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THE CASABLANCA ART SCHOOL | SHARJAH ART FOUNDATION

In the exhilaration following Moroccan independence in 1956, staff and students at the Casablanca Art School (CAS) fomented an artistic revolution. They integrated abstract art with African and Amazigh traditions, taking inspiration from the region's rugs, jewellery, calligraphy and painted ceilings. Declaring a new art for Morocco grown from Afro-Amazigh heritage, they created a cultural uprising that spread into the future.

Drawing on multicultural heritage, CAS staff and students brought art into everyday life, utilising paintings, posters, magazines, outdoor murals and street festivals to do so. This Moroccan 'new wave' triggered a social and urban movement, eventually contributing to artistic solidarities between Latin America, West Asia and Africa.

The Casablanca Art School: Platforms and Patterns for a Postcolonial Avant-Garde (1962-1987)

explores a distinct vision for modern life driven by five influential CAS artists and teachers: Farid Belkahia, Mohammed Chabâa, Bert Flint, Toni (Antonella) Maraini and Mohamed Melehi. Known informally as the Casablanca Group (or Casa Group), the legendary Moroccan art collective, which grew to include more members, proved to be more a 'constellation' of artists rather than a strict group.



Organised in key platforms and patterns, this first museum exhibition of their work and legacy in the region features artworks by 21 CAS artist-activists from across generations. On view are vibrant abstract paintings and urban murals as well as crafts, typography, graphics and interior design, which are displayed alongside rarely seen print archives, vintage journals, photography and film.

The presentation in Sharjah, is curated with the Foundation's Director Hoor Al Qasimi

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EXHIBITED ARTISTS

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