



مؤسسة الدراسات الفلسطينية  
Institute for Palestine Studies



# CHALLENGES OF IDENTITY

A Talk and Art Exhibition by Four of the Founding  
Members of the Modern Art Movement in Palestine  
Nabil Anani, Sliman Mansour, Tayseer Barakat, Vera Tamari

From April 30<sup>th</sup>  
to May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Media Tour: 4 PM  
Seminar: 5 PM  
Exhibition Opening: 6:30 PM



Dar El-Nimer for Arts and Culture and the Institute for Palestine Studies, are pleased to host in Beirut, Nabil Anani, Sliman Mansour, Tayseer Barakat and Vera Tamari for a talk and group exhibition. The artists are four of the founding members of the modern art movement in Palestine as well as members of the League of Palestinian Artists.

The works on display come from the private collections of the artists, the El-Nimer Collection and the collection of Rula Alami.

As a response to the First Intifada (1987 -1991), Anani, Mansour, Barakat and Tamari founded 'New Visions', a group of artists who have been totally immersed in an art practice, which addressed collectivity of expression, sought to reflect on their individual career and practice. Their new creations proposed a margin for more individualized outlets and experimentation. Furthermore, they turned to earthworks and mixed media assemblage using materials derived from the Palestinian environment to boycott Israeli art suppliers in protest of the ongoing occupation.

This collective as well as the artists' works produced in the 1970s, proposed ways that art could be used as a tool for propagating political activism, resistance, civic and public awareness in occupied Palestine.

Inspired by the concept of a free and independent state of Palestine, the first exhibition as a group took place in Jerusalem in 1989.

The 'New Visions' exhibitions travelled to Jordan, Germany, Italy and the United States.

In 1994, the group renovated a traditional Arab-style house in Jerusalem, establishing Al-Wasiti Art Centre. The inaugural exhibition *From Exile to Jerusalem*, featured the works of Jabra Ibrahim Jabra, Laila Shawa, Vladimir Tamari and Kamal Boullata among other.

*Challenges of Identity* is their first group exhibition in Beirut, Lebanon.

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## NABIL ANANI

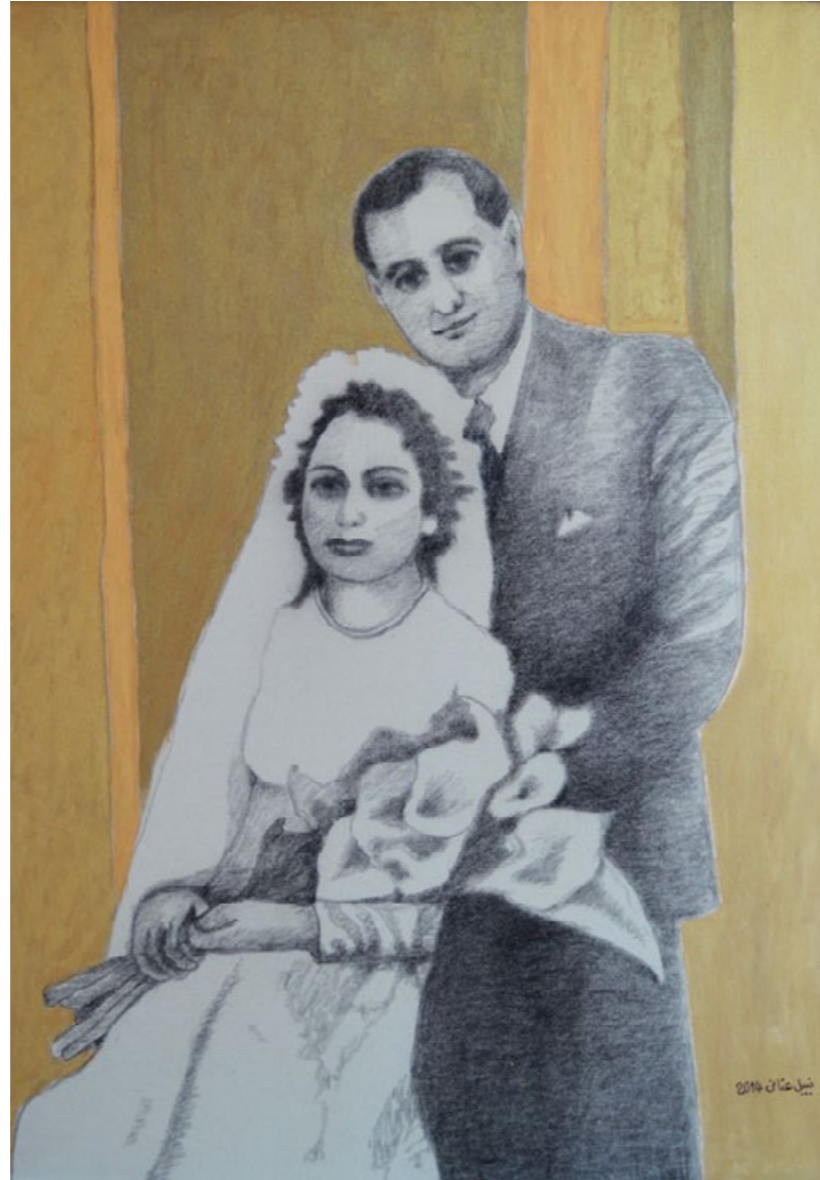
Born in Latroun, Palestine in 1943, Nabil Anani is a key founder of the modern Palestinian art movement. Anani graduated in Fine Art from Alexandria University, Egypt in 1969. Upon his return to Palestine, he began a career as an artist, teacher and trainer at the UN college in Ramallah. Anani is a multi-disciplinary artist working as a painter, ceramist and sculptor using medias such as leather, henna, wood, papier-maché, copper and natural dyes in his unique works.

Anani held his first exhibition in Jerusalem in 1972 and has participated in solo and group shows in the UK, Japan, Russia, the Middle East, Europe and North America. His works are showcased in the collections of the Institut du Monde Arabe, the Agha Khan Museum, the Guggenheim Museum and the Jordanian National Museum as well as in private collections.

In 1988, he was appointed as the head of the League of the Palestinian Artists and played a key role in the establishment of the first International Academy of Fine Art in Palestine. He was awarded the first Palestinian National Prize for Visual Art in 1997 by Yasser Arafat. In 2006, Anani was also awarded the prestigious King Abdullah II Award for Creativity.

He is the co-author of a number of books on Palestinian arts and folklore. Nabil Anani: Palestine, Land and People (2018) is his latest publication.

Nabil Anani resides and works in Ramallah, Palestine.



## SLIMAN MANSOUR

Born in 1947 in Birzeit, Palestine, Sliman Mansour is considered to be an important and distinguished figure in Palestinian art. Considered as an artist of the Intifada, Mansour has established himself as an artist dedicated to giving visual expression to Palestinian identity.

Mansour studied Fine Arts at the Bezalel Art Academy in Jerusalem from 1967 to 1970. He served as the head of the League of Palestinian Artists from 1986 to 1990. In 1994, he co-founded Al-Wasiti Art Center in East Jerusalem and served as its director from 1996 to 2003. Mansour is also a member of the founding board of directors of the International Academy of Art Palestine, established in Ramallah in 2004.

Uniting Mansour's body of work is the depiction of the orange tree (symbolising the 1948 Nakba), the olive tree (a symbol of the 1967 war), traditional Palestinian embroidery, village life and the figure of the Palestinian woman as the mother figure of Palestine. Mansour also uses mud as a medium in his compositions to depict Palestine, its history and people.

Besides being an artist, Mansour is also a professional cartoonist who published his cartoons from 1981 to 1993 in Al-Fajr, a weekly English publication based in Jerusalem.

Sliman Mansour has exhibited his works in Japan, Korea, Russia, Europe, the Middle East and North America. His works are also showcased in the permanent collections of Mathaf-Arab Museum of Modern Art, Barjeel Art Foundation, the Jordan National Gallery and the Institut du Monde Arabe to name a few.

Sliman Mansour resides and works in East Jerusalem, Palestine.





## TAYSEER BARAKAT

Born in 1959 in Jabalia Camp in Gaza, Tayseer Barakat is considered to be one of Palestine's most prominent artists, whose practice over the past years has drawn inspiration from the ancient past, oral traditions and cultural narratives that are intimately tied to life in Palestine.

Barakat graduated with a BA in Fine Arts from Alexandria University, Egypt in 1983. Upon his return to Palestine, he moved to Ramallah where he became an artist and a teacher. He works primarily in paint, inks and dyes. His colour palette is often limited to monochrome tones, which imbue his works with a sober tone. Barakat believes that the use of dark colours 'reflects the hardships of our time and our present life, and the pressure imposed on us makes us use dark colours'.

Barakat continues to be heavily influenced by the environment where he grew up. This is reflected in both his subject matter and the variety of media he works in, including wood, metal and glass.

Tayseer Barakat has exhibited his work as part of solo and group exhibitions, which include the São Paulo International Biennial (1997), the Sharjah Biennial (2003) and galleries in Europe and North America.

Tayseer Barakat resides and works in Ramallah, Palestine.



## VERA TAMARI

Born in Jerusalem in 1945, Vera Tamari is a visual artist, Islamic art historian, art educator and curator. Tamari graduated with a BA in Fine Arts from Beirut College for Women in 1966. She specialised in ceramics at the Istituto Statale d'Arte per la Ceramica in Florence, Italy in 1974 and obtained her M. Phil. degree in Islamic Art and Architecture from the University of Oxford in 1984.

As an artist, Tamari specialises in ceramic sculpture and conceptual art and since 1974, has exhibited her work in the UK, Palestine, Japan, Middle East, Europe and North America.

Tamari served for more than two decades as professor of Islamic Art and Architecture and Art History at Birzeit University, where she also founded and directed the Virtual Gallery and the Birzeit University Museum between 2005 and 2010. There, she also conceived the Cities of Exhibition series, curating and co-curating three of its editions (2009 – 2012).

Tamari is actively involved in the promotion of art and culture in Palestine and serves as advisor and member to numerous institutions and cultural boards. She served as a jury member for the Young Artist of the Year Award (YAYA), organised by the Abdel Muhsin Qattan Foundation and the Arab Fund for Arts and Culture.

Vera Tamari resides and works in Ramallah, Palestine.

