

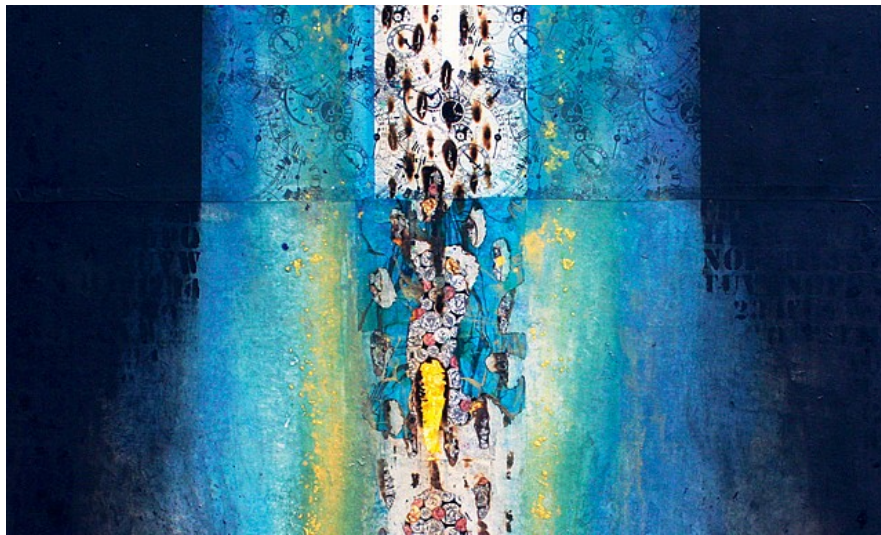
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Iraqi art in Dubai

Art from Iraq comes to the Meem Art Gallery



By Jenny Hewett
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Gallery

Covering three generations of modern Iraqi artists, this exhibition shines a light on the country's creative pioneers and reveals insight into their shared journeys. Starting with the work of modern masters, such as the 'founder of Iraq's artistic identity', Faiq Hassan, the works on show include '80s artists Hanaa Mallalah and Mahmoud Obaidi. All of the artists on show have works featured in some of the world's most respected museums and galleries. Here, three of them share their pieces and thoughts on life as an artist from Iraq.

'Untitled'

Nedim Kufi, Iraqi-Dutch, based in Netherlands



'I cut up clothes and then glue them on the canvas. I then treat the composition with Gesso paint mixture and a little tea. This piece has a geometric method – it tries to visualise a kind of emotional depth and asks the question, is it minimal enough? It draws in the viewer and stimulates the eye to the hidden lines in the composition. I would say, when trying to explain my art, that it is related to human beings living everywhere in the world.'

Man On Stage

Delair Shaker, 42, Iraqi, based in Arizona

'I use art to tell stories. Sometimes they are stories based on memories and dreams, other times they are documentations of what others have seen. I'm most interested in distilling an often chaotic experience of moving through an event into a single moment. I use paint, paper, metal, wood and so on, which I cut, burn and tear to construct visual metaphors for consequences, contradictions and outcomes, seen and unforeseen. This piece tells the story of a man on a stage. The man, wounded by systemic onslaught, yet protected by the halo of brilliant blue, is in a state of suspension; he's about to partake in an unknown performance.'

'Looting of Baghdad Manuscript'

Hanaa Malallah, 55, based in London

'The technical aspects of my practice include the burning, distressing and obliterating of material; I have termed this "ruins technique". Clearly, this technique owes its existence to war. This does not mean that I am reproducing the idea of war. Instead, I am utilising its destructive process to engender the visceral experience of the reality of war, irrespective of its geographic particular. I'd like this piece to be seen as a found object, which means it is an unreadable manuscript, it does not tell anything, but it is evidence.'

The lowdown

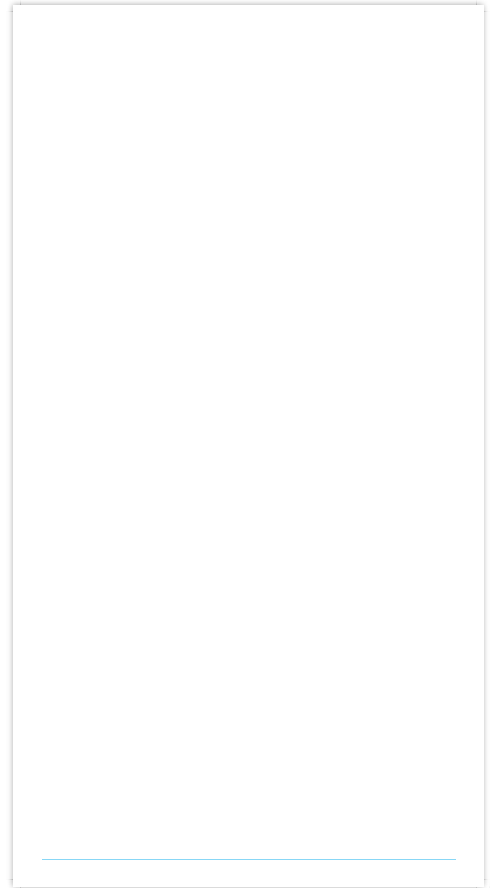
Exhibition: Modern Iraqi Art until July 10 at **Meem Gallery**, Umm Suqeim Road, Al Quoz 3 (04 347 7883).

Artists: Varied

Price: Sold as a collection.



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