



Exhibition 3: **Huguette Caland**

Curated by Mohammed Rashid Al-Thani
January 18 - April 18, 2018

Institute of Arab and Islamic Art

IAIA presented the first institutional survey of Lebanese artist Huguette Caland in New York City. *Exhibition 2: Huguette Caland* featured four decades of her paintings, drawings, caftans, and smocks, including a selection of never-before exhibited drawings and the first caftan Caland created. Born into a cosmopolitan and political family in Beirut in 1931, Caland was the daughter of the first President of the independent Republic of Lebanon, but defied social expectations and moved to Paris in the 1970s to become an artist. This exhibition explores Caland's sustained engagement with lines over the course of her remarkable and diverse career. While the artist's interdisciplinary practice, which traverses art, design, and fashion, has historically been framed in terms of eroticism and the body, *Exhibition 2* illuminates the often overlooked formal innovations of Caland's work.

In Paris, Caland met the fashion designer Pierre Cardin, who deeply admired her kaftans, and asked her to design a collection under his label. After producing a caftan collection for Cardin, as well as numerous of drawings and paintings, Caland moved to Los Angeles in 1987, where she lived and worked until recently relocating back to Beirut. In both fashion and painting, Caland has consistently engaged with the visibility of the female body, and is best known for her sustained investigation of how society politicizes female sexuality, often utilizing her own body as a subject. *Exhibition 2* contends that the line is a key element of Caland's practice, a formative tool guiding her explorations across media. Whether they are subtly evoking eroticism, constructing abstract figures on her kaftans, minimally defining the faces in her works on paper, or cross-stitched in obsessive, grid-like patterns in her more recent works, lines feature prominently throughout Caland's extensive oeuvre.

By tracing this visual development, which stretches from Caland's earlier, more figurative works to her recent minimal abstractions, *Exhibition 2* shares an untold story about Caland and her passion-driven, critical engagement with the formal politics of beauty and femininity.



Mission

The Institute of Arab and Islamic Art (IAIA) is an independent, non-profit center that promotes and advances the artistic and cultural dialogue between New York City and the Arab and Islamic worlds. Through outreach programs, a multidisciplinary exhibition space, a knowledge-building facility, residency program and an emphasis on collaborations with cultural organizations around the globe, IAIA provides a convivial, welcoming environment to learn about and engage with an often over-simplified culture.

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