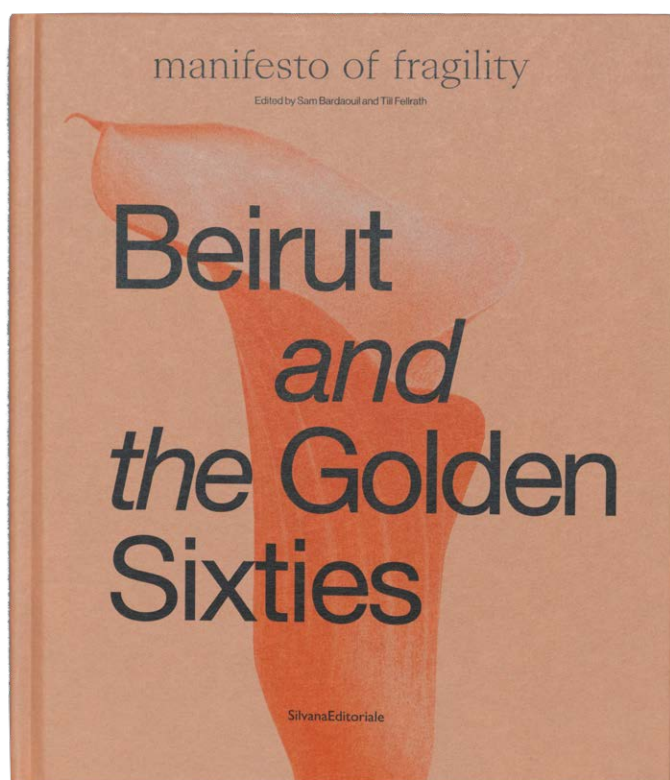
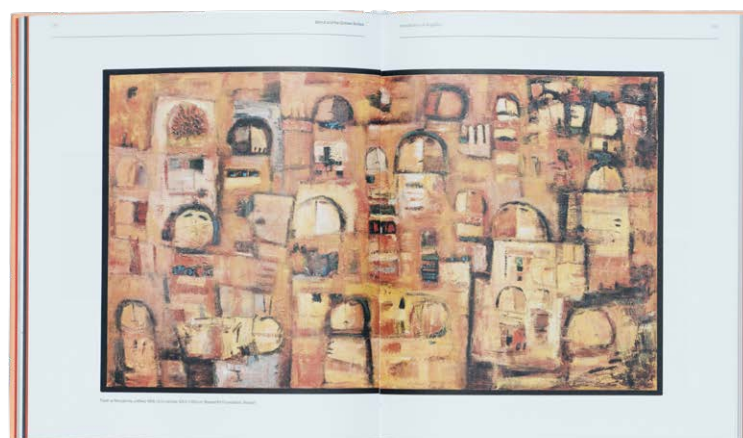


MANIFESTO OF FRAGILITY: BEIRUT AND THE GOLDEN SIXTIES



Publisher: SilvanaEditoriale
silvanaeditoriale.it

Price: \$45
Canvas rating ★★★★★



Beirut has often been characterised as resilient, never failing to pick up the pieces despite blow after blow to its cultural life, economy and infrastructure, from the civil war to the 2020 blast. However, for the editors of *Beirut and the Golden Sixties*, the city is instead a 'manifesto of fragility'. The theme of last year's Lyon Biennale, this notion suggests that the vulnerability of human existence can be harnessed to enact resistance through collective action. *Beirut and the Golden Sixties* was one of the three main exhibitions in the biennale responding to this theme, and this catalogue provides an in-depth look of the show.

The introduction sets the scene with an historical overview of the period between Lebanon's 1943 independence from the French Mandate and the 1975 civil war, during which the country's modernist art movement took shape alongside, and through, major political shifts. Paying homage to the agents of this movement, the book features 230 works by 34 artists including Etel Adnan, Dia

Al-Zawawi and Aref El Rayess, organised into five thematic sections that reflect the structure of the exhibition: 'Le Port de Beyrouth', 'Lovers', 'Takween', 'Monster and Child' and 'Blood of the Phoenix'.

We learn about the diverse communities that inhabited Beirut, from the cosmopolitan cultural set to populations that were excluded from the leisure and excess of the art scene, such as the Armenian refugees housed in camps that Paul Guiragossian depicted in his oil paintings. The book also explores the inspiration derived from the international sexual liberation and women's movements by artists such as Cici Sursock, who painted surrealist nudes that distort idealised images of the body. There are also extracts from the script of Joana Hadjithomas and Khalil Joreige's deeply moving two-part video work commissioned especially for the exhibition, with the artists proposing that the memory of Beirut's cultural heyday enables us to imagine and build another epoch of artistic excellence.