

Haibat Balaa Bawab

Haibat Balaa Bawab (b.1952) is a Lebanese artist renowned for her pioneering work in collage art. In her pieces, namely her oil paintings additionally to her collage work, she intricately weaves narratives of Beirut, Lebanon and its people, along with the scenic mountains and the country's diverse beauty. The city where she was born and raised continues to influence her work. Her observations of quotidian Beirut scenes inspire her to translate these impressions into a distinctive artistic style.

Balaa's main medium is an assemblage of fragments from popular sources—magazines, stamps, and bills. She uses said media to map the cultural fabric of the city. By creating figurative images with abstract elements, she draws on memories of village life, harvests, and bygone eras. Certain motifs recur in her work; such as carpets, rugs, and oriental tapestries, evoking a sense of serenity and nostalgia. Her subjects are a reflection of a range of social strata; from haute bourgeoisies' opulent houses to the vibrant floral and polychromatic patterns of peasants, refugees, and beggars. All of this she achieves by using cut-outs as markers of identity and status.

"My artworks in collage and oil painting vary, encompassing cityscapes, local landscapes, heritage, and nostalgia—reflections of daily life and topical issues. I'm inspired by my surroundings. Even when I travel, my work mirrors my environment and mood," Balaa states. Indeed, Balaa's urban and natural environments tend to permeate her artistic processes and manifest through her art.

Haibat Balaa received her BA in Fine Arts in 1975 from the Beirut University College [currently the Lebanese American University]. She holds 17 years of teaching experience at the Lebanese American University. She also took up the position of Fine Arts Coordinator at the American University of Science and Technology (AUST) from 2001 until 2022.

Balaa has exhibited in numerous solo shows in Lebanon, Dubai, and Abu Dhabi. The various collective exhibitions she has participated in include both local and international venues. Locally, these include the American University of Beirut (AUB), LAU, ALBA, Haigazian, Station Des Arts, and the prestigious Sursock Museum. Internationally, she has exhibited at Grand Palais de Paris, in addition to shows in Cairo, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, and Kuwait. In 2019, she was invited to participate in the 8th Beijing Biennale China.

Haibat Balaa Bawab is a member of the Lebanese Association of Painters and Sculptors as well as the Artists Syndicate. Her artworks have appeared in publications including a monograph dedicated to her, titled 'Haibat Balaa Bawab: The Art of Collage' (published 2012). Furthermore, she has authored two AUST publications titled 'Beyond the Medium I' and 'Beyond the Medium II'.

Balaa is an award-winning artist. In 1982, she was awarded the first and only prize by the Central Bank of Lebanon for designing a new Lebanese currency. She also won first prize at the Makhoul exhibitions of both 1979 and 1980. She continues to inspire artists and art-enthusiasts in her community.

Art on 56th Solo exhibitions

- 2025 Timeless Traditions, Art on 56th Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2023 Heritage Impressions, Khawla Art & Culture, Abu Dhabi, UAE
- 2022 LOCAL INSPIRATIONS, Art on 56th Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2022 Haibat Balaa Bawab, Private Museum of Art, NFT
- 2022 Online exhibition, Artscoops, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2018 Agial Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2014 Interpretations, Art on 56th Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2010 Galerie Alwane, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2006 Espace SD, Beirut, Lebanon
- 1996 Epreuve d'Artiste, Beirut, Lebanon
- 1992 Maarouf Saad Cultural Center, Saida, Lebanon
- 1991 Amateur, Beirut, Lebanon

Collective Exhibitions

- 2026 Nevertheless, Art on 56th Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2025 Curated Selection, Art on 56th Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2024 Where We Belong, Art on 56th Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon
Archzology Auction Houses Museum Art Exhibition, AUB, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2023-24 SUMMER, Art on 56th Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon
Women Day, organised by UNDP, Beit Beirut, Lebanon
- 2022 Winter 2022, Art on 56th Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon
Unesco Fine Arts Exhibition, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2020 Comeback 2020, Art on 56th Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2019 The 8th Beijing Biennale, Beijing, China
- 2017 Summer 2017, Art on 56th Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2016 Never been seen, Art on 56th Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2015 Art on paper, Art on 56th Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2014-15 Summer, Art on 56th Gallery, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2014 Women, Inspirations & Expressions, Haigazian University, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2012 The Homecoming, LAU Alumni Art exhibition, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2009 Spring exhibition at AUST for eleven eminent artists, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2006 Espace SD, Beirut, Lebanon
- 1999 Galerie Rochane, Beirut, Lebanon
- 1998 Ministry of Culture, Cairo, Egypt
Ministry of Culture, Abu Dhabi, UAE

Art on 56th

Collective Exhibitions

- 1997 Ministry of Culture, Bahrain
Two Collective Exhibitions, Sharjah, UAE
- 1995-96 Ministry of Culture, Kuwait
- 1995 Ministry of Culture, Dubai, UAE
Ministry of Culture, Bahrain
- 1994 International College, Beirut, Lebanon
- 1993 Stations des Arts, Beirut, Lebanon
- 1992 Salon d'Automne, Grand Palais, Paris, France
Portrait in Lebanese Art, BUC, Lebanon
- 1991-2000 Salon d'Automne, Sursock museum, Beirut, Lebanon
- 1991-93 Lebanese Art Association, Beirut, Lebanon
- 1988 Three BUC art generations, BUC, Beirut, Lebanon
- 1983 Eight BUC art graduates, BUC, Beirut, Lebanon
- 1983-93 Salon de l'Alba, Lebanese Academy for Fine Arts, Beirut, Lebanon
- 1982 AUB, Beirut, Lebanon
Ministry of Tourism, Beirut, Lebanon
- 1975 AUB, Beirut, Lebanon
BUC, Beirut, Lebanon