

THE RIGHT TO WRITE

CALLIGRAPHIC WORKS FROM
THE COLLECTION OF THE
JORDAN NATIONAL GALLERY
OF FINE ARTS

THE DALTON GALLERY
AGNES SCOTT COLLEGE
JULY 15TH - OCTOBER 16TH
1996

CURATOR: Dr. Wijdan Ali
ASSISTANT CURATOR: Rajwa Ali

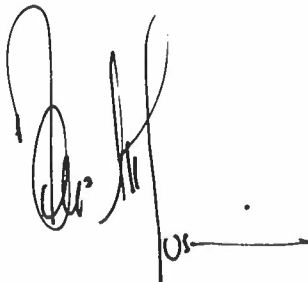
FOREWORD BY HER MAJESTY
QUEEN NOOR AL-HUSSEIN OF JORDAN

Since its inauguration in 1980, the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts has acted as a medium of exchange and understanding between different cultures and artistic disciplines. Through seventy-eight exhibitions at its premises in Amman, the Gallery has succeeded in bringing together works from countries such as Malaysia, Brunei, Senegal, Tunisia, France, the United Kingdom, Spain, Italy, the United States and Canada. These events have introduced new and inspiring aspects of varied cultures and artistic disciplines to the Jordanian public in general, and to school children in particular.

The Gallery has sent out exhibitions from its permanent collection to Paris, London, Istanbul, Warsaw, Krakow, Dhaka, Rome and Kuala Lumpur, thus introducing works by modern artists from the Islamic and developing worlds and hopefully sowing the seed of mutual understanding between various cultures through the common aesthetic bond of art appreciation. "The Right to Write" exhibition is intended to open a window to the interchange between traditional and contemporary Islamic art forms. A new and innovative movement has recently grown out of eighth century classical Arabic calligraphy. It has succeeded in amalgamating its own visual Islamic traditions with modern Western media and techniques, to develop an authentic contemporary Islamic art style.

It is our hope that this exhibition will provide new insights into modern Arab and Islamic culture for the people of Atlanta and the general public during the Olympic Games. However, what makes the exhibition a particularly special event is its venue — the campus of Agnes Scott College. The exhibition and accompanying seminar, to be held in September, will not only transmit information to the students, but also will demonstrate how cultural exposure, constructive dialogue and open debate can dispel stereotypes, break psychological barriers and identify common ground among people from two different continents and civilizations.

I would like to express our sincere appreciation to President Bullock and members of the Board of Trustees of Agnes Scott College for their invitation to bring "The Right to Write" to Atlanta and for their valuable support and cooperation to ensure its success.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Noor al-Hussein', with a horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the signature.

Queen Noor al-Hussein

Agnes Scott College is proud to host "The Right to Write," an original exhibit of contemporary art from the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts. We deeply appreciate HRH Princess Wijdan's creative leadership which has made this collaborative exhibit possible. The conviction of HRH Princess Wijdan, head of the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, that art both reflects and transcends culture is boldly represented in this exhibit for which she, a scholar and artist, has been the primary creator. Here Arabic calligraphy, a sacred script to a fifth of the world's population, long deemed foreign and impenetrable by Americans, becomes the medium through which the power, diversity, and modernity of contemporary Arab and Islamic thought is socially revealed.

It is altogether appropriate that this exhibit serve as Jordan's contribution to our international city, and that it be honored at Agnes Scott College. Jordan, an ancient land, home to some of the world's earliest human settlement, has long served as a crossroad connecting Asia, Africa, and Europe, and as a conduit for trade and communication among East and West, North and South. This age-old tradition of openness and cross-cultural interaction today is mirrored in the Jordan National Gallery's impressive collection and activities representing major twentieth century art movements in the Arab and Islamic world.

On its part, Agnes Scott College is committed to an appreciation of diverse cultures. It seeks and encourages respectful engagement with divergent ideas, philosophies and perspectives. We will be enriched in discovering our common bonds with the Arab world. We believe that our students and members of the Atlanta and Olympic communities who visit this exhibit will come away refreshed by these new dimensions of human expression, committed to learn more about Jordan and the Arab and Islamic cultures who inspired "The Right to Write."

Mary Brown Bullock

President, Agnes Scott College

It is with the greatest pleasure that the Dalton Gallery of Agnes Scott College hosts "The Right to Write," a collaborative presentation with the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts. This international exhibition gives testament to the rich visual and language traditions of Arab and Islamic art. Artists from 17 countries are represented by 55 works from the collection of the Jordan National Gallery. A contemporary exhibition, "The Right to Write" exemplifies the range of artists' interest in language — from the written word to calligraphic-based abstractions. From the more formal, lyrical approach of repetition of word and letter-forms to the recognition of graffiti as a source, the viewer grasps the power of the written word and use of fragments of it. This exhibition teaches us much about the variety of contemporary artistic expression in the Arab and Islamic world by recalling the primal activity of marking, from which grew both art and writing.

July 15, 1996

Donna Sadler

Chair, Department of Art

Michael C. Tinkler

Exhibition Coordinator

"THE RIGHT TO WRITE:
CALLIGRAPHIC PAINTINGS FROM THE COLLECTION
OF THE JORDAN NATIONAL GALLERY OF FINE ARTS"

INTRODUCTION BY WIJDAN ALI Writing grew out of stylized self expressive figures indicating human, animal and various natural and man-made forms. They were either carved or drawn, in monochrome or color. With the passage of time writing developed to become abstract signs, each character denoting a sound; when several are grouped together, they make up a word which transmits noises; these noises in turn convey an image in our minds which is either visual or mental depending on the meaning. Hence the close relationship between images and script.

The origins of Arabic calligraphy go back to the eighth century A.D. when the message of Islam, the third monotheistic religion after Judaism and Christianity, was revealed through the Prophet Muhammad. God's revelation in the form of Qur'anic verses was brought to the Prophet by the Angel Gabriel. Thus writing took on a special aspect in Islam. Its direct link with God through the Qur'an made it next to sacred for the Muslims who, throughout fifteen centuries, spared no effort in developing, embellishing and producing it in the best form possible.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Western art forms began to penetrate the Islamic world and by the turn of the century, easel painting and three-dimensional sculpture had already replaced the traditional arts in countries that had an early Western oriented art movement such as Turkey, Lebanon, Egypt, Tunisia and Iran. This process which engulfed modern Islamic artists also cut them off completely from their cultural and artistic roots, forcing them to learn painting and sculpture from naught. A number of art schools and academies opened in various Islamic countries. The Academy of Fine Arts opened in Istanbul in 1883; the School of Fine Arts in Cairo started in 1908; in Tunis, the French authorities founded *Centre d'Art* in 1923 and in Tehran, the School of Fine Arts opened in 1911. All these art institutes brought Western instructors who trained the students according to European academic norms. Meanwhile, a number of students from Lebanon, Turkey, Egypt, and Iran traveled to Europe, either on their own or on scholarships from their governments. They joined art academies in Paris and Rome and upon their return to their respective countries trained others in Western style painting, eventually replacing foreign art teachers.

This social and cultural awakening led to an artistic renaissance which came about after several decades of relaxing in the security of depicting local scenes through recognized international styles such as Impressionism and Post Impressionism. After World War II, Western colonialism in Asia and the Middle East was withdrawing. People in the region began to turn towards their roots, dig into their heritage, and take a new pride in their nationalism and newly-found political independence. of depicting local scenes through recognized international styles such as Impressionism and Post-Impressionism. By the second half of the 20th century, a new art movement began to take shape. It came about out of the need felt by Arab and Islamic artists to ground imported art styles in the local environment. They had proved their aptitude in learning the theories and in applying Western aesthetics, as well as refining their ability in diverse media. Although a considerable number of Arab and Islamic artists had already reinterpreted their past heritage in a modern artistic language, they reached a stage in their development where they had to rebuild their own artistic personalities in order to develop their individuality. They were no longer satisfied with drawing on figures and signs taken from their traditions. They wanted to supersede all that had been done and to reach a truly original context both in execution and content. The solution was to develop a style that could relate to their cultural heritage, while benefiting from their Western artistic training. An answer to these needs emerged in the Calligraphic School of Arts, *al-Madrassa al-Khatiya F'il-Fann*, which includes calligraphic painting and three dimensional work as opposed to the art of classical Arabic calligraphy.

The foundation of the calligraphic movement in modern Islamic art is the traditional Islamic art of calligraphy. The central nature of calligraphy as a medium of Islamic art and aesthetics led Muslim artists to return to the Arabic alphabet in a

search for artistic identity. It is the application of the calligraphic letters that gives words their aesthetic value. Only in cultures where calligraphy exists as an independent art form, like China, Japan and the Islamic world, do we find a visual aesthetic expression based on the use of letters and characters as a graphic element.

The Calligraphic School of Art emerged as individual young artists worked in isolation from each other, both in the West and the Islamic world. Probably none of them envisaged that his or her efforts would flourish into a full-fledged school of art in the span of a few decades. By the 1980s the Calligraphic School reached its peak among contemporary Islamic artists. Even in a country like Turkey whose alphabet was changed in 1928 from Arabic to Latin, artists began experimenting with calligraphy in their plastic work, albeit on a much smaller scale than in other countries.

PURE CALLIGRAPHY In the exhibition "The Right to Write: Modern Calligraphic Works from the Collection of the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts" there are fifty-five examples of various calligraphic styles, covering different subjects, from seventeen Islamic countries. The first part of the exhibition is that of Pure Calligraphy. It includes works composed only of letter-forms that make up both the background and the foreground of the composition. The main component within this category is the Arabic alphabet which forms the entire subject-matter and composition. It can be a letter or a group of letters, a word, words, sentences, paragraphs, or any combination. It should be noted that any letter from the Arabic alphabet, apart from its visual and graphic impact, even when taken on its own, has a certain significance. Artists of the Pure Calligraphy style use various scripts that range from the highly regulated classical script, to a personal free-form handwriting which follows no rules or regulations; and because of the connection between writing and religion in Islam, many of the pure calligraphic works either have a numinous message or carry spiritual symbolism within their aesthetic folds.

Erol Akyavas from Turkey mainly uses the curvilinear *Nasta'liq* script which was common in his country and is still widely used in Iran. Although his script is intercepted by images and signs, the main component of his composition in "*Hem Batin*", a Sufi idiom denoting esoterism, is as much the calligraphy as the color combination in the work. **Parviz Tanavoli** from Iran shares the same *Nasta'liq* script as Akyavas to form his calligraphic sculpture in bronze. The title of the work is "*Hich*", which means 'nothing', thus denoting the banality of life. Another work with a Sufi subject is the Palestinian **Kamal Boullata's** silk-screen "He is the First and the Last", meaning God. It is composed entirely of monumental geometric Kufic script. As a Christian who grew up within an Islamic civilization, Boullata freely identifies with Sufi philosophy without feeling any contradiction or inhibition. He tries to portray the absolute quality of God through the theme in his painted sentence, the shapes of the letters which can be repeated indefinitely and the red dot in the middle of the blue and green calligraphic shapes.

In her ceramic plate, **Wasma Chorbachi** from Iraq includes a Chinese type of Arabic script that she came across when traveling in the Muslim provinces of China, while researching one of her books. She wrote the main creed of Islam, "There is no god but God", enacting a religious aura reminiscent of Classical Islamic pottery. Like Chorbachi, **Ahmad Mohamed Shibrain** from Sudan also presents a religious sentence on a plate, yet the plate is a wood platter used by the Sudanese to serve food to honored guests and the writing is carved and stained, and is framed by African folk motifs. The large geographic area of the Islamic world, with its varied cultures, serves artists well in saving their work from repetition and monotony, despite the similarity in content.

In the works of **Ahmed Moustafa** from Egypt, **Issam El-Said** from Iraq and **Hossein Zenderoudi** from Iran, verses from the Qur'an in well-known classical scripts form the whole compositions. However, through superimposing the letters and sentences and playing with their arrangements, each has executed his work in a contemporary manner, both in terms of media and structure. Zenderoudi goes further in his second work, the untitled silk-screen, and uses Latin script while exploiting its graphic qualities in an aesthetic and non-thematic manner. Thus his dexterity in calligraphic painting over-steps Arabic calligraphy into the domain of Latin alphabet.

Osman Waqialla from Sudan mixes his own colored calligraphy in the classical Ottoman *Tajwid* style with printed newspaper collages of Fadwa Toukan's poetry in black and white, to show contrast and harmony. However, the painted word *Allah* is dominant and defines the spiritual message in the painting. **Samir Salameh** from Palestine shares the same subject with Waqialla, however in a totally different presentation. While the painted word *B'ism il-Lah*, 'in the name of God' in *Kufi* script dominates the composition, there are other letters which balance the shapes and distribution of masses and figures. In each painting the central shape is different although the theme is identical.

In contrast to the former two works, there is the work of **Etel Adnan** from Lebanon and **Ramzi Moustafa** from Egypt. They both repeat the word *Allah* in a colorful manner on a plain white background. Adnan writes *Allah* in black, using her own informal handwriting and paints over it in watercolor, giving it a playful and childish flavor, while Moustafa paints the same word in white geometric *Kufic*, within a rigid three-dimensional brightly colored cube. However, the tilted angle of the arrangement breaks the formality of the composition and bestows on it a rather casual aura.

Usama Khalidi from Palestine forms a sculpture with a three-dimensional word *Huwa*, meaning 'God' in Sufi idiom. Based on the three-dimensional script which he has invented, Khalidi easily twists a mundane copper tube to create a spiritual art piece.

Artists of the Pure Calligraphy style also chose mundane subjects. **Ali Omer Ermes** from Libya draws with bold wide strokes his "Letter *Kaf*" in *Maghribi* script and places in his own individual handwriting an explanation of the *kaf* and an unrelated poem from ancient Arabia, to form a well-balanced abstract composition. Its pleasing proportions and impressive appearance make the viewer appreciative of its appealing plastic qualities without having to understand the meaning of the writings. Being an Iraqi who lives in Greece, **Leila Kawash's** work "Across the Sea" carries a humanitarian statement against the indiscriminate obstacles that face Iraqis in obtaining visas and crossing borders, just because they belong to a country whose leadership has been condemned for crimes the people had no say in. Here the writings and stamps signify a political protest.

Falling short of figurative representation to interpret her concepts, **Wijdan** from Jordan abandons all imagery and, in a personalized script, employs Arabic verse to portray the eighth century battle of Karbala in Iraq where the martyrdom epic of the Prophet's grandson Hussein as well as that of 77 of his family and followers took place. With painted couplets, prose, diacritical marks, signs, conflicting brushstrokes and colors, she portrays a calamity which for her has become the epitome of tragedy, betrayal and injustice committed against human beings, including Dachau, Palestine, Vietnam, Bosnia, Somalia, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Chechenia, Zaire, Cambodia, Uganda, and Sri Lanka.

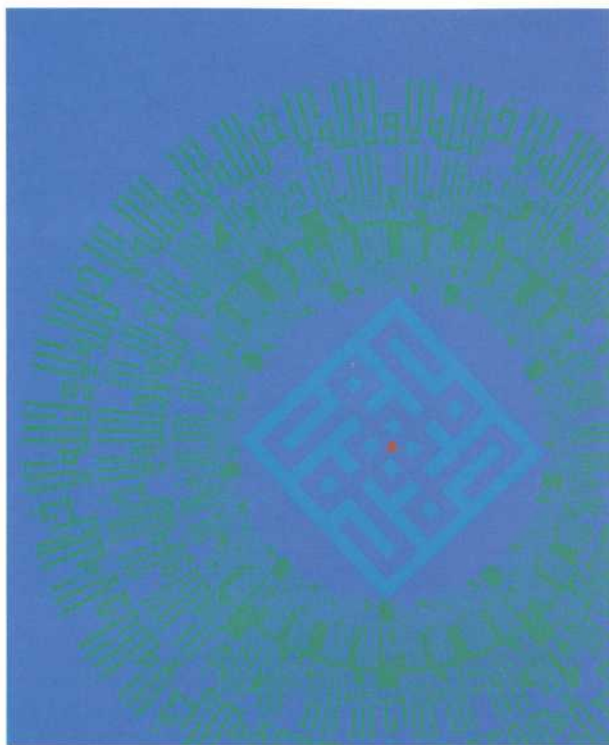


<p>Etel Adnan (Lebanon)</p>	<p>"Allah", 1987 mixed media on Japanese paper 30 x 70 x 10cm.</p>
--	--



Erol Akyavas
(Turkey)

"Hem Batin", 1993
etching
76 x 63cm.



Kamal Boullata
(Palestine) | "He is the First and the Last", 1983
silk-screen
60 x 50cm.



Wasma Chorbachi
(Iraq) | Untitled, 1993
glazed ceramic plate
33cm. diameter



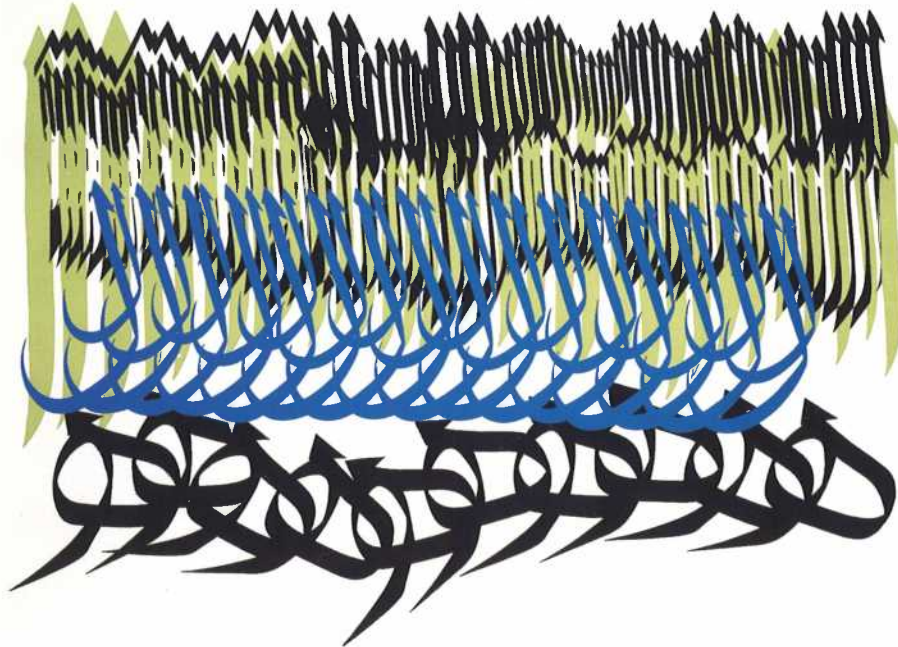
Ali Omer Ermes
(Libya) | "Letter Kaf", 1979
mixed media on paper
65 x 95cm.



Leila Kawash
(Iraq) | "Across the Sea", 1994
mixed media on paper
50 x 66cm.



Usama Khalidi
(Palestine) | "Huwa", 1995
copper tube and wood
27 x 10 x 18cm.

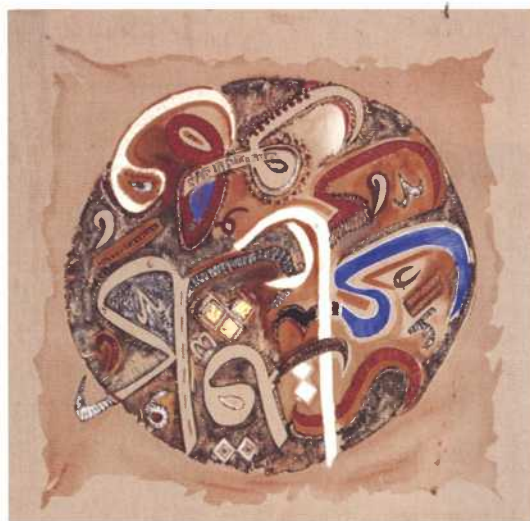


Ahmed Moustafa
(Egypt) | "alif, lam, ha", 1976
silk-screen on paper
65 x 90cm.



Ramzi Moustafa
(Egypt)

“Allah”, undated
oil and acrylic on paper
50 x 60cm.



Issam El-Said
(Iraq)

“He the Omnipotent”, 1983
acrylic on raw canvas
91 x 91cm.



Samir Salameh
(Palestine) | "In the Name of God", 1986
china ink and water colour on paper
45 x 61cm.



Ahmad Mohamed Shibrain
(Sudan) | Untitled, undated
stained mahogany wood
56cm. diameter



Parviz Tanavoli
(Palestine) | "Hich", undated
bronze
17 x 5 x 5cm.



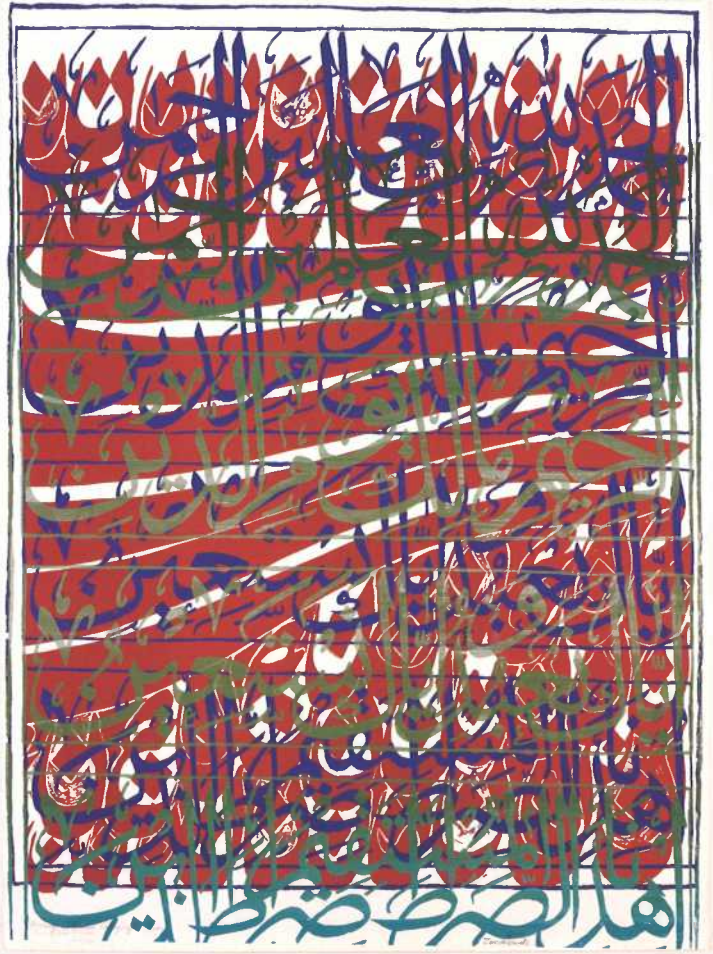
Osman Waqialla
(Sudan)

Untitled, 1991
water-color on paper
58 x 41cm.



Wijdan
(Jordan)

"Karbala", 1993
mixed media on paper
57 x 73cm.



Hossein Zenderoudi
(Iran) | "Homage to a Master Calligrapher", 1986
etching
56.5 x 76cm.



Hossein Zenderoudi
(Iran) | "Untitled", 1990
etching
59 x 79cm.

ABSTRACT CALLIGRAPHY The second group of art works are of Abstract Calligraphy, which subtracts both form and meaning from letters. A short reference to the definition of abstraction is necessary: "Abstract art (is) Art which is either completely **nonrepresentational**, or which converts forms observed in reality into patterns which are read by the spectator primarily as independent relationships, rather than with reference to the original source."¹ Abstract Calligraphy fits well within this definition whereby the artist exploits the visual aesthetic aspect of the Arabic letter as a structural element in the composition. The abstract quality of letters builds up his or her abstract work without having to refer to a recognized school of art or to follow any set rules. Artists following this style usually use two kinds of script; the first is a legible script whose letters are recognizable, yet because of the way they have been placed within the composition make no legible sense. The second is a pseudo-script inspired by calligraphy, yet it is totally illegible.

In his work "An Attempt at Unity", **Yussef Ahmad** from Qatar writes assortments of Arabic words as if they were a swarm of bees. They condense and disperse at his will to form semi-geometrical shapes. Some of the words are legible yet they were used to fill the space and not to make up a written theme. Even when he employs legible sentences, Ahmad concentrates on strengthening the construction of his compositions rather than legibility and content. **Mehdi Qotbi** from Morocco also scatters his words and letters across the surface; in his "Arabic Calligraphy" he evenly paints his words around in superimposing layers of different colors and creates invisible waves across the surface which rise and fall with great subtlety. The letters and words serve Qotbi well in forming his intricate abstractions.

Meanwhile, the Iraqi pioneer, **Shakir Hassan Al Said**, mixes numbers and words with Sufi signs, dots, circles and crosses in his untitled work, while burning and tearing parts of the paper. The result resembles a *mandala* or talismanic sheet full of mystery and magic. Although all the words and letters are quite clear, they still make no coherent sense when taken as a whole.

Another Arab pioneer artist, the Syrian **Mahmoud Hammad** took letters and transformed them into the main component of his compositions. He neglected their legible significance and utilized their plasticity of shape. In his monochrome formation "Arabic Calligraphy", Hammad was more concerned with the placement of the abstract calligraphic shapes and their visual and constructional effect within the space of the composition than with their meanings.

Chaos and order work hand in hand in the untitled work of **Abdullah Hariri** from Morocco. Free-form letters scatter over the neat geometric grid. Strong colors of reds, greens and yellows make up the background for letters in black, creating an overall effect of a well-constructed abstraction. In his "Letter *Nun*" in black and white, **Ali Hassan** from Qatar uses both *Nasta'liq* and a free hand script to draw his letter which construes the main figure in the composition. By playing on contrast in color and using wide spontaneous brush strokes, Hassan succeeds in achieving a highly dramatic effect in his work.

A master in calligraphic abstraction, **Rafa Nasiri** from Iraq builds up his three untitled etchings as if he is painting a landscape. A fading graded horizon at dawn, midday and dusk furnishes a backdrop for the calligraphic signs and squiggles in the foreground. Much like fifteenth-century Persian miniatures, those signs transgress their limited frame and flow free of the structured constraints found in their background.

Himat Ali Saleh from Iraq writes in an Oriental manner with a brush, yet purposely breaks the flow. The winding calligraphic shape in black ink is put mirror fashion on printed Japanese paper in his "Spiritual Aspirations". It is reminiscent of the indecipherable calligraphy employed on Islamic Persian pottery.

The work of the Jordanian master potter, **Mahmoud Taha** is a good example of the development in Islamic ceramics from the classical to the contemporary. His employment of Islamic calligraphic motifs, such as the Ottoman *Tughra*,² on a modernized glazed ceramic shape, shows how progress can serve tradition in a propitious manner without deflecting from its aesthetics.

At times it is difficult for the viewer to detect pseudo-script and relate it to Arabic calligraphy; however, artists use it especially when they do not have a message to transmit or do not want to divert attention from the theme or the composition of the work. Yet, just like their other colleagues who work within the calligraphic school, their source of

1.) Edward Lucie Smith, "The Thames and Hudson Dictionary of Art Terms" (London, 1988) p.9.
2.) A calligraphic composition of the sultan's insignia which was put at the head of Royal Ottoman edicts.

inspiration is derived from calligraphy. **Burhan Dogançay** from Turkey composes his large abstractions from calligraphic forms and their shadows against a cracked wall. The employment of a shadow on the canvas gives his forms a third dimension which is usually absent in writing. Consequently, by using a contrasting effect to writing, Dogançay emphasizes the importance of its two-dimensionality.

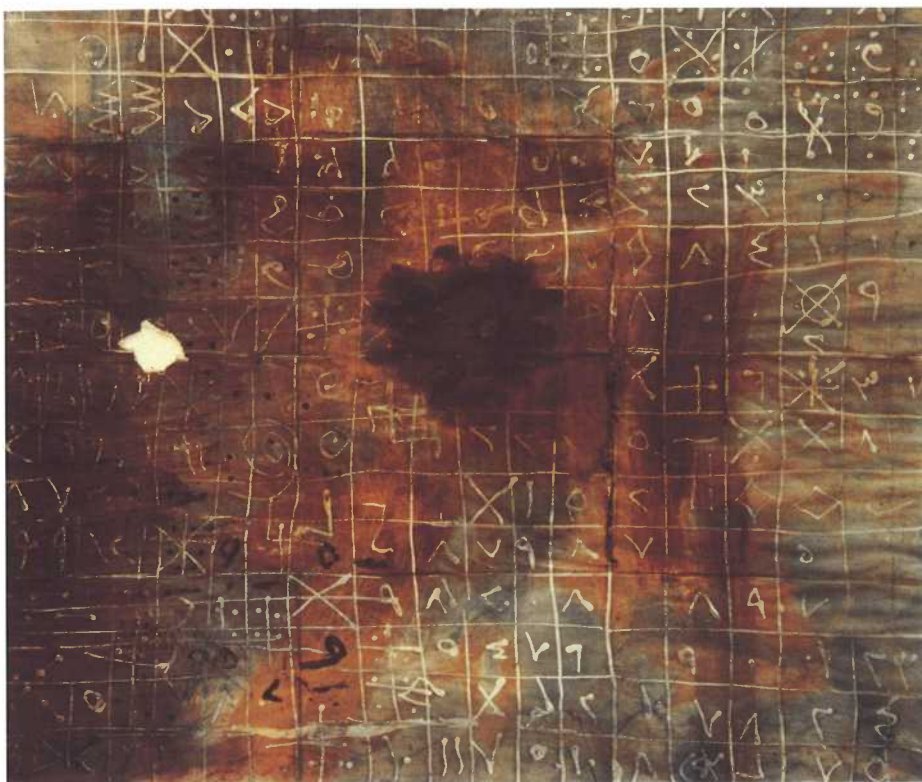
From Palestine, **Jumana el-Husseini** builds up her compositions laboriously. Enigmatic lines in various densities poke in between eighteen to twenty layers of transparent paint. As if hidden by a veil of fog, those lines form fading conundrums on a multiplying horizon. **Khalid Khreis** from Jordan tackles the whole surface in his paintings like a piece of parchment. At times he keeps the letters unfinished, insinuating a word, while leaving the viewer to complete it in his mind, inspired by the hues, tones, and architecture of the composition. In his abstract letters, Khreis sees a humanitarian and cultural dimension as well as compositional and aesthetic elements which supersede their literal and linguistic value.

From Tunisia, **Khaled Ben Slimane** composes a monochromatic abstraction which is curiously naïve yet its naïveté is well constructed to balance between shapes and lines. A cross between Australian bark painting and a Berber writing tablet from the Atlas mountains, Ben Slimane's untitled work leaves all interpretation to the viewer. **Ahmad Khalid Yusuf** from Malaysia composes a melodious lyrical abstraction of calligraphic signs floating like feathers against the evening sky or dancing algae in the sea. The transparency and lightness of his painting "Down Memory Lane" add an ephemeral quality to the work.



Yussef Ahmad
(Qatar)

"Attempt at Unity", 1982
china ink on raw canvas
150 x 150cm.



Shakir Hassan Al Said
(Iraq)

Untitled, 1992
mixed media & collage on paper
79 x 87cm.



Burhan Dogançay
(Turkey)

Untitled, 1972
acrylic on canvas
127.5 x 89.5cm.



Mahmoud Hammad
(Syria)

"Arabic Calligraphy", 1984
oil on canvas,
55 x 75cm.



Abdullah Hariri
(Morocco)

Untitled, 1988
mixed media on paper
36 x 50cm.



Ali Hassan
(Qatar)

"Letter Nun", 1993
mixed media on paper
120 x 100cm.



Jumana el-Husseini
(Palestine)

Untitled, 1989
mixed media on canvas
85 x 110cm.



Khalid Khreis
(Jordan)

Untitled, 1991
mixed media on paper
70 x 50cm.



Rafa Nasiri | Untitled, 1994
(Iraq) | etching
38 x 47.5cm.



Mehdi Qotbi | "Arabic Calligraphy", undated
(Morocco) | mixed media on paper
80 x 50cm.



Himat Ali Saleh
(Iraq) | “Spiritual Aspirations”, 1995
china ink on hand-made Japanese paper
82x82cm.

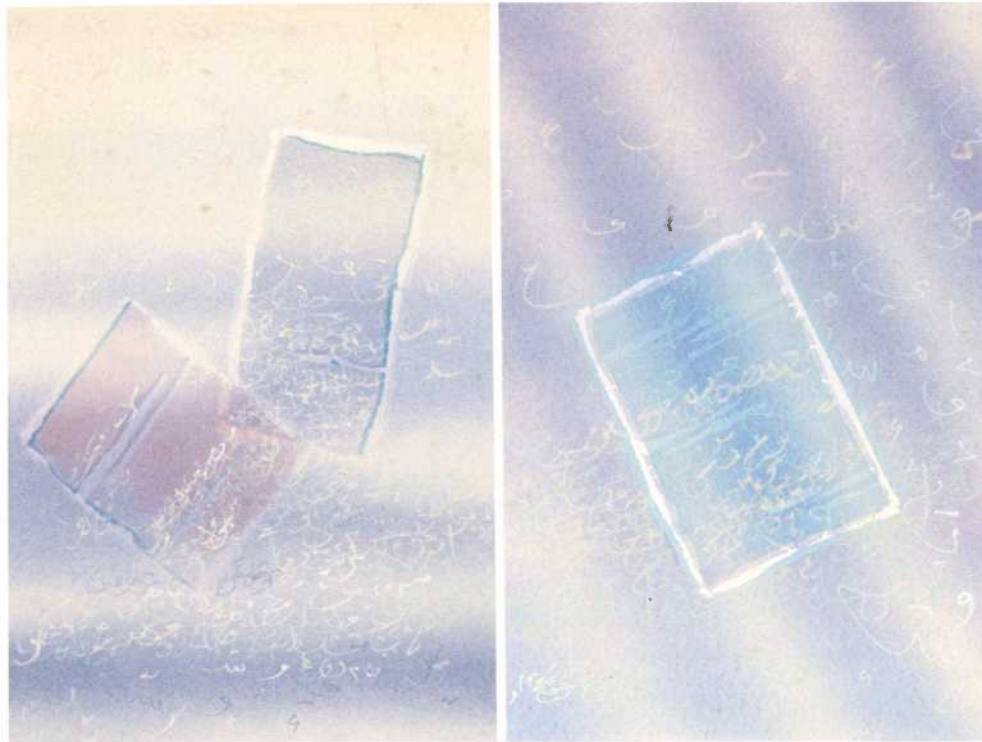


Khaled Ben Slimane
(Tunisia) | Untitled, 1987
acrylic on canvas
92 x 61cm.



Mahmoud Taha
(Jordan)

Untitled, 1980
glazed ceramic
40 x 40 x 9cm.



Ahmad Khalid Yusuf
(Malaysia)

"Down Memory Lane", 1992
acrylic on paper
76 x 97cm.

FIGURATIVE CALLIGRAPHY

The third group of works falls within Figurative Calligraphy, which consists of shapes made up entirely of writing. This form of calligraphic art was always popular among the Persians and Turks whose zoomorphic and human calligraphic figures are well known in Islamic art. The first among this group is **Ameena Ahuja** from India who uses verses by classical Persian poets such as the Sufi Hafiz to form her subjects. In "The Lion Weeps", Ahuja enacts the traditional zoomorphic figure, yet with a contemporary feel. **Husain** is another artist from the Indian subcontinent who draws a boat with the words *Huwa-Allah*, meaning 'He is God'. Since the times of the Ancient Egyptians, the boat has carried many esoteric meanings, including a transitional instrument between the temporal and spiritual worlds.

Hassan Massoudy from Iraq transforms prose and verse into female figures. His two etchings "Poem I" and "Poem II" undulate with the poetry of the tenth century Abbasid poet Umar Khayyam. The erotic nature of the poetry is aesthetically reflected in the curves and positions of the two nude figures.

The two works by **Khairat Saleh** from Syria were inspired by Mughal marble inlaid with semi-precious stones, found in the famous monument of the Taj Mahal near Agra, in India. Like a puzzle to be solved, within the stylized floral decorative shapes of the paintings lie hidden letters which form the titles of the paintings. The first reads *Rab*, meaning 'Master', while the second reads *Noor*, meaning 'Light'.

Vladimir Tamari from Palestine takes over the whole composition in his polychrome water-color for the calligraphy, transmitting a subtle verbal message. In his untitled water-color, Tamari has formed the word *al-quds*, 'Jerusalem', in a chiseled script that looks like a winding and intersecting stone wall. For the literate viewer in Arabic, the painting carries a double bonus; although one can read the composition, it is left to the imagination to reach behind the obvious. On the other hand, the strongly balanced abstract composition itself, with its stodgy forms, should rouse enough interest in the illiterate viewer to find its meaning.



Ameena Ahuja
(India)

"The Lion Weeps", undated
china ink on hand-made paper
105 x 70cm.



Husain
(India) | "Huwa Allah", 1980
water-color on paper
33 x 42cm.



Hassan Massoudy
(Iraq) | "Poem I", 1978
etching
60 x 50cm.



Khairat Saleh
(Syria)

“Taj series 3 Noor”, undated
gouache & water-colour on paper
33 x 23cm.



Vladimir Tamari
(Palestine)

Untitled, 1991
water-color on paper
60 x 80cm.

CALLIGRAPHIC COMBINATIONS

The fourth group belongs to Calligraphic Combinations. In this style, sentences, words and letters are used in conjunction with other components to create a work of art. Legible and illegible Arabic script forms part of the composition, while the rest is made up of either pictorial and figurative shapes or expressive symbols. Most of the artists who work in this style are concerned with sociopolitical themes which deal with humanitarian, social and political issues. This movement is more widespread in the Developing World than in the West. It gained momentum in Arab art after the flagrant defeat of the Arab armies in the 1967 war with Israel and the people's disappointment with their leaderships. Among this group are **Aziz Ammoura** and **Yasser Duwaik** from Jordan, **Rachid Koraichi** from Algeria, and **Laila Shawa** from Palestine, whose works are directly related to the Palestinian Problem which has occupied Arab intellectuals as well as laborers for over half a century. Ammoura's ink drawings depict the 1982 massacre of Palestinian refugees by the right-wing Phalangist Lebanese Army in the camps of Sabra and Shatilla in Beirut. The calligraphy forms the background in "Echoes from Sabra and Shatilla", repeating the words Sabra and Shatilla to identify the cause for the bloated and naked bodies in the drawing. In "After the Massacre" the calligraphy forms a backdrop for the silent and heavy blocks of mourning figures, evoking religious and literary connotations. Duwaik's etching is more direct and has a down to earth approach, posing the question "What Next!" which in itself reflects a certain despondency and unclear future. In this work, abstract calligraphic signs are used as a secondary element in the composition in order to ascertain the identity of the repeated featureless figures. In Koraichi's etching commemorating the 1976 massacre of Palestinian refugees at Tell al-Za'tar camp in Beirut, by the Lebanese Forces (a military faction of the right wing Phalangist Party), the largest space is given to calligraphy while the expressionistic faces and signs are imposed on it. The background can be deciphered, yet without doing so one realizes its relationship to the drama that the monochromatic composition portrays. Laila Shawa makes a strong statement in her series "Walls of Gaza". Always a hotbed of revolt, Gaza's only means of expressing its people's opinions when it was under Israeli occupation was through wall graffiti. At night the slogans go up, and during the day a coat of white paint or even other motifs such as the dollar sign is sprayed on the walls by the occupation army to obliterate the previous ones. By nightfall slogans reappear once again and so on. Shawa took photographs of the walls and superimposed on them symbols such as the United Nations Charter, the Palestinian flag and target signs, thus working with an existing and ready made background, adding one element to it and turning it into a statement. Even after Gaza came under Palestinian self-rule, its population still revert to the walls as the best and safest means to freely and anonymously express their ideas and beliefs, without incurring their authorities' displeasure.

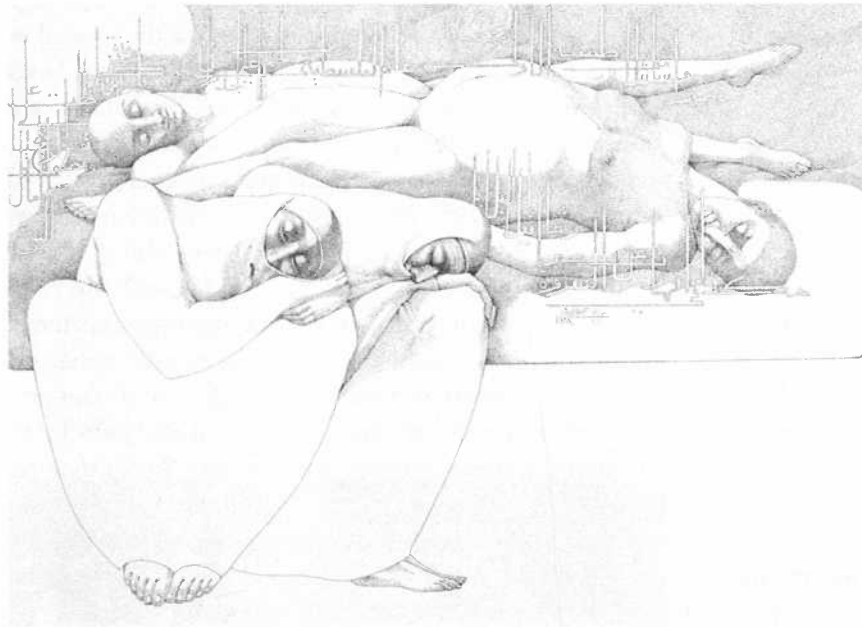
Besides political themes, artists also take up social issues, sometimes with a hint of cynicism and humor. **Chant Avedissian** from Egypt has a series which he calls "Nile Icons". The three works chosen from this series include portraits of the former King Farouk of Egypt and of the late Um Kulthum, known as *Kawkab al-Sharq*, 'Star of the Orient', who was the most popular Egyptian singer in the Arab world for more than four decades. To these two icons he adds an old bus ticket on Cairo's overcrowded transport system. For the ordinary man in the street, each is an important icon that has played a role in peoples' everyday life. As the three subjects are taken from the 1930s, 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, writing is used as a means by which the subject is identified and put in context.

Nirmala Shanmughalingam from Malaysia has always been concerned with humanitarian and international issues, not necessarily within her immediate boundaries. She has depicted conflicts in Vietnam and Afghanistan. In her present work, she uses visual interpretations of painted realistic black and white images, copied from newspapers, to depict the civil war in Lebanon. Part of the images of "Beirut x 10" is a caption in Latin print which attracts the viewer to investigate at a close range; anyway, who said only Arabic should be used? The artist should always be free to incorporate whatever he or she deems appropriate and feels comfortable with.

Muhamed Hedi Labban from Tunisia and **Maisoon Qasimi** from United Arab Emirates belong to two different generations. However, in both their works calligraphy plays a marginal graphic role. In Labban's "The Wounded Bird", a strip of calligraphic signs pulls the floating surrealistic symbols on top to rest on a solid and static base. Meanwhile Qasimi covers

the background for her heavy, draped figures in abstract calligraphic squiggles, in order to animate the composition and give it movement. Thus calligraphy's role in each work is opposite to the other. **Saleh Abu Shindi** from Jordan balances the female figure and the background in his ink drawing by emphasizing the curvature of his stylized nude with a calligraphic frame. In this work both the figure and the calligraphic signs share the composition in almost equal parts.

Last but not least there is the painted wood carving of **Abdel Basit Khatim** from Sudan. It is neither a painting nor a sculpture but an undeniably mask-like piece which carries within its figures images and indecipherable sentence, an air of African mythology and a mystical sensibility that one usually find in the folds of ancient cultures.



Aziz Ammoura
(Jordan)

“Echoes of Sabra and Shatilla”, 1984
ink on paper
22 x 30cm.



Chant Avedissian
(Egypt)

"Star of the Orient", 1994
mixed media on recycled paper
50 x 70cm.



Yasser Duwaik
(Jordan) | "What Next!", 1984
etching & mixed media
45 x 26cm.



Abdel Basit Khatim
(Sudan) | Untitled, 1981
oil on carved wood
44 x 44cm.



Rachid Koraichi
(Algeria) | "Tell al-Za'tar", 1979
etching
48 x 35cm.



Hedi Labban
(Tunisia)

"The Wounded Bird", undated
etching
40 x 52cm.



Maisoon Qasimi
(United Arab Emirates)

"Telling it as is", 1993
mixed media on paper
50 x 41cm.



Nirmala Shanmughalingam
(Malaysia)

“Beirut x 10”, 1984
acrylic on canvas
76 x 97cm



Laila Shawa
(Palestine)

“The Deal”, 1994
silk-screen on paper
48 x 68cm



Saleh Abu Shindi
(Jordan)

"Afternoon", 1986
china ink on paper
30 x 40cm

CONCLUSION When Rajwa Ali and I were curating this exhibition, the nationality of individual artists had nothing to do with our choice of works. Our only considerations were the works of art and the way they interrelated to form a cohesive and complete show. At the end, we were both surprised to find that the outcome was fifty-five works, by forty-five artists from seventeen countries. This in itself is proof enough that the Contemporary School of Calligraphic Art, prevalent throughout the Islamic world, is a well established art style in its own right.

The Calligraphic School of Art in modern Arab and Islamic painting is more than a novel style; it is a form of artistic identity through which the artist is able to gratify his or her creative instincts and establish an individuality as a contemporary Arab and Islamic artist. Evolving from the art of classical Arabic calligraphy and developing into a current form of expression, it employs modern media and technique. It unites the legible value of letters and words with their optic and graphic abstract shapes, allowing artists to ascertain their work as a contemporary Arab and Islamic, yet within an international artistic framework.

It is with great sadness we note the absence of a dear friend of the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, Mrs. Allison Najib Halaby, who supported this exhibition and was following its progress from the very beginning. She was sensitive to beauty and highly appreciative of all forms of creativity.

ARTISTS' BIOGRAPHIES

PURE CALLIGRAPHY **Etel Adnan (b. 1925), Lebanon.** Philosopher, novelist, designer, poet, literary critic, journalist and painter, Etel Adnan is a multi-faceted woman by any standard. A graduate in philosophy from the Sorbonne University in Paris (1955), she went on to continue her studies at Berkeley and Harvard Universities in the United States. She has been living in California since the Lebanese civil war, teaching at the Dominican College in San Rafael. Her work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman. Since 1964, Adnan has been researching the relationship between writing and image. She illustrated many poems by well known contemporary Arab poets until her search led her to working with Japanese accordion-like books. They range in length between three and twelve meters, and are illustrated with her calligraphic compositions in the form of a repeated individual word such as the name of God, Allah, and in the form of varied poetry verses in color. Her pure-calligraphic works carry within them visual and spiritual joy.

Erol Akyavas (b. 1932), Turkey. Following his art training at the Academy of Fine Arts in Istanbul and the Accademia di Belle Arte in Florence, Erol Akyavas attended the School of Architecture at the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago. He later worked in the ateliers of Fernand Leger and André Lhôte in Paris. Since the 1960's, Akyavas has been dividing his time between New York and Istanbul. His work is at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Museum of Painting and Sculpture in Istanbul, the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman, and the Museums of Modern Art in Ankara, Bremen and Stuttgart.

Contrary to his early geometric and surrealistic styles, Akyavas has moved to a strongly individual style where calligraphic signs mix with figures from Islamic miniatures and Chinese seals to form abstract expressive paintings, with Sufi undertones and mystical symbols.

Kamal Boullata (b. 1942), Palestine. Born and raised in Jerusalem, Kamal Boullata's initial training in art was at the Accademia di Belle Arte in Rome, followed by the Corcoran School of Art in Washington D.C. In 1968, he settled in the United States where he taught at Georgetown University. Lately he has gone on a Fulbright Scholarship to Morocco where he engaged in a complicated research on Islamic design in arabesque and its relation to color. Consequently in his new work, Boullata strikes a highly sensitive balance between line, form and color. A writer and literary critic, he has edited several poetry books. His work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman and the British Museum in London.

Boullata's occupation with the Calligraphic School of Art began in the 1980s. He concentrated on thematic abstracts related either to Sufi poetry or nationalistic slogans, executing them in strong intervening colors and monochromatic gradations. His keen sense of balance has always been one of his strong points as an artist.

Wasma Chorbachi (b. 1944), Iraq. After training in art at the Beirut College for Women (later to become Lebanese American University) and the Accademia di Belle Arte in Florence, Wasma Chorbachi went to Harvard University where she took her Ph.D. in Islamic art history in 1990. She has settled in Cambridge Massachusetts where she paints, writes, lectures and works on her ceramics. Her work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman, the Sackler Museum in Massachusetts and the British Museum in London.

Chorbachi's paintings and ceramic plates are based on her research in Islamic calligraphy and decoration, using geometric and floral motifs as well as various forms of classical and modern Arabic script. Her continuous experiments with colored and transparent glazes has led her to perfect a highly polished white ceramic which she embosses with writings and Islamic motifs, distinguishing her work and giving it cerebral as well as spiritual qualities.

Ali Omar Ermes (b. 1945), Libya. Photographer, painter and writer, Ali Omar Ermes was sent on a scholarship to the Plymouth School of Architecture and Design in England, from which he graduated in 1970. In 1976, he was appointed the visual art consultant for the World of Islam

Festival which was held in London. Ermes's work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman, the British Museum in London and the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. He has been living and working in London since 1981.

Ermes considers Arabic calligraphy as an entity of Islamic culture which can be employed in international modern art without requiring the viewer to be literate in language. He employs his letters and sentences as graphic elements with which he builds up his compositions free of a thematic structure. Ermes is an Arab artist who has succeeded in propagating his culture in the West without betraying its origins or becoming xenophobic.

Leila Kawash (b. 1945), Iraq. A graduate of Manchester College of Art in 1966, Leila Kawash lives and works in Athens, Greece. Her experiments in different styles, her interest in her Arab culture and the deteriorating political situation in her country led her to experiment with calligraphic collages.

When she cannot depict a concept visually she expresses it in her sensitive and delicate manner. Including slogans, verse, prose and collages into her transparent compositions, she registers her protest and anger against the closed borders in the face of her countrymen, and the discriminating and partial treatment they are met with. Her work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

Usama Khalidi (b. 1932), Palestine. A scientist by training, Usama Khalidi comes from an old and prominent family from Jerusalem. He got his BA in chemistry in 1951 and his MA in bio-chemistry in 1954 from the American University of Beirut. In 1960, he received his Ph.D. in bio-chemistry from the University of Michigan in the United States. Khalidi was a professor at the American University of Beirut (1974-83) and the Arabian Gulf University (1983-91), a visiting professor at the Pediatrics Department at Harvard University (1975-76) and is member of several scientific societies.

Despite his illustrious career in the field of science, Khalidi's main hobby is Arabic calligraphy which he practices on his own. While in high school, his initial training was at the hands of the well-known Palestinian traditional artist, Jamal Badran. Through practice and experiments, Khalidi invented a three-dimensional Arabic script which he has patented. His three-dimensional small scale calligraphic sculptures have been acknowledged by critics for their originality and innovation. His deft manipulation of metal and wood bestows on his pieces a simplicity that takes into account the fragile balance of Arabic letters. Khalidi also has calligraphic works on paper. His work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

Ahmed Moustafa (b. 1943), Egypt. Upon graduating from the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Alexandria in 1966, Ahmed Moustafa was appointed a full-time lecturer in painting and stage design. He continued his studies in advanced printmaking at the Central School of Art and Design in London where he got his MA in 1978 and was a part-time lecturer on Arabic calligraphy at the same school (1980-82). In 1989, Moustafa completed his Ph.D. thesis on "proportional script", *al-khatt al-mansub*, as defined by the tenth century Abbasid calligrapher Ibn Muqla. It was the first degree to be given out jointly by St. Martin's College and the British Museum. Since 1974, Moustafa has been living and working in London. His work is at the Museum of Modern Art in Alexandria, the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman, the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford and the British Museum in London.

Despite his training in modern art, Moustafa utilizes the art of classical calligraphy to build up his three-dimensional calligraphic drawings, manipulating optical illusions through script, and creating Qur'anic still-lives and scriptural landscapes. In his works, he combines the strength of tradition with the originality of innovation, and joins his Arab-Islamic heritage with modern techniques and media, interpreting them through the skill and vision of the master artist.

Ramzi Moustafa (b. 1926), Egypt. A graduate of the Accademia di Belle Arte in Bologna, Italy (1955) and the Royal College of Art in London (1956), Ramzi Moustafa got his Ph.D. in art history from Denver University in Colorado (1961). He teaches at the Academy of Fine Arts in Cairo and his work is at the Museum of Modern Art in Cairo, the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman and the National Museum in Prague.

Moustafa is an accomplished painter, printmaker, ceramist and sculptor. He asserts his identity as a modern Islamic artist by drawing on Arabic calligraphy for both its graphic qualities and content. He often uses the name of God, *Allah*, as a basic motif in his work, either emphasizing it with bright colors against a neutral background, or reversing the process by writing in gray against a multicolored background. His work ranges from the colossal to the miniature and from the pure calligraphic to the highly expressionistic, which makes him a truly versatile and innovative artist.

Issam El-Said (1939 - 1988), Iraq. Painter, designer, architect, art historian and expert on Islamic art, Issam El-Said read architecture at Cambridge University, graduating in 1961 after which he went to Hammersmith College of Art and Design (1962-64). At the time of his death, El-Said was doing research in Islamic art for his Ph.D. at the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne in England. He designed several mosques and mosque interiors, including the London Central Mosque and the Islamic Cultural Centre (1976-77). His work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, Museum of Modern Art in New York, and the Museum of Modern Art in Baghdad. He lived and worked in London from 1958 until his death, and was a member of Christies' Contemporary Artists group.

A truly versatile artist, El-Said worked in graphics, water-colors, oils, enamel on aluminum and paleocrystal (a transparent material of cold cast polyester resin which he developed through long research and experiments). He was one of the early Arab artists to investigate the usage of calligraphy in modern works of art. Since the 1960s, almost all his work included calligraphy in one form or another. Although a number of his paintings had traditional Arabic script, his media and execution were contemporary. An agile and prolific artist, El-Said chose the calligraphic school, with its principal and secondary styles, as the main course of his art work.

Samir Salameh (b. 1944), Palestine. Born in Safad, Samir Salameh's art training was at the College of Fine Arts in Damascus (1973) and the École Supérieur des Beaux Arts in Paris (1981) where he lives and is Artistic Director at the VI and VII University of Jussieu. His work was shown at the various Arab and European biennials including Venice and is in the collection of the Belvedere Museum of Modern Art in Tunis, the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman and the Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw.

In his compositions, Salameh paints his words and letters, mixing traditional Arabic script with calligraphiti, in a modern rendition where letter signs, words and sentences combine to form visual forms and thematic subjects. Thus he joins tradition and modernism in a purely Arab plastic expression.

Ahmad Mohamed Shibrain, Sudan. Painter, graphic artist, carver, poet and educator, Ahmad Shibrain is one of the foremost Sudanese artists. He was Dean of the College of Fine and Applied Arts in Khartoum and Secretary General of the Sudanese Council of Arts and Letters. His work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

One of the first Arab artists to experiment with calligraphy in the 1950s, Shibrain draws on his country's rich African, Nubian, Arab and Meriotic heritage by combining different motifs from various artistic disciplines, including folk art and calligraphy, and working with local primary materials such as mahogany. His color of choice is black which he considers as the multiplication and amalgamation of all colors. His carved pieces of wood platters are perfect examples of contemporary Islamic art which serves both aesthetic and practical ends.

Parviz Tanavoli (b. 1937), Iran. A pioneer Iranian sculptor and ceramist, Parviz Tanavoli studied sculpture at the Fine Arts School in Tehran before continuing his training in Italy. He has taught sculpture in Iran and the United States. Tanavoli retired from Tehran University in 1981 and became a full-time artist. His work has been commissioned world wide and is in many museums including the Museum of Modern Art in Tehran and the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

An influential figure in the Saqqah-Khanneh movement (see Zenderoudi), Tanavoli's work betrays a deep attachment to his country's traditions, including folk culture, language and poetry. However, his work does not show any clichés or repetition. Simple folk motifs are transformed in Tanavoli's hand into international symbols and are carried out in a modern artistic language without losing their authenticity. Among his best known works are "The Walls of Iran".

Osman Waqialla (b. 1925), Sudan. A graduate of Gordon Memorial College and the School of Design in Khartoum in 1945 and 1946, respectively, Osman Waqialla was subsequently sent on a scholarship to Camberwell School of Arts and Crafts in England. Upon his return to Sudan in 1949, he was appointed art teacher at the College of Design at University College in Khartoum. Thereafter, he went to Cairo to train with the professor of calligraphy Sayyid Ibrahim, at the School of Arabic Calligraphy, graduating in 1951. In 1955, Waqialla began working for the BBC and moved to London where he has lived since that time. His work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

First and foremost, Waqialla is a calligrapher who manipulates his formal training to create both traditional and modern works, utilizing the visual and thematic qualities of Arabic script. His unusual abstract calligraphic compositions include printed collages from daily papers and hand-written words in gouache and water-colors. However, he also has classical pieces in which he excels.

Wijdan (b.1939), Jordan. Wijdan is a painter, lecturer, and art historian. She got her BA in history from Beirut College for Women (later to become Lebanese American University) in 1961. In 1993, she earned her Ph.D. in Islamic art history from the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London. She took art courses at college and during the holidays in Amman, she worked with individual artists in their studios. Among her best known works are those of her Desert Period in the 1980s.

Since 1985, Wijdan has been experimenting with Arabic calligraphy in its different forms, emphasizing the aesthetic and graphic qualities of the letters and at times making use of them to put forward a statement as in her "Karbala" series. Her work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman, the National Gallery in Islamabad, Asillah Museum in Morocco, the Belvedere Museum of Modern Art in Tunis, the British Museum in London, the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, and the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C.

Hossein Zenderoudi (b. 1937), Iran. One of Iran's foremost modern painters, Hossein Zenderoudi trained at the School of Fine Arts for Boys and the School of Decorative Arts in Tehran. In 1961 he founded the Saqqa-Khanneh movement in art which is based on 'spiritual pop art' that draws on Shi'ite iconography and popular folk motifs. Zenderoudi's works are in the Musée d'Art Moderne and the Centre George Pompidou in Paris, the British Museum in London, the Centre de Recherche Esthétique de Turin in Italy, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman, the Museum of Modern Art in Tehran, and the Museum of Rotterdam in the Netherlands. He has been living and working in Paris since 1961 thus benefiting from the best of what the West can offer and matching it with his Islamic traditions.

Although Zenderoudi always uses traditional script in his work, he has succeeded in freeing his style from the constraint of tradition to soar freely and spontaneously over the surface in balanced and rhythmic compositions. At times he employs Latin script which makes an interesting point for comparison with his Arabic calligraphic pieces. In his work, calligraphy is used for both its aesthetic value and content, yet within an international artistic language.

ABSTRACT CALLIGRAPHY. **Yussef Ahmad (b. 1955), Qatar.** Following a BA degree from the College of Fine Arts at Hulwan University in Cairo (1976), Yussef Ahmad went to Mills College in Oakland, California for his MA in fine arts. One of the most active artists in the Gulf states, Ahmad has been organizing Qatari artistic activities within member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council and abroad. His work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

After numerous experiments with various calligraphic compositions, Ahmad has attained a distinctive style whereby he transforms letters and words into pure abstract signs.

Shakir Hassan Al Said (b. 1925), Iraq. One of the second generation of Iraqi pioneer artists, Shakir Hassan Al Said's initial training was at the Higher Institute of Teachers Training (1942) in Baghdad. When he decided to pursue a career in art he joined the Iraqi Institute of Fine Arts, graduating in 1954, then continued his training at the École des Beaux Arts in Paris. His quest to ascertain an Arab Islamic artistic identity led him to form the One-Dimension Group in 1971 with a number of younger artists who were also experimenting at the time with the usage of calligraphy in their work. A painter, art historian and critic, Al Said has published numerous books and articles on art history and philosophy. His work is at the Museum of Modern Art in Baghdad and the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

Al Said's inclusion of calligraphic signs in his compositions carry more than one connotation. His work is impregnated with Sufi symbols and religious and mundane iconography. Prison walls covered with graffiti intercept cracks, and alternate with coded messages of heavenly love in numerical symbols, to form different *mandalas* which clearly define the artist's cultural and artistic identity by combining traditional concepts with modern renditions.

Burhan Dogançay (b. 1929) Turkey. Son of the well-known painter Adil Dogançay, Burhan's first art training was with his father in Istanbul. In 1953 he graduated from the School of Law at the University of Paris after which he took art courses at the Grande Chaumiére and in 1953 he received a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Paris. In 1964, Dogançay gave up a diplomatic career to become a full-time artist. Painter, sculptor, graphic artist and photographer, Dogançay has been living and working in New York since 1978. He undertook a mammoth photographic project "Walls of the World" which resulted in an archive of some 25,000 slides, a selection of which has been published in a book titled *L'Amour*

sur les Murs. His work is in numerous museums in Europe, Asia and the Americas including the Museum of Modern Art in Vienna, the Art Museum of Rio de Janeiro, the Royal Museum of Fine Arts in Antwerp, Musée d'Arts Moderne in Paris, Museum of Painting and Sculpture in Istanbul, the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman, the Brooklyn Museum in New York, the Museum of Modern Art and the Guggenheim Museum in New York.

Through the deft insertion of shadows in his works, Dogaŋçay has succeeded in introducing a third dimension to his abstract calligraphic paintings while showing a strong influence of the tradition of Arab and Oriental calligraphy.

Mahmoud Hammad (1922 - 1988), Syria. Mahmoud Hammad was a painter, graphic designer and educator. He began his career as a member of the Republican Guard before giving in to his talent and becoming an art teacher. While studying at the Accademia di Belle Arte in Rome from which he graduated in 1957, he was influenced by the European academic style which he followed at the beginning of his artistic career. Upon his return to Damascus, Hammad was appointed instructor at the College of Fine Arts, at the University of Damascus and later became its Dean. His work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman and the Modern Art Museum in Damascus.

Hammad was responsible for establishing the calligraphic school of painting in Syria in the late 1960s. He took letters and transformed them into the main component of his compositions. He neglected their legible significance and utilized the plasticity of their shapes. In his monochrome formations, Hammad was more concerned with the placement of the abstract calligraphic shapes and their visual and constructional effect within the space of the composition than with their meaning, and they serve no purpose other than being the principal components of the abstract composition. On the other hand, the viewer might be able to form a word out of them, which enhances the enigmatic nature and potential of the letters.

Abdulla Hariri (b. 1949), Morocco. After graduating from the École des Beaux Arts Casablanca, Abdulla Hariri went to France to study design and cinematography in Toulouse. He continued his training in design and graphics in Italy and Poland before coming back to settle in his hometown. His work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

Hariri's animated paintings are based on calligraphic and diacritical marks, crossing static geometrical forms and grids in drifting haphazard movements across the surface. His pure bright colors are simultaneously intercepted and accentuated with dramatic blacks and whites. Hariri's experiments with various media such as acrylics, water-colors, plastic and linoleum have yielded imaginative and interesting results.

Ali Hassan (b. 1957), Qatar. After receiving his BA in history from Qatar University in 1982, Ali Hassan went to Cairo to train in graphics and Arabic calligraphy in 1986. A full time artist who lives and works in Doha, his work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

Hassan has been concerned with Arabic calligraphy since the beginning of his career as a full time artist in the mid 1980s. His early work was composed of a conglomeration of letters, scattered and in groups within well defined borders. Eventually, his compositions became bigger and bolder, and his strokes large and daring, forming single letters over embossed backgrounds and making up dramatic compositions in black and white. He uses both *Nasta'liq* and a free hand script in his compositions, while playing on contrast between colors and shapes.

Jumana el-Husseini (b. 1932), Palestine. After moving from Jerusalem to Beirut in 1948, Jumana el-Husseini trained in painting, ceramics and sculpture while majoring in political science at the American University of Beirut and the Beirut College for Women (later to become Lebanese American University) during the 1950s. In the early 1990s, she moved to Paris. Her work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

El-Husseini was known for her stylized Palestinian cityscapes in decorative colors and infantile figures. Suddenly her work changed to strongly balanced abstract compositions in transparent layers where abstract calligraphic symbols in graded hues make up horizons of imaginary landscapes. Her new style shows a high degree of skill and maturity.

Khalid Khreis (b.1955) Jordan. An artist with a rich training in art, Khalid Khreis first graduated from the College of Fine Arts at Hulwan University in Cairo in 1978 after which he went to Spain to train in painting at the Escuela de Bellas Artes, in sculpture at the Escuela de Artes Aplicadas y Artisticos Oficios, and in mural painting at the Escuela Internacional Pintura Mural, San Cugat in Barcelona. Subsequently, Khreis went to Italy and took courses in sculpture and graphic arts at the Accademia di Belle Arte, Pietro Banucci in Perugia (1978-81). He also joined the Escuela di Bellas Artes, San Miguel de Allende in Mexico before returning to Barcelona where he completed his Ph.D. in art history at the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Barcelona in 1994. His doctoral thesis is on Arabic calligraphy in modern art. His work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

Khreis' paintings are as cerebral as they are visual. Although he builds up each painting slowly and laboriously, he works without any preconceived ideas. However, his abstract calligraphic signs are not the result of accidental painting. They are the outcome of a controlled and sensitive expressiveness in which the artist's emotions and intellect equally determine the visual end result.

Rafa Nasiri (b. 1940), Iraq. An artist with a varied and rich artistic training, Rafa Nasiri began his studies at the Academy of Fine Arts in Baghdad and graduated in 1959 after which he went on a scholarship to Beijing where he specialized in graphic art (1959-61). Later on Nasiri continued his printmaking in Lisbon (1967-69). A highly accomplished painter, his work is in the collections of the National Museum of Modern Art in Baghdad, Modern Art Museum in Damascus, Asillah Museum in Morocco, International Arts Academy in Salzburg, Contemporary Art Museum in Madrid, Art Academy Collection in Beijing, and the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

A member of the One-Dimension Group founded by Shakir Hassan Al Said (see Al Said), Nasiri is one of the first Arab artists to deal with Arabic calligraphy as a means of asserting one's artistic identity. However, his letters and calligraphic signs were never meant to transmit a message or have content, they were always used for their graphic attributes, developing from the legible to the pure enigmatically abstract.

Medi Qotbi (b. 1951), Morocco. After getting his initial art training at the École des Beaux Arts in Casablanca, Medi Qotbi went on to the École des Beaux Arts in Toulouse and subsequently to the École Nationale des Beaux Arts in Paris, experimenting with different media and styles. His work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

Despite his training in France, where he has settled, Qotbi has been researching and experimenting with the plasticity of Arabic calligraphy and design. His delicate undulating and meticulous calligraphic compositions recall intricate antique Oriental silk textiles, while forming a bond between Western modern technique and Islamic tradition. Qotbi draws, writes and paints his letters in a single gesture whose sum formulates an animated garden of color and shape.

Himat Ali Saleh (b. 1960), Iraq. A self-taught artist, Himat Ali Saleh has been diligently painting and experimenting in his work since he was a teenager. His hard work paid off when he was given a studio by the French government at the International Arts City in Paris in the early 1990s. He moves between Tokyo and Paris, trying to benefit from the best of the Occident and the Orient. His work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

Himat has developed a personal style with a variety of signs, dots and dashes scattered on the surface and intercepted by various motifs which is reminiscent of Arabesque. After a visit to Japan his style changed to include abstract Arabic calligraphic signs on a background of fading Japanese characters. His compositions have a distinctly Oriental ambiguous aura and an air of brush painting on ceramics.

Khaled Ben Slimane (b. 1951) Tunisia. Painter and ceramist, Khaled Ben Slimane initially trained at l'Institut Technologique d'Architecture, d'Art et d'Urbanisme in Tunis, graduating in 1976. Between 1976 and 1977 he attended the Escuela MASSANA in Barcelona, and between 1982 and 1983 he followed art courses at the Idemitsu Museum of Art in Tokyo. His work is at the Belvedere Museum of Modern Art in Tunis and the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

Ben Slimane's abstract calligraphic signs could be both Arabic and Berber, which he mixes with North African folk symbols, composing what looks like talismanic arrangements inside giant amulets. His visual inscriptions on dark greens and brilliant blues form curious and enigmatic monochromes which reflect his occupation with the problems of abstraction in modern Arab art, within international and local traditions.

Mahmoud Taha (b. 1942), Jordan. A ceramist and calligrapher, Mahmoud Taha graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Baghdad in 1968, and studied calligraphy with a well-known modern Arab calligrapher, the late Muhammad Hashim Al-Baghdadi. He continued his training in ceramics at Cardiff College of Arts in Wales, on a British Council Scholarship, graduating in 1976.

A leading Arab ceramist who introduced the art of ceramics into Jordan, Taha's talent lies in his skillful experiments with colored glazes and his ability to successfully join the traditions of his country's most ancient craft with contemporary techniques, Islamic forms, and calligraphy. His spherical and round forms incorporate one and two dimensional decorative Arabic script in an innovative manner as part of the piece's construction, while the calligraphy in some of his large murals carry a thematic message. His work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman and the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff.

Ahmad Khalid Yusuf (b. 1934), Malaysia. After graduating from the Malaya Teacher Training College in Kinky, England in 1958, Ahmad Khalid Yusuf continued his training at Winchester Art School (1965-69) before going to the United States and earning his MA degree in art education and printmaking from Ohio State University, in 1978. His work is at the National Gallery in Kuala Lumpur and the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

A well established printmaker and painter, Yusuf employs Arabic and Jawi calligraphic signs in their most abstract forms. His ethereal and transparent surfaces are luminous with soft shades of pastel pinks, violets and blues. They form the background for ambiguous floating shapes, reminiscent of butterflies against a spring sky at dusk.

FIGURATIVE CALLIGRAPHY. **Ameena Ahmed Ahuja, India.** Of an Indian father and an English mother, Ameena Ahuja spent most her life in Europe and studied art at the Slade School of Art. Her interest in philosophy led to a degree in the subject from England and a doctorate from Moscow University. Being married to a career diplomat took her to several countries where she lived, painted and taught at various universities, such as Nehru University in India, the Pushkin Institute in Russia, and Columbia University in New York. Her work is in the Museum of Oriental Art in Moscow and the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

Ahuja draws her artistic inspiration from the poems of the 15th and 16th century Sufi Persian poets, Rumi and Hafiz; 18th and 19th century Indian poets, Mir and Ghalib; and the poetry of Pushkin from Russia. In her hands, verse turns into zoomorphic shapes of gazelles, lions, eagles and tigers. On rare occasions religious human figures of Christ, as well as the Madonna and Child have emerged from her brush paintings on handmade paper. In her versatile manner, she works with various alphabets, namely Urdu, Persian, Arabic, Sanskrit and Cyrillic Russian letters.

Husain (b. 1915), India. Maqbool Husain, internationally known as Husain, is one the simplest yet most enigmatic personalities. He is a self-taught painter, calligrapher, architect (From Bau-Hous to my House), sculptor, photographer, printmaker, poet, philosopher, critic, film-maker (his first film "Through the Eyes of a Painter" won the Golden Bear Award in Berlin in 1967), hedonist, Sufi and cynic. He raises numerous questions both in his writings and art work, yet manages to answer all of them. Probably Asia's most international artist, Husain's work hangs in various museums around the world, including the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

Truly versatile, Husain's work covers a wide range of media and subjects which vary between the sensual and spiritual, figuration and abstraction, color and black and white. An aggressive painter, Husain was doing folk calligraphic paintings on glass when he was eleven years old. At present, he has reached a stage of mental freedom whereby he does what he feels like with no remorse or guilt. One day he might finish the most classical figurative painting and the next he might put up the most abstract installation; what is amazing is that both can be recognized as Husain's.

Hassan Massoudy (b. 1944), Iraq. A traditional calligrapher who trained in Baghdad, Hassan Massoudy moved to Paris in 1969 and attended the École Nationale des Beaux Arts. Graduating in 1975, he became a true calligraphic painter in both the classical and modern sense. Massoudy has published several books in Arabic and French on the development, aesthetics and techniques of Arabic calligraphy, and his work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

Massoudy's work is distinguished by its purity in the sense that his only compositional elements are calligraphic signs which he either uses on their own or amasses them in figurative forms. Verses of poetry undulate to make up the curves of a nude, they condense and spread forming shadow and light, while each stroke and line makes up a letter and the letters turn into verses and the verses into a woman.

Khairat Saleh, Syria. A poet, painter, ceramist, printmaker and writer, Saleh got her BA in English literature from Cairo University before going to the United Kingdom where she studied drama and English poetry at the University of Wales, earning her MA in 1978. She then worked in

publishing, and engaged in research at the British Library and the Victoria and Albert Museum. Studying Islamic and Arabic illuminated manuscripts in their collections stirred in her a deep desire to revive her Arab cultural heritage. Consequently, she wrote a book entitled *Fabled Cities: Princes and Jinns from Arab Myths and Legends*. Her artistic training has been with individual artists and through art courses in London where she lives and works. Her work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

Saleh's art works are mainly illuminated calligraphic paintings and etchings where she uses scripts by well known classical calligraphers in new and innovative renditions with vibrant colors and gold leafing.

Vladimir Tamari (b. 1942), Palestine. Artist and inventor Vladimir Tamari has been living in Tokyo since 1970. He earned his BA in physics from the American University of Beirut before going on to London to train in art at Saint Martin's School. Tamari's scientific inventions include a machine for three-dimensional drawings and his research has led him to create a type setting of the Arabic alphabet suitable for printing without losing its aesthetic value.

Tamari's art is versatile and includes Japanese calligraphy and brush painting as well as sketching and painting on paper and canvas. Like most Palestinian artists, some of his works carry a political message, though it is only ten percent of his total output. However, all his work exudes the same Oriental transparency and sensitivity. In his highly personal style, calligraphy blends naturally with organic forms giving the viewer the chance to contemplate the work and discover its intellectual attributes camouflaged by its visual aesthetic qualities.

COMBINATION CALLIGRAPHY **Aziz Ammoura (b. 1944), Jordan.** Aziz Ammoura was born in Haifa. He graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Baghdad in 1970, and got his Masters in Fine Arts from the Pratt Institute in New York in 1983. Ammoura was an assistant professor at the Department of Fine Arts in Yarmouk University where he trained a number of young Jordanian artists. His work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

Ammoura's early oil paintings are of a sensitive and warm impressionistic style depicting landscapes, figures, and portraits taken from his immediate environment, while his adept ink drawings follow a stylized pointillism and at times contain letters and words as an added compositional element. Lately, he has developed an original style of calligraphic painting that is based on the Arabic script in abstract compositions of overlapping transparent layers of color.

Chant Avedissian (b. 1951), Egypt. Of Armenian origin, Chant Avedissian's initial training in visual arts was at the School of Art and Design, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts (1970-1973), after which he went to the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs in Paris (1975-78) where he studied sculpture and printmaking. His work is at the British Museum in London and the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

An accomplished photographer, Avedissian mixes in his silk-screens various techniques of photography with stenciling intercepted by names, and popular slogans and titles to identify an everyday culture of the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s. The work ends up commemorating figures who lived in the popular Arab consciousness either through the cinema, theater, political propaganda, advertisements, or everyday mundane activities. The result makes him the foremost Pop artist of the Arab world.

Yassir Duwaik (b. 1940), Jordan. Born in Hebron, Yassir Duwaik is a graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts in Baghdad (1968) after which he went to Brighton Polytechnic to continue his art training, graduating in 1972. Presently, Duwaik is seconded to the Government of Dubai as art instructor. His work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts.

Duwaik's early works evolved from structured picturesque local landscapes to a somber style laden with calligraphic symbolism representing the Palestinian Intifada (Uprising) in the West Bank, in a highly expressive manner. Considered one of the second generation of pioneers in Jordan, he is among the first Jordanian artists to produce engravings and etchings. Recently he has reached an abstraction based on multiplied and fractured calligraphic signs, manipulating their fluid graphic qualities.

Abdel Basit Khatim (b. 1942), Sudan. After graduating from the College of Fine Arts at Khartoum University in 1967, Abdel Basit Khatim traveled to Europe to be further acquainted with contemporary art movements.

The son of a carpenter, Khatim learnt from his father the skill of manipulating wood. At times Khatim exchanges his canvas for wood pieces inspired by his immediate popular surroundings, which he paints in bright vibrant colors intercepted by calligraphic signs beyond the boundaries of academic restraints. The calligraphy in Khatim's work compliments his indigenous folk motifs and they both form an interchanging whole which is simultaneously ancient and modern.

Mahmoud Rachid Koraichi (b. 1947), Algeria. After graduating from the Higher Institute of Fine Arts in Algiers, Rachid Koraichi continued his art training at the École Supérieure des Beaux Arts in Paris. A master printmaker, his best known works are his monochromatic large etchings in sepia, and black and white with their calligraphic background and bold symbols in the foreground. Reminiscent of Chinese signs and brush painting, they carry social and political messages of protest against injustice, genocide and occupation. His work is in the Modern Art Museum in Brazil, the Modern Art Museum in Columbia, and the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

Hedi Labban (b. 1946), Tunisia. A graduate of the School of Fine Arts in Tunis (1971), Labban continued his art training (1971-76) at the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux Arts in Paris, specializing in etching. Meanwhile he got a Doctorate in fine arts from the Sorbonne University (1967), and went on to become a teacher of art education in Benzert and Bajeh in Tunisia (1976-81). His work is in the collection of the Belvedere Museum of Modern Art in Tunis and the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

Labban is a distinguished graphic artist. The subjects of his adept etchings are inspired by local folk traditions, popular myths and taboos, executed in an expressive manner where calligraphy forms part of the graphic composition and is used in combination with symbolic figures and signs.

Maisoon Qasimi (b. 1958), United Arab Emirates. Born in Abu Dhabi, Maisoon Qasimi is a poet and a painter who received her MA in economics and political science from the University of Cairo in 1981. A self taught artist, she trained with fellow artists in their studios while simultaneously practicing on her own. Her work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

Qasimi employs calligraphy in her work as a secondary abstract background element whose function is to accentuate the main figures in the composition. The squiggle lines animate the heavy static human shapes, adding to the composition a certain dynamism.

Nirmala Shanmughalingam (b. 1941), Malaysia. After training with the pioneer Malaysian artist Hoessein Enas in Kuala Lumpur in 1962, Nirmala Shanmughalingam began her formal art education at the Corcoran School of Art in Washington, D.C. (1966-67) and at the Harvard University Extension Course at the Fogg Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts (1970-71) before receiving her B.Sc. from Oxford Polytechnic in England in 1978. Her work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman and the National Gallery in Kuala Lumpur.

An artist who is preoccupied by humanitarian issues, Shanmughalingam has portrayed conflict and civil war in Vietnam, Afghanistan and Lebanon, in a series of large silk-screen and smaller prints. Her use of colors is minimal while her black and white images intercept and overlap; upon them, written captions intrude to emphasize the artist's point in condemning brutality and senseless killing. The captions are in English and not Arabic; nevertheless they are written words and form part of the graphic composition while defining its theme.

Laila Shawa (b. 1940), Palestine. Born in Gaza, Laila Shawa first gained her art training at the School of Art Leonardo Da'Vinci in Cairo (1957-58); she then continued at the Accademia di Belle Arte and Accademia St. Giacomo in Rome, intercepted by three summer courses with Oskar Kokoshka in his academy in Salzburg, Austria. Among her well known works are the stained glass windows at the Rashad Shawa Cultural Center in Gaza. Her paintings are at the National Gallery in Kuala Lumpur, the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman and the British Museum. She has been living and working in London since 1975.

Painter, designer and illustrator of children's books, Laila Shawa is a versatile artist whose work swings between decorative cityscapes and horses, and humanitarian causes and women's affairs, such as the enforced veiling of women in her hometown in the 1980s. In her latest series entitled "Walls of Gaza" calligraphy plays an educating role by transmitting messages of a repressed people who were not allowed freedom of expression, thus they reverted to graffiti. However, this same graffiti forms part of the composition, making a message an element of the plastic expression.

Saleh Abu Shindi (b. 1942), Jordan. Saleh Abu Shindi graduated with a BA in fine arts from the College of Fine Arts at Hulwan University in Cairo in 1969. From 1973 to 1981 he headed the Art Education Department at the Teachers Training College in Amman. In 1992 Abu Shindi went to India to continue his post graduate studies in art at the University of Hyderabad. His work is at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman.

Abu Shindi has a distinctive style based on fluidity of line and form. With time his colors have become sparse, while his lines have gained richness and harmony. Among his best works are his laborious black and white drawings of old Jordanian and Palestinian towns and villages, as well as symbolic compositions where the figures are framed by Arabic letters making up part of the composition with a decorative background.

"THE RIGHT TO WRITE:
CALLIGRAPHIC WORKS FROM THE COLLECTION
OF THE JORDAN NATIONAL GALLERY OF FINE ARTS".
GENERAL EXHIBITION LIST

1. Etel Adnan (Lebanon). "Allah", 1987, mixed media on Japanese paper, 30 x 70 x 10cm.
2. Yussef Ahmad (Qatar). "Attempt at Unity", 1982, china ink on raw canvas, 150 x 150cm.
3. Ameena Ahuja (India). "The Lion Weeps", undated, china ink on hand-made paper, 105 x 70cm.
4. Erol Akyavas (Turkey). "Hem Batin", 1993, etching, 77x 63cm.
5. Shakir Hassan Al Said (Iraq). Untitled, 1992, mixed media & collage on paper, 79x87cm.
6. Aziz Ammoura (Jordan). 2 works.
 - (a.) "Echoes of Sabra and Shatilla", 1984, ink on paper, 22 x 30cm.
 - (b.) "After the Massacre", 1984, ink on paper, 36 x 23cm.
7. Chant Avedissian (Egypt). 3 works.
 - a. "King Farouk", 1993, mixed media on recycled paper, 50 x 70cm.
 - b. "Ticket", 1994, mixed media on recycled paper, 50 x 70cm.
 - c. "Star of the Orient", 1994, mixed media on recycled paper, 50 x 70cm.
8. Kamal Boullata (Palestine). "He is the First and the Last", 1983, silk-screen, 60 x 50cm.
9. Wasma Chorbachi (Iraq). Untitled, 1993, glazed ceramic plate, 33cm. diameter.
10. Burhan Dogançay (Turkey). Untitled, 1972, acrylic on canvas, 127.5 x 89.5cm.
11. Yasser Duwaik (Jordan). "What Next!", 1984, etching & mixed media, 45 x 26cm.
12. Ali Omer Ermes (Libya). "Letter Kaf", 1979, mixed media on paper, 65 x 95cm.
13. Mahmoud Hammad (Syria). "Arabic Calligraphy", 1984, oil on canvas, 55 x 75cm.
14. Abdullah Hariri (Morocco). Untitled, 1988, mixed media on paper, 36 x 50cm.
15. Ali Hassan (Qatar). "Letter Nim", 1993, mixed media on paper, 120 x 100cm.
16. Husain (India). "Huwa Allah", 1980, water-color on paper, 33 x 42cm.
17. Jumana el-Husseini (Palestine). Untitled, 1989, mixed media on canvas, 85 x 110cm.
18. Leila Kawash (Iraq). "Across the Sea", 1994, mixed media on paper, 50 x 66cm.
19. Usama Khalidi (Palestine). "Huwa", 1995, copper tube and wood, 27 x 10 x 18cm.
20. Abdel Basit Khatim (Sudan). Untitled, 1981, oil on carved wood, 44 x 44cm.

21. Khalid Khreis (Jordan). Untitled, 1991, mixed media on paper, 70 x 50cm.
22. Rachid Koraichi (Algeria). "Tell al-Za'tar", 1979, etching, 48 x 35cm.
23. Hedi Labban (Tunisia). "The Wounded Bird", undated, etching, 40 x 52cm.
24. Hassan Massoudy (Iraq). 2 works
 - a. "Poem I", 1978, etching, 60 x 50cm.
 - b. "Poem II", 1978, etching, 60 x 50cm.
25. Ahmed Moustafa (Egypt). "alif, lam, ha", 1976, silk-screen on paper, 65 x 90cm.
26. Ramzi Moustafa (Egypt). "Allah", undated, oil and acrylic on paper, 50 x 60cm.
27. Rafa Nasiri (Iraq). 3 works.
 - 27a. Untitled, 1994, etching, 38 x 47.5cm.
 - 27b. Untitled, 1994, etching, 38 x 47.5cm.
 - 27c. Untitled, 1994, etching, 38 x 47.5cm.
28. Maisoon Qasimi (United Arab Emirates). "Telling it as is", 1993, mixed media on paper, 50 x 41cm.
29. Mehdi Qotbi (Morocco). "Arabic Calligraphy", undated, mixed media on paper, 80 x 50cm.
30. Issam El-Said (Iraq). "He the Omnipotent", 1983, acrylic on raw canvas, 91 x 91cm.
31. Samir Salameh (Palestine). "In the Name of God", 1986, china ink & water-colour on paper, 45x61cm.
32. Himat Ali Saleh (Iraq). "Spiritual Aspirations", 1995, china ink on hand-made Japanese paper, 82x82.
33. Khairat Saleh (Syria). 2 works.
 - a. "Taj series 2 Rab", undated, gouache & water-colour on paper, 33 x 23cm.
 - b. "Taj series 3 Noor", undated, gouache & water-colour on paper, 33 x 23cm.
34. Nirmala Shanmughalingam (Malaysia). "Beirut x 10", 1984, acrylic on canvas, 76 x 97cm.
35. Laila Shawa (Palestine). 3 works.
 - a. "Amended Resolution", 1994, silk-screen on paper, 48 x 68cm.
 - b. "20 Targets", 1994, silk-screen on paper, 48 x 68cm.
 - c. "The Deal", 1994, silk-screen on paper, 48 x 68cm.
36. Ahmad Mohamed Shibrain (Sudan).
 36. Untitled, undated, stained mahogany wood, 56cm. diameter
37. Saleh Abu Shindi (Jordan). "Afternoon", 1986, china ink on paper, 30 x 40cm.
38. Khaled Ben Slimane (Tunisia). Untitled, 1987, acrylic on canvas, 92 x 61cm.
39. Mahmoud Taha (Jordan). Untitled, 1980, glazed, ceramic, 40 x 40 x 9cm.
40. Vladimir Tamari (Palestine). Untitled, 1991, water-color on paper, 60 x 80cm.
41. Parviz Tanavoli (Iran). "Hich", undated, bronze, 17 x 5 x 5cm.
42. Osman Waqialla (Sudan). Untitled, 1991, water-color on paper, 58 x 41cm.
43. Wijdan (Jordan). "Karbala", 1993, mixed media on paper, 57 x 73cm.
44. Ahmad Khalid Yusuf (Malaysia). "Down Memory Lane", 1992, acrylic on paper, 76 x 97cm.
45. Hossein Zenderoudi (Iran).
 - a. "Homage to a Master Calligrapher", 1986, etching, 56.5 x 76cm.
 - b. Untitled, 1990, etching, 59 x 79cm.

EXHIBITION LIST ACCORDING TO STYLE

Works in Pure Calligraphy

1. Etel Adnan (Lebanon). "Allah", 1987, mixed media on Japanese paper, 30 x 70 x 10cm.
4. Erol Akyavas (Turkey). "Hem Batin", 1993, etching, 77x 63cm.
8. Kamal Boullata (Palestine). "He is the First and the Last", 1983, silk-screen, 60 x 50cm.
9. Wasma Chorbachi (Iraq). Untitled, 1993, glazed ceramic plate, 33cm. diameter.
12. Ali Omer Ermes (Libya). "Letter Kaf", 1979, mixed media on paper, 65 x 95cm.
18. Leila Kawash (Iraq). "Across the Sea", 1994, mixed media on paper, 50 x 66cm.
19. Usama Khalidi (Palestine). "Huwa", 1995, copper tube and wood, 27 x 10 x 18cm.
25. Ahmed Moustafa (Egypt). "alif, lam, ha", 1976, silk-screen on paper, 65 x 90cm.
26. Ramzi Moustafa (Egypt). "Allah", undated, oil and acrylic on paper, 50 x 60cm.
30. Issam El-Said (Iraq). "He the Omnipotent", 1983, acrylic on raw canvas, 91 x 91cm.
31. Samir Salameh (Palestine). "In the Name of God", 1986, china ink & water-colour on paper, 45x61cm.
36. Ahmad Mohamed Shibrain (Sudan). Untitled, undated, stained mahogany wood, 56cm. diameter
41. Parviz Tanavoli (Iran). "Hich", undated, bronze, 17 x 5 x 5cm.
42. Osman Waqialla (Sudan). Untitled, 1991, water-color on paper, 58 x 41cm.

43. Wijdan (Jordan). "Karbala", 1993, mixed media on paper, 57 x 73cm.
 45. Hossein Zenderoudi (Iran).
 a. "Homage to a Master Calligrapher", 1986, etching, 56.5 x 76cm.
 b. Untitled, 1990, etching, 59 x 79cm.

Works in Abstract Calligraphy

2. Yussef Ahmad (Qatar). "Attempt at Unity", 1982, china ink on raw canvas, 150 x 150cm.
 5. Shakir Hassan Al Said (Iraq). Untitled, 1992, mixed media & collage on paper, 79 x 87cm.
 10. Burhan Dogançay (Turkey). Untitled, 1972, acrylic on canvas, 127.5 x 89.5cm.
 13. Mahmoud Hammad (Syria). "Arabic Calligraphy", 1984, oil on canvas, 55 x 75cm.
 14. Abdullah Hariri (Morocco). Untitled, 1988, mixed media on paper, 36 x 50cm.
 15. Ali Hassan (Qatar). "Letter *Nim*", 1993, mixed media on paper, 120 x 100cm.
 17. Jumana el-Husseini (Palestine). Untitled, 1989, mixed media on canvas, 85 x 110cm.
 21. Khalid Khreis (Jordan). Untitled, 1991, mixed media on paper, 70 x 50cm.
 27. Rafa Nasiri (Iraq). 3 works.
 a. Untitled, 1994, etching, 38 x 47.5cm.
 b. Untitled, 1994, etching, 38 x 47.5cm.
 c. Untitled, 1994, etching, 38 x 47.5cm.
 29. Mehdi Qotbi (Morocco). "Arabic Calligraphy", undated, mixed media on paper, 80 x 50cm.
 32. Himat Ali Saleh (Iraq). "Spiritual Aspirations", 1995, china ink on hand-made Japanese paper, 82x82.
 38. Khaled Ben Slimane (Tunisia). Untitled, 1987, acrylic on canvas, 92 x 61cm.
 39. Mahmoud Taha (Jordan). Untitled, 1980, glazed ceramic, 40 x 40 x 9cm.
 44. Ahmad Khalid Yusuf (Malaysia). "Down Memory Lane", 1992, acrylic on paper, 76 x 97cm. .

Works in Figurative Calligraphy

3. Ameena Ahuja (India). "The Lion Weeps", undated, china ink on hand-made paper, 105 x 70cm.
 16. Husain (India). "*Huwa Allah*", 1980, water-color on paper, 33 x 42cm.
 24. Hassan Massoudy (Iraq). 2 works
 a. "Poem I", 1978, etching, 60 x 50cm.
 b. "Poem II", 1978, etching, 60 x 50cm.
 33. Khairat Saleh (Syria). 2 works.
 a. "Taj series 2 *Rab*", undated, gouache & water-colour on paper, 33 x 23cm.
 b. "Taj series 3 *Noor*", undated, gouache & water-colour on paper, 33 x 23cm.
 40. Vladimir Tamari (Palestine). Untitled, 1991, water-color on paper, 60 x 80cm.

Works in Calligraphic Combinations

6. Aziz Ammoura (Jordan). 2 works.
 a. "Echoes of Sabra and Shatilla", 1984, ink on paper, 22 x 30cm.
 b. "After the Massacre", 1984, ink on paper, 36 x 23cm.
 7. Chant Avedissian (Egypt). 3 works.
 a. "King Farouk", 1993, mixed media on recycled paper, 50 x 70cm.
 b. "Ticket", 1994, mixed media on recycled paper, 50 x 70cm.
 c. "Star of the Orient", 1994, mixed media on recycled paper, 50 x 70cm.
 11. Yasser Duwaik (Jordan). "What Next!", 1984, etching & mixed media, 45 x 26cm.
 20. Abdel Basit Khatim (Sudan). Untitled, 1981, oil on carved wood, 44 x 44cm.
 22. Rachid Koraichi (Algeria). "Tell al-Za'tar", 1979, etching, 48 x 35cm.
 23. Hedi Labban (Tunisia). "The Wounded Bird", undated, etching, 40 x 52cm.
 28. Maisoon Qasimi (United Arab Emirates). "Telling it as is", 1993, mixed media on paper, 50 x 41cm.
 34. Nirmala Shanmughalingam (Malaysia). "Beirut x 10", 1984, acrylic on canvas, 76 x 97cm.
 35. Laila Shawa (Palestine). 3 works.
 a. "Amended Resolution", 1994, silk-screen on paper, 48 x 68cm.
 b. "20 Targets", 1994, silk-screen on paper, 48 x 68cm.
 c. "The Deal", 1994, silk-screen on paper, 48 x 68cm.
 37. Saleh Abu Shindi (Jordan). "Afternoon", 1986, china ink on paper, 30 x 40cm.

SPONSORS Agnes Scott College
 The Royal Society of Fine Arts
The Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts
Royal Jordanian Airlines
The Jordanian French Insurance Company
Mr. Mohannad Malas of the Dana Group
Arab-American Business & Professional Association

Photos © 1996 Caroline Joe and Mimi Pfeil