

Sadik Kwaish Alfraji (Iraq, b. 1960)

Sadik Kwaish Alfraji explores what he describes as ‘the problem of existence’ through drawings, paintings, video animations, art books, graphic art, and installations. The shadowy protagonist who often appears in Alfraji’s multimedia works represents a black void, a filter that allows him to explore the intricacies of life. By rendering his solitary character as a charcoal-coloured silhouette and minimising the formal properties of his compositions, Alfraji captures the expressed movements and subtle inflections of the body in psychologically laden environments. The artist often records his own narrative in black and white scenes of this recurring figure, particularly the loss, fragmentation, and lapses in time that underline exile.

Born in Baghdad, Iraq in 1960, Sadik Kwaish Alfraji lives and works in Amersfoort, Netherlands. He received a Bachelor of Fine Art in Painting and Plastic Art from the Academy of Fine Arts, Baghdad in 1987 and a High Diploma in Graphic Design from CHK Constantijn Huygens, Netherlands in 2000.

The artist’s solo shows include Maraya Art Centre, Sharjah (2017); Red Star Line Museum, Antwerp (2016); Galerie Tanit, Munich (2016); Ayyam Gallery Beirut (2015); Ayyam Gallery Al Quoz, Dubai (2015); Beirut Exhibition Center, Beirut (2014); Ayyam Gallery London (2015, 2013); Ayyam Gallery DIFC, Dubai (2011); Stads Gallery, Amersfoort, Utrecht (2010); Station Museum, Houston (2008); Stedelijk Museum, Den Bosch (2007). Selected group exhibitions include the Katzen Art Center, American University Museum, Washington (2017); Iraq Pavilion of the 57th Venice Biennale, Venice (2017); British Museum, London (2017, 2015); TRIO Biennial, Rio de Janeiro (2015); P21 Gallery, London (2015); 56th Venice Biennale, Venice (2015); Abu Dhabi Festival, Abu Dhabi (2015); Maraya Art Centre, Sharjah (2015); LACMA, Los Angeles (2015); FotoFest Biennial, Houston (2014); Samsung Blue Square and Busan Museum of Art, Seoul & Busan (2014); Ikono On Air Festival, online and broadcasted (2013); Mori Art Museum, Tokyo (2012); Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris (2012); Centro Cultural General San Martin, Buenos Aires (2012); and Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha (2010).

Alfraji’s works are housed in private and public collections including the British Museum, London; National Museum of Modern Art, Baghdad; The Art Center, Baghdad; National Gallery of Fine Arts Amman; Shoman Foundation, Amman; Royal Association of Fine Arts, Amman; Novosibirsk State Art Museum, Russia; and Cluj-Napoca Art Museum, Romania; Los Angeles Country Museum; Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha; and Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

A monograph on the artist edited by Nat Mueller was published in 2015 (Schilt Publishing, Amsterdam).