

KAMALA IBRAHIM ISHAG



b.1939 Omdurman, Sudan

Kamala Ibrahim Ishag (b. 1939) was amongst the first women artists to graduate from the College of Fine and Applied Art in Khartoum in 1963, which she followed with studies in Mural Painting at the RCA in London between 1964 and 1966 and Lithography, Typography and Illustration from 1968-9.

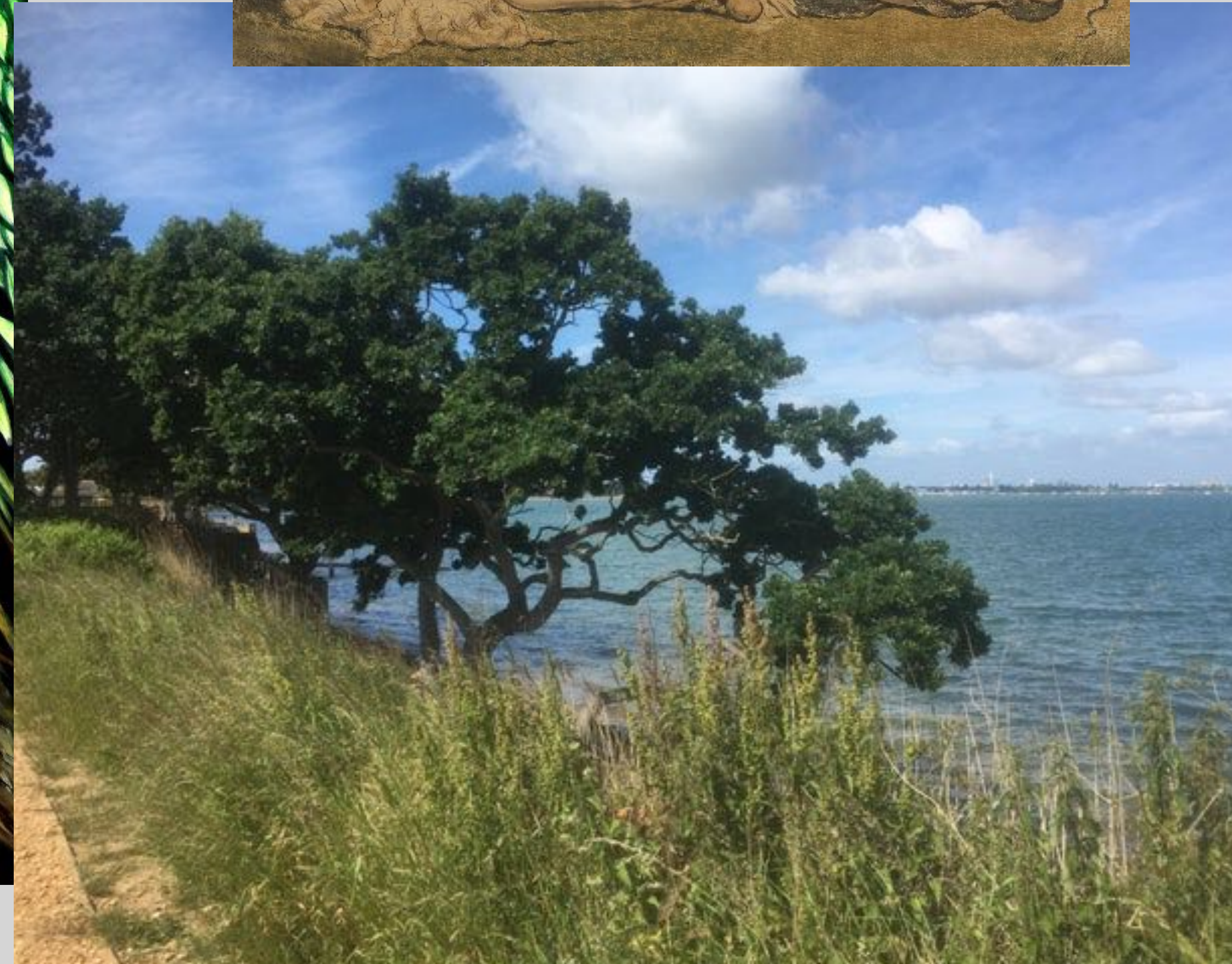
Ishag's work is inspired by the flora in her Khartoum home garden, mythology, the stories of spirits told by her mother and grandmothers, and the field research she carried out with spiritualist women convening healing Zar ceremonies, a traditional practice in North Africa and the surrounding region. From her time spent in London, Ishag has also drawn on William Blake's visionary subjects and Francis Bacon's distorted figures which she connected to the reflections of human faces and figures she saw during the 1960s in the curved windows of Underground trains.

Often human and plant forms intertwine, in a distinctive palette rooted in the colours of the sun, sand and sky and contemplate the cyclical flow of life and the intangible aspects of women's lives in Sudan.

<https://www.serpentinegalleries.org/whats-on/kamala-ibrahim-ishag/>



Procession (Zaar), 2015. Courtesy the artist. Photo: Mohamed Noureldin Abdallah Ahmed. © Kamala Ibrahim Ishag.





Dinner Table with Embroidered Cloth, 1974. Courtesy of the Sharjah Art Foundation Collection.



Preparation of Incense - Zār Ceremony
signed and dated 2015 (lower centre)
oil on canvas
139.5 by 141cm., 55 by 55½in.

The Zār Ceremony is a practice whereby the individual is exorcised of the evil spirit leaving them in a trance-like state. Ishaq's *Preparation of Incense* depicts thirteen women in a collective space, stacked on top of one another, showing their unity and perseverance in their ordeal. ([sothebys.com](https://www.sothebys.com))



Women in Cubes, 2015. Oil on canvas, 155 x 115 cm.
From the collection of Samia Omer Osman. Courtesy
of the Sharjah Art Foundation.



Figures and Spirits 2, 1970

Ink and gouache on paper

6 11/16 × 4 3/4" (17 × 12 cm)



THE SEAT - ZAR CEREMONY

signed and dated 2016 (lower right)

oil on canvas

100 by 75cm., 39½ by 29½in.



17 X 11

