Iyad Almosawi

Iraqi–Canadian contemporary artist

EDUCATION & AWARDS

1987–1991
Bachelor of Fine Arts (Printmaking)
College of Fine Arts, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada

1992
Outstanding Artist Award, Quebec, Canada

1990s
Recipient of the Russo and Fermet Grant
Artist Residency, Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, Alberta, Canada

ARTISTIC JOURNEY

Late 1980s – Early 1990s: Formation & Printmaking Discipline

Almosawi's formative years were grounded in academic printmaking, where repetition, structural balance, and material exploration shaped his visual vocabulary. These early works demonstrate disciplined experimentation and emerging conceptual awareness.

Mid 1990s – 2000s: Migration, Memory & Monumentality

Following his movement between cultural geographies, his work expanded into larger formats and public murals. Symbolism, geometry, and abstraction became vehicles for exploring identity, displacement, and cultural memory.

2010s: Heritage Reinterpreted

This period marked a deep engagement with Mesopotamian visual memory, calligraphic rhythms, and ornamental structures. Rather than nostalgic citation, these elements were transformed into contemporary metaphors for continuity and resilience.

2020s: Existential Reflection & Renewal

Recent exhibitions such as *Baghdadi Memories*, *Nostalgia*, *Conflict 24*, and *Existential Challenges* reflect a mature philosophical inquiry into history, transformation, and the human condition. The work balances optimism and gravity, structure and fluidity.

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS (Chronological Order)

1994
Small Works, Total Art Gallery, City Centre Mall, Dubai

2002
Solo Exhibition, Abu Dhabi Cultural Center (by invitation of Abu Dhabi Cultural Foundation)

2007
Solo Exhibition, Total Art Gallery, The Courtyard, Dubai

2012

Manifestations of Longing and Attachment, Sultan Bin Ali Al-Owais Cultural Foundation

2017

Unity of Spirit in the Realm of Nature, Zemzy Gallery, Dubai

2018

Memories of Migration, Joint Exhibition with Amer Al-Abidi, Sultan Bin Ali Al-Owais Cultural Foundation

2019

Baghdad... Dreams of Dawn, Hewar Gallery, Baghdad

2020

Manifestations of Love: Mural Projects, Zemzy Gallery, Dubai

2022

Baghdadi Memories, Hewar Gallery, Baghdad

2023

Nostalgia (Retrospective), The Gallery Hall, Baghdad

2024

Conflict 24, Rewaq Mohamed Al Fassi, Ministry of Culture, Kingdom of Morocco

2025

Existential Challenges, Akkad Gallery, Baghdad

2025

16 Masks, The Gallery Hall, Baghdad

He has also presented solo exhibitions in Kuwait; Asilah and Rabat (Morocco); Montreal, Toronto, and Manitoba (Canada); London (UK); Tunis (Tunisia); Bangkok (Thailand); Riyadh (Saudi Arabia); Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and Sharjah (UAE).

COLLECTIONS & PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION

- Honorary Member, Aga Khan Museum of Modern Art, Toronto
- Museum of Modern Art, Canada
- Canada Council Art Bank, Ottawa
- Major private and institutional collections across North America, Europe, and the Gulf region
- Mercedes-Benz International acquired his work for an international advertising campaign

SCHOLARLY & CRITICAL ENGAGEMENT

Alongside his studio practice, Almosawi has contributed to visual culture as a writer and independent scholar. He has published research and essays addressing Arab and Canadian modern art and has lectured on art history and criticism for over four decades.

Fulbright Scholar Prof. John Dishman writes:

“Art experts in both the West and the Arab world recognize the brilliance of Iyad Almosawi, viewing him as one of the most significant figures among the new generation of artists who have laid the groundwork for a new era in contemporary art.”

Chief Editor Marta Puig of *Contemporary Art Curator Magazine* (UK) has featured Almosawi in both a critical review and a spotlight feature, further affirming his international relevance.