

During the seventies, her deep attachment to Lebanese landscapes sparked a series of almost abstract paintings depicting variations of light on the slopes of Mount Sannine, a mountain peak that can be seen from Beirut.

The country's long-running civil war eventually forced her to leave Lebanon in 1980 from where she moved to California. It was there, in 1982, that Simone Fattal stumbled, by “chance” she says, into the role of a publisher, founding and successfully running The Post-Apollo Press, specialized in experimental poetry and literature as well as in English translations of European and Arabic-language books.

During this period she also kept up her work as an artist. A course at the Art Institute of California - San Francisco resulted in the discovery and immediate love of ceramic clay, which she has continued to experiment with, later collaborating over a number of years with master ceramist Hans Spinner at his studio near Grasse in Southern France. Clay was a medium from which simple, timeless forms could emerge and her sculptures all possess a certain characteristic primal force that comes from melding elements of archeology, art history, politics and spirituality.

Recurrent in her early ceramic work is the figure of a man, standing warrior-like, upright against all odds, perhaps symbolic of a troubled past in the Middle East, but all the more powerful when viewed today. Simone Fattal's collages or assemblages of newspaper cuttings, adverts and family photos also display a similar weaving of temporal strands, mixing Mesopotamian art, mundane contemporary news stories, historical and personal events.

Above all, this portrait of Simone Fattal would be incomplete without reference to the epic poems that underlie her work. Stepping out of the verses of Gilgamesh, Homer's Odyssey and early creation myths we recognize Enkido, Ulysses and Balkis accompanied by a menagerie of fabulous beasts including centaurs, bulls and lions. Mythological stories for Simone Fattal are not just tales of heroic deeds. They represent a search for universal truths.

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