

Veils in many forms and depths surround our lives from the day we are born. We spend a lifetime trying to see through them, some we manage to remove and some are so transparent that we do not recognize. However, very few of us accept them willingly and most of us try to unveil the truth in order to have a clearer vision of life.

HRH Princess Wijdan Al Hashemi, Founder of the Royal Society of Fine Arts, Jordan

BREAKING THE VEILS: WOMEN ARTISTS FROM THE ISLAMIC WORLD

The Interfaith Centre of Melbourne is honoured to bring this important exhibition to Melbourne. We believe that mutual understanding and respect for religious and cultural diversity is greatly fostered through the arts as well as through interfaith and intercultural dialogue.

Breaking the Veils: Woman Artists from the Islamic World attempts to remove the 'veils' of misperception and misunderstanding that distort the image of women in Islamic countries. The exhibition highlights the works of fifty-one women artists who live in twenty-one Islamic countries and was first presented on the island of Rhodes in Greece in 2002. These works have been displayed in numerous galleries in Europe, including Spain and Italy, in the intervening years. Many of the artists are practising professionals with degrees in fine art from tertiary institutions, while others are self-taught.

The works of the participating artists do not represent any particular religion, their individual faiths include Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism. The exhibition embodies cultures with roots in the illustrious Islamic

civilization that revolutionised all aspects of life in one of the richest and most prolific phases in the cultural history of humanity.

The broad stylistic range seen in this collection of artworks embraces figuration and abstraction. The subject matter reflects universal social and feminist themes including identity, politics and relationships, while a number of works carry strong messages concerning freedom and human dignity that unite us everywhere.

The concept of this unique celebration of the diverse ways in which women artists from Islamic countries see the world, was first proposed by Ms Alik Moschis-Gauguet, President of the Pan-Mediterranean Women Artists Network, F. A. M. (Femme Art Méditerranée) in Greece, who suggested that the exhibition would rectify the distorted image of woman in Islam. HRH Princess Wijdan Al Hashemi, Founder of the Royal Society of Fine Arts of Jordan, is the curator of the exhibition, which comes from the permanent collection of the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts. Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah

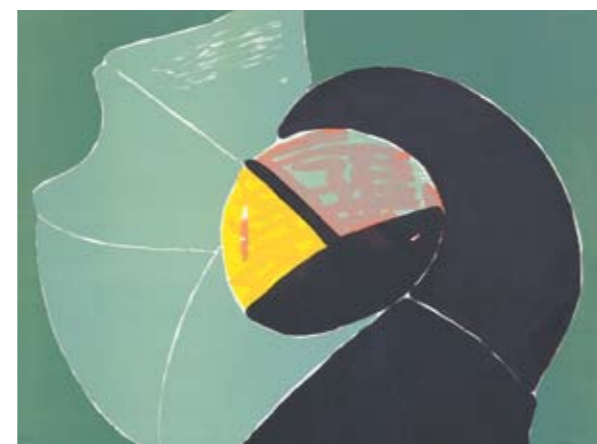
supported and encouraged the exhibition from its beginning. HRH Princess Wijdan Al-Hashemi, together with F. A. M. are dedicated to the promotion of the arts, intercultural dialogue and peace.

Helen Summers
Founder and Director
The Interfaith Centre of Melbourne

Following the Melbourne exhibition *Breaking the Veils: Women Artists from the Islamic World* will travel to Shepparton, Victoria, and then tour the USA and Asia.

EXHIBITION VENUES:

SPAN Galleries,
45 Flinders Lane, Melbourne,
24 October - 9 November 2007.
Opened by the Governor of Victoria,
Professor David de Kretser AC.
Shepparton Art Gallery,
Eastbank Centre,
Welsford Street, Shepparton,
25 January - 23 March 2008.



* Fahda Bint Saud (Saudi Arabia)
Women I 1992

** Sohad Lachiri (Morocco)
Marked Faces (n.d.)

*** Houria Niati (Algeria)
Violence and Power 1988

**** Karima Bin Othman (Jordan)
Unity 2002



* Naz Ikramullah (Pakistan)
In Memoriam 1991

** Umi Dachlan (Indonesia)
The Expression of Ultramarine Blue and the Antique Coins 1996



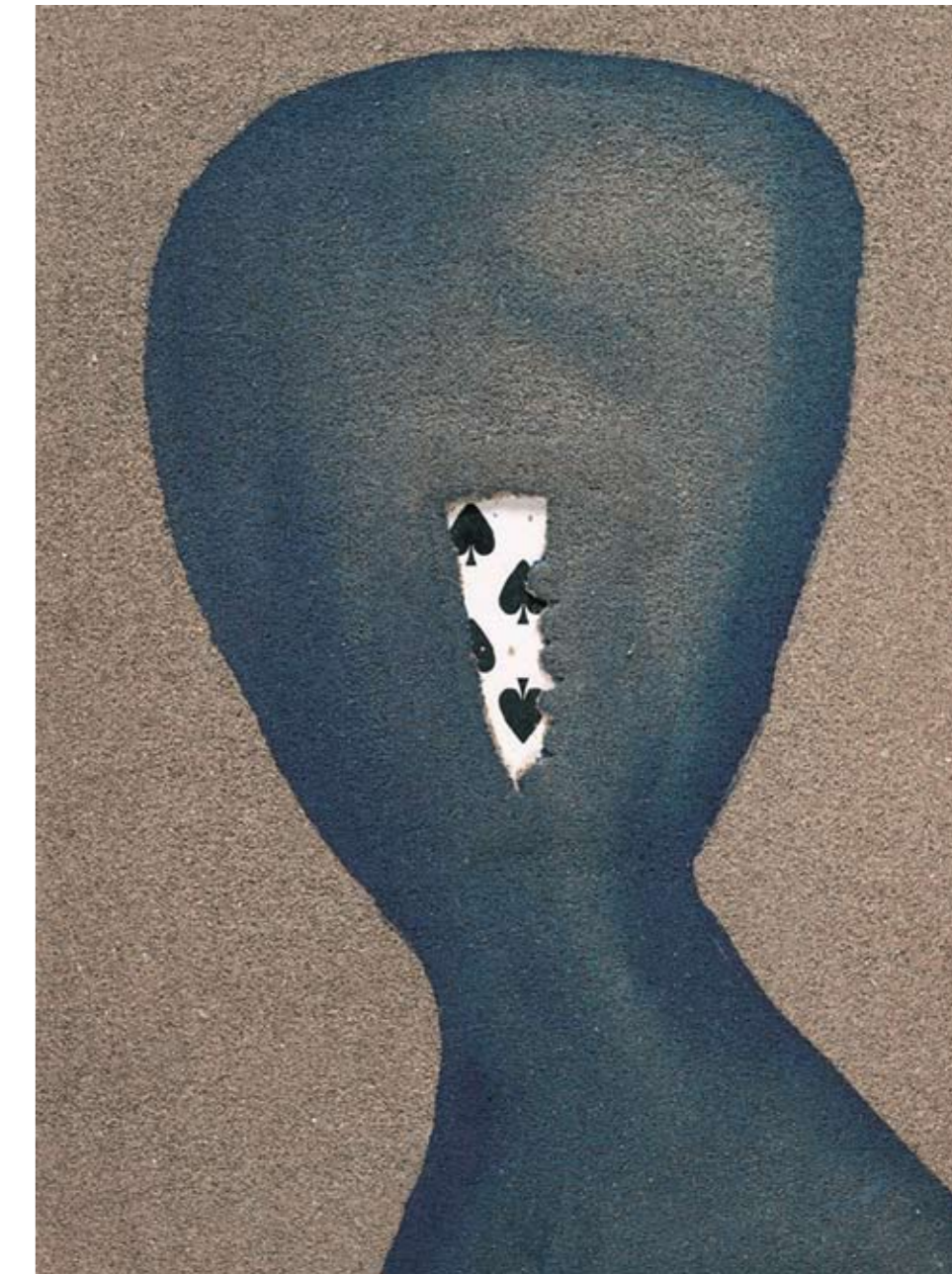
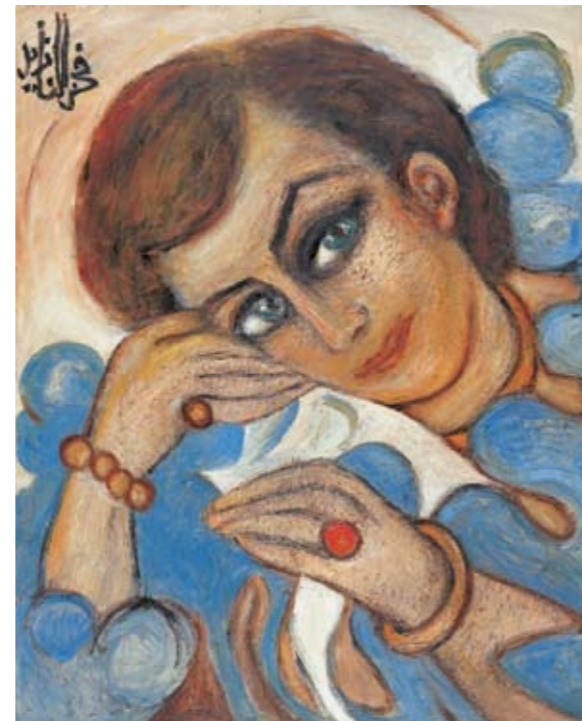
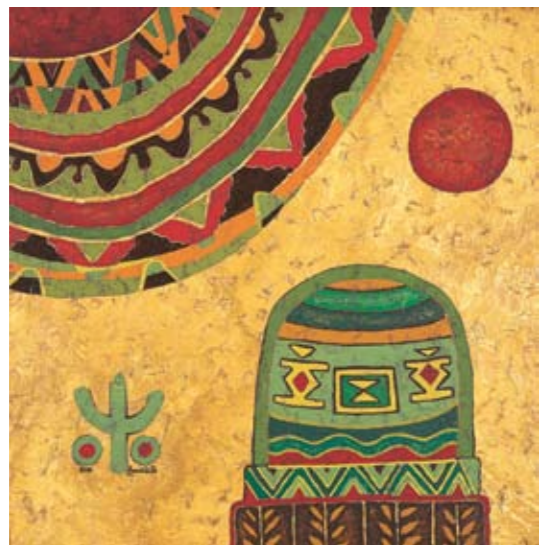
*** Laila Shawa (Palestine)
Twenty Targets 1994

**** Maisoon Qasimi (United Arab Emirates)
Telling It As Is 1993



* Juliana Seraphime (Lebanon)
Flying Horse (n.d.)

** Rana Bishara (Palestine)
Eyes Curse 1999



above *Baya* (Algeria) *Untitled* 1984 cover *Meriam Bouderbala* (Tunisia) *Untitled* (n.d.)

• *Suad Attar* (Iraq)
The Blue Paradise 1989

••• *Thuraya Baqsami* (Kuwait)
Peace Talk 1992

•••• *Anna Nusairy* (Yemen)
Untitled 2001

••••• *Rabha Mahmoud* (Oman)
Omaniat 3 1992

• *Mounira Nusseibeh* (Palestine)
Kneeling in Front of the Mosque 1983

•• *Leila Kawash* (Iraq)
Across the Sea 1994

••• *Rabab Nimer* (Egypt)
Untitled 1985

•••• *Fahrelnissa Zeid* (Turkey/Jordan)
Lady in Blue (n.d.)



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