

HISHAM SHARIF (BAHRAIN, B. 1993)

Guided by both emotion and technique, Hisham Sharif's paintings serve as emotional landscapes: dense, intuitive, and haunted by fragments of personal and collective history. Initially trained in finance, Sharif applies a structural clarity to the chaotic, exploring dislocation and inherited memory for their formal and psychological significance. His canvases rarely reveal a clear subject, yet they pulse with presence—evoking seascapes, architectural ruins, or intimate scenes.

There is a restlessness in Sharif's surfaces—built through layered washes, scraped textures, and luminous shifts of tone—that convey a deeper concern with erasure and revelation. He's not interested in narrative. He's pursuing something much less stable: mood, ambiance, and the emotional afterimage of experience.

Sharif's recent work reveals his increased comfort with ambiguity. He explores ritual, heritage, and mythology, but always through a veil—implying that being rooted in a place can also mean feeling disconnected from it. The result is a practice that feels both deeply personal and politically conscious, rooted in Bahrain, but resonating globally through his experiences and Persian ancestry. In an era when much of contemporary painting seems overly self-aware or eager to explain itself, Sharif relies on sensation. Through this approach, he offers us something rare: paintings that linger long after they're seen.

Selected exhibitions include *Frightening the Dark*, his first solo exhibition in 2017, and *Sharif & Sharif* in 2022.

Sharif also won the Al Dana Award at the 50th edition of the Bahrain Annual Fine Arts Exhibition and received a Recognition Award for Outstanding Work at the 45th edition. He has also taken part in residencies in New York and Bahrain.

Sharif's work is housed in the permanent collection of the Bahrain National Museum.