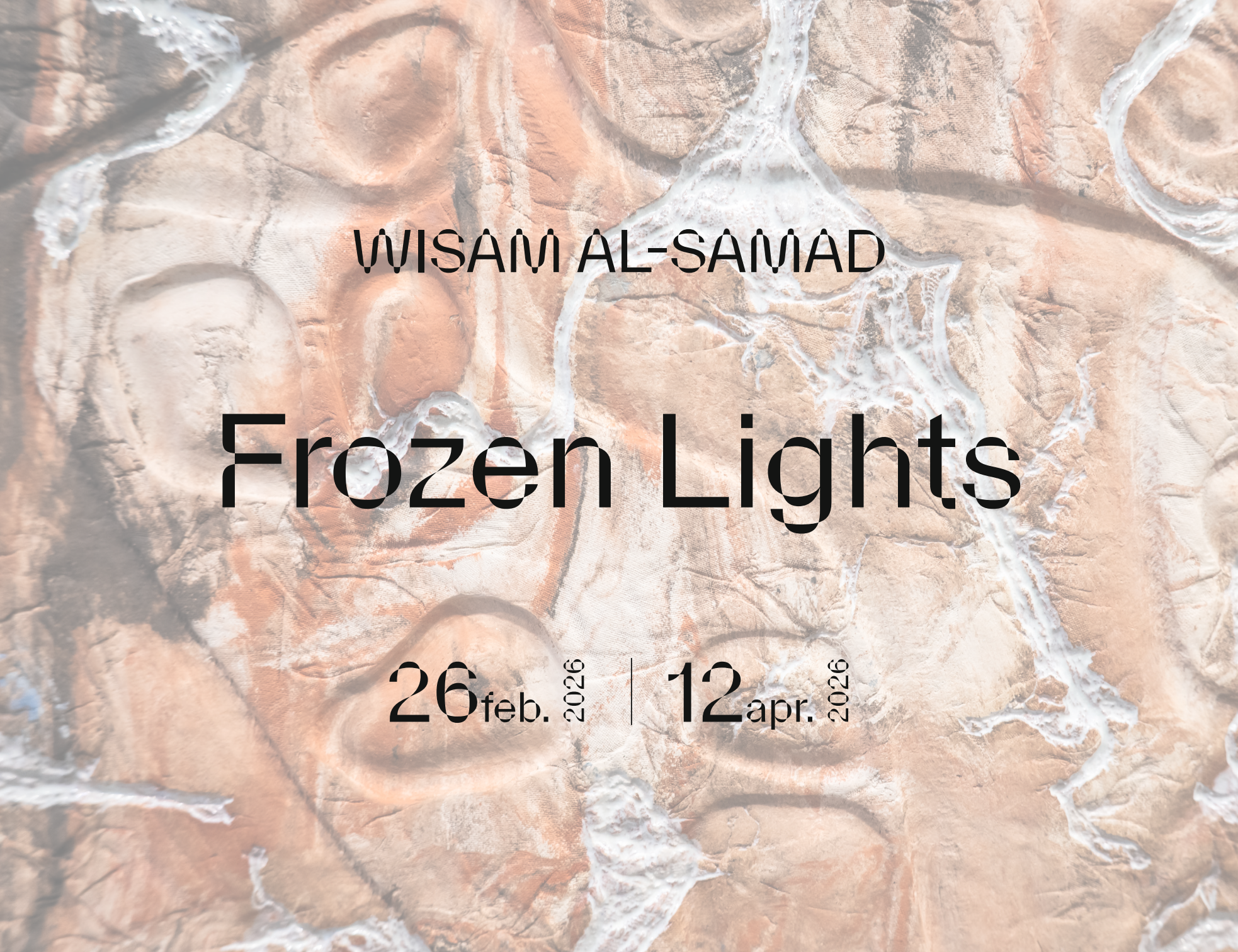




WISAM AL-SAMAD

Frozen Lights

26_{feb.} 2026

| 12_{apr.} 2026

BIOGRAPHY

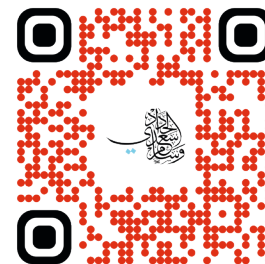
Wisam Al-Samad is a ceramic artist based in Norway. In his artistic work, he primarily creates ceramic wall pieces and sculptural installations that explore themes of love, language, and cultural memory. Using clay, high-fired stoneware, lustre, and calligraphic elements, he examines how words, forms, and materials can convey emotions, experiences, and history.

The colour palette in Al-Samad's work is inspired by hues from the East and the subtle shades of the northern lights. Warm earth tones, deep blues and greens, and metallic surfaces interact as carriers of light, movement, and emotional tension.

His works combine references to Norwegian cultural heritage—such as rock carvings and landscapes—with influences from Mesopotamia's visual and linguistic traditions. Calligraphy serves as both a formal and conceptual element, with many works incorporating words and concepts that explore the nuances of love.

Al-Samad was educated at the College of Fine Arts at the University of Baghdad and the Institute of Fine Arts in Baghdad. He has held solo exhibitions and participated in numerous exhibitions in Norway, including at RAM Gallery in Oslo (2025), Skien Kunstsenter (2025), and KRAFT in Bergen (2024), as well as international biennials and festivals such as the Aveiro International Biennale of Artistic Ceramics in Portugal (2025), the International Ceramics Festival Mino in Japan (2024), and Ceramic Art Andenne in Belgium (2015).

His work is represented in both public and private collections, and he is a member of the International Academy of Ceramics (IAC) in Switzerland. Educational outreach aimed at children, youth, and older adults, with a focus on craftsmanship, participation, and community, forms an important part of his artistic practice.





WISAM AL-SAMAD

FROZEN LIGHT

26.02.26 → 12.04.26

In his exhibition *Frozen Light*, Wisam Al-Samad showcases a new monumental wall piece where nature's tiniest structures become carriers of existential and cultural questions. The central work, *Snowflake* (2026), measures over 5.5 metres and is made up of a cohesive form built from numerous hexagonal units in high-fired stoneware.

The snowflake is not simply a decorative motif but a foundational principle. In nature, every snow crystal forms according to the same geometric laws, yet no two are identical. Al-Samad uses this duality as his starting point: repetition and variation, system and freedom, order and deviation. Each unit in the work shares a close kinship with the others, yet has its own texture, height, and inner rhythm. Gentle shifts create a soft movement across the surface, allowing light to travel across the form—emerging, vanishing, sparkling, and softening depending on the viewer's perspective.

In several of the units, subtle references to the artist's cultural background can be observed—forms and signs that flow into the hexagonal structure without overpowering it. Consequently, a space arises in which personal memory and universal order coexist.

In *Frozen Light*, snow is not just a natural phenomenon, but also a metaphor, symbolising both stillness and danger, as well as clarity and insight. For Al-Samad, snow does not only mean coldness; it is a space for reflection. In the meeting between the structure of the snow and the warmth of the clay, an image of human experience emerges: We are shaped by the same fundamental structures, yet each of us bears our own unique difference.

Al-Samad's artistic practice is rooted in the millennia-old Mesopotamian ceramic tradition. This tradition features polyphonic decorations on both glazed and unglazed ceramics for utilitarian and decorative purposes. Over the years, Al-Samad has developed a visual language that reflects his Arabic heritage through a combination of calligraphy, geometric principles, and modernist compositions. After being forced into exile from Iraq, he has lived in Norway since 2009. Living across different cultures forms the foundation of his work, where themes of identity, belonging, and language are explored.

In his art, Wisam Al-Samad mainly works with ceramic wall pieces and sculptural installations. By using earthenware, high-fired stoneware, lustre glaze, and calligraphic

elements, he explores how words, forms, and materials can convey emotions and histories. Al-Samad's works blend references to Norwegian cultural heritage—such as petroglyphs and landscapes—with influences from the visual and linguistic traditions of Mesopotamia.

Wisam Al-Samad studied at the College of Fine Arts at the University of Baghdad and the Academy of Fine Arts in Baghdad. He has participated in numerous exhibitions in Norway, including at RAM Galleri in Oslo (2025), Telemark Kunstsenter (2025), and KRAFT in Bergen (2024), as well as international biennials and festivals such as the Aveiro International Biennale of Artistic Ceramics in Portugal (2025), the International Ceramics Festival Mino in Japan (2024), and Ceramic Art Andenne in Belgium (2015).

Al-Samad's work is represented in both public and private collections. He is a member of the International Academy of Ceramics in Switzerland. His artistic practice focuses on educational outreach to children, young people, and older adults, emphasising craft and community engagement.

This exhibition is supported by the Arts Council of Norway, the City of Oslo, and art centres in Norway.

Kunstnerforbundet

Translation: Ali Saleem



01

SNOWFLAKE



Consists of 27 parts forming a unified whole.
Each part is unique within the same structure.
The work reflects the balance between the individual and the collective.
A reflection on difference and connection.

200 × 550 × 8 cm
Stoneware, 1240 °C
2026

02

THE ROAD TO AURORA



A work consisting of 20 parts forming a continuous journey.
Inspired by the colours and movements of the northern lights.
Each part carries a synonym for the word “love” in Arabic.
The work reflects love as an ongoing path.

120x660x40 cm
Stoneware, 1240 °C
2025

03

LAVENDER LIGHT



A work about a soft, inner light.
 The lavender colour symbolises calm and balance.
 The form is open, evoking a sense of an embrace.
 The work expresses stillness and reflection.

85 × 90 × 5 cm
 Stoneware, 1240 °C
 2026

04

FOUR SEASON JOURNEY



A work in four parts representing the seasons as human states.
The colours depict the cycle of life—from growth to stillness.
White functions as a symbol of memory and continuity.
The circular form reflects the eternal movement of life.

82 × 100 × 5 cm
Stoneware, 1240 °C
2026

05

LIGHT UNDER THE ICE



Explores life that exists beneath the surface.
White conceals, while green tones suggest growth.
Seed-like forms point toward new beginnings.
The work is about hope and enduring life.

85 × 99 × 4 cm
Stoneware, 1240 °C
2026



EMBERS OF SNOW



Fragmented forms explore the relationship between fire and snow.
White conceals an inner warmth that never disappears.
Red areas act as embers beneath the surface.
The work addresses hidden energy and inner tension.

75 × 95 × 3 cm
Stoneware, 1240 °C
2026

07

TURQUOISE LIGHT



Multiple forms create a unified whole.
Turquoise represents protection and inner strength.
The fragmentation reflects human experience.
Light binds the parts together.

85 × 98 × 5 cm
Stoneware, 1240 °C
2026

BETWEEN SNOWFLAKES AND FRAGMENTS OF MEMORY, FROZEN LIGHT EMERGES — WISAM AL-SAMAD

The Iraqi artist based in Norway presents *Frozen Light* at Kunstnerforbundet in Oslo, an exhibition that brings together Mesopotamian memory and the geometry of nature in high-fired ceramic sculptures.

Dozens of hexagonal modules in high-fired stoneware, each unique in texture, height, and chromatic vibration: this is the first image greeting visitors to *Frozen Light*, a solo exhibition by Iraqi-Norwegian artist Wisam Al-Samad, which opened on February 26 at Kunstnerforbundet in Oslo and runs through April 12, 2026.

The centerpiece of the show, titled *Snowflake* (2026), spans over 5.5 meters and was built from a deceptively simple premise: no two snowflakes are identical, yet all follow the same geometric laws. Al-Samad translated this duality of nature into sculptural language, exploring repetition and deviation, order and freedom, and system and singularity.

A visitor contemplates the *Snowflake* (2026) panel, a modular stoneware installation that covers the entire gallery wall.

“Snow does not only mean coldness,” says Al-Samad. “It is a space for reflection. In the meeting between the structure of the snow and the warmth of the clay, an image of human experience emerges: we are shaped by the

same fundamental structures, yet each of us carries our own unique difference.”

Al-Samad was born in Baghdad and studied at the College of Fine Arts at the University of Baghdad and the Academy of Fine Arts in the Iraqi capital. Forced into exile, he has lived in Norway since 2009. The experience of moving between cultures, from millennia-old Mesopotamia to contemporary Scandinavia, forms the foundation of his entire body of work.

His artistic practice is rooted in the Mesopotamian ceramic tradition, one of the oldest in the world, featuring polyphonic decorations on both glazed and unglazed pieces for utilitarian and decorative purposes. Over the years, Al-Samad has developed a visual language that integrates Arabic calligraphy, geometric principles, and modernist compositions. Scandinavian petroglyphs and Nordic landscapes also quietly inhabit his reliefs, creating a cultural palimpsest of rare density.

Beyond the mural panel, *Frozen Light* presents an expressive body of freestanding ceramic sculptures, each one split in two: divided down the middle like a broken body or an interrupted word. The surfaces are covered in luster glazes ranging from midnight blue with golden veins to blood red with black specks, moss green, amber yellow, and volcanic black with ember-like streaks. The technique, mastered by

the artist over decades of work with high-fired stoneware, produces textures that evoke territories, maps, and skin.

The choice of splitting is not merely formal. In many of the pieces, the two halves face each other like mirrors that refuse symmetry, suggesting interrupted dialogue, fragmented identity, and divided belonging. These are works that speak of exile without ever using the word.

In several of the hexagonal units, signs and forms drawn from the artist's cultural background flow into the geometric structure without overpowering it. Calligraphy that does not aim to be read as text but felt as rhythm. A space in which personal memory and universal order coexist, as the exhibition notes describe it.

Al-Samad is a member of the International Academy of Ceramics, based in Switzerland, and has works in both public and private collections. He has participated in international biennials and festivals, including the Aveiro International Biennale of Artistic Ceramics in Portugal (2025), the International Ceramics Festival Mino in Japan (2024), and Ceramic Art Andenne in Belgium (2015). In 2025, he exhibited at RAM Galleri in Oslo and Telemark Kunstsenter. In 2024, he was part of the program at KRAFT in Bergen.

Samuel Serpa



Kulturrådet