

## 30 YEARS AND MOVING FORWARD

Agial Art Gallery has been hosting and publishing works by some of the most exciting and relevant artists from Lebanon and the Middle East for three decades. In celebration of the passing of those three decades, Saleh Barakat Gallery held an exhibition in September, 2021. On display was part of its collection of artworks, books and catalogues it has published or assisted in producing, as well as artefacts of the institution's history. This exhibition wasn't a retrospective. It is an invitation to look back on the history of this institution, and the history it was part of. It is an announcement of this institution's future

Saleh Barakat, Agial's founder, has often chosen to keep one work of art from each show that Agial hosted or participated in. Much of these works were displayed across the gallery space from oldest to most recent. The audience was guided through the collection by the original postcard invitations to the very exhibitions from which these works were collected.

The publications, catalogues, and artist's books that were produced during and separately from these different exhibitions were also displayed in chronological order, in a manner similar to that of the paintings and postcards.

In this exhibition, these postcard invitations didn't only guide the audience through the paintings but were also a few of the many aesthetic objects being displayed. Agial has digitized, archived and preserved much of its records. For the first time, Agial's archive of its own history was open to the public. The audience got the chance to see how the institution's aesthetics, identity, preferences, and mission has changed since its genesis in nineteen ninety-one. Posters, catalogues, publications, photographs, souvenirs, newspaper pages, as well as documentary records were all on display at the exhibition.





