

ABDALLA AL OMARI (SYRIA, B. 1986)

Abdalla Al Omari is a Syrian multidisciplinary artist whose work explores themes of displacement, conflict, the human condition, and, more recently, takes on more sensitive topics around identity. Born in Damascus and currently based in Belgium, Omari uses painting as a powerful medium to express his enduring ties to Syria and his evolving persona in a new environment shaped by exile's realities. His intricately figurative and detailed works, which recently blur into composition studies, are marked by deep emotional resonance and capture life's complexities through the expressive use of vibrant colour.

"Fraught with emotion, Omari's oil on canvas compositions tackle complex psychological states, yet retain a profound beauty through their painterly application and realistic portrayal."

With a nearly two-decade career, Omari's practice reflects a personal journey that parallels his lived experience and eventual exile from Syria. In his internationally acclaimed Vulnerability Series, he initiated a space for dialogue around the dignity of those marginalised by war and political indifference. These works weave realism and symbolic abstraction, echoing his reflections, creating a dynamic visual narrative of identity, loss, and resilience.

Omari's practice merges classical portraiture with expressive, emotionally charged compositions. His art challenges viewers to confront the psychological toll of conflict while affirming the enduring adaptability and change of the self in response to new environments. Each canvas becomes a site of memory, mourning, resistance, and hope, bridging the personal and political with unflinching honesty.

He holds a degree in English Literature from the University of Damascus. Though he worked alongside pioneering Syrian artists Ghassan Sibai and Fouad Dahdouh, Omari is widely considered a self-taught artist, having developed his practice independently outside of formal academic institutions. His work is held in collections including the Barjeel Art Foundation (UAE), Ayyam Gallery (UAE), FENIX Museum of Migration (Netherlands), Kamel Gallery (Syria), and the Syrian Ministry of Culture, among others.

Omari has exhibited internationally at institutions and galleries such as the Gangwon Biennale (South Korea), Pinchuk Art Centre (Kyiv), Ayyam Gallery (Dubai), Affenfaust Gallery (Hamburg), Institut du Monde Arabe (Paris), Kusseneers Gallery (Brussels), Strombeek Cultural Center (Belgium), NW Gallery (UK), Kozah Gallery (Lebanon), and the Berlin Biennale (Germany).