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| Guiragossian, Paul (1925-1993) |
| **[Enter any *variant forms* of your headword – OPTIONAL]** |
| Born in Jerusalem to Armenian parents who survived the 1915 Armenian Genocide, Guiragossian eventually settled in Beirut after being evacuated from Palestine by the British. Working as an illustrator, Guiragossian began exhibiting during the 1950s. In 1956, he won first prize at a painting competition and received a scholarship from the Italian government to study at the Academy of Fine Arts of Florence. Two years later, Guiragossian held his first solo exhibition at the Galeria D’Arte Moderna La Permanente. In 1962, he received a second scholarship from the French government to study abroad at Les Ateliers des Maitres de l’Ecole de Paris. Most recognised for his depiction of the human figure, his portraits include a substantial number of compositions of his wife and children, self-portraits, and anonymous figures, while a significant number of pieces focus on the tender embrace of mother and child. Guiragossian’s distinctive style uses long, vertical brushstrokes to depict the bodies of his figures as abstracted and elongated, echoing the imagery of Byzantine and Christian icons. During the 1950s, Guiragossian began producing complete abstract paintings. Applying bright, bold colour in blocks to the canvas, Guiragossian also left parts of the surface untouched, thus generating depth and movement through a creative utilisation of negative space. |
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| Further reading:  (Baradouil)  (British Lebanese Association)  (Chahine)  (Fani)  (Lahourd)  (Naef) |