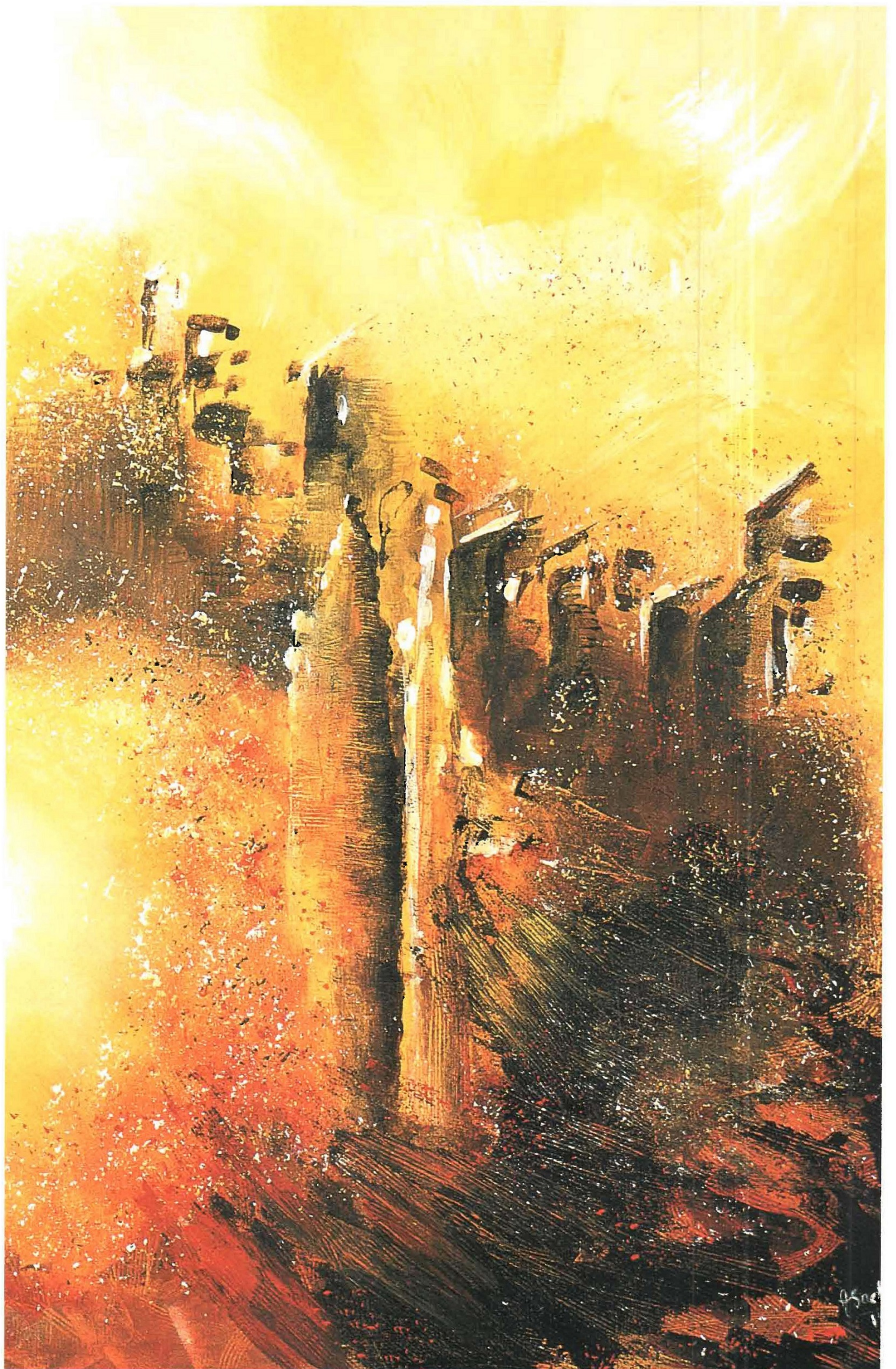


NATURE & DANCE

Afaf Sader has always
refused to consider painting as a hobby, seeing it as a profession in its own right. And if today, she has decided to organise her very first exhibition, with just forty of her large number of canvasses, it's partly thanks to her husband who has always encouraged her in her painting





'It's the mix of colours in particular that make you admire a painting from the past... Today the task of the contemporary artist is simplified with an infinity of nuances and hundreds of mixtures of colours'

Did you teach yourself painting?

Not at all, I studied Fine Arts at the Assaad Renno school, the great Lebanese painter. You always start with classical painting, I've always been influenced by impressionism which also belongs to the classical. Today, I do representational paintings and I do watercolours, oils and in particular acrylics.

Do watercolours involve a difficult technique?

They're easier than oil but it's impossible to make corrections to a proof. And you can't play with white because it's the background. I have a predilection for acrylic and its advantage is that it dries quickly.

In effect I've found my style, I'm learning to perfect it, noth-

ing gets done without documentation.

What are your favourite subjects?

Nature, dance and my colours are a bit out of the ordinary.

Which painter do you most admire?

Renoir, the impressionist who dared to use new mixtures of colours like mauve. His paintings seem to be out of a dream, a vision. I also like Wagih Nahle and Samir Abi Rached.

Where do you paint?

I have a spacious studio at home in Mar Roukoz.

Do you need to be alone?

No, I paint in front of everyone. Of course I prefer to be quiet, to

avoid answering the phone and my husband helps me a lot, he works in the printing field.

Do you think art can change the world in any way?

Art is the reflection of civilisation and we have civilisation a billion times over. Often, Easterners aren't aware of the richness of our heritage and Lebanese artists help to export our culture abroad.

Has Lebanese art evolved in the same way in other countries?

Don't you get the impression that the Lebanese artist is less daring than other Eastern artists? I think that the key to success is risk. If you fear something you can't advance. I'm talking about myself as well.

Do you like what you see in Lebanese galleries?

I like some things and others not at all and there are some paintings I don't understand.

What is the definition of beauty?

It's a relative notion, which depends on each person's taste. But you can't deny that there are some great painters whether you like them or not. It's the mix of colours in particular that make you admire a painting from the past, Michelangelo for example. Today the task of the contemporary artist is simplified with an infinity of nuances and hundreds of mixtures of colours that you can buy in a tube. And to make inspiration easier there is photography.

Music, I love, I can't live without music, all types of music, especially Tchaikovsky.

After my travels, I accumulate images and experiences and I pour them onto the canvas. The white mummies of Montmartre inspired me and I made a painting out of it. Everything inspires me: museums, people, nature. I like car journeys as you can seize the spirit, the soul of a region. I loved the Lavandou region in France, their tradition of tuna fishing and village evenings. I also loved Biarritz.

Is sadness creative?

When I'm depressed, I watch cartoons. I only have one sad painting. You have to change the memory. After a war it's important to forget violence. I don't like crying. My colours are lively and don't show any melancholy.

Do you ever correct your paintings?

Yes, and I listen to the advice of others. I often give paintings to friends. And then I have a library, I never stop learning or finding about things. □