



H & H G A L L E R Y

Oil on board Painting By Jawad Selim (Iraq, 1919-1961)

Sold



REF: 1330

Height: 48 cm (18.9")

Width: 47 cm (18.5")

Depth: 4 cm (1.6")

Description

Colourful painting by the Iraqi pioneer Jawad Selim, signed and dated lower left (Jawad Selim 58). Dimensions: H: 48cm, W: 47cm, D: 4cm Board: H: 31cm, W: 30cm It is impossible to understand the modern art movement in Iraq without taking into account the works of this pioneer sculptor and painter, who was undoubtedly the most influential artist in Iraq's modern art movement. To him, art was a tool to reassert national self-esteem and help build a distinctive Iraqi identity. He tried to formulate an intellectual definition for contemporary Iraqi art. In charting his country's contemporary social and political realities, he was committed to combining the indigenous historical and folkloric art forms, with contemporary Western trends. Born in Ankara, Turkey in 1919 to Iraqi parents who moved to Baghdad in 1921, Jawad Selim came from a strongly artistic family: his father was an accomplished amateur painter, whose work was influenced by the European old masters, and his brother Nizar and sister Neziha were also accomplished painters, becoming well-known in their own right. Jawad was sent to Europe on government scholarships to further his art education, first to Paris (1938-39) and then to Rome (1939-40). The effects of World War II resulted in Jawad cutting short his studies and returning to Baghdad, where he began part-time work at the Directorate of Antiquities, where he developed an appreciation and understanding of ancient art of his country, and he also taught at the Institute of Fine Arts and founded the sculpture department. In 1946, he was sent to the Slade School of Art, London. At the Slade, Jawad met his future wife and fellow art student, Lorna. Jawad returned to Baghdad in 1949 to become Head of the Department of Sculpture at the Institute of Fine Arts, where he taught his students to draw on the heritage of their country to create a distinctive Iraqi style and artistic identity, which would become the ethos of an influential art movement just a few years later. In 1950 Lorna joined Jawad in Baghdad, where they were married. In 1951, Jawad Selim formed The Baghdad Modern Art Group.. Modern Iraqi art began with the first exhibition of the Baghdad group where they announced the birth of a new school of art that would "serve local and international culture". After painting his most mature works in the 1950s, the artist gave up painting and focussed on sculpture, the culmination of which was his Monument for Freedom in Tehrir Square in Baghdad of 1960-61. This was the largest monument built in Iraq in 2500 years ". The time frame presented by the President was unrealistic and the project did not run smoothly.