

# Middle Eastern Crafts Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

Thursday 11 & Friday 12 October 2018  
10.30–17.30



*Research for this conference has been made possible with Art Fund support*



*Coppersmiths at work in a shop in Cairo, late 19th century © Victoria and Albert Museum (PH.1382-1896)*

## THURSDAY 11 OCTOBER

10.00 *Registration with refreshments*

10.30 **Welcome**

Tim Stanley, Senior Curator, Middle East, V&A

10.40 **Keynote: *Death, Resurrection, and the Hope for Eternal Life: The Changing World of Middle Eastern Crafts from the Sixteenth to the Early Twentieth Century***

Marcus Milwright, Professor, Islamic Art and Archaeology, Department of Art History and Visual Studies, University of Victoria (Canada)

### **Panel 1: EGYPT**

Moderator: Mohamed Elshahed, Project Curator for Modern Egypt, British Museum

11.45 ***The 'Authentic' and the 'Modern' in Medieval Mamluk Minbars: Restoration Interventions by the Comité de conservation des monuments de l'art arabe (1881–1961)***

Dina Bakhom, Specialist in Cultural Heritage Conservation and Management / PhD Candidate at the Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne and Leiden University (France)

12.05      ***Khayamiya: Art of the Egyptian Tentmakers***  
Seif El Rashidi, Institute of Historical Research and the Barakat Trust (UK)  
Sam Bowker, Lecturer in Art History and Visual Culture, Charles Sturt University  
(Australia)

12.40      Panel discussion

13.00      *Lunch (provided)*

**Panel 2: MAGHREB**

Moderator: Moira Vincentelli, Emeritus Professor of Art History  
and Consultant Curator of Ceramics, Aberystwyth University

14.00      ***North African Crafts under Colonial Status about 1900: The Case of the Pottery  
Crafts in Tunisia and Algeria (in French) \****

Clara Ilham Álvarez Dopico, Marie Curie–Clarín Cofund Researcher, University  
of Oviedo (Spain)

*\* An English translation is available to read in attendee packs*

14.20      ***Markets, Makers and Anxious Administrators: Ceramics and Craft Fidelity in  
Early Twentieth-Century Morocco***

Margaret Graves, Associate Professor, Art History, Indiana University  
Bloomington (USA)

14.40      ***Tunisian Textiles and the Constellation of Modernist Tapestry***

Jessica Gerschultz, Assistant Professor, Department of African and African-  
American Studies, University of Kansas (USA)

15.00      Panel discussion

15.30      *Refreshments*

16.00      **Breakout Sessions in Galleries** (see next page for details)

17.30      *Close*

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## FRIDAY 12 OCTOBER

10.00 *Registration with refreshments*

10.30 **Welcome**  
Mariam Rosser-Owen, Curator, Middle East, V&A

### **Panel 3: CRAFT AND TRADITION**

Moderator: Camilla Cañellas, Art Historian and Independent Arts  
Consultant / Senior Associate for Art Projects and Solutions

10.35 ***Supporting a Crafts Ecology: Working in Partnership with Artisans to Revive Crafts Heritage***

Thalia Kennedy, Creative Director, Turquoise Mountain (Afghanistan)

10.50 ***A Practice Rooted in Tradition: My Journey of Discovery***

Naseer Yasna (Mansouri), master artisan in wood and co-founder of Lazo Studios

11.05 ***Palestine Crafts: from Production to Knowledge Production***

Khaldun Bshara, Director, Riwaq (Palestine)

11.20 ***'Not the worship of ashes but the preservation of fire': Traditional Arts Institutes in the Preservation of Architectural Heritage***

George Richards, Head of Heritage, Art Jameel (Saudi Arabia and Dubai)

11.35 ***Safi Ceramics: Inheritance to Inspiration***

Simon Fraser and Elizabeth Wright, Ultra-indigo Design Strategy Agency and Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London (UK)

11.55 Panel discussion

12.30 *Lunch (provided)*

### **ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION**

Moderator: Ann Shafer, Lecturer in Art History, Rhode Island School of Design  
and SUNY-Fashion Institute of Technology

13.30 ***A Moroccan Craft Renaissance in the Post-Fordist Era?***

Eric van Hove, artist and founder of Atelier Eric van Hove (Morocco)

*Titaween Project*

Sara Ouhammadou, artist (Morocco)

*Defreezing Tradition*

Elias and Yousef Anastas, architects (Palestine)

*Craft Stories*

Amina Agueznay, artist (Morocco)

*The Value of Culture in Design*

Kawther Alsaffar, product designer and owner of Saffar Crafts (Kuwait)

14.20 Panel discussion

15.00 *Refreshments*

**Panel 4: NEW BUSINESS MODELS**

Moderator: Salma Tuqan, Curator, Contemporary Middle East, V&A

15.30 ***Towards 'Made in the UAE'***

Lisa Ball-Lechgar, Deputy Director, Tashkeel (Dubai)

15.45 ***Friends with Benefits: Learning and Relearning Collaboration***

Omar Al-Zo'bi and Yousef Abedrabbo, graphic designers and co-founders of eyen design (Jordan)

16.00 ***Lessons from the British Council's Crafting Futures Programme***

Kendall Robbins, Acting Senior Programme Manager, Architecture, Design and Fashion, British Council (UK)

16.15 Panel discussion

16.45 General discussion and Q&A with all speakers

17.00 ***Closing Remarks: Middle Eastern Crafts and Symmetry of Opportunity***

Tanya Harrod, independent design historian

17.15 *Close*

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17.15–18.30 *Drinks Reception*

18.00 *Doors/Registration for film screening*

19.00–20.30 **FILM SCREENING: *The Tentmakers of Cairo***

Free but ticketed, open to the public

Attendees must hold a separate ticket to the screening and be seated by 18.50, at which time standby tickets will be made available on a first come, first served basis

# Middle Eastern Crafts

## Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

### Speaker Biographies

**Tim Stanley** has been Senior Curator of the V&A's Middle East collection since 2002. His first venture at the museum was the travelling exhibition *Palace and Mosque: Islamic Art from the V&A* (2004–6). He was a lead curator for the Islamic Middle East gallery (Jameel Gallery, opened 2006) and for the first phase of the Ceramics galleries (opened 2009). In 2008–9, Tim also developed the Jameel Prize, a biennial international award for contemporary artists and designers whose work is inspired by Islamic tradition. The latest edition, *Jameel Prize 5*, is on show in the Porter Gallery at the V&A until 25 November. Tim is a specialist in manuscripts, the decorative arts and other aspects of Middle Eastern material culture in the Islamic period, and his recent publications have ranged from Iranian lacquer to Ottoman gun lock technology.

**Marcus Milwright** is Professor of Islamic Art and Archaeology in the Department of Art History and Visual Studies, University of Victoria. He has held fellowships at the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard and MIT and the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art at Shangri La in Honolulu. He is involved in architectural and archaeological projects in Greece, Jordan and Syria and has created the Crafts of Syria website (<http://craftsofsyria.uvic.ca>). Marcus's books include *An Introduction to Islamic Archaeology* (Edinburgh University Press, 2010), *The Dome of the Rock and its Umayyad Mosaic Inscriptions* (Edinburgh University Press, 2016), and *Islamic Arts and Crafts: An Anthology* (Edinburgh University Press, 2017). He is currently working on a history of the balsam plantation of Matarea in Egypt and a catalogue of the early Islamic ceramics excavated in the Syrian city of Raqqa.

**Mohamed Elshahed** trained as an architect before joining the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard and MIT and completing his PhD at NYU's Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies. Mohamed's multidisciplinary practice focuses on the history of modernism in Egypt through architecture, images and objects. As the Project Curator for Modern Egypt at the British Museum, he has been responsible for building a new collection of material culture from the past century in Egypt. He is the curator of Egypt's medal-winning pavilion 'Modernist Indignation' at the 2018 London Design Biennale, and the author of the forthcoming book *Cairo Since 1900: An Architectural Guide* (American University in Cairo Press, 2019).

**Dina Bakhom** is an engineer and art historian specialising in cultural heritage conservation and management. She has extensive experience working with a variety of Egyptian and international institutions and universities on heritage-related projects, including research, documentation, restoration, teaching and capacity-building activities. Between 2004 and 2012, Dina managed restoration projects of medieval Islamic architecture as part of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture's regeneration project for al-Darb al-Ahmar area in Historic Cairo. From 2013 to 2018, she collaborated with the American Research Center in Egypt on the Red Monastery Conservation Project in Sohag, Upper Egypt. Dina is a PhD candidate at Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne and Leiden University.

**Seif El Rashidi** is an art historian who graduated from the American University in Cairo's Islamic art programme. Seif specialises in the management of heritage projects involving community

engagement, and he has worked for ten years in cultural preservation in Cairo's al-Darb al-Ahmar, the tentmakers' neighborhood. Much of his research and writing is about the Islamic world and its visual heritage.

**Sam Bowker** is Lecturer in Art History and Visual Culture at Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga, Australia. He completed his PhD at the Australian National University in 2011 and has published on aspects of khayamiya since 2012. Sam curated *Khayamiya: Khedival to Contemporary* for the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia in 2015–16.

**Moira Vincentelli** is Emeritus Professor of Art History and Consultant Curator of Ceramics at Aberystwyth University. Over forty years she has developed the major ceramic collection and archive at Aberystwyth. Her personal research has a focus on gender and ceramics with a particular interest in World Ceramics. Moira's published works include *Women and Ceramics: Gendered Vessels* (Manchester University Press, 2000) and *Women Potters: Transforming Traditions* (A&C Black, 2003), as well as many articles and catalogue essays.

**Clara Ilham Álvarez Dopico** obtained her PhD in Islamic Art from the Université Paris-Sorbonne in 2010. The following year, she was appointed André Chastel Researcher at the Villa Medici in Rome, and subsequently a member of the Casa de Velázquez in Madrid (2012–13), researcher in the Spanish Cooperation Agency for International Development (AECID) at Tunis University (2013–14), as well as Marie Curie–Clarín Cofund Researcher in the Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art (2014–17). Clara has taught at the Faculté des Sciences Humaines et Sociales de Tunis, the Institut Catholique de Paris and the École du Louvre. She has also worked collaboratively with the Bardo National Museum in Tunis, the González Martí National Museum of Ceramics and Decorative Arts in Valencia, the Topkapi Palace Museum in Istanbul and the Museum of Fine Arts of Lyon. Currently, she is Professor at the University of Oviedo in Spain. Her research focuses on cultural relations and connections in Western Mediterranean countries in the 18th century; the art industries and cultural and heritage policies in colonial-era Maghreb; Maghreb's history of Islamic art in the modern period; and the Digital Humanities.

**Margaret Graves** is Associate Professor of Islamic Art History at Indiana University. She received her PhD from the University of Edinburgh in 2010. She has published articles, books and exhibition catalogues on medieval and nineteenth-century arts of the Islamic world, including her recent monograph *Arts of Allusion: Object, Ornament, and Architecture in Medieval Islam* (Oxford University Press, 2018). Margaret's current projects include an edited volume on the art of the nineteenth-century Islamic Mediterranean, and a study of the effects of the art market on premodern ceramics.

**Jessica Gerschultz** is an Assistant Professor in the Department of African and African-American Studies at the University of Kansas and a 2018 Hans-Robert Roemer Fellow at the Orient-Institut Beirut. Her research centres on African and Arab articulations of modernism with an emphasis on tapestry. She has published articles in *ARTMargins* (2016), *International Journal of Islamic Architecture* (2015), and *Critical Interventions: Journal of African Art History and Visual Culture* (2014). Jessica was an American Council of Learned Societies Fellow in 2016 for the writing of her first book *Decorative Arts of the Tunisian École: Fabrications of Modernism, Gender, and Power* (Penn State Press, forthcoming). She has held fellowships and awards from the American Philosophical Society, the Max Weber Foundation, the American Association of University Women, the US Fulbright Council, and the American Institute for Maghrib Studies. Jessica has served on the board of the Association for Modern and Contemporary Art of the Arab World, Iran and Turkey (AMCA) since 2015, and she was a subject advisor for the anthology *Modern Art in the Arab World: Primary Documents* (Duke University Press, 2018).

**Mariam Rosser-Owen** has been Curator of the V&A's Middle East collection since 2002. She specialises in the arts of the medieval Islamic Mediterranean, in particular Spain and North Africa. She is interested in materials and how objects are made, and has published widely on ivory and ceramics. Mariam is the author of *Islamic Arts from Spain* (V&A, 2010), and her most recent publication is the co-edited volume (with Glaire D. Anderson and Corisande Fenwick), *The Aghlabids and their Neighbors: Art and Material Culture in Ninth-Century North Africa* (Brill, Handbook of Oriental Studies, 2017). She is the recipient of one of the Art Fund's first round of New Collecting Awards, to research and begin to acquire Contemporary Craft from North Africa, with a focus on Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt.

**Camilla Cañellas** is an art historian, independent arts consultant and writer with over 25 years' experience in the cultural sector. She holds an MA in History of Art from the University of Edinburgh, specialising in Islamic art and architecture, a certificate in Art Journalism and Writing from the Art Radar Institute, and she is an elected member of the International Association of Art Critics. Her research has been published in *Architectural History* and *Levant*.

From 1992 to 1995, Camilla oversaw research and cataloguing of the Indian and Islamic art holdings at The Royal Collection in London, as well as undertaking projects for the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, Bowerbank, Brett & Lacey Architects, *Arts and the Islamic World* magazine, and the British School of Archaeology, Jerusalem. In 1995, Camilla joined the British Council in London as Deputy Director and then Head of Visual Arts at Visiting Arts. During this time, she initiated pioneering arts programmes and cultural diplomacy projects across Asia, the Middle East, North Africa and the Russian Federation. She designed and set up the first Visiting Arts international artist fellowship programme, which saw the creation of the first Middle East artist residencies at the Delfina Foundation in London and the first international artist residency programmes with Spike Island in Bristol and Fabrica Gallery in Brighton. She co-founded ArtSchool Palestine and helped to set up the first 'Artist to Artist' international programme with the Henry Moore Foundation. She also developed UK curatorial research trips to Iran, Egypt, Lebanon and Turkey and arts management placement programmes with China and Central Asia. During her tenure at the British Council, Camilla spent a sabbatical year travelling the old Silk Road, carrying out research on medieval Islamic architecture.

Camilla joined Art Projects and Solutions in 2005 as Senior Associate, where she has worked on projects with Qatar Museums, Arts Council England, Art Jameel and the *Jameel Prize* at the V&A. In 2006, Camilla relocated to Barcelona to continue her career as an independent art consultant, and she has since delivered projects for Jafre Biennial, Keep in Brand agency in Barcelona, *Bidoun*, British Museum, Tate Britain, Arts Council England and Sotheby's.

**Thalia Kennedy** is Creative Director for Turquoise Mountain, overseeing work with artisans and traditional crafts across programmes in Afghanistan, the Middle East and Myanmar. She has worked with Turquoise Mountain in different roles for more ten years. From 2007, Thalia was the founding Director of the Turquoise Mountain Institute for Afghan Arts & Architecture in Kabul, handing over leadership in 2011. Since then, she has been a member of the Institute Board of Directors. From 2015 until late 2017, she oversaw the Turquoise Mountain project in Saudi Arabia, before taking up her current role.

Thalia received a PhD in Islamic art and architectural history from SOAS, London in 2006, and she has published peer-reviewed research. Her early career was in the commercial art world in London, working with corporate and private clients to build art collections. She has taught at the Institute of Ismaili Studies, the V&A and Sotheby's Institute of Art, and in 2011 she was scholar-in-residence at the Getty Conservation Institute in Los Angeles and Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art in Honolulu. From 2012 to 2015, Thalia was Deputy Director at the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha.

**Naseer Yasna (Mansouri)** was born in Panjshir, Afghanistan. Following the Soviet invasion, his family fled to Iran when he was 6 years old. In Iran, at the age of 14, Naseer was apprenticed to an Iraqi master carver and it was there that he learned the precision, sense of aesthetics, and scrupulous attention to detail which was to distinguish him from his peers. In 2006, shortly after Naseer returned to Kabul, he joined Turquoise Mountain – a charity dedicated to preserving tradition arts and crafts – as a master carver and trainer. After several years, he went on to set up his own business, employing a large number of young Afghan craftsmen and women. In 2016, Naseer and his partner founded Lazo Studios in London. Naseer’s work draws on the rich heritage of Afghan and Islamic art and design. As one of the most accomplished woodworkers of the Islamic world, Naseer was invited to contribute to discussions at WEF 2018 in Davos and his work has been displayed at various museums around the world, including the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha, Leighton House Museum and Buckingham Palace in London, and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC.

**Khaldun Bshara** is an architect, restorer and anthropologist. He is currently the Director of Riwaq Centre in Ramallah, Palestine where he has worked since 1994 in documenting, protecting and restoring built Palestinian heritage. He received a BSc in Architectural Engineering from Birzeit University in 1996 and an MA in Conservation of Historic Towns and Buildings from the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium in 2000. Interested in refugees, space and memory, Khaldun joined the University of California, Irvine on a Fulbright scholarship, where he obtained an MA in Anthropology in 2009 and a PhD in Socio-cultural Anthropology in 2012.

Living and working in Ramallah, Palestine, Khaldun’s work explores the relation between space and identity formation. He is particularly interested in margins, peripheries or liminal spaces that challenge grand identity narratives and grand theories on space. He carried out many architectural design and architectural restoration projects in Palestine. His design approach uses architecture and architectural processes as media to investigate and test the architecture possibilities of negotiating tensions and power between different actors in the field. Since 2010, Khaldun has been the editor of Riwaq’s Monograph Series on Architectural History of Palestine, and he is the author and co-author of number of books and articles.

**George Richards** is Head of Heritage at Art Jameel, covering initiatives in Egypt, Saudi Arabia and beyond, in the fields of traditional craft, architectural preservation, and the digital recording of heritage. George has undertaken field expeditions in the Middle East to preserve cultural heritage on behalf of the British Library and the British Institute for the Study of Iraq. George is the special rapporteur for cultural heritage to the Kurdistan Regional Government; a specialist assessor to the British government’s Cultural Protection Fund; and a Senior Fellow at the Iraqi government’s cultural heritage commission, Iraq Heritage.

**Simon Fraser** leads courses on ceramics, furniture and jewellery for MA Design at Central Saint Martins.

**Elizabeth Wright** teaches on the BA Fine Art and BA Ceramic Design programmes at Central Saint Martins.

Simon and Elizabeth work together with Ulrike Oberlack as Directors of Ultra-indigo, a strategic design consultancy in London. As designers, they both design ‘objects’ and have increasingly used their expertise with objects and materiality to create spaces for collaboration with master craftsmen. This project aims to share knowledges, and to reframe inherited and often intangible cultural knowledge as inspiration for sustainable futures.

**Ann Shafer** is an art historian and designer. She holds an MA in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations from the University of Chicago, an MArch from the Rhode Island School of Design, and a PhD in the History of Art and Architecture from Harvard University. As a scholar, she is a

specialist in ancient Near Eastern and Islamic cultures, and her published work highlights linkages between historic and contemporary ritual practices in architecture. Current projects include a volume, scheduled for release early next year by Oxford University Press, on the Middle East in the art historical canon.

As a designer, Shafer has worked alongside craftsmen in parts of the Middle East and North Africa on a number of projects, including architectural sculpture, home furnishings and apparel. She has also written on various related topics, including traditional design training and the use of artisanal ornament in sacred space. She recently published a study on the status of Moroccan *zillij* as a crafts industry, in the *Journal of North African Studies*. A key element in her design work is social activism, including the development of design-thinking training programmes for women. She currently teaches in New York and Providence, Rhode Island.

**Eric van Hove** established his atelier, the Fenduq, in Marrakesh, after years of traveling to map a global sense of contemporaneity through art making. Together with a team of Moroccan master craftsmen, the African-born Belgian artist has initiated a consistent sculptural interrogation of the role of craft within the field of contemporary art. He has referred to his studio in the Maghreb as a 'socioeconomic living sculpture producing effect and artworks alike'. By reverse-engineering western industrial modern icons through Moroccan craft, his works aim to foster engagement and tell stories. In his latest project, the Mahjouba Initiative, the artist aims to create a decentralised manufacturing model enabling Morocco's nearly three million active craftsmen to find a new role for themselves in contemporary society, through the production of electric mopeds for the local market on a grand scale.

**Sara Ouhaddou** was born in France in a traditional Moroccan family and studied at the École Olivier De Serres Paris. Her dual culture informs her practice as a continuous dialogue, in which she strikes a balance between traditional Moroccan art forms and the conventions of contemporary art, aiming to place artistic creation's forgotten cultural continuities into new perspectives. Sara participated in the Sharjah Islamic Arts Festival in 2017 and 2018, *Crafts Becomes Modern* at the Bauhaus Dessau Foundation, Germany in 2017 and the Marrakech Biennale in 2016. She has held solo exhibitions at the Moulin d'Art Contemporain Toulon in 2015, Gaité Lyrique Tanger-Tanger, Paris in 2014, and Marrakech French Institute in 2014. Her awards include an Arab Fund for Art and Culture grant in 2014, and funding from One Percent Contemporary Art in New York for the *Little Syria* project in 2017. Sara has taken part in artist-residencies at Appartement 22, Rabat in 2017, Culturunner, New York in 2016, Think Tanger, Tangiers in 2016, Edge Of Arabia ISCP residency, New York in 2015, Dar Al Ma'mun, Morocco in 2014 and 2013, and Trankat, Morocco in 2014. She is represented by Galerie Polaris, Paris.

**Elias and Yousef Anastas** were born into a family of architects in Bethlehem. They studied architecture in Paris and set up an office there, before winning a competition to build a music conservatory in their hometown. They returned to Palestine in 2010 and have since expanded into furniture design and research projects that celebrate local artisanal skills. Elias and Yousef are partners at AAU ANASTAS and they are the founders of Local Industries, a community of bold artisans and designers dedicated to industrial furniture making. Their most recent work includes *While We Wait*, an installation commissioned by the V&A. This is part of their ongoing research project 'Stone Matters', which combines traditional building craftsmanship and materials with innovative construction techniques to produce architecture that is inscribed in both local heritage and natural surroundings. Elias and Yousef's recent awards include the 40 under 40 Award for Young European Architects in 2014, the Hassib Sabbagh and Said Houry Award in 2016, *Harper's Bazaar Arabia* award for Best International Achievement in 2017, and the Middle East Top 50 by *Architectural Digest* in 2017.

**Amina Aguezny** is a designer of jewellery and meticulously structured contemporary pieces. She was born in Casablanca before training as an artist, architect and designer in the United States. Drawn to jewellery after returning to Morocco in 1997, she began researching and creating jewels using traditional forms and locally-sourced materials. Amina now collaborates with master artisans in Morocco to produce small and large scale installations that demonstrate how the relationship between art and crafts can still be maintained and revived in our modern world. Her recent installations include *Skin* (FIAF, New York, 2011), *Casablanca Green* (Maison Folie, Mons, 2014), *Ankabouth* (Société Générale Atrium, Casablanca, 2016), *Draâ x Draâ* (ifa Gallery, Stuttgart and Berlin, 2016, 2017) and *Noise* (Center Hassan II of International Relations, Assilah, 2018). Amina has animated several workshops in Morocco in collaboration with the Ministry of Handicraft, in France at the Domaine de Boisbuchet and in Spain at the DIMAD Center.

**Kawther Alsaffar** is the Owner and Senior Designer at Saffar in Kuwait. Kawther attained her BFA in Industrial Design from Rhode Island School of Design and her MA in Design Products from the Royal College of Art in London. Her work is multi-disciplinary and uses storytelling and craft to traverse the fictional lines between art and design. She focuses on finding patterns for human intimacy and truth, whether this manifests itself in finding cultural significance, integrity in materials or creating human connections.

Kawther's brand, Saffar, works within the local constraints of Kuwait. Through her emerging furniture design practice, Saffar aims to contribute to a worldwide conversation on the differences and importance of experience-based cultural design. This is achieved by elevating and promoting underutilised processes and skills available in Kuwait, such as sand-casting and copper sinking. Kawther focuses on developing crafts in Kuwait that are not favourably considered in the rest of the world, challenging the generic definition of luxury. Saffar's products aspire to be personally informed, locally defined and universally desirable.

**Omar Al-Zo'bi** is a graphic designer who cemented his design education with a BSc in Information Systems from Brunel University, focusing on Interface Design & Human-Computer Interaction, followed by an MA in Visual Arts in Graphic Design from Camberwell College of Arts. Omar worked in advertising, product design and exhibition design prior to co-founding *eyen* design.

**Yousef Abedrabbo** is a graphic designer who graduated with a BFA in Graphic Design with distinction from the American University of Beirut. Yousef worked in consultancy and brand communication for aviation and type design prior to co-founding *eyen* design.

Established by Omar and Yousef in 2016, *eyen* is a design collective in Amman, Jordan. *eyen* aims to congregate a network of designers and creative thinkers of multidisciplinary practices, enabling design experiments and collaborations to explore possibilities beyond the commercial realm. Functioning primarily in graphic design backed with strategic frameworks, *eyen* works with a wide variety of clients across cultural institutions, independent businesses, food & beverage and more. They specialise in brand strategies, visual and corporate identities, Arabic type, publication design and illustration.

**Salma Tuqan** is the Contemporary Middle East Curator at the V&A, responsible for Arab art and design programming, and the co-Curator of the international biennial *Jameel Prize* exhibition. Salma graduated from Cambridge University with a BA in History of Art and she has an MA in Arts Policy and Cultural Management from Birkbeck University. She worked at Art Dubai as Head of Artists' Projects, from its inauguration in 2007 to 2011, as well as Artistic Director of *Contemparabia*, a series of cultural itineraries for museum groups. She has contributed to other projects as an independent curator and facilitator, including Palestine c/o Venice at the 2009 Venice Biennale and the Wind Tunnel Project in Farnborough in 2014. Salma works closely with

cultural organisations on strategy and is a committee member of the Arab Image Foundation (Beirut), The Palestinian Museum (Birzeit) and The Khatt Foundation (Amsterdam). She is also a trustee of the Crossway Foundation (London) and a strategic advisor to NuMu (Guatemala City) and, previously, Delfina Foundation (London).

**Lisa Ball-Lechgar** is Deputy Director of Tashkeel, a contemporary art and design centre founded in 2008 by HH Sheikha Lateefa bint Maktoum bin Rashid Al Maktoum. Lisa has worked in the MENA cultural sector for 20 years in management, programming, training and publishing. Previously, she held senior positions at Abu Dhabi Music & Arts Foundation (ADMAF), Clientele Bahrain, Mixed Media Publishing (*Canvas* magazine), Arts & Business, and Comité Européen pour le Rapprochement de l'Economie et de la Culture (CEREC). She has consulted for organisations including Ashkal Alwan in Lebanon and the European Cultural Foundation in Belgium.

Lisa has edited and co-edited several books including *Reference Point: A History of Tashkeel and the UAE Art* (Tashkeel, 2018), *Bill Fontana: Acoustical Visions & Desert Soundings* (ADMAF, 2014), *View From Inside: Contemporary Arab Photography, Mixed Media & Video Art* (ADMAF/FotoFest, 2015), *The Art of the Emirates* (ADMAF/Motivate, 2015), *25 Years of Arab Creativity* (ADMAF/Institut du Monde Arabe, 2013), *Hassan Massoudy: Gestures of Light* (ADMAF/October Gallery, 2012) and *Rachid Koraichi: Eternity is the Absence of Time* (ADMAF/October Gallery, 2011). A Fellow of the University of Glasgow, Lisa has lectured on contemporary art and cultural management in Europe, the United States, MENA countries and South Africa, and moderated talks for the likes of the Abu Dhabi Festival, Art Dubai and the World Bank.

**Kendall Robbins** is acting Senior Programme Manager for Architecture, Design and Fashion at the British Council. She programmes, curates, produces and commissions architecture, design and fashion events and exhibitions across East Asia as well as in the UK. She is the global programme manager for the British Council's Crafting Futures and Fashion Revolutionaries programmes, and she advises on the British Council's fashion work internationally with focuses on fashion futures, craft and cultural heritage, emerging fashion economies and fashion design education. Kendall has also devised programmes such as Fashion DNA, Common Thread and the Graduate Fashion Week International Residency Award. She has managed some of the British Council's major fashion exhibitions, including *Gem: Contemporary Jewellery and Gemstones from Afghanistan* and *Reconstruction: Cultural Heritage and Contemporary Fashion*. At the British Council, Kendall has worked with partners such as Seoul Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism, Jakarta Fashion Week, Lagos Fashion and Design Week, Riyadh Fashion Days and Skopje Fashion Weekend. In 2016, Kendall was Acting Director Arts for British Council Bangladesh, and she previously led on the British Council's architecture, design and fashion work in South Asia and the Middle East and North Africa.

**Tanya Harrod** is the author of the prize-winning book *The Crafts in Britain in the Twentieth Century* (Yale University Press, 1999) and in 2012 her book *The Last Sane Man: Michael Cardew: Modern Pots, Colonialism, and the Counterculture* (Yale University Press, 2012) won the James Tait Black Prize for biography. Her latest books are *The Real Thing: Essays on Making in the Modern World* (Hyphen Press, 2015), *Leonard Rosoman* (Royal Academy of Arts, 2017) and the edited volume *Craft: Documents of Contemporary Art* (Whitechapel Gallery, 2018). With Glenn Adamson and Edward S. Cooke, Tanya is the founder editor of *The Journal of Modern Craft*. Tanya is on the Advisory Panel of *The Burlington Magazine* and she is a member of the Contemporary Art Society's Acquisitions Committee. She is a member of the International Association of Art Critics and an Honorary Senior Research Fellow at the V&A.