

Iraqi contemporary art influenced by experiences of war and exile

Meem Gallery is pleased to present the second part of four exhibitions displaying contemporary Iraqi art this November. Curated by Dia Al-Azzawi, Art in Iraq Today: Part II will exhibit the work of Ghassan Ghaib, [Kareem Risan](#) and [Nazar Yahya](#). The exhibition, and its supporting catalogue, is dedicated to the memory of Jabra Ibrahim Jabra and his seminal essays on modern Iraqi art, titled 'Art in Iraq Today.'

Ghassan Ghaib (b. Baghdad, 1964) received his Diploma in Fine Arts from the Fine Arts Institute, Bagdad, in 1986 and a BA in Fine Arts from the Academy of Fine Arts, Baghdad, in 1997. His solo exhibitions include Orfali Gallery, Amman, 2001, and Dar Alanda Gallery, Amman, 2005. He has participated in numerous group exhibitions including Environment and Surroundings in Iraqi Art, Jordanian National Museum, Amman, 1997; Before. After. Now., Deluxe Gallery, London, 2003; Homage to Shakir Hassan Al Said and Ismail Fattah, Athar Gallery, Baghdad, 2005; Iraqi Art, East and West Foundation, Amsterdam, 2005; Word into Art, British Museum, London, 2006; and My Home Land, Art Sawa, Dubai.

Ghaib's awards include the Sixth Al Wasiti Award, 1987; Third Place, Contemporary Iraqi Art Festival, Baghdad, 1996; and Creativity Award, Baghdad, 2000. His work is held in the collections of the Arab Museum of Modern Arab Art, Doha; Art Center for Fine Arts, Baghdad; British Museum, London; and Jordanian National Museum, Amman. His recent work explores ideas regarding migration and nature, as well as the devastation of his homeland.

Kareem Risan (b. Baghdad, 1960) received his BA from the Fine Arts

College, Department of Painting, Baghdad, in 1988. His solo exhibitions include National Museum, Baghdad, 1992; Dar Al Mashriq Gallery, Amman, 1997; Al Riwaq Gallery, Bahrain, 2005; and Gallery Hittite, Toronto. International group exhibitions include *Between the Tigris and Euphrates*, Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, 1988; *Chair Exhibition: Arabic Contemporary Artists*, Darat Al Funun, Amman, 1994; *Contemporary Iraqi Art*, Museum of Art, Tunis and Museum of Modern Art, Caracas, 2000; *Contemporary Iraqi Art*, China International Museum, Beijing, 2001; *The Broken Letter: Arab Contemporary Artists*, Kunst Gallery, Darmstadt, 2003; *Contemporary Iraqi Book Art*, University of North Texas Gallery, Texas, 2005; *Word into Art*, British Museum, London, 2006; *Modernism and Iraq*, Wallach Art Gallery, Columbia University, New York, 2009; *Iraqi Artists in Exile*, Station Museum, Houston, Texas, 2009; *Beyond the War*, LTMH Gallery, New York, 2010; and *My Home Land*, Art Sawa Gallery, Dubai, 2010.

Risan's work is held in the collections of the Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha; Darat Al Funun, Amman; Kinda Foundation, Saudi Arabia; British Museum, London; Tauch@Art, London; and Athar Gallery, Baghdad. Risan's work draws references from wall painting and society's relationship with nature; he also communicates ideas related to the destruction and devastation of Iraq through his art work.

Nazar Yahya (b. Baghdad, 1963) received his BA in Painting from the Academy of Fine Arts, Baghdad University in 1987. He has held solo exhibitions at Riwaq Gallery, Baghdad, 1994; French Cultural Centre, Doha, 2000 and 2002; Orfali Gallery, Amman, 2004; Karmin Gallery, Amman, 2007; and Sultan Gallery, Kuwait, 2008. Group exhibitions include *Environment and Surrounding in Iraqi Art*, Jordanian National Museum, Amman, 1997; *Three Iraqi Artists*, Agial Gallery, Beirut, 1999; *Asian Art Biennale*, Dhaka, 2002; *Contemporary Iraqi Book Art*, University of North Texas, Houston, Texas, 2005; *Word into Art*, British Museum,

London, 2006; Chair and Painting, Albareh Gallery, Manama, 2010; and My Home Land, Art Sawa Gallery, Dubai, 2010.

Yahya's awards include three artistic awards he received for Homage to Jawad Salim in 1997 and First Prize for Painting, Emaar, Dubai, 2004. His recent work is based on the Tigris River, a subject which has been a source of inspiration for many Iraqi artists and poets.



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