

## Kholod Hawash

Kholod Hawash was born in Basra, Iraq, in 1977 and lives and works in Espoo, Finland. For many years she was working as an illustrator of children's books for major publishers in Iraq.

Kholod Hawash uses the textile craft technique of *jodaleia*, the Arabic term for quilting. Traditionally, Iraqi quilts are created from re-used textiles that are sewn together by hand and used to cover and protect furniture and walls.

She gets her inspiration from memories of her mother's quilting, Iraqi folklore and its myths and legends, as well as animals and nature in the rich archaeological landscape where she grew up. The motifs are dominated by strong feminist beliefs and our human longing for and right to freedom and self-determination. Her colourful visual stories emerge stitch by stitch, the present and the past converging in a magical universe.

In 2024, Kholod Hawash represented Finland at the 60th Venice Biennale in 2024, in "The Altersea Opera"—a multidisciplinary work conceptualized by Swedish artist Lap-See Lam in the Nordic Countries Pavilion. Parallely, her work was also exhibited at the UNESCO-supported Artists at Risk Pavilion at the biennale.

Kholod Hawash work has been presented in a number of solo exhibitions in Finland, Jordan and Lebanon, recently at the Critical Gallery in Helsinki in 2025.

She has also participated in group exhibitions, such as ARS22 at the Museum for Contemporary Art Kiasma in Helsinki, as well as the textile exhibition *Pehmo* (soft) at the Helsinki Art Museum in 2022.

Furthermore, she was for many years working as an illustrator of children's books for major publishers in Iraq.

Kholod Hawash received the William Thuring Prize in 2022, as well as professional grants from the Arts Promotion Centre Finland (Taika) and the Kone Foundation. Her work is represented in the collections of Kiasma, the Helsinki Art Museum and the Espoo Museum for Modern Art, as well as private collections in Dubai, France, Iraq, Switzerland and Spain.