

A portrait of Sultan Bin Fahad, the 25th Sultan of Saudi Arabia, dressed in traditional white Saudi attire (thobe and ghutra). He is seated and looking directly at the camera. He is holding a white object, possibly a scroll or a book, in his hands. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

SULTAN BIN FAHAD
The Blue Note



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Sultan bin Fahad (b. 1971, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; lives and works between Riyadh and the United States) is a self-directed artist working across painting, photography, and installation.

Beginning as a painter, his practice developed outside formal academic frameworks, evolving through the use of found objects as carriers of cultural and spiritual meaning, and later through intricate bead works for which he became widely recognized. His recent work extends this trajectory into a narrative-driven approach in which storytelling functions as the primary medium.

Drawing from inherited symbols, architectural forms, and historical references, bin Fahad repositions these elements within contemporary frameworks that resist fixed interpretation. While earlier works engaged more directly with Islamic visual and spiritual traditions, his recent practice expands into a broader, transnational context.

His works function as constructed situations—where history is not preserved, but edited; where memory is not recalled, but staged.

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Faith and music, peace and rhythm, the story in the song and the passion it unearths. An assemblage of moments, shifting tides in a collective culture, expressed musically, *Blue Note: A Turn to the East* is an installation that seeks to track the history of jazz in its early days, especially how it manifested in production and artistry, with an exhibition developed through archival reference and interviews that source real life accountings of the events to present and retell their stories across a unique visual experience.

Through the dawn of the 20th century, Black musicians were experimenting with energetic improvisations on the blues, from ragtime sounds, their African and Caribbean heritage as well as the influence of European harmonies to cultivate a peppy and electrifying genre of music, hard to properly define because of its polyphonic style. *Blue Note*, thus, is a study of that sound, identity, spirituality, tapping music as a form of communal expression. The intersection of faith and a rhythmic syncopation. What makes the core of the show is its playfulness—stories on tapestry, tarp, with the past brought to life by the songs themselves—to directly inform on the ways that culture was both lifestyle and muse: to express the powerful art that the human soul can awaken from deep within us.

Each work emphasizes a subtle touch of abstraction: clear figures with their facial features smudged, clothing that's bathed with a cool brightness. Their absence removes the question of ownership from jazz styles that are often hemmed in by appropriation, celebrating the freedom it brings without waiving the authenticity of its African American origins, by painting it with a suggestion of movement. Other works in the series do much the same on an opposite track: flattening images to convey power, saturated in startling colors to represent the underrepresented aspects of the scene: mainly the remixings of jazz and Islam, both their values, and the markers of its identity, tapestries sewn with beautiful affirmations and arabized fonts bordered by florals.

Blue Note uses vibrancy and the lack of it as contrast to commemorate jazz in its duality—as more than simply music, an audiovisual gathering for culture to flourish from and exact its designs on the world as it slid into modernist thinking: new media, departing from older models of art. This exhibition works to embrace that experimentation, by making room for the audience to infuse and entertain pieces in blinding half-formation, others in a totally vivid frenzy, open for questioning how we incorporate ourselves into the wider consciousness, these musicians's ancestral mixologies harmonizing into an open-ended future, and its rhythm never finished.



Yusef
2026
Oil on Canvas
62.5 x 62.5 cm



Dakota
2026
Oil on Canvas
62.5 x 62.5 cm



Max
2026
Oil on Canvas
62.5 x 62.5 cm



Dizzie
2026
Oil on Canvas
62.5 x 62.5 cm



Etta
2026
Oil on Canvas
62.5 x 62.5 cm



Abby
2026
Oil on Canvas
134 x 134 cm



Ahmad
2026
Oil on Canvas
134 x 134 cm



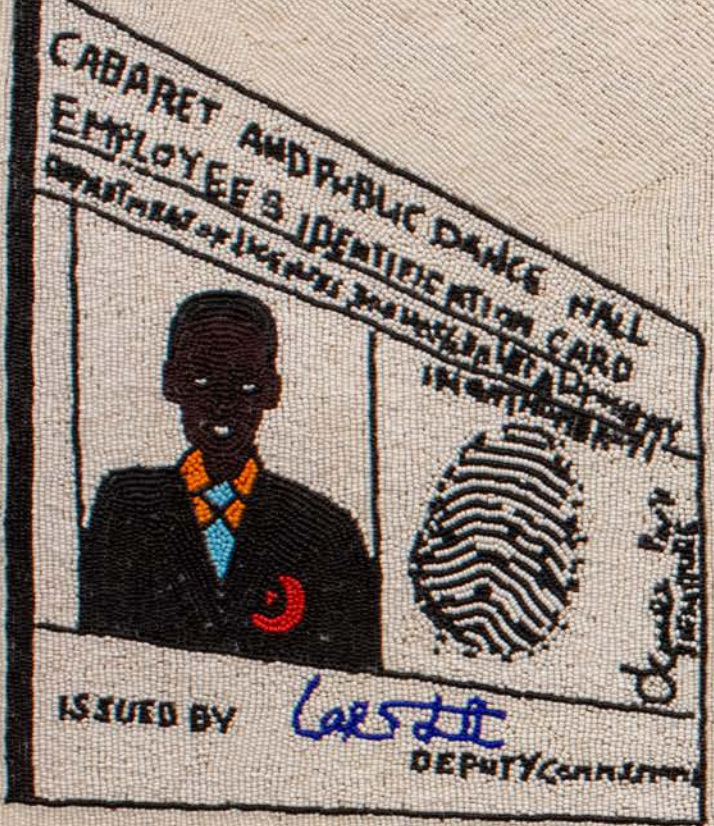
Art
2026
Oil on Canvas
134 x 134 cm



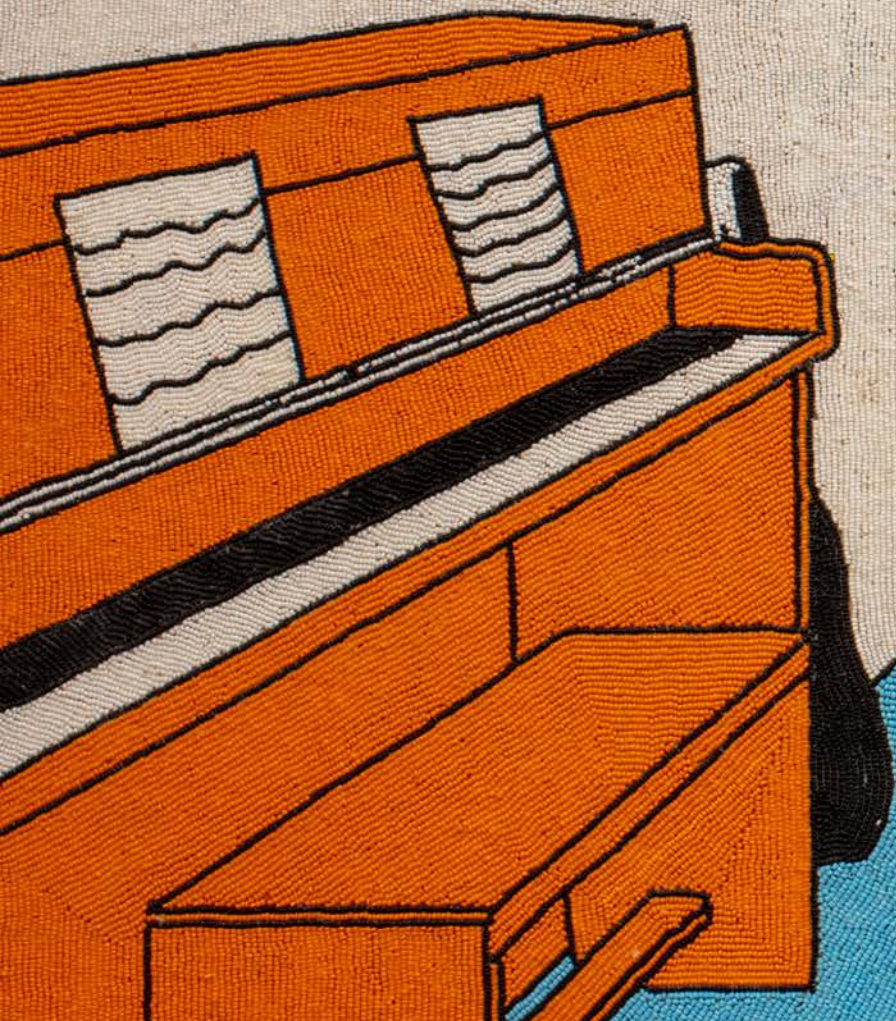
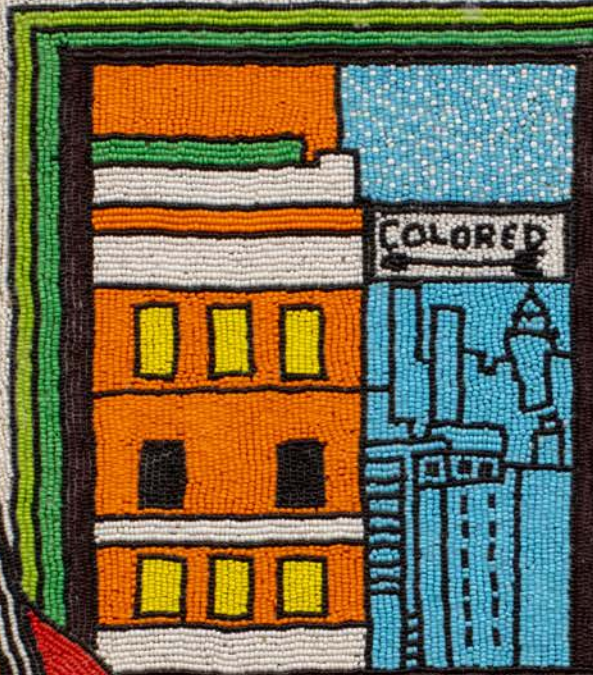
Coltrane
2026
Oil on Canvas
134 x 134 cm



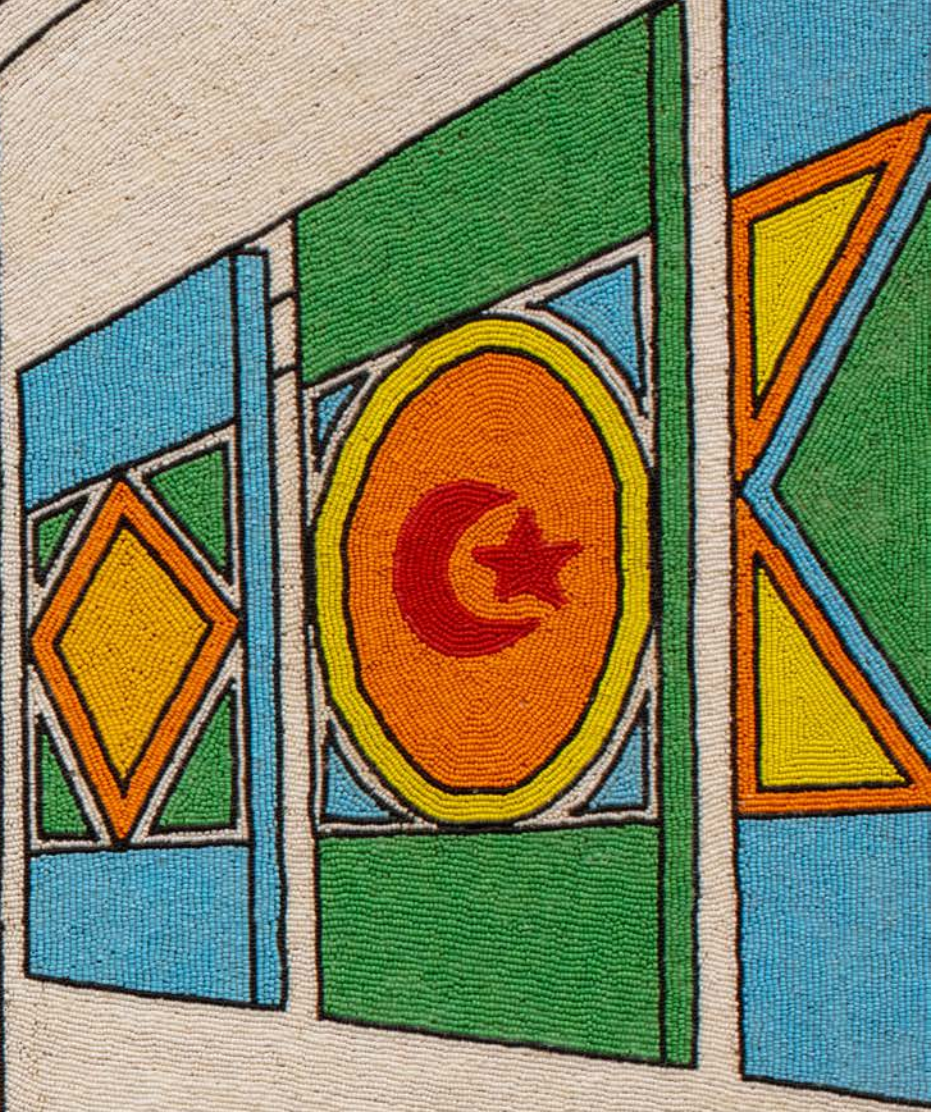
Malcolm
2026
Oil on Canvas
134 x 134 cm



AN ESCAPE,
LIVING AND
OF CHOOSING



A WAY OF
THINKING,
ING FREELY.







Notes
2023
Beads on Canvas
42.5 x 73 cm



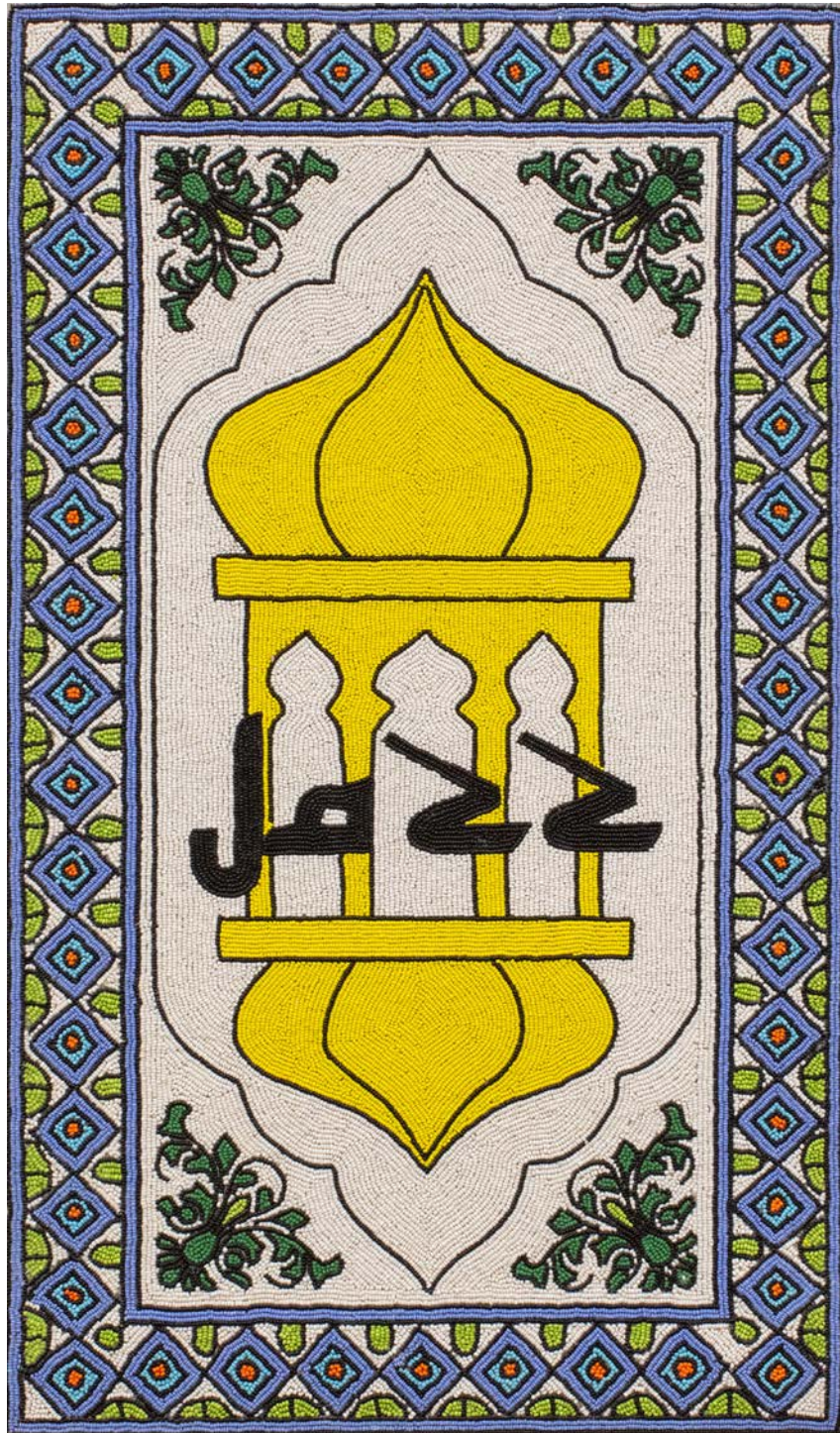
Brothers and Sisters
2023
Beads on Canvas
42.5 x 73 cm



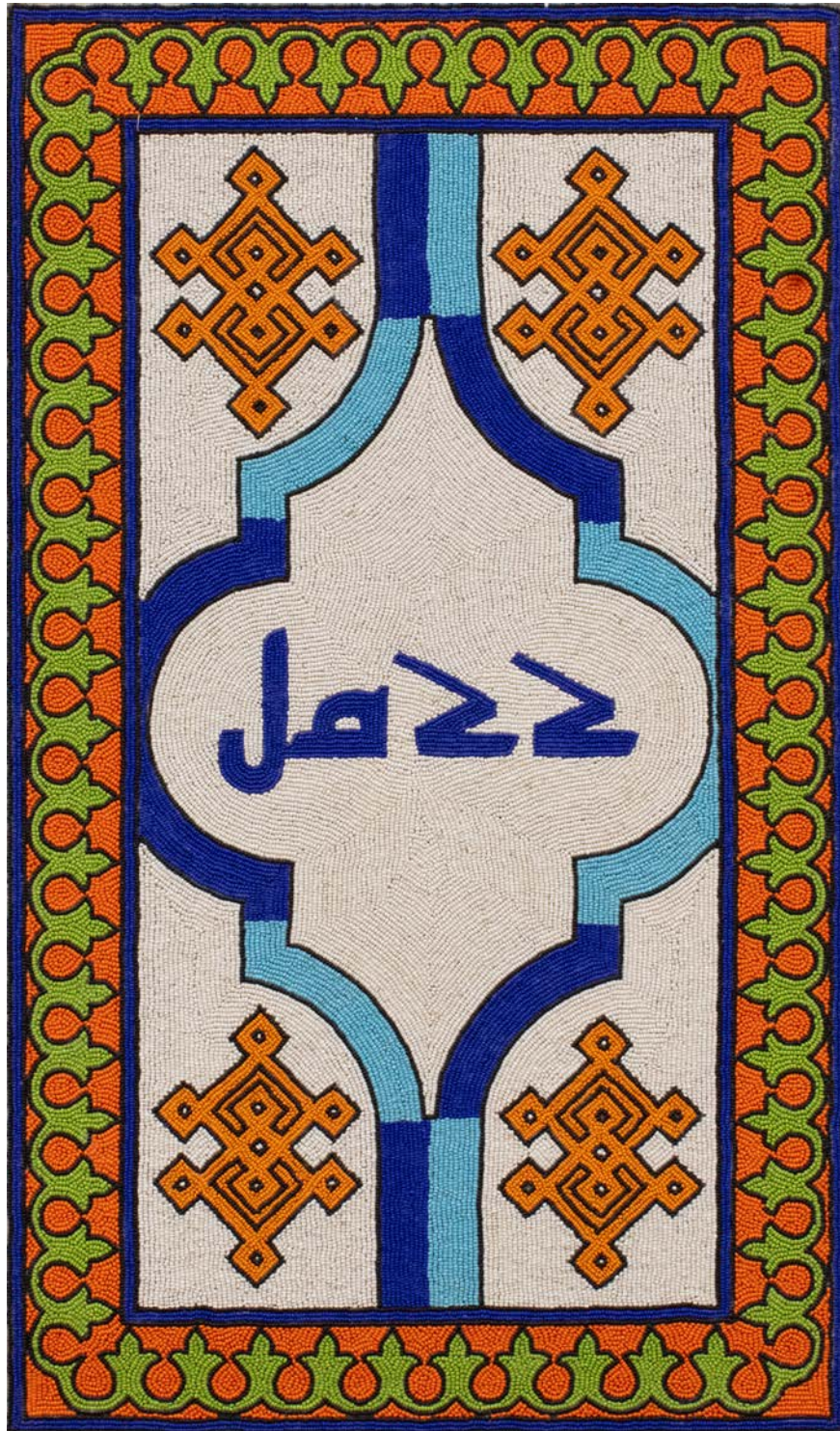
Gramophone 1
2023
Beads on Canvas
42.5 x 73 cm



Believer
2023
Beads on Canvas
73 x 73 cm



Jazz 2
2023
Beads on Canvas
42.5 x 73 cm

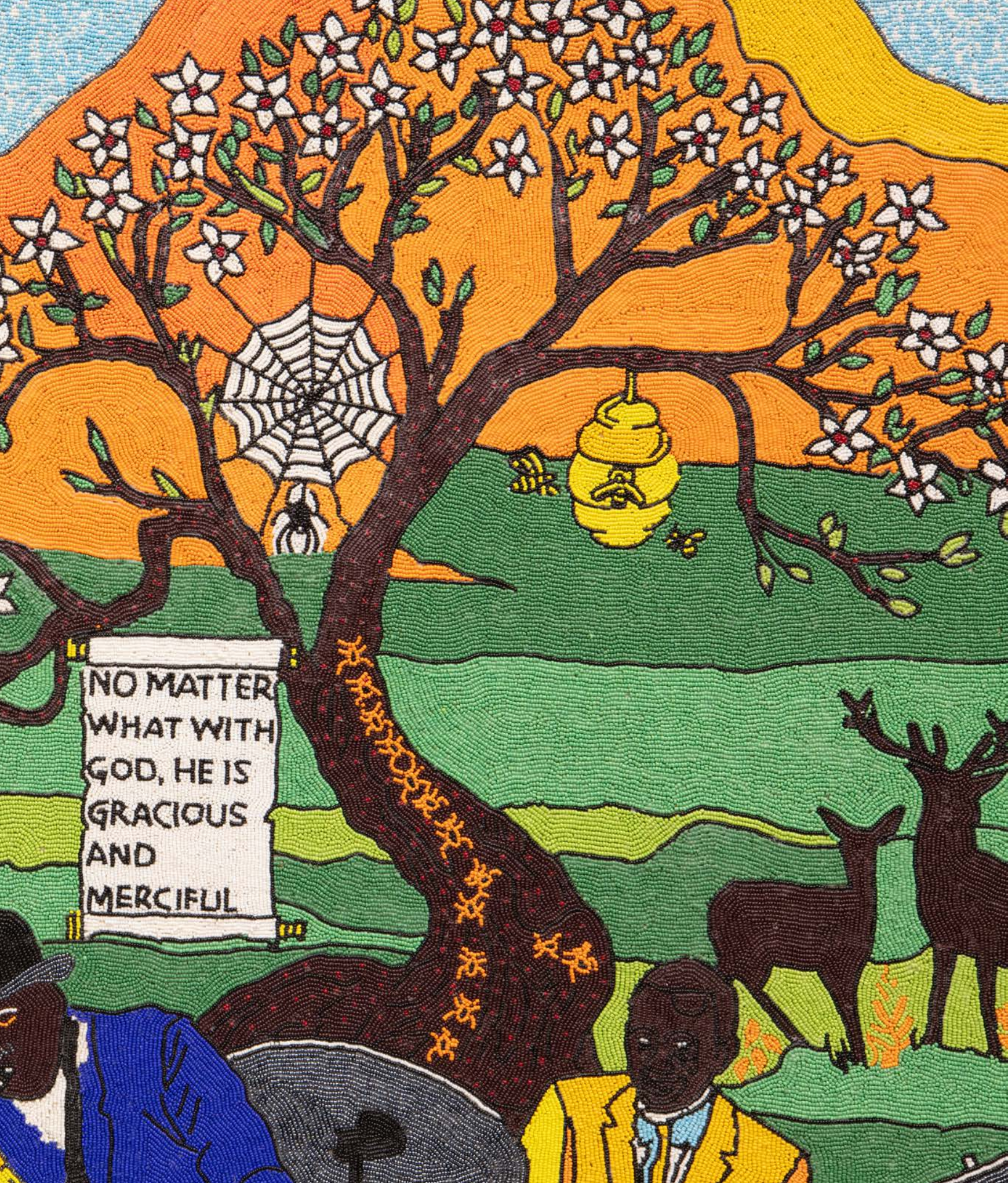


Jazz 1
2023
Beads on Canvas
42.5 x 73 cm



Thankyou
2023
Beads on Canvas
73 x 73 cm

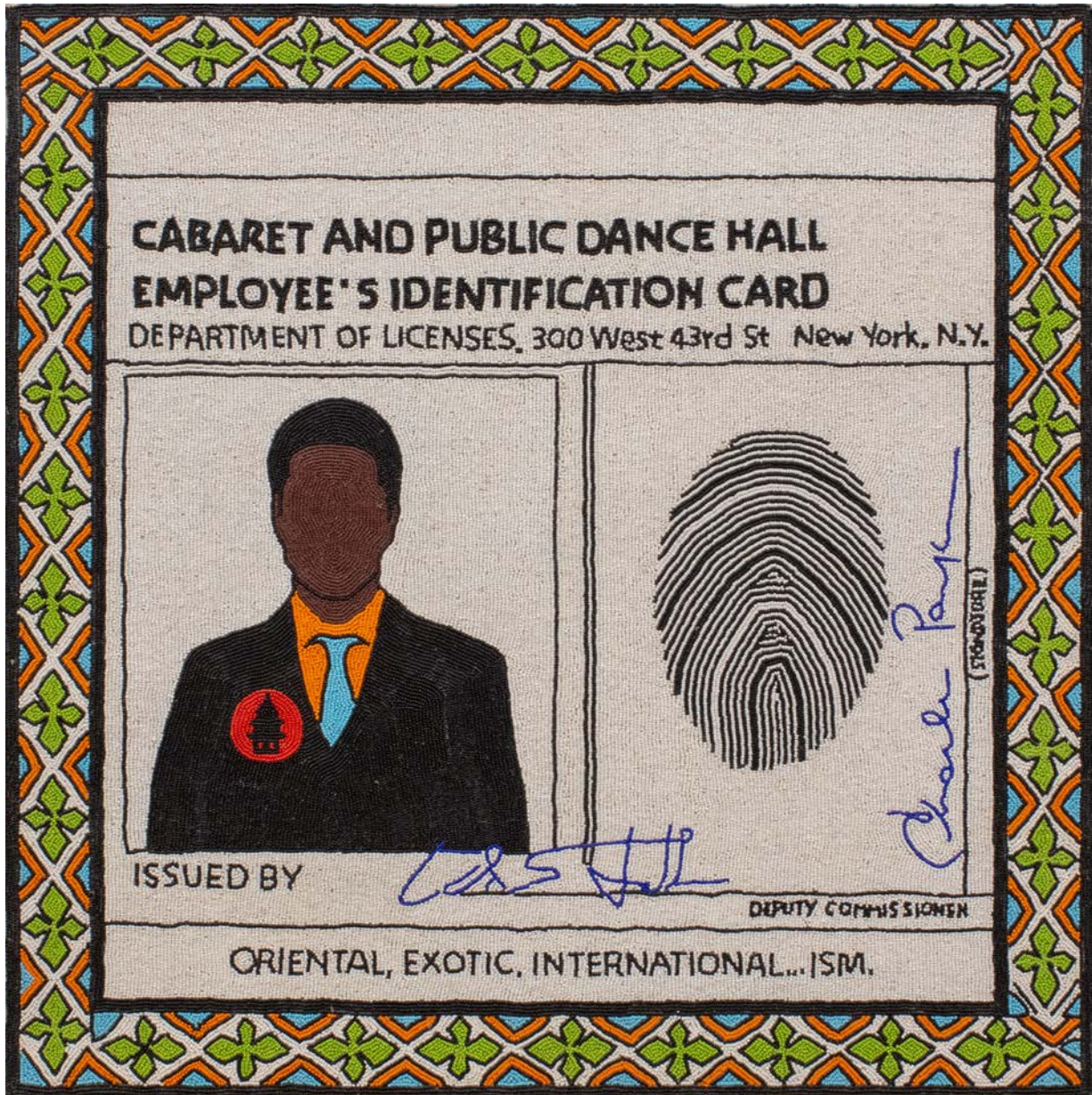




NO MATTER
WHAT WITH
GOD, HE IS
GRACIOUS
AND
MERCIFUL

THE LORD IS GRACIOUS AND MERCIFUL

NO MATTER
WHAT WITH
GOD, HE IS
GRACIOUS
AND
MERCIFUL



ID card
2023
Beads on Canvas
73 x 73 cm



Lawrence of Newark
2023
Beads on Canvas
73 x 73 cm



Find and Seek
2023
Beads on Canvas
153 x 153 cm



Praise
2023
Beads on Canvas
153 x 153 cm



Supreme
2023
Beads on Canvas
153 x 153 cm



Music is Us
2023
Beads on Canvas
73 x 73 cm



Gracious and Merciful
2023
Beads on Canvas
153 x 153 cm



Way of Living
2023
Beads on Canvas
153 x 153 cm



SEEK AND



E S HALL FIND



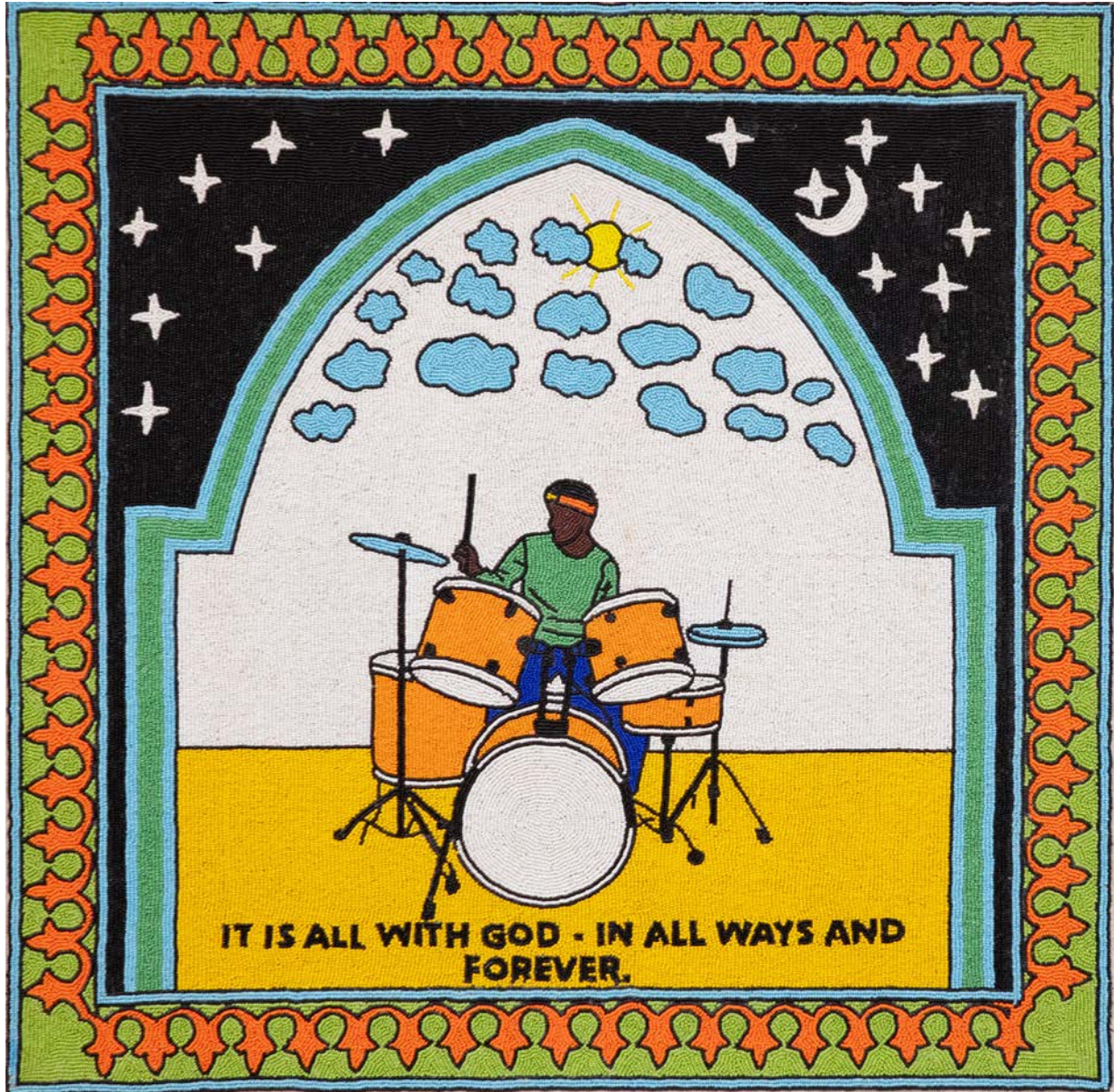
Turn East
2023
Beads on Canvas
73 x 73 cm



Peace and Rhythm
2023
Beads on Canvas
73 x 73 cm



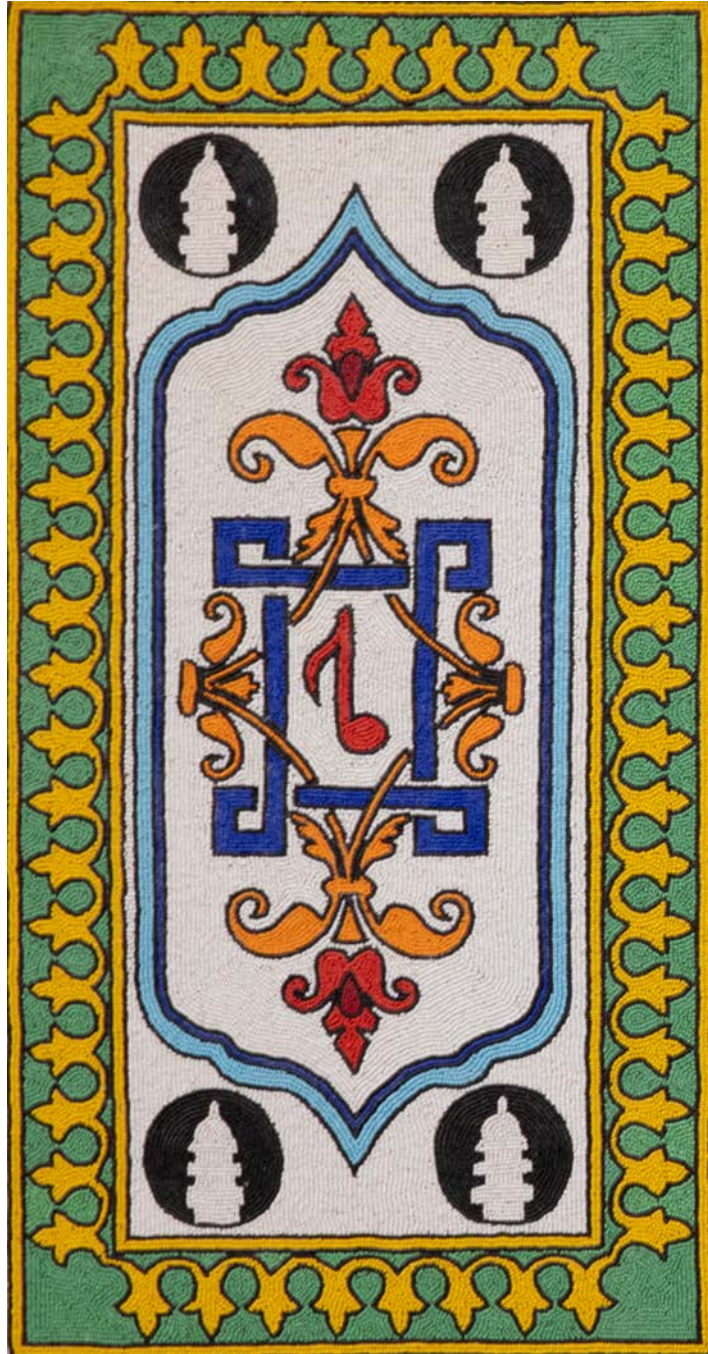
Savoy
2023
Beads on Canvas
73 x 73 cm



Forever
2023
Beads on Canvas
73 x 73 cm



Jazz 3
2023
Beads on Canvas
42.5 x 73 cm



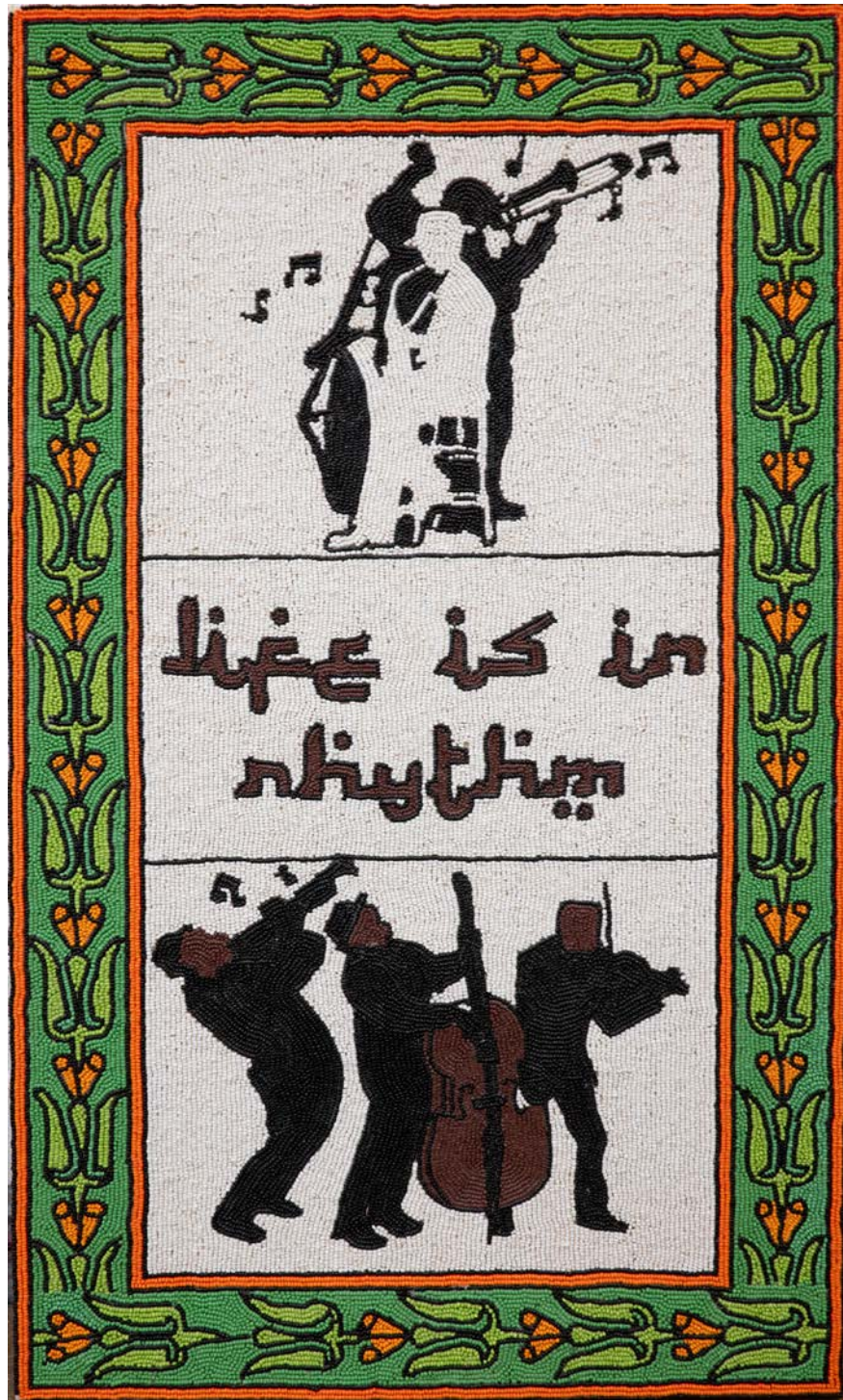
Towers
2023
Beads on Canvas
42.5 x 73 cm







Love
2023
Beads on Canvas
42.5 x 73 cm



Life in Rhythm
2023
Beads on Canvas
42.5 x 73 cm



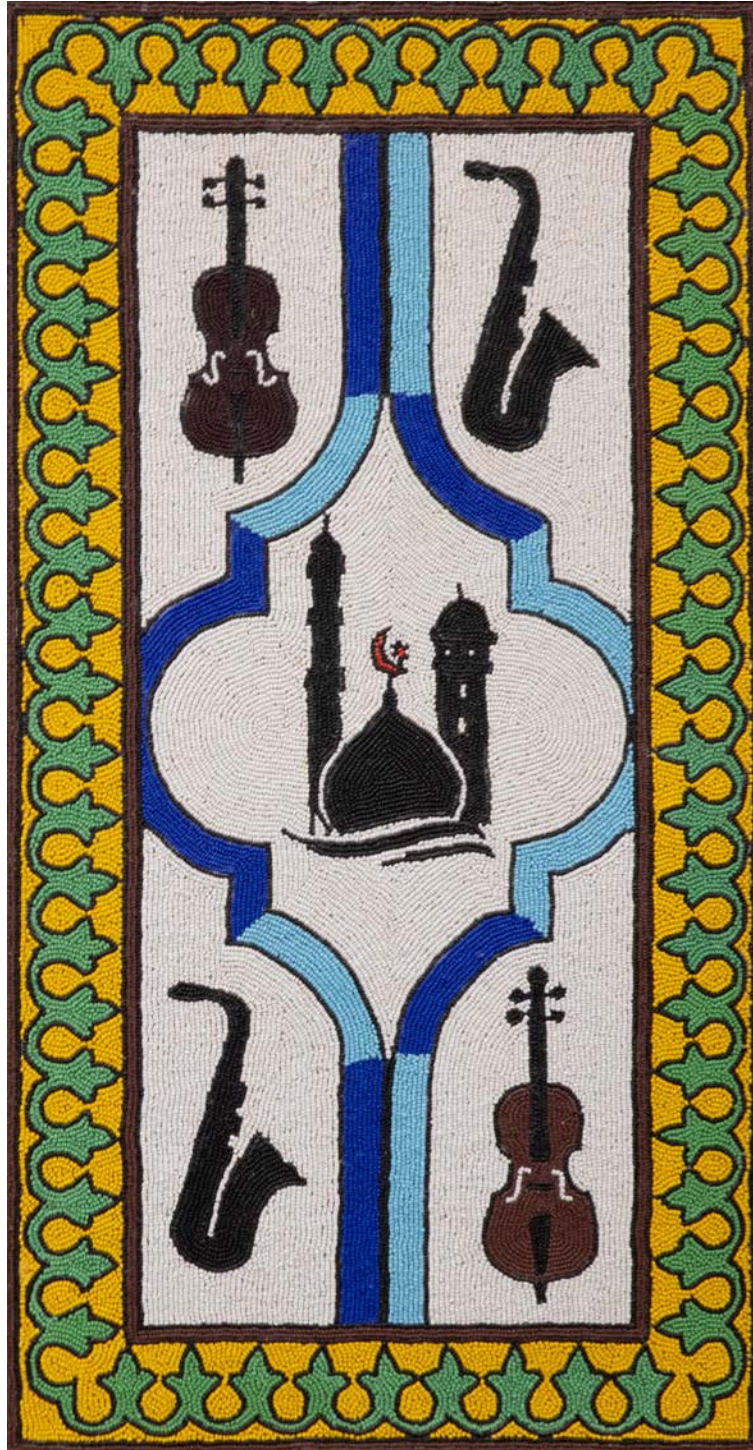
Jazz 4
2023
Beads on Canvas
42.5 x 73 cm



Chello
2023
Beads on Canvas
42.5 x 73 cm



Gramophone 2
2023
Beads on Canvas
42.5 x 73 cm



Instruments
2023
Beads on Canvas
42.5 x 73 cm



IT IS ALL WITH GOD



IN ALL WAYS AND



Struggles
2023
Beads on Canvas
73 x 73 cm



Jihad
2023
Beads on Canvas
73 x 73 cm

Sultan Bin Fahad

Solo Exhibitions

- 2026 Threshold, Athr Gallery, Jeddah
- 2025 CNCVE, Leila Heller Gallery, New York, NY
- 2024 GwPow!, ATHR Gallery, Jeddah, KSA
- 2020 Frequency, Rhinoceros Gallery, Rome Italy
- 2020 The Red Palace, curated by Reem Fadda, the Cultural Foundalon, Abu Dhabi,UAE
- 2019 Gabriel, Fondazione Fendi, Rome, UAE The Red Palace, curated by Reem Fadda, The Red Palace, Riyadh, KSA
- 2016 Qunoot,' Alaan gallery, Riyadh, KSA

Group Exhibitions

- 2025 World Expo, Saudi Pavilion, Osaka, JP
- 2025 Symbolic Gestures, Al Ula, KSA
- 2025 Naseej: Threads of Hope at BEEAH Headquarters, Sharjah, KSA
- 2024 Between Two Cultures, Riyadh, KSA
- 2023 Islamic Biennale, Jeddah, KSA
- 2021 Desert X, Al Ula, KSA
- 2021 Diriyah Biennale, Feeling the Stones, Riyadh , KSA
- 2020 Light Upon Light, group exhibilon at KAFD, Riyadh
- 2019 Bahrain Annual Fine Arts ExhibiBon, The Arena Manama, Bahrain
- 2018 Contemporary Art 014, Madina Art Center, Madina, KSA
- 2018 Mnwr, Haz Gallery, Jeddah, KSA
- 2018 Shara art show, Jeddah, KSA
- 2018 Vantage Point 6, Sharjah Art Foundalon, Sharjah, UAE
- 2018 London Arabia Art & Fashion Week, Jumeirah Carlton Tower Hotel, London, UK
- 2018 Mujard, Mono gallery, Riyadh, KSA
- 2018 Contemporary photography from the Arab world, American University Museum, Katzen Art Center, Washington DC, USA
- 2017 JERUSALEM LIVES, curated by Reem Fadda, The PalesInian Museum, Birzeit, Palestine
- 2016 Tadafuq / Flow, Hafez Gallery, Jeddah, KSA Dreams and Memory, Athr Gallery, Jeddah, KSA

Collections

- 2024 Toledo Museum of Art
- 2022 Royal Commission for AlUla
- 2020 Guggenheim Abu Dhabi
- 2019 Ithra (King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture)
- 2016 Palestine Museum

Publications

Khaleej Times <https://www.khaleejtimes.com/nalon/sharjah/sharjah-islamic-art-feslval-kicks-o-with-vibrantmasterpieces>

A Garden of Possibilities at the Palestinian Museum, Hrag Vartanian, September 2017, Hyperallergic <https://hyperallergic.com/397840/palestinian-museum-opens/>

Sultan bin Fahad and Osama Esid: Sukoon, prole, Tribe Photomagazine issue 6, p.194, April 2018, https://issuu.com/tribephotomagazine/docs/tribe_06

Sharjah Islamic Arts Festival kicks off with vibrant masterpieces, Ahar Abdullah, December 19, 2018.

Harper Bazaar Arabia, Sultan bin Fahad's The Red Palace Exhibition Travels From Riyadh To Jeddah's Khuzam Palace, <https://www.harperbazaararabia.com/culture/art/art-exhibitions/sultan-bin-fahads-the-red-palace-exhibition-riyadh-to-jeddah>, 2019.

Arab News, Sultan Bin Fahad explores spirituality in Rome exhibition, <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1758806/life-style>, 2020.

Artribune, Voices from Saudi Arabia #1. The Artist: Sultan bin Fahad, <https://www.artribune.com/turismo/2019/07/reportage-arabia-saudita-sultan-bin-fahad/>, 2019.

Ocula, Desert X 2022, <https://ocula.com/magazine/spotlight/desert-x-alula-2022/>, 2022.

Authenticite, Gems of Arabia, <https://authenticite.me/gems-of-arabia/hrh-prince-sultan-bin-fahad/>, 2022.

Arab News, 5 highlights from the Islamic Arts Biennale in Jeddah, <https://www.arabnews.com/node/2270336/life-style>, 2023.

Selections Arts, Beyond Borders: Sultan bin Fahad, <https://selectionsarts.com/sultan-bin-fahad/>, 2023.

To see more publications and press go to sultanbinfahad.com

Awards

2026 Takreem America Foundation award of excellence Houston, TX

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Front Cover image

Yusef

2026

Oil on Canvas

62.5 x 62.5 cm

Back cover image

Etta

2026

Oil on Canvas

62.5 x 62.5 cm

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