



ART &amp; PHOTOGRAPHY, MUSIC, THE ARTS

# 5 Palestinian Artists That Transformed the Way We See Gaza

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Young, resilient and relentless, these five artists crystallize the one thing no other people have: Palestinians' irrepressible will to live and create life.

1) [Gaza's little Picasso](#): [Mohamed Quraige](#) rejects the nickname he earned on a TV interview with CBC, after his extraordinary talent was discovered. His paintings, filled with color and symbolism, often portray the destruction and asphyxia that Gazans endure. This year, the 12-year-old artist [presented his artwork in Tunisia](#), where he was invited by the president himself to draw his portrait. "If I get to cross over Gaza's wall, it will be a sign that the wall dividing the Palestinian lands could start to be broken," he had told us before his dream came true.

2) [The bomb transformers](#), [Tawfik Gebreel and Bushra Shanan](#): Their paintings, drawn over the smoke-filled images of Israel's bombings on the Gaza strip, traveled the whole world. "I can make life out of death because I see freedom in the smoke created by these bombs," he told us, as [Operation Protective Edge](#) unfolded. Few people in the world have the capacity to outlive confinement and war with imagination like these young artists, who **transformed images of bombs into drawings** symbolizing unity and resistance.

3) [The Arab alchemist](#): [Hossam al-Dabbus](#) transforms instruments of death into a "vessels of life", as he calls **the flower vases he creates using pieces of tank shells** spread across Gaza after Israel's last offensive. Al-Dabbus, who lives in Gaza's biggest refugee camp in Jabaliya, has already reaped the fruits of his talented craft, as people started making orders to purchase his creations. His paintings have messages of peace, some adorned with casings from Israeli bullets or a key, the symbol of Palestinian diaspora.

4) **Imad Abu Shtayyah**: Symbolism and realism at the same time: Abu Shtayyah's astounding paintings perfectly portray the situation in Palestine. His human figures, realistic as they can be, fade into a background that becomes the colorful fantasy of liberation. "I know the Palestinian struggle well. What happened in Gaza, the destruction of homes and the annihilation of the Palestinian people **will not deter the Palestinians from rising up again** and rebuilding what was destroyed – they will be back to struggle again!" he told [Your Middle East](#).

5) [The Children of Jenin](#), who last August, as shelling continued to drop on the coastal strip, found the strength in their hearts to sing for their rights. Produced by [World Vision Organization](#) and [Al-Kamandjati Association](#) and directed by Palestinian filmmaker [May Odeh](#), the song is filled with heartwarming sentiments of innocence and a deep desire for normalcy. Watch the video [here](#).

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**Valentina Primo**

Journalist, globetrotter, and determined idealist. Since Valentina left her home country of Argentina, she has searched for ways to build bridges between cultures and foster dialogue. Her previous work in international organizations in Italy and Germany fed her passion for the world of

development, while her 8-year journalistic experience in Argentina and Egypt increased her curiosity for everything that challenges the stereotype. She holds a BA in Journalism and a Masters in Peace Studies with a specialization in Human Rights.



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