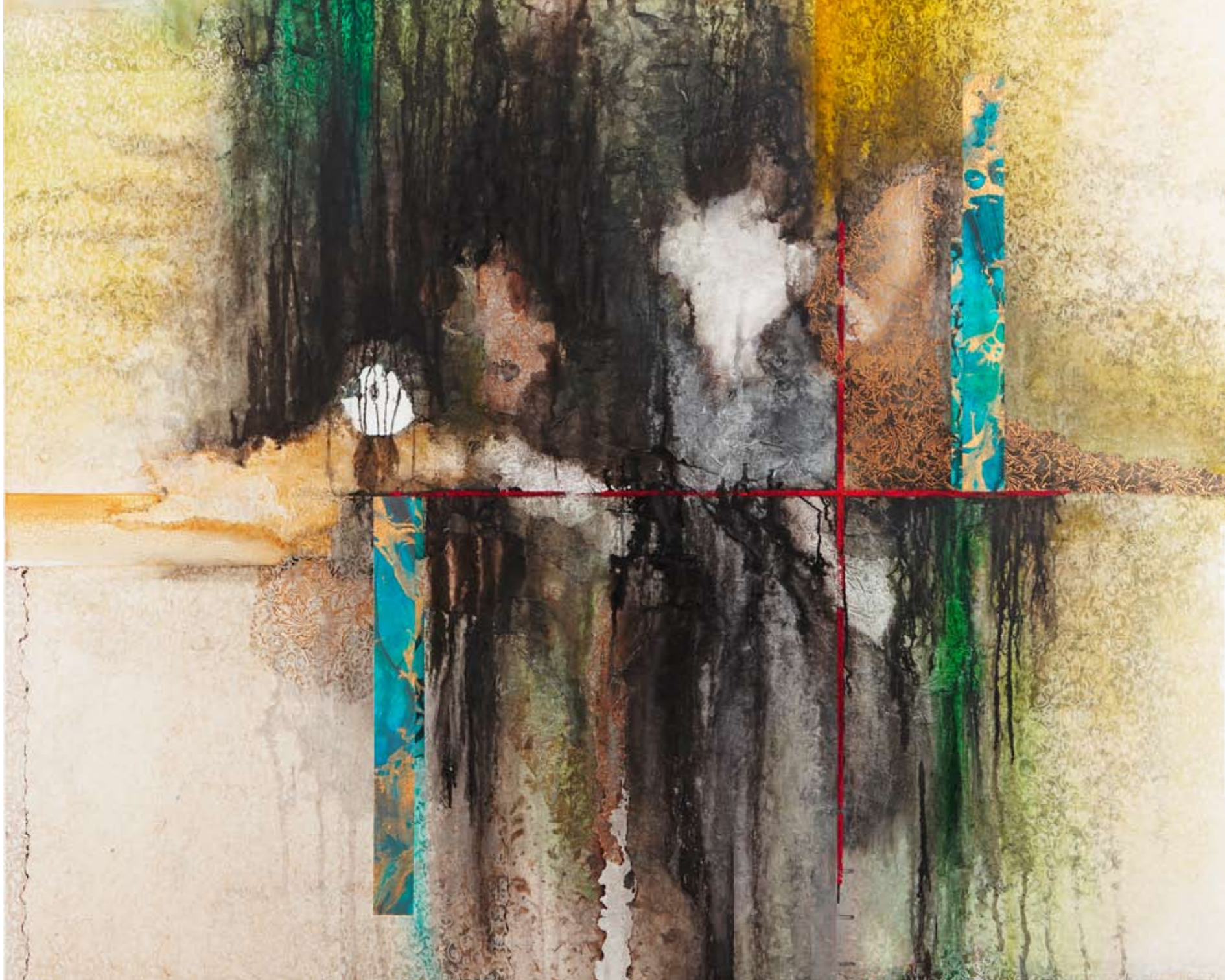


**Change Of Time** (2010)  
Mixed media on canvas  
152 \* 183 cm





**New Map Of Two Rivers** (2010)  
Mixed media on canvas  
152 \* 183 cm







**Past And Present (2010)**  
Mixed media on board  
150 \* 300 cm





**Ethics Of War** (2010)  
Mixed media  
122 \* 122 \* 61 cm







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