



F o n d s

Women in Crystal Cubes
Additional information

This exhibition selectively traces Kamala Ibrahim Ishag's half-century journey as an artist. It will feature a variety of paintings including early works, beginning with her graduation from the College of Fine & Applied Art, Khartoum in 1963, and subsequent studies at the Royal College of Art between 1964 and 1966, and spanning her return to Sudan and three-decade's tenure as a professor in the painting department at the Khartoum's College of Fine & Applied Art in the 1970s through the early 1990s. The exhibition also examines her practice during subsequent years in London and Muscat in the Sultanate of Oman, until her return to Sudan in the early 2000s.

“Kamala's studies at the Royal College were formative to her career. Her early interest in the work of the English painter and writer William Blake, in particular his exploration of spirituality and incarnation through the sublime power of poetry resonated with her own contemplation of spirit possession practices by Sudanese women known as Zār. The unlikely convergence would lead to the development of central themes and styles in her work that run through her oeuvre. Such influences can be seen in the distorted faces and figures of women in her paintings, which are mostly rendered in dark monochromatic tones of brown. Even when brighter colours are used in her work, Kamala rigorously and deliberately mutes the palette, as in her series inspired by the brooding, figurative paintings of Francis Bacon. Kamala's career cannot be imprisoned in such style, as she moved on to explore other themes that have come to define the multiplicity of her oeuvre of the plants world, which has become a rich source for new forms and compositions witnessed in her most recent paintings. In addition, Kamala has collaborated with Sudanese poets, writers and scholars by gracing their publications with cover designs and illustrations, as displayed in this exhibitions.” – Salah M. Hassan, co-curator *Women in Crystal Cubes*