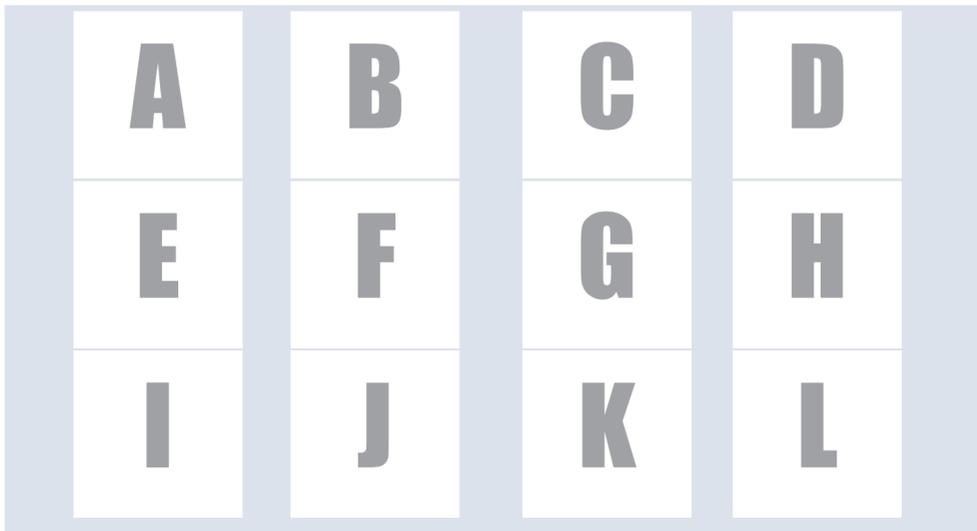


The First Middle Eastern Refugee Quilt



The squares for this quilt were made in 2016 by refugees from Syria, Iraq and Palestine. The artists have all sought refuge in Amman, Jordan. They have formed a cooperative, the Hope Workshop, to produce handicrafts and work under the auspices of the Collateral Repair Project. Allyson Hawkins, an Advocacy Project Peace Fellow, coordinated the embroidering in Amman.



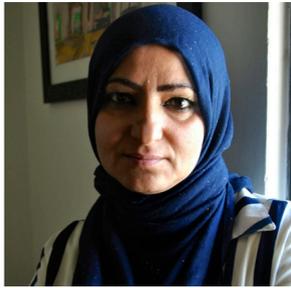
The squares were assembled into quilts by the Quilters By The Sea guild in Portsmouth, Rhode Island led by Ruth Sears, above right. Other quilters were Betty Davis, Loretta Krebel, Lori Bessette, Sara Jane Tirpaek and Sarah Sullivan. Kim and Larry Ingeneri covered the costs, and hosted the quilters. Allison Wilbur added backing and completed the quilting.

Asad Brought Bombs, Not Peace



A. Nafiza led a peaceful life with her family in the countryside outside Damascus before the war. But, the family fled when the area became too dangerous. The dove in her design represents the promises of Bashar al-Assad, who told the Syrian people that he would bring peace, but brought bombs as shown by the branch carrying the TNT. Nafiza asked that her face not be shown.

Remembering The Sister I left Behind



B. Ikhlhas was living in Ramadi, Anbar Province, Iraq, when militants entered her town and killed her cousin. Ikhlhas and her sister managed to escape, but her sister was unable to leave Iraq with Ikhlhas. The embroidery shows her sister's house in Ramadi. Ikhlhas is embracing her sister and conveying the feelings of loss that come with leaving family members behind.

They Came For Me At Night



C. Wa'ad fled to Jordan from Iraq after a terrifying incident, which she describes in this square. Wa'ad lived alone in Baghdad. One night, a group of militiamen burst into her home and beat her. The intruders wore black and she could only see their eyes.

Remembering Friends Who Died In Iraq



D. Suzanne lost many family members, friends and neighbors during the war in Iraq. Her design recalls her home in Iraq, which she remembers with great affection. However, she also remembers the nearby cemetery when she thinks of her lost friends. Tombstones loom over her idyllic house.

Frightened By The Planes



E. This square by Suzanne shows her daughter in a field picking wild flowers in Iraq, something that she loved doing before the war. But there is a plane overhead and the loud noise scares the child. Her daughter still cries when she hears the sound of planes.

Women Fleeing From Gaza



F. Soltana's roots are in Yaffa and Gaza. She came to Jordan after the 1967 War. Her embroidery shows people fleeing from the war in Gaza. They have left their homes for tents in the desert. The women are carrying their belongings on top of their heads.

Destroyed By Planes



G. Amal was hoping to follow her family to Jordan from Syria, but the violence in her home town of Dara'a made it impossible, and she reached Amman two years later. Her embroidered square recalls the horrifying day that a plane dropped a bomb on her house, injuring her brother. Amal herself was unharmed, but made up her mind to leave.

Refugees Flee By Boat



H. Fakhriaya's embroidery shows refugees attempting to reach Turkey by sea. When Fakhriaya was planning to flee Iraq, she had hoped to find a smuggler who would take her and her daughter to Turkey. But she then began to read terrifying stories of failed crossing attempts, drownings and crime along the way. Fakhriaya was deeply affected, and decided to stay in Amman with her daughter Aftab.

So Sad - Two Words Sum It All Up



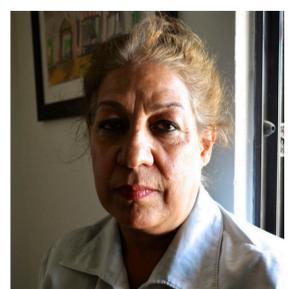
I. The artist of this embroidered square chose to remain anonymous. Her square shows a young refugee thinking back to his time in Iraq and carries the poignant message - "So Sad!!"

Saying Goodbye To My Family



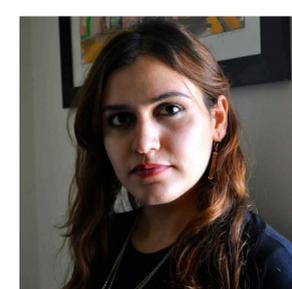
J. Ikhlhas arrived in Jordan, alone, after a very risky journey. Her embroidery shows a map of Iraq underneath a plane. Ikhlhas is on the plane, saying goodbye to her family members. They include her sister, who was forced to remain behind in Iraq. This has left Ikhlhas feeling alone and sad.

My Life Before And After



K. Wa'ad fled Iraq in 2015 and her embroidery shows the home she left behind in Baghdad. Wa'ad misses the house, which was large and had a beautiful garden. A fence can be seen cutting across the image of the building. This represents the border between Iraq and Jordan. On the far side of the fence Wa'ad has stitched a tent, depicting the temporary house that she rents in Amman.

Women Refugees Under Pressure



L. Roa'a left Baghdad with her father, mother and two sisters in 2013. Her embroidery shows a woman surrounded by several other figures that represent society, culture and religion, and the many pressures that they place on women. Roa'a feels that women are not permitted to express their true feelings. This is particularly acute for refugees in a new country and culture.