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| Tamari, Vera (1945--) |
| **[Enter any *variant forms* of your headword – OPTIONAL]** |
| Vera Tamari was born in 1945 in Jerusalem. Her parents, originally from the coastal city of Jaffa, exposed their children to visual art, music, and literature from an early age. Vera’s older brother, Vladimir, is an artist based in Japan, and her sister Tania is a classical singer. Tamari received her BA in Fine Arts at the Beirut Women’s College between 1962-1966, and then pursued her studies in ceramics in Florence between 1972-1974. In 1982 she received a Master’s of Philosophy in Islamic Art and Architecture from Oxford University. She established the first ceramic art studio in Ramallah and held the post of professor in Islamic Art and Architecture at Birzeit University in the West Bank until her recent retirement. She is active as a curator, artist, and writer.  Several major themes remain consistent in Tamari’s work throughout her career. In her early work, Tamari drew inspiration from traditional Palestinian ceramics, which she integrated along with specific references to the long history of the art form. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, her work specifically negotiated her relationship to the Palestinian landscape through three-dimensional and relief works that mapped out its terrains. |
| Vera Tamari was born in 1945 in Jerusalem. Her parents, originally from the coastal city of Jaffa, exposed their children to visual art, music, and literature from an early age. Vera’s older brother, Vladimir, is an artist based in Japan, and her sister Tania is a classical singer. Tamari received her BA in Fine Arts at the Beirut Women’s College between 1962-1966, and then pursued her studies in ceramics in Florence between 1972-1974. In 1982 she received a Master’s of Philosophy in Islamic Art and Architecture from Oxford University. She established the first ceramic art studio in Ramallah and held the post of professor in Islamic Art and Architecture at Birzeit University in the West Bank until her recent retirement. She is active as a curator, artist, and writer.  Several major themes remain consistent in Tamari’s work throughout her career. In her early work, Tamari drew inspiration from traditional Palestinian ceramics, which she integrated along with specific references to the long history of the art form. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, her work specifically negotiated her relationship to the Palestinian landscape through three-dimensional and relief works that mapped out its terrains.  Tamari has also been concerned with the representations of women. In her early work of the 1970s, she engaged with women’s traditional roles as harvesters, craft-makers, olive pickers, and toilers of the earth. Later, she explored the struggle and silent strength of women in the first intifada (uprising). After the second intifada of 2000, Tamari revisited this theme with a new body of work in mixed media that focused on the lament of women and their experiences of loss as the mothers of martyrs. In response to the Israeli army incursions into Ramallah in 2002, she created a monumental installation from the cars crushed by Israeli tanks, titled *Going for a Ride?*  Tamari’s relationship to the past and her memories of Jaffa were explored in a late 1990s series of works in which she revisited old family photographs, recreating in relief works the gestures, human relations, and nuances of places they contained. The works include intimate details of verandas, house-fronts, and courtyards. This engagement with nostalgia and the past comes to the foreground in the work *Oracles from the Sea* (1998), a mixed media installation consisting of ceramic faces lined and cracked by time. The work was mounted on the seashore in Jaffa, with the sea occupying the hollowed spaces of the eyes. The result is a haunting image of loss and longing that explores issues of identity and history by figuring the imaginary return of Tamari’s ancestors to Jaffa.  File: Tamari\_Oracles\_from the\_Sea.jpg  Figure : Vera Tamari, *Oracles from the Sea* (1998). For permission contact: vera@palnet.com or vtamari@birzeit.edu. |
| Further reading:  (Boullata)  (Johnson)  (Malt)  (Selva)  (Tamari, Artist of the Month - Video Interview)  (Tamari and Johnson, Loss and Vision: Representation of Women in Palestinian Art under Occupation)  (Vera and Amiry)  (Zarur) |