

EN biography Mustapha Hafid

Mustapha Hafid, born in 1942 in Casablanca, stands as a prominent figure in Moroccan modern art. In 1958, he joined the École des Beaux-Arts de Casablanca, an institution then steeped in European academic traditions. During his three years there, Hafid developed a profound passion for drawing, which he regarded as the essential foundation of all artistic creation. His skill quickly set him apart as he immersed himself in observation and life drawing classes under the mentorship of Monsieur Verdi, along with plaster modeling and sketching courses led by Michel Courteaux. Under the tutelage of Félix Bellenot, Hafid honed his painting techniques, while Monsieur Cheneau introduced him to the art of poster design.

Seeking to expand his artistic scope, Mustapha Hafid secured a Polish government scholarship to pursue advanced studies in Europe. Though he considered various renowned institutions, he ultimately selected Poland, influenced by his cousin, painter Ahmed Cherkaoui, who praised the Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts after a formative year-long residency. From 1961 to 1968, Hafid settled in Warsaw, where he earned a master's degree in 1966. It was here that Hafid met Anna Draus, a fellow Academy graduate who would become both his wife and a profound influence on his artistic journey.

At the Warsaw Academy, Hafid studied under eminent figures such as Artur Nacht-Samborski and Michał Bylina, who guided his early explorations in form and expression. After earning his degree, he extended his training at the Pablo Picasso Studio of Graphic Arts under Józef Pakulski's direction. Driven by an insatiable curiosity, Hafid delved into diverse artistic disciplines, affirming his autonomy by resisting alignment with any single style or school.

In 1966, Hafid made a pivotal decision to abandon figuration entirely, dedicating himself to abstraction. Deeply influenced by Polish avant-garde movements and Władysław Strzemiński's Unism, he began to forge a distinct visual language marked by organic lines and sinuous shapes, moving away from traditional geometric compositions to express a profound subjectivity.

Upon his return to Morocco in 1968, Hafid took up a position at the École des Beaux-Arts de Casablanca as a professor of drawing and painting. The school soon became a vibrant center of creative and intellectual activity, fueling the development of a modern Moroccan art movement that consciously broke from colonial legacies and embraced local cultural realities. Hafid played an active role in the Casablanca Group's exhibitions, most notably the manifesto shows of 1969 at Place Jamâa El Fna in Marrakech—alongside artists like Ataallah, Belkahia, Chabâa, Hamidi, and Melehi—and at Place du 16 novembre in Casablanca, events that marked defining moments in Moroccan art history.

Hafid's work, often linked to expressionism and fauvism for its bold, intense palette, drew inspiration from artists such as Paul Klee and Vassily Kandinsky. In his hands, color, form, and emotion became tools not for depicting visible reality but for unveiling internal states. His canvases pulse with dynamic energy, using color as an expressive force to capture sensations and emotional landscapes that transcend the mere replication of the physical world.

During the turbulent 1980s in Morocco, Hafid was appointed twice as director of the École Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Casablanca where he introduced key reforms. Even amid the challenges, he continued to produce work, his style shifting toward darker tones and a stronger use of black. His compositions then reflected a baroque gravity that marked a new stage in his artistic maturity.

Hafid has been instrumental in shaping Moroccan modern art. By engaging with, yet moving beyond, European influences, he forged a distinct visual language that affirmed Moroccan identity on an international platform. His career demonstrates how Moroccan artists can engage global art movements while creating a modernity anchored in local culture. Through his work and commitment, Hafid remains a central figure in contemporary art, redefining the landscape of art history in Morocco and beyond. As a founding member of the Moroccan Association of Plastic Arts and a member of the Polish Association of Plastic Artists, he has continued to move between Poland and Morocco, embodying a cross-cultural perspective that enriches his legacy.

Collections:

- MATHAF, Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha – Qatar
- Musée de la Kasbah, Tanger – Maroc
- Musée Mohammed VI d'Art Moderne et Contemporain, Rabat – Maroc
- Musée d'Art, Agadir – Maroc
- Musée de Bank Al-Maghrib, Rabat - Maroc
- Office Chérifien des Phosphates, Casablanca – Maroc
- Attijariwafa Bank, Casablanca - Maroc
- Société Générale, Casablanca - Maroc
- EQDOM, Casablanca – Maroc
- Parlement du Maroc, Rabat – Maroc
- Ministère de la Culture, Rabat - Maroc
- Ministère de l'Énergie et des Mines, Rabat – Maroc

Solo shows:

2024

Hafid, UNE VIE, UNE ŒUVRE, La Galerie 38 Casablanca, Casablanca – Maroc

2019

Exposition-Rétrospective, Villa des Arts de Casablanca, Casablanca – Maroc

2007

Galerie Europejski, Varsovie – Pologne

1997

Métamorphoses, Galerie Nationale Bab Rouah, Rabat – Maroc

1987

Galerie Moulay Ismaël, Casablanca – Maroc

1981

Galerie Le Savouroux, Casablanca – Maroc

1975

Galerie Le Savouroux, Casablanca – Maroc

Espace d'art de l'OCP, Khouribga – Maroc

1973

Galerie Bab Rouah, Casablanca – Maroc

1967

Salon du débutant, Varsovie – Pologne

Collective exhibitions:

2024

The Casablanca Art School, Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt, Francfort – Allemagne
The Casablanca Art School, Sharjah Art Foundation, Charjah – Émirats arabes unis

2023

The Casablanca Art School, Tate St Ives, St Ives – Royaume-Uni
Présence, Hall du Complexe de la Bourse et Galerie DAP, Varsovie – Pologne

2022

Théâtralité d'une vie. Hossein Tallal et les artistes de la galerie Alif Ba, Fondation Alliances, Casablanca – Maroc

2021

Journée internationale de solidarité avec le peuple palestinien, Siège social de Bayt Mal Al Qods Acharif, Rabat – Maroc
Group Dynamics – Collectives of the Modernist Period, Lenbachhaus, Munich – Allemagne

2020

Ahmed Cherkaoui à Varsovie. Les relations artistiques polono-marocaines dans les années 1955-1980, Galerie nationale d'art Zachęta, Varsovie – Pologne

2019

Mains de lumière, Espaces d'Arts de la Galerie Nationale Bab Rouah, Galerie Mohamed El Fassi et Nobl'ys Gallery, Rabat – Maroc

2018

La création des artistes d'origine arabe en Pologne, Musée de l'Asie et du Pacifique, Varsovie – Pologne
Musée Imaginaire, ancienne agence Bank Al-Maghrib, Place Jemaa el-Fna, Marrakech – Maroc
Farid Belkahia et l'École des Beaux-Arts de Casablanca, Fondation Farid Belkahia, Marrakech – Maroc

2017

50ème anniversaire de la disparition d'Ahmed Cherkaoui, Boujaâd – Maroc
Le Chant de la Mer, Galerie Chaïbia, El Jadida – Maroc et Complexe Culturel Abderrahim Bouabid, Mohammedia – Maroc
Le printemps du dessin, Galerie Villa Delaporte, Casablanca – Maroc
Parcours Esthétiques, Nobl'ys Gallery, Rabat – Maroc

2015

50 ans de peinture au Maroc, Espace d'art de la Médiathèque de la Mosquée Hassan II, Casablanca – Maroc et Musée de La Palmeraie, Marrakech - Maroc

2014

Exposition inaugurale : 1914-2014 : Cent ans de création, Musée Mohammed VI d'Art Moderne et Contemporain, Rabat – Maroc
Fondation Frère Albert, Galerie nationale d'art Zachęta, Varsovie – Pologne et Musées à Cracovie, Wrocław, Katowice, Rzeszów – Pologne

2013

100 ans – cent artistes/cent œuvres, Espace d'art de Société Générale Maroc, Casablanca – Maroc

2012

220 ans de relations culturelles et scientifiques entre la Pologne et le Royaume du Maroc. Hommage des artistes marocains à Ahmed Cherkaoui à l'occasion du 45ème anniversaire de sa disparition, Bibliothèque Nationale du Royaume du Maroc, Rabat – Maroc

Fondation Frère Albert, Galerie nationale d'art Zachęta, Varsovie – Pologne et Musées à Cracovie, Wrocław, Katowice, Rzeszów – Pologne

2010

Fondation Frère Albert, Galerie nationale d'art Zachęta, Varsovie – Pologne et Musées à Cracovie, Wrocław, Katowice, Rzeszów – Pologne

2008

Fondation Frère Albert, Galerie nationale d'art Zachęta, Varsovie – Pologne et Musées à Cracovie, Wrocław, Katowice, Rzeszów – Pologne

200ème Anniversaire de la naissance de Chopin, Galerie DAP, Varsovie – Pologne

2006

VII International En Plein Air, Zelwa – Pologne

2003

Hommage à Mohamed Kacimi, Galerie Bab Rouah, Rabat – Maroc

1999

Peintres en partage, Espace des Blancs-Manteaux, Paris – France

1997

Rencontre de la peinture méditerranéenne, Galerie Bab Rouah, Rabat – Maroc

1996

Concours International de Sculpture sur Neige, Frankenmuth – Etats-Unis

1994

Galerie Marsam, Rabat – Maroc

1991

Exposition collective au profit de l'Irak, Galerie Bab Rouah, Rabat – Maroc

Paradox of the New Art from Africa, South Square Gallery, Bradford – Royaume-Uni, Johnson Kilm Gallery, Farnham – Royaume-Uni et Hanover Gallery Liverpool – Royaume-Uni

1988

Espace d'art de la Fondation Wafabank, Casablanca – Maroc

1987

Concours International de Sculpture sur Neige, Rovaniemi – Finlande

1986

Galerie d'Art Moderne au Parc de la Ligue Arabe, Casablanca – Maroc

1985

Exposition/Débat à la Faculté Sidi Othmane, Casablanca – Maroc

Chambre des Représentants, Rabat – Maroc

1982

Galerie Anoual, Casablanca – Maroc

Petits formats, Galerie Alif Ba, Casablanca – Maroc

Rencontre entre Architectes Urbanistes et Plasticiens, Musée des Oudayas, Rabat – Maroc

1981

Exposition internationale de Tapisserie Contemporaine, Linz, Vienne – Autriche

1980

Art contemporain du Maroc, Fondation Joan Miró, Barcelone – Espagne

La semaine culturelle marocaine, Bordeaux – France

1979

Exposition collective – Maroc, Irak et Mexique

1978

Galerie Bab Rouah, Rabat – Maroc et Galerie du Café-Théâtre, Casablanca – Maroc

Galerie Structure B.S., Rabat – Maroc

Galerie Œil, Rabat – Maroc

Aspects de l'Art Actuel au Maroc, Essaouira – Maroc

1977

Exposition organisée par l'O.C.E., Europe, Afrique du Sud

1976

Exposition/Débat de l'Association Marocaine des Arts Plastiques, Rabat, Fès, Meknès, Assilah – Maroc

Deuxième Biennale Arabe, Musée des Oudayas, Rabat – Maroc

1975

Congrès des peintres Maghrébins, Tunis – Tunisie

Galerie Le Savouroux, Casablanca – Maroc

1974

L'art marocain dans les collections privées, Galerie Nadar, Casablanca – Maroc

Première Biennale Arabe, Bagdad – Irak

Exposition « Peintres maghrébins », Alger – Algérie

1973

Exposition avec son épouse, Anna Draus, Bab Rouah, Rabat – Maroc

1972

Exposition d'artistes peintres marocains en soutien au peuple palestinien, Rabat – Maroc

1969

Exposition-Manifeste sur la place Jemaa el-Fna, Marrakech – Maroc

Exposition-Manifeste sur la place du 16 Novembre, Casablanca – Maroc