



## History



In spite of the political situation and the challenges present, Al Ma'mal chose the Old City of Jerusalem as its operational base. Since its inception, the foundation envisioned its home in the traditional Tile Factory founded in the Old City of Jerusalem in 1900; identified by local inhabitants as 'al ma'mal', meaning 'workshop' or 'small factory' in Arabic, of which the foundation took its name.

Following the cessation of industrial activity in the 1970's in the Old City, the building had been neglected for decades leaving it standing in ruins and accumulating waste. While Al Ma'mal initiated its activities in 1998 in other host buildings, it was determined to renovate the Tile Factory and adapt it for reuse as a vibrant community space. Not until 2005 was Al-Ma'mal able to progress with the first stages of the renovation plans, only to be obstructed by Israeli authorities and financial constraints. Enduring through over ten years of legal battles and meagre means, Al Ma'mal was finally able to complete renovations of the Tile Factory and move into its long awaited home in 2013.

Today, Al Ma'mal, in the newly renovated Tile Factory, has become a dynamic art and cultural centre serving Palestinian communities of Jerusalem. Artists, youth and adults, schools, community centres and the general public as well as visiting artists, curators, writers and musicians engage with a variety of productions and interventions that bridge creative practice with heritage and tradition. Al Ma'mal is a unique intervention within the framework of Jerusalem, never allowing itself to be oblivious of the challenges or the enduring qualities of the city. In a politically driven environment where the Palestinian community is separated by religion, political ideologies and social movements, Al Ma'mal provides an alternative forum bringing together all sectors of society; becoming a channel through which we strive to contribute towards the evolvement of the cultural fabric of society, giving art more possibilities to become a mode of expression and a way of life.

