



**Color Field Variation no. 4**

**1973**

Gesso and oil on duck cotton

110 x 70 cm (43.3 x 27.6 in.)

Agial Art gallery, Beirut

# FARID HADDAD

1945

## Expression and inspiration

Farid Haddad began painting at the beginning of the nineteen-sixties, when he took classes at the studio of the painter Omar Onsi and at the Guvder Institute. Born into a family of scientists and businessmen in 1945, Haddad was attracted to art from a very young age: first to music, then to the fine arts, which he studied more formally at the American University of Beirut, with American artists Arthur Frick and John Carswell as his teachers. He then completed his training with a Masters of Fine Arts at the University of Wisconsin.

In 1972, Haddad was granted a Fulbright scholarship thanks to which he spent six months in New York. Four years later, he settled in the United States and started teaching drawing and painting at the University of Wisconsin, from which he went on to teach design and multimedia art at the New England College of Henniker, New Jersey. At the beginning of his career, Haddad experimented with color-field painting, an approach to painting that paid particular attention to the unity of shape and process, translated into flat color. Critics often compared him to Jack Tworokov, the American expressionist painter of Polish origin.

He reintroduced a sense of depth and relief in the canvas, while freeing up shapes to give predominance to color.

In the early eighties, Haddad strayed away from color-field painting and painted the works for which he is best known, where he reintroduced a sense of depth and relief in the canvas, while freeing up shapes to give predominance to color. In experimental abstract paintings, large-scale hatching and energetic brushstrokes freely span the canvas, creating intriguing textures; from afar some paintings look like they are made of crumpled paper. Haddad modulates different tones around the same note; his color is autonomous, with no figurative function. Yet one can't help wondering about Haddad's intentions and meanings hidden within the canvas. During the first decade of the Lebanese Civil War, one senses in his work a denunciation of conflict – the collisions of color, the attacks of the paintbrush, and the violence of the lines could be metaphors for the war, or an exorcism of it.

Today, Haddad mainly dedicates himself to education. He teaches art and art history in order that young artists find their own voices and that society to honors its heritage.

## EXHIBITIONS AND PRIZES

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*Farid Haddad has exhibited in Beirut, Kuwait, Rome, New York, Paris, Milwaukee and Henniker. He took part in over 40 group exhibitions since 1968 in Europe, the Middle East and North America. In 1983 and 1984 he received the State Council of the Arts Prize in New Jersey.*