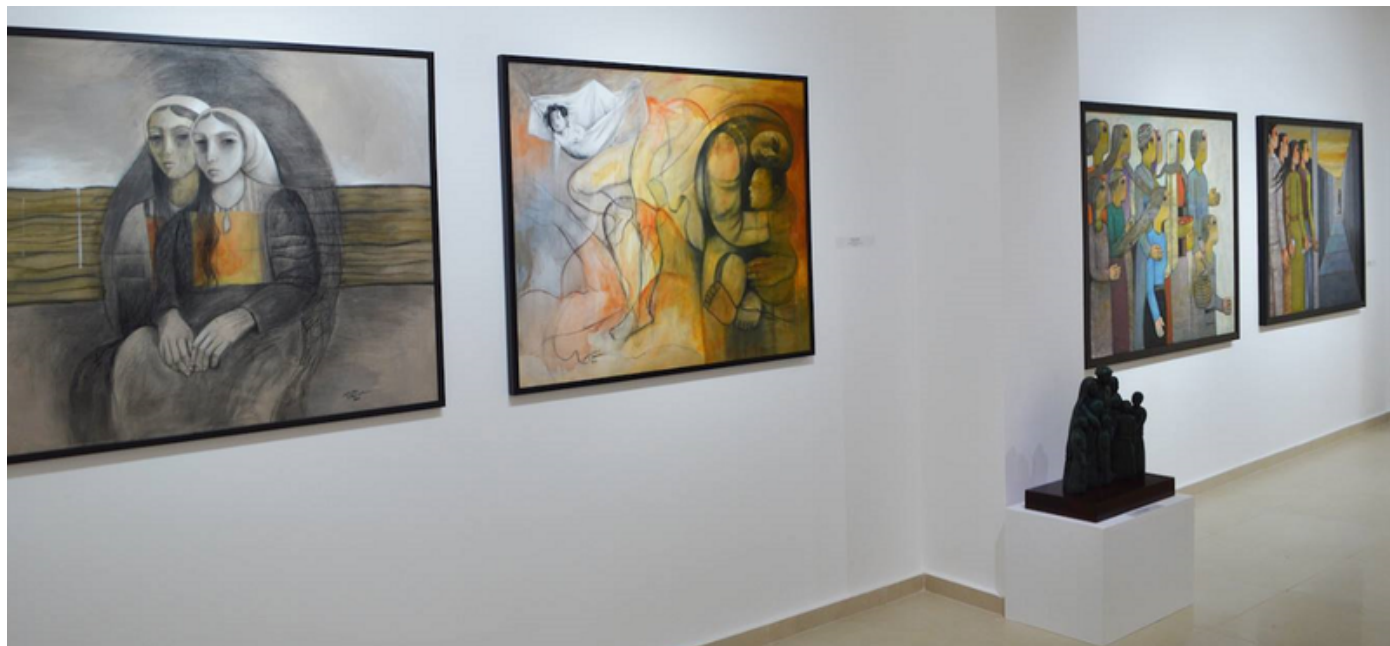


# Ramallah show highlights interpretations of Palestinian reality

[Sarah Irving](#) [Arts and Culture](#) 22 June 2015



*Narratives* exhibition at Zawyeh in Ramallah evokes links between personal and historical meaning. (Zawyeh Gallery)

A new group exhibition at [Zawyeh Gallery](#) in Ramallah again demonstrates the breadth of styles and talent currently active across Palestine.

Titled *Narratives*, the show brings together painting, drawing, collage and sculpture by 13 artists from Gaza, the West Bank and present-day Israel, namely Abed Alem, Ahmad Kanaan, Amani Harhash, Asad Azzi, Irina Naji, Jawad Malhi, Marwa Najjar, Maisara Baroud, Mohammad Khalil, Nabil Anani, Sana Bishara, Sliman Mansour and Tayseer Barakat. [Anani](#) and [Barakat](#) have both recently had solo exhibitions at Zawyeh.

The striking selection of images is notable for its haunting, often introspective tone, with many works — such as those of Marwa Najjar and Maisara Baroud — employing muted, subtle colors. In Najjar’s painting, the influences of early 20th century Austrians Egon Schiele and Gustav Klimt combine with the Byzantine aesthetic which has seen her work adorn the ceiling of St. Mary’s church in Nablus.

Baroud’s complex black-and-white ink drawings, meanwhile, reference thousands of years of Palestinian history and mythology in images which also highlight female strength and beauty.

The stone and bronze sculptures, too — as seen in those by Ahmad Kanaan and Sana Farah Bishara — often have a contemplative mood, evoking personal and interpersonal relationships and internal rather than public-level narratives.

## **Intertwining**

As well-known art critic and curator Nicola Gray has written for Zawyeh’s supporting material for the exhibition: “it is part of the human experience to have an image bank in our minds and memories, both private and personal as well as public and collectively shared.” This gives



“Untitled,” 2015 by Marwa al-Najjar. Oil and gold leaf on canvas, 135 x 50 cm. (Zawyeh Gallery)

meaning to the intertwining of individual and social narratives, particularly needed for a society such as Palestine where the collective experience is spread across a “scattered and broken geography.”

As Gray points out, visual artists are uniquely placed to draw on this bank of shared images in order to express individual, social and political meanings. This is abundantly clear in the artworks seen in *Narratives*, in which personal introspection combines with widely recognizable cultural imagery to present pieces which resonate across place and time.

*Narratives* runs at Zawyeh Gallery in Ramallah until 28 June. More images from the show can be seen on Zawyeh’s [Facebook page](#).

- [Zawyeh Gallery](#)
- [Ramallah](#)
- [exhibition](#)
- [paintings](#)
- [sculpture](#)
- [drawings](#)
- [Tayseer Barakat](#)
- [Nabil Anani](#)
- [Abed Alem](#)
- [Ahmad Kanaan](#)
- [Amani Harhash](#)
- [Asad Azzi](#)
- [Irina Naji](#)
- [Jawad Malhi](#)
- [Marwa al-Najjar](#)
- [Maisara Baroud](#)
- [Mohammad Khalil](#)
- [Sana Bishara](#)

- [Sliman Mansour](#)
- [Nicola Gray](#)
- [art](#)
- [history](#)
- [memory](#)