The poster has played a prominent role as a tool for the dissemination of thought, political messaging and calls for mobilisation in times of revolution throughout history. Efficient and inexpensive to produce, posters can be printed quickly by various methods, such as offset and lithography. Overnight, an entire city can be blanketed with posters, swiftly yielding a desired effect.

The Palestinian political poster came to prominence between the mid-1960s and late-1980s as a means of motivation, mobilisation and political messaging throughout the Palestinian revolution and its armed struggle. Its proliferation in that period was bolstered by the establishment, in 1965, of the Palestine Liberation Organisation’s National Arts and Culture Unit led by Palestinian artist Ismail Shammout.

Palestinian political Posters were an affirmation of the justness of the cause and a medium through which to expose the crimes of the Zionist project while undercutting its propaganda. The emergence and spread of these posters in the public sphere was an assertion of the existence of a Palestinian people and a challenge to those who denied it. They also served to counter the stereotypes associated with Palestinians and propagated by some Western media. The poster was an ideal medium on which to depict the land of Palestine — lost for refugees, and unknown to those born outside of it — thus evoking its image in Palestinian minds.

Posters were mostly produced outside of Palestine’s geographic borders, as their production and dissemination was outlawed by Israeli occupation authorities. They were printed in Beirut, Tunis, and cities around the world where the PLO was actively represented.

The spirit of the Palestinian revolution and struggle inspired various political movements and revolutions confronting imperialism and colonialism around the world. That spirit elicited broad international solidarity and fed a border-transcendent revolutionary imagination, which had been ignited by the Palestine Liberation Organisation. Artists and designers the world over were drawn into the orbit of the Palestinian cause and its justness; many would contribute by designing political posters. Among them were Mohieddine el-Labbad (Egypt), Dia Azzawi (Iraq), Kadhim Hayder (Iraq), Mona Saudi (Jordan/Palestine), Mohamed Shabaa (Morocco), Kamal Boullata (Palestine), Sliman Mansour (Palestine), Nabil Anani (Palestine), Marc Rudin (Switzerland), Jack Kowalski (Poland),Toshio Satoh (Japan) Burhan Karkoutly (Syria), and Youssef Abdelke (Syria). The Palestinian struggle enriched their practices and offered them opportunities to innovate and experiment with their artistic methods and aesthetics, especially given the freedom afforded to them by the PLO to do so.

Numerous exhibitions and competitions featuring the Palestinian political poster and themes of struggle and liberation were held during that period, including the International Exhibition on Palestine, organised by the PLO in Beirut in 1978. The International Poster Exhibition, held in Baghdad in 1979, explored two themes: ‘Third-world Liberation Struggle’ and ‘Palestine, a Stolen Homeland’. Pedro Laperal designed its thematic poster, and participating artists’ works tackled a range of issues linked to the Palestinian revolution and the return of refugees. Among the themes were the beauty of the stolen land, armed struggle and the fida’iyin, memorialising the revolutionary shaheed, the brutality of the Zionist project and the plight of Palestinian refugees. The iconographic symbols employed included the map of Palestine, the olive, pomegranate and orange, the keffiyeh and traditional Palestinian dress, the key (representing the return of refugees), weaponry, Palestinian embroidery, birds and the dove in particular, the farmer, flowers and the anemone. Each of these symbols holds a special sentimental value in the Palestinian collective imagination and cultural heritage.

**WALL TEXT**

*Glimmer of a Grove Beyond* explores representations of Palestinian land and natural geography through an array of political posters drawn from the Palestinian Museum’s permanent collection. The collection includes a set of 540 Palestinian political posters, produced between the late 1960s and early 1990s, which were collected and generously donated by ambassador Ali Kazak.

The exhibition addresses the notion of landscape and the alterations inflicted on Palestine’s geography, sometimes represented through orientalist photography, and at times as lost geography or as fantasy. Those alterations shaped the political project and ideologies of the day, which in turn were reflected in the artistic and visual languages employed in posters.

*Glimmer of a Grove Beyond* aims to outline links among the various artistic styles and methods of landscape representation, in addition to their fluctuating relation to the contemporary political project and historical circumstance. It complements its preceding exhibition, *Intimate Terrains*, and offers an opportunity to examine the landscape through an additional, unique artform: the poster.

The exhibition is divided into seven sections, classified according to iconography or topic: Sowing Liberation, Agency and Sanctity, Devastation as Landscape, Manifesting Palestine, Fida’i, Flowers and Anemones, and Reclaiming the Orange. Each section highlights distinct methods in which symbols or topics were employed, and sheds light on their relation to landscape.

The title of the exhibition, *Glimmer of a Grove Beyond,* was inspired by French poet Jean Genet’s memoirs, in which he recounts seeing the lights of the Galilee glimmering beyond the Jordanian frontier, where he was encamped with Palestinian fida’iyin in the early 1970s.