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| Shaikhly, Ismail al- (1924-2002) |
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| Born in Baghdad, Iraq, Ismail al-Shaikhly was among the Baghdadi Institute of Fine Art’s first graduating class in 1945. At the institute, he studied under Faiq Hassan and is considered his most gifted student. After graduating from the Institute, al-Shaikhly travelled to Paris to attend the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts. Upon his return to Baghdad, al-Shaikhly became an active participant in several art groups that were gaining prominence in the 1950s and 1960s. He was a member of the Pioneers and became the group’s leader in 1962. He was also a founding member of the Society of Iraqi Plastic Artists and participated in the Iraqi Artists Society. Al-Shaikhly exhibited extensively with these groups. He was also a prodigious exhibitor internationally. In 1955 and 1958, a collection of his works toured countries like China, Russia, Bulgaria, Poland, and India. Early in al-Shaikhly’s career, his work borrowed much from his mentor Faiq Hassan. However, he soon developed his own interpretation of subject matter favoured by many of his contemporaries, the environs, and people of Iraq. He is best known for his feminine masses composed of colour and ovular shapes. These female figures, recognisable by the abaya, cluster together with emotional energy. The power of al-Shaikhly’s representations is intertwined with this rhythmic energy. It suggests not only the colours and forms of everyday Iraqi life, but also the essence of its experience. |
| Born in Baghdad, Iraq, Ismail al-Shaikhly was among the Baghdadi Institute of Fine Art’s first graduating class in 1945. At the institute, he studied under Faiq Hassan and is considered his most gifted student. After graduating from the Institute, al-Shaikhly travelled to Paris to attend the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts. Upon his return to Baghdad, al-Shaikhly became an active participant in several art groups that were gaining prominence in the 1950s and 1960s. He was a member of the Pioneers and became the group’s leader in 1962. He was also a founding member of the Society of Iraqi Plastic Artists and participated in the Iraqi Artists Society. Al-Shaikhly exhibited extensively with these groups. He was also a prodigious exhibitor internationally. In 1955 and 1958, a collection of his works toured countries like China, Russia, Bulgaria, Poland, and India. Early in al-Shaikhly’s career, his work borrowed much from his mentor Faiq Hassan. However, he soon developed his own interpretation of subject matter favoured by many of his contemporaries, the environs, and people of Iraq. He is best known for his feminine masses composed of colour and ovular shapes. These female figures, recognisable by the abaya, cluster together with emotional energy. The power of al-Shaikhly’s representations is intertwined with this rhythmic energy. It suggests not only the colours and forms of everyday Iraqi life, but also the essence of its experience.  File: Ismail\_al-Shaikhly\_Farewell\_1994.jpg  Figure : Ismail al-Shaikhly, *Farewell* (1994). Oil on canvas, 95 x 115 cm. Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art. |
| Further reading:  (Ali)  (Faraj)  (Mudaffar)  (Pocock)  (Saad) |