

HUNA حُنا ALKUWAIT

هنا الكويت



The Embassy of The State of Kuwait
The Cultural Office - London



HUNA ALKUWAIT

INITIATED AND CURATED BY DR. HESSAH ALOJAYAN, THE CULTURAL ATTACHÉ

EMBASSY OF STATE OF KUWAIT IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

THE KUWAIT CULTURAL OFFICE

FOREWORD

On the occasion of the 64th National Day, The Kuwait Cultural Office is pleased to unveil “**Huna AlKuwait**”, a permanent art exhibition at its headquarters in Kuwait Embassy, London. The Huna AlKuwait exhibition lays the foundation for the newly established permanent collection of Kuwait Cultural Office.

At the heart of Huna AlKuwait lies an evocative dialogue between past and present, where themes of nostalgia and innovation coalesce. The exhibition features contemporary works by 14 Kuwaiti artists, offering diverse perspectives on Kuwaiti identity. Through a blend of heritage, memory, and transformation, these works celebrate the country's architectural and cultural legacy, the beauty of its coastline, and its unique wildlife. From delicate calligraphic compositions to bold mixed-media installations, the pieces on display serve as a bridge between tradition and modernity, illustrating the evolving artistic and cultural landscape of Kuwait.

Given the honour of facilitating and curating this exhibition, I wanted to establish a platform for Kuwaiti artists to share their talents with the international community, emphasizing the soft power of art in bridging cultures and deepening global appreciation for Kuwait's rich heritage.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the Ministry of Higher Education and H.E the Ambassador to the United Kingdom, Bader AlMunaikh for supporting this initiative. I would like to also thank my colleague Dr. Abdullah AlMeshal (the Director of the Cultural Office) and Huna AlKuwait team for their continuous support through this journey.

I would like to also extended my sincere gratitude to all the participating artists for their generous contribution of artwork, without their contribution this exhibition would not have been possible.

I hope that Huna AlKuwait will reflect the national identity and spirit of Kuwait, which has always promoted peace and humanity worldwide.

Sincerely,
Dr. Hessah AlOjayan – The Cultural Attaché and The Curator
25/2/2025

مقدمة

بمناسبة العيد الوطني لدولتنا الحبيبة الكويت الرابع والستون، يطيب للمكتب الثقافي أن يفتتح معرضاً فنياً دائماً بعنوان "هنا الكويت" في مقره في سفارة الكويت في لندن ليكون شاهداً على ثقافة الكويت في الخارج، وليكون منصة إبداعية تحكي قصة الهوية الكويتية. يمثل هذا المعرض نواة وبداية إنطلاقة المجموعة الفنية الدائمة للمكتب الثقافي في لندن.

تغنت جميع الأعمال بجمال الكويت وثقافتها العربية والإسلامية وجمعت في طياتها عناصراً فنية مستوحاة من التراث والعمارة والبيئة البرية والبحرية واسلوب معيشة الكويتيين وتفاعلهم مع بيئتهم المحيطة. تحكي كل قطعة من الأعمال قصة الهوية الوطنية بإطار حديث وباستخدام وسائل مختلفة، تتباين الأعمال المعروضة بين لوحات زيتية ومطبوعات ومجسمات وصور فوتوغرافية ونسيج جداري وفن رقمي .

لقد كان لي شرف لقاء الفنانين واختيار الأعمال وتنسيقها واعداد محتوى منشورات المعرض وتدشينه، وتنطلع لعرض المزيد من المشاركات في المستقبل .

وبهذه المناسبة أود أن أشكر وزارة التعليم العالي على رعايتهم الكريمة، وأتقدم أيضاً بالشكر لسعادة سفير دولة الكويت في المملكة المتحدة السيد بدرعبدالله المنيع على دعمه للمبادرة ولرئيس المكتب الثقافي د. عبدالله محمد المشعل وفريق عمل "هنا الكويت" على دعم الفكرة ودعمهم المستمر خلال رحلة تدشين المعرض. وختاماً، أتقدم بوافر الشكر وعظيم الامتنان الى جميع الفنانين والفنانات على إهدائهم القيم للأعمال المعروضة .

وختاماً أتمنى أن يترك هذا المعرض أثراً طيباً وانطباعاً مميزاً عن وطن السلام والإنسانية في الخارج .

مع تحياتي

د. حصة حمد العجيان الملحق الثقافي ومنسق المعرض

٢٥ فبراير ٢٠٢٥

ARTISTS

ABDULAZIZ ALESSA

LULU ALABDULMOGHNI

AHMED ALHOULI

MAHMOUD SHAKER

DEEMA ALGHUNAIM

MANAL ALMAIMOUNI

FARAH BEHBEHANI

MISHARI ALNAJJAR

HUDA ABDULMUGHNI

MOHAMMED ALKOUH

JASSIM ALNASRALLAH

YAHYA ALAYOUB

Dr. JAWAHER ALBADER

YASMEEN ABDAL

ABDULAZIZ ALESSA, 2005

Abdulaziz AlEssa is a cinematographer currently pursuing a degree at Gulf University for Science and Technology in Kuwait. AlEssa always pushes the creative boundaries to shed light on untold stories and narratives. He shares with Lulu AlAbdulgoghni a passion for visual storytelling, which led to the birth of Redain.

LULU ALABDULMOGHNI, 2004

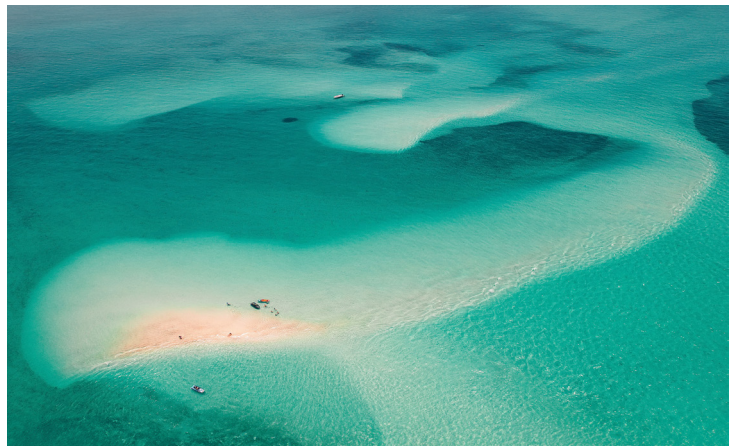
Lulu AlAbdulgoghni is currently pursuing a degree in Fine Arts in Los Angeles, CA. Her strong passion for storytelling led her to pursue a career as a creative director and co-author of photographic books. AlAbdulgoghni directed several short marketing films in advertisement, as well as other short films highlighting the beach life in Kuwait. She co-founded Redain, a platform dedicated to highlighting the beauty of overlooked places in Kuwait. AlAbdulgoghni's future projects aim to celebrate the richness of the Middle East's landscapes and culture.

ABDULAZIZ ALESSA, 2005

KAYAK SPELLED BACKWARDS IS KAYAK, 2021

(PHOTOGRAPHY, PRINTED ON PREMIUM ACRYLIC, 100X80 CM)

This photograph depicts a kayaker in motion, embodying both the thrill of adventure and the serenity of the water. The image enhances the dynamic contrast between movement and stillness.



ALHALA, 2021

(PHOTOGRAPHY, PRINTED ON PREMIUM ACRYLIC, 100X80CM)

A photo of AlHala: a sandbank nestled between Bnaider and Al-Zour. Revealed at low tide and submerged once the tide rises, this ephemeral landscape embodies the ever-changing rhythm of nature.



AHMED ALHOULI, 1988
ARFAJ, 2020

Ahmed AlHouli is a digital illustrator, animator, and director. He holds a bachelor's degree in architecture from Kuwait University and an M.A. in animation and film from Hochschule Luzern - Design und Kunst in Switzerland. His interdisciplinary approach merges animation with ethnobotany, focusing on Kuwait's native flora and cultural identity. AlHouli uses animation to resonate with varied audiences, with a particular interest in neurodiversity.

His work aims to challenge conventional perspectives, emphasize inclusivity and preserve indigenous knowledge. His work also critiques the adoption of foreign symbols, advocating instead for narratives rooted in Kuwaiti history and values.



AHMED ALHOULI, 1988

ARFAJ, 2020

Arfaj explores symbolism of Kuwait's national flower through animation and botanical research. In highlighting the flower's survival during seismic environmental challenges (e.g. the Gulf War), AlHouli presents the Arfaj as a powerful emblem of Kuwaiti cultural identity and resilience.

DEEMA ALGHUNAIM, 1984

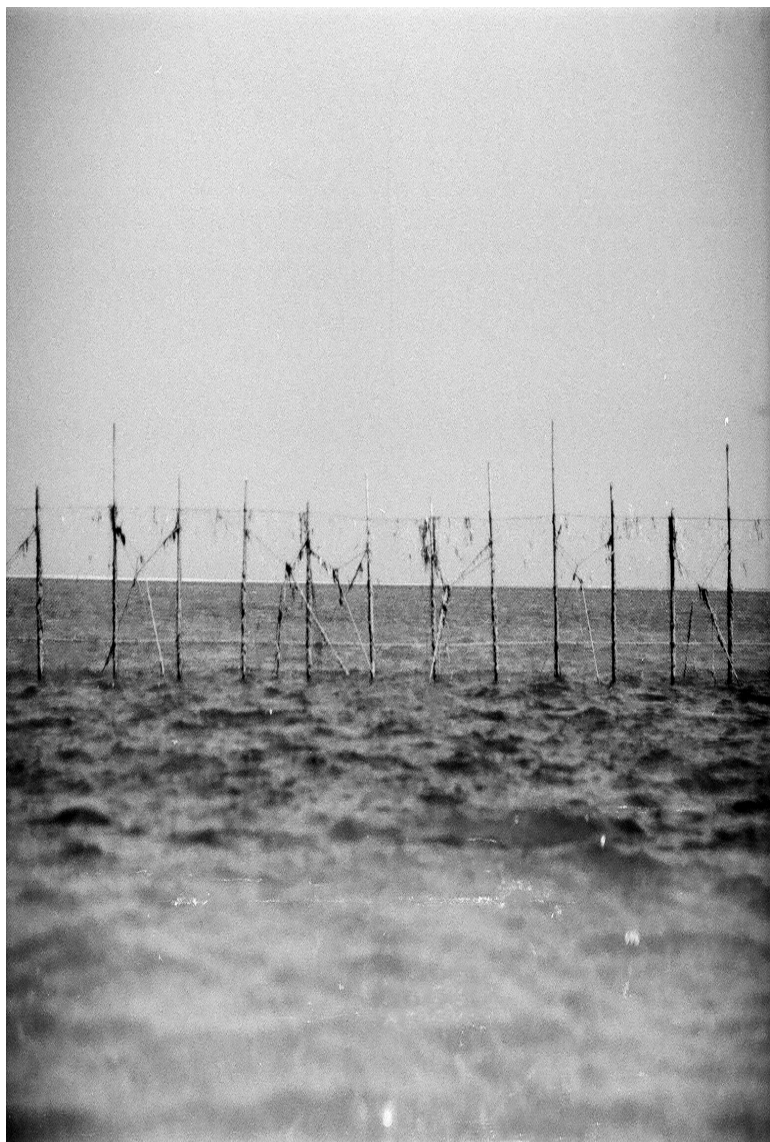
Deema AlGhunaim is a multidisciplinary artist. Her site-specific practice involves etymological and mythological contemplation through immediate and improvised methods; including raw footage, performance and watercolour. Maintaining a strong connection to Kuwaiti landscapes, AlGhunaim's work reflects nodes of resistance and decay in contemporary systems. AlGhunaim holds a degree in architecture from Kuwait University and an MFA from The Ruskin School of Art (University of Oxford). She is an active member of Safat Studios and other artist-run initiatives.

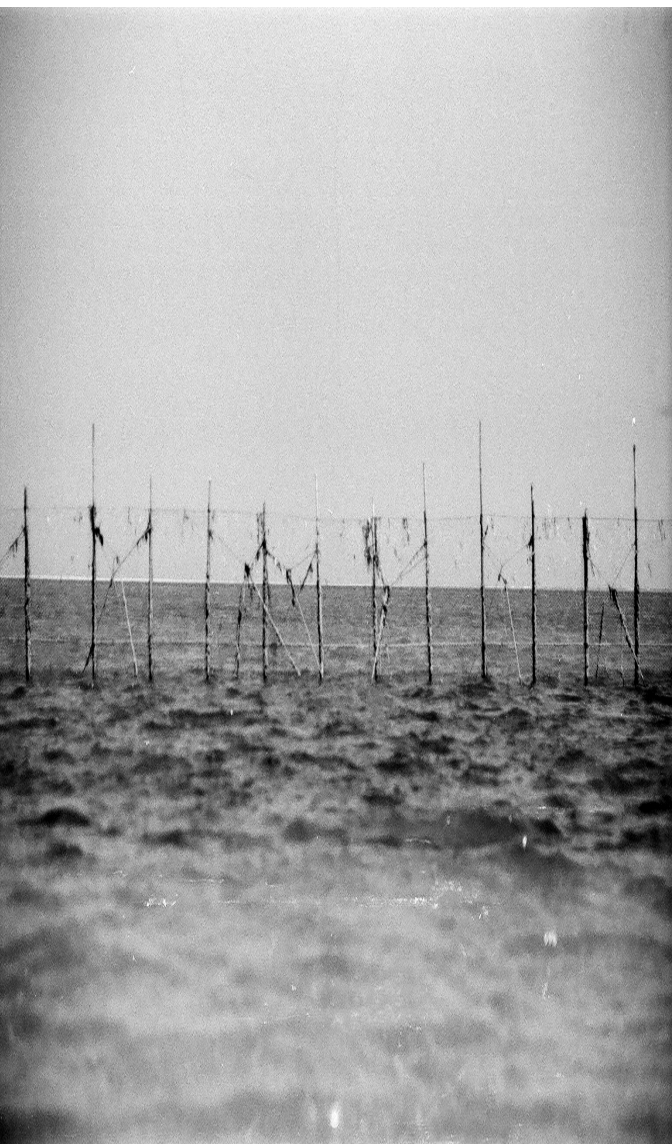
MEMENTO MARE, 2009

(Analogue Photography, 32.5x21.5cm)

This photographic series was captured at the sedimentary cliffs of Nuwaiseeb in Southern Kuwait. Inspired by the creation story of the Sumerian god Numo, as well as Hiroshi Sugimoto's seascape photography, Memento Mare considers the sea as a "commonplace" where water and air meet.

The series invites viewers to reflect on their connection to the sea. Once central to Kuwait identity and the backbone of Kuwait's economy, AlGhunaim examines how maritime professions and imagery have become symbolic remnants amid Kuwait's post-oil transformation.







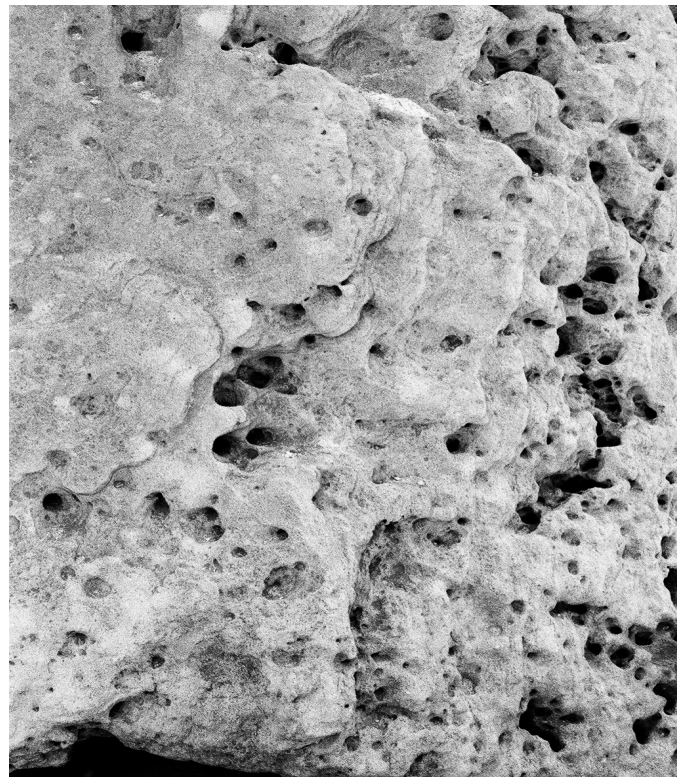
DEEMA ALGHUNAIM, 1984
MEMENTO MARE, 2009
(Analogue Photography, 32.5x21.5cm)



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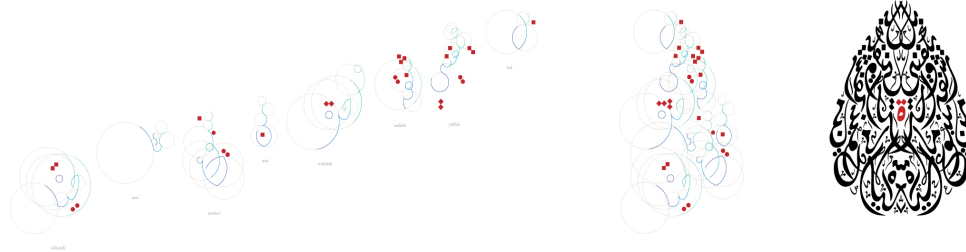
FARAH BEHBEHANI, 1981

Farah K. Behbehani is a multidisciplinary artist, she holds a Master of Arts in Communication Design from Central Saint Martin's College of Art and Design, London, in 2007.

Behbehani practice reflects her desire and passion to rediscover and employ different forms traditional Islamic art with contemporary insight. Ranging from works on paper and canvas to immersive multimedia installations and intricate embroidery, her works examine various themes including the interpretations of light, the female voice, spiritual awakening and the Divine. Highlighting her mastery of Arabic lettering, Behbehani's practice focuses on continuously investigating its layered meanings and exploring the boundaries of its physical form – physical, mystical and metaphorical.

Behbehani participated in numerous shows internationally, including The Kennedy Center (Washington D.C.), Haus Der Kunst (Munich), and the King Abdulaziz Center for World (Dhahran). Recent installations include 'The Path of Light', which was shown at the 'Awwal Bait': Islamic Arts Biennale in Jeddah (2023). Farah's immersive installation 'Hiya' was shortlisted for the third edition of the Richard Mille Art Prize (2023), currently being exhibited at the Louvre Museum, Abu Dhabi.



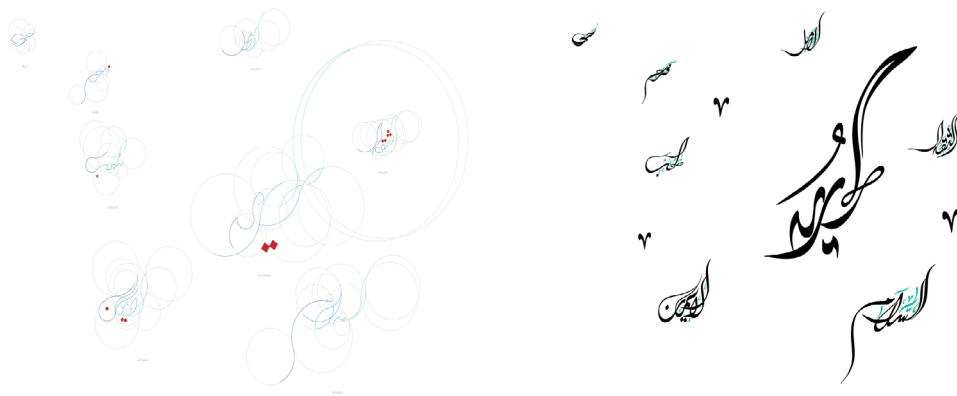


FARAH BEHBEHANI, 1981

THE STORY OF THE PARROT', 2009

(Edition 2/13, Silkscreen on fine art paper, 33x 84 cm)

Written by the Persian poet and mystic Farid ud-Din Attar, *The Conference of the Birds* is a 12th Century Sufi allegorical poem that tells the story of the birds of the world in search of their mythological king – the Simorgh. The birds represent different characteristics found in human nature, each making excuses for not embarking on the spiritual journey. Attar uses the bird's journey as a metaphor to the Sufi path to enlightenment.



FARAH BEHBEHANI, 1981

‘THE SEVEN VALLEYS OF THE WAY’, 2009

(Edition 11/13, Silkscreen on fine art paper, 33 x 91 cm)

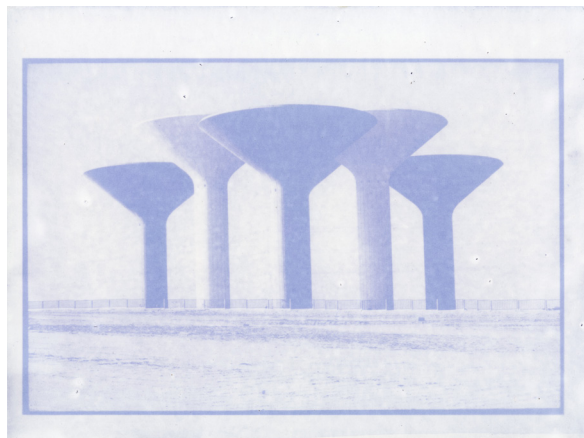
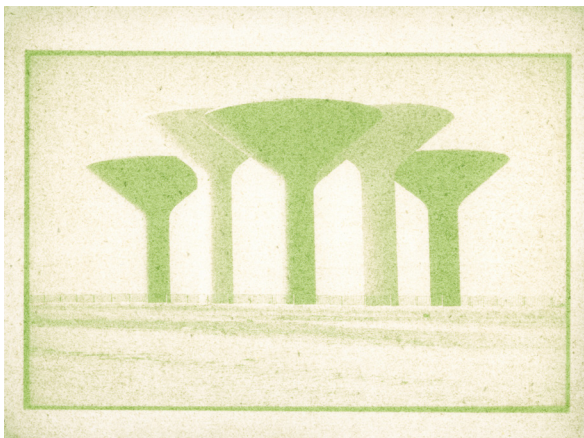
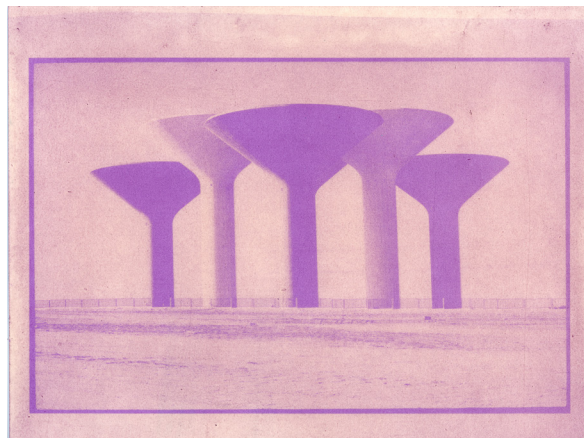
The calligraphic illustrations in the story are juxtaposed with a series of circular designs created a enable readers to have greater insight into the intricacies of Arabic script. The system relies on the premise that calligraphy is based on a series of harmonious curves. The circle, considered to be one of the most sacred forms, is used to highlight the curves within each calligraphic letter. A colour coding system is then applied to the part of the circle that falls on the letter, with a gradation from light green to turquoise and finally dark blue, indicating the beginning, middle and end of each word, respectively. Thus through shape and colour, the readers are able to follow the reading direction, form and flow of the calligraphy.

HUDA ABDULMUGHNI, 1964

Huda Abdulmughni is a Kuwaiti photographer, specializing in portraiture and place across different photographic media and techniques. Abdulmughni studied interior design in Amman (Jordan) before moving into photography. Her work captures natural light and familiar objects, setting her subjects in their own unaltered environments. Abdulmughni's practice is inspired and fueled by her curiosity for the world around her, with a particular emphasis on capturing individual stories.

In an effort to develop and implement a modern water-supply system in Kuwait, the Swedish company VBB (Sweco) began constructing the water towers in February 1970. implemented a modern water-supply system for Kuwait's capital city. Their iconic 'mushroom' shape was designed to provide shade for public gardens beneath. The design of the water towers, as well as the Kuwait Towers, received the Aga Khan Prize for Islamic Architecture in 1980 (source: Aga Khan Trust for Culture).

This series is based on photographs of Kuwait City's landmark water towers, originally captured in 1985. These towers were originally grey and white before they were painted with stripes of white and blue and became the iconic water towers we know today. Abdulmughni explores this intersection of urban architecture and natural forms through recreating the images as anotype prints (a photographic printing process using emulsions extracted from light-sensitive flowers, fruits and vegetables).



HUDA ABDULMUGHNI, 1964
 (ANTHOTYPE IMAGES, 30X21CM)
 FADING FACADES, 2023

JASSIM ALNASRALLAH, 1987

Jassim AlNasrallah is a self-taught calligraphist and multidisciplinary artist. He learned calligraphy from his older brother then began a journey of exploring his own artistic style. AlNasrallah practice involves ink, sculpture and performance art. AlNasrallah's work explores the spiritual and philosophical dimensions of Islamic calligraphy through presentation in contemporary contexts.

AlNasrallah's work adorns historic buildings throughout the Middle-East. Notable examples include the Kuwait Opera House, the Qatar National Museum and the House of Wisdom in Sarjah.



A LOVED LAND BECOMES A HOMELAND, 2024
(Aluminium sculpture mixed with Kuwaiti soil and salt crystals, 125x40cm)

AlNasrallah designed the sculpture exclusively for this exhibition. The piece incorporates aluminium, salt crystals and Kuwaiti soil to capture the deep ties between humans and their homeland. The sculpture represents love and identity, inviting viewers to reflect on their own spiritual and cultural bonds with the land.

DR. JAWAHER AL BADER, 1974

Dr. Jawaher Al Bader is an artist and architect. Specializing in studio-based instruction. Dr. Al Bader holds a Ph.D. in Art Education from the Pratt Institute (New York) and was a professor at Kuwait University's Department of Visual Communication Design at the College of Architecture. She is also the founder of Art Studio Kuwait, a communal space fostering artistic exploration and collaboration.

Opposite:

Africa is Coming uses vibrant hues of pink, yellow, gold, and green to capture the allure of faraway landscapes. The dynamic brushstrokes and untouched areas convey a sense of discovery and the vibrancy of cultural journeys.



DR. JAWAHER AL BADER, 1974
AFRICA IS COMING, 2024
(Oil on canvas, 100x100cm)



DR. JAWAHER AL BADER, 1974

ISTIKANA AT DUSK, 2024
(OIL ON CANVAS, 85X230 CM)

It is a vibrant and dynamic tribute to the cherished tradition of teatime in Kuwaiti homes. The painting captures the warmth and nostalgia of these gatherings, where family and friends come together in a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere. The intuitive forms and motifs—most notably the “Istikana” tea cup—symbolize the essence of these moments, rich in connection and shared stories.

To revive her own memories of teatime with her grandparents and great-grandparents, Dr. AlBader invited children to contribute to this piece, creating an open and collaborative artistic expression. This inclusivity mirrors the spirit of Arabic teatime, where people of all ages come together in conversation, creativity and community.



DR. JAWAHER AL BADER, 1974
THE SEAFOAM, 2024
(OIL ON CANVAS, 40X60CM)

Seafoam evokes nostalgia and memory, symbolizing the “foamy state” of joy. Through abstract forms and layered textures, the piece invites viewers into a sensory experience of recollection, evoking their emotional connection to happiness and cherished moments.

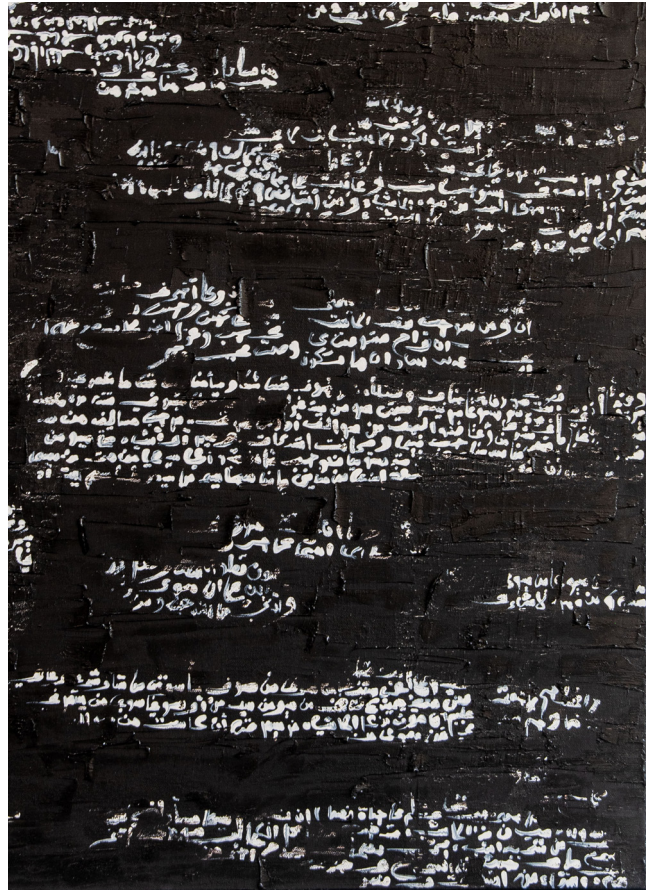
MAHMOUD SHAKER, 1988

Mahmoud Shaker is a prolific artist, calligrapher and writer, with a practice devoted to blending storytelling with visual art. He holds a bachelor degree in Mass communication from Kuwait university. Alongside three previous solo exhibitions and participation in numerous art shows, he is the author of seven publications.

His multidisciplinary approach incorporates oil, acrylic, ink and mixed media. Through his work, Shaker seeks to evoke introspection and foster emotional connection with audiences.

Opposite:

Chaos of Emotions – Chapter Two is an acrylic on canvas artwork that reflects an internal struggle between conflicting emotions. The artist, Mahmoud Shaker, uses dynamic brushstrokes to express the turmoil of feelings such as love, nostalgia, sadness, and hope. Viewers may notice influences from abstract art, where words intertwine in an irregular yet deliberate composition, conveying a sense of randomness and emotional chaos.



MAHMOUD SHAKER, 1988
 CHAOS OF EMOTION ACT II, 2022
 (Acrylic-oil on canvas, 60 x80cm)



MAHMOUD SHAKER, 1988

(HE IS THE FORGIVING, HE IS THE MERCIFUL)

THE HOLY QURAN, 2024

(Acrylic on canvas, 70x50 cm)



MAHMOUD SHAKER, 1988

(HE IS THE HEARING, HE IS THE SEEING)

SURAH ASH-SHURA (11), THE HOLY QURAN, 2024

(Acrylic on canvas, 70x50 cm)

MANAL ALMAIMOUNI, 1988

Manal AlMaimouni is a Kuwaiti artist and designer who reinterprets the rich weaving traditions of the Arabian Gulf with a contemporary touch. Deeply inspired by her heritage, she celebrates the role of women in art and craftsmanship, weaving narratives of identity, beauty, and environment. Her work revitalises Bedouin techniques for the modern world, bridging tradition with innovation. Exhibited internationally, Manal offers a unique perspective on cultural heritage and contemporary artistry. AlMaimouni work was exhibited in the UK, USA, Malaysia, and other countries.

Opposite:

The Alhanbaliyah Bench honors Kuwait's desert heritage, inspired by the renowned weaver Alhanbaliyah. Handwoven with wool, walnut wood, and jute, it beautifully balances tradition and modernity with natural materials and craftsmanship.



MANAL ALMAIMOUNI, 1988
ALHANBALIYAH BENCH, 2020
(Bench of wood and textile, 200x59x66cm)

MISHARI ALNAJJAR, 1988

Mishari AlNajjar is a multidisciplinary artist and architect. His research focuses on Kuwait's urban landscape, creating work that integrates architecture, textiles and storytelling. A graduate of the American University of Sharjah, AlNajjar's art has been showcased in Sadu House and Misk Art Institute. He is the co-founder of in narrative, an exploratory platform focusing on interdisciplinary architectural discourse.

Opposite:

AlNajjar designed this tapestry exclusively for this exhibition. The piece was Inspired by the artist's grandmother's craft, this piece comprises patchwork mittens sourced from Kuwait's Blockat district. Symbolizing the intersection of architectural permanence and personal heritage, AlNajjar's work captures the evolving relationship between Kuwait's textile traditions and its urban landscape.



MISHARI ALNAJJAR, 1988

BEIZ I, 2024

(Textile, 97x70cm)

MOHAMMED ALKOUH, 1984

Mohammed AlKouh's photographic practice spans analogue techniques, archival material and hand-drawn elements. His work explores the transience of memory, aiming to bridge past and present through evocative themes of identity and nostalgia.





UNTOLD STORIES, 2013

Drawing on childhood memories and forgotten histories, AlKouh's layered visuals encourage viewers to reflect on the interplay between memory, identity and contemporary existence. Untold Stories explores the emotional narrative of this intertwining, memory and emotion blending to allow a personal, intrinsic feeling beyond the photograph.



MOHAMMED ALKOUH, 1984

UNTOLD STORIES, 2013



MOHAMMED ALKOUH, 1984
UNTOLD STORIES, 2013

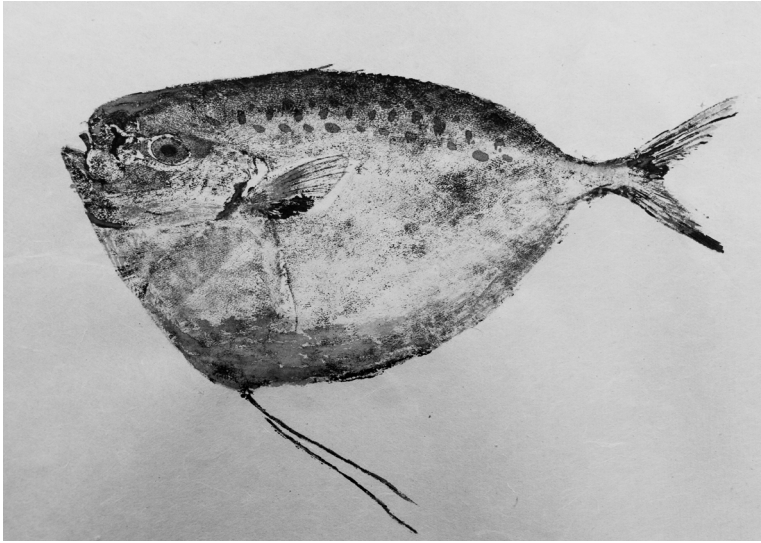
YAHYA HISHAM ALAYOUB, 1984

Yahya Alayoub holds a degree from the American University of Kuwait. Alayoub is a furniture designer and an artist. Inspired by Kuwait's marine life and maritime heritage, he employs gyotaku (a traditional Japanese technique of printing using ink applied to fish). Combined with the use of palm-leaf paper, AlAyoub's material practice honors the deep connection between Kuwait's land and sea.

Opposite:

Alayoub's detailed fish prints celebrate Kuwait's ecological balance, emphasizing the delicate harmony between nature and culture. His work invites viewers to appreciate the beauty of Kuwait's natural heritage through modern craftsmanship that showcases traditional techniques. The Japanese process of manual printing requires around 6-7 hours, reflecting the meticulous effort and precision required to capture every intricate detail.

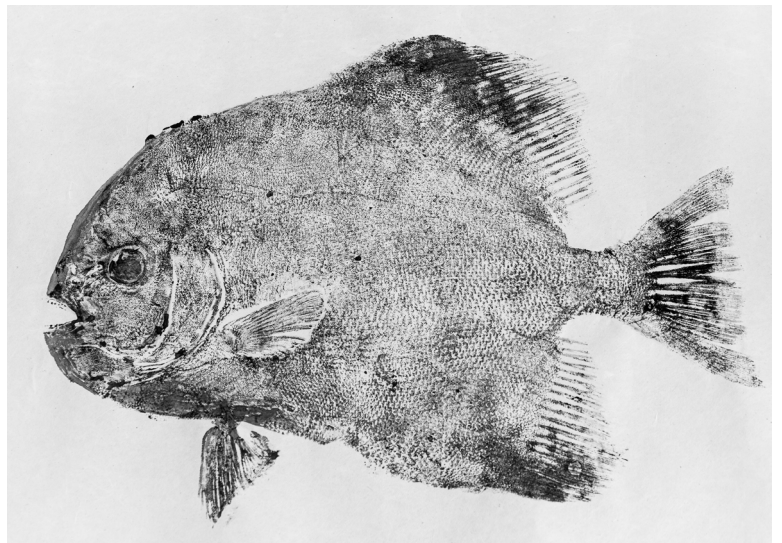
YAHYA HISHAM ALAYOUB, 1984



Left:
MOONFISH (CARANGARIA), 2024
(PRINT 1 OF 10, INK ON WASHI PAPER, 40X40CM)

Right:

IMAD (PLATEX TEIRA/ TEIRA BATFISH), 2024
(INK ON PALM PAPER, 85X54CM)





Zubaidi (Pampus Argenteus/Silver Pomfret), 2025
(print 1 of 3, ink on palm paper, 55 x 45 cm)



DEYAYO (MEGALASPIS CORDYLA/TORPEDO SCAD), 2024
(PRINT 1 OF 2, INK ON PALM PAPER, 70X37 CM)



TUNA TAIL (GENUS THUNNUS/ TUNA), 2024
(INK ON PAPER, 98X68 CM)



YASMEEN ABDAL, 1998

Yasmeen Abdal is a multidisciplinary Kuwaiti visionary designer and artist. Her work involves architecture, sculpture, printmaking, and installation, and explores cultural narratives. Abdal's work is inspired by Kuwaiti heritage and cultural narrative where she reinterprets tradition through contemporary design, crafting immersive spatial experiences that evoke memory and identity. She participated in Kuwait's National Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2023. Currently pursuing her MFA at Pratt Institute, she continues to push the boundaries of architecture as a vessel for cultural expression.



BRICKS - WEAVING HERITAGE, 2024
(Each brick: 7.62x60.96x21cm)



BRICKS - WEAVING HERITAGE, 2024
(Each brick: 7.62x60.96x21cm)

Bricks draws inspiration from Kuwait's evolving cityscape, reimagining its highways as carriers of cultural memory. Influenced by traditional Kuwaiti dhows, Sadu weaving, and historic architecture, this conceptual concrete catalogue embeds symbols such as the date palm and the historic first wall. By merging past and present, it explores how heritage shapes and enriches urban environments, transforming infrastructure into storytelling.



The Kuwait Cultural Office
London 2025