TRIUMPH OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT: WORKS FROM HOUSTON’S REFUGEE AND IMMIGRANT ARTISTS

Friday, October 7 from 6–9 pm
The Campus Center at St. John’s School
Houston, TX 77019
Mohammed Tahr Baro, 56, Syria

Mohammed Tahr Baro was born in Syria and fled from his country to Lebanon, Iraq and Jordan before coming to the U.S. in 2010.

His talent was discovered by his childhood friend, although his family didn’t support his pursuit of a career as an artist. However, Baro never gave up on his passion for art.

For him, his art is the only way to express his feelings of missing his home country and the memories he built there. Mohammed is also an accomplished chef in Houston.

Ammar al-Obaidi, 46, Iraq

Ammar al-Obaidi is an Iraqi painter and sculptor. Through his abstract style, he communicates the harmony between his Middle Eastern identity and appreciation of European culture, as well as between his experience as a scientist and his affinity for the creative and abstract. Ammar conveys his perspective on themes and intricacies of human relationships, focusing on the interactions between male and female forms.

He hopes to share through his art the strength and beauty in acts of love, solidarity and generosity between people that are so often obscured by the violence in today’s world.
Refugee and Immigrant Artist Bios

Juan Carlos Fuentes Ferrin, 53, Cuba

Juan Carlos Fuentes Ferrin is a Cuban artist. He studied Fine Arts at Alejandro Academy, Havana, Cuba. He was a fine arts professor and an art designer before he moved to the U.S.

Juan Carlos has received several awards in Cuba and has had his artwork displayed at more than 30 solo and group exhibitions in Cuba, Italy and the U.S.

To him, it is the responsibility of the artist to modify reality and transform it into an art language in order to create art. His inspiration comes from all places: in the clouds, a coffee cup, lovers, and palm trees.

Tekie Gebremichael, 38, Eritrea

Tekie Gebremichael was born in Asmara City, Eritrea in East Africa. He lived in Ethiopia for 5 years as a refugee before he moved to the U.S. in 2010 through a refugee resettlement program.

Tekie graduated from the IRC Fine Arts Institution in Ethiopia and over the years has participated in numerous art events and exhibitions in Africa and in Atlanta and Houston.

Tekie believes that art has the reflection of realism, the vibration of music and the expression of feelings. In order to be a good artist and illustrator, one needs to be a well rounded person. He believes every day is a blessing, and beauty can be found everywhere one looks.
Refugee and Immigrant Artist Bios

Thamer Al-Sheikh, 65, Iraq

Thamer Al-Sheikh was born in Baghdad, Iraq. He studied art at the University of Baghdad, College of Fine Arts, where he earned his bachelor’s degree. His primary mediums are acrylic and oil.

Thamer’s talent was developed and encouraged by his teachers, among them Faiq Hassan, who is often referred to as “the father of modern art” in Iraq.

His artworks express the conflicts and events taking place around the globe and their effects on civilians, especially children. Thamer believes art is a mirror of life; it reflects and captures its essence in works that convey emotion in beautiful ways.

Tina Aldevashi, 28, Yemen

Tina Aldevashi is a Yemeni-born contemporary painter. She works primarily with oil, acrylic and resin. Her interest in working with resin increased since living in Houston and engaging with the rich and diverse artistic community here.

Tina seeks to convey the idea of “revolution” in her work, utilizing the colors and lines of her paintings to illustrate a strong sense of movement and to elicit an emotional reaction.

She sees the role of art as healing and connecting forces in society and hopes to contribute to those notions through her own work.