

# **The Master's Hands:**

*Those Who Passed Through Neşet Günal's Studio*

**Curated from the Demsa Collection**

**12 June / 31 July 2026**

Curator: Erkan DOĞANAY

**Opening: Friday, 12 June 2026  
18:30 – 21:00**

**Pera Palace Hotel, Galata Exhibition Hall  
BEYOĞLU – İSTANBUL**

In the history of Turkish art, certain ateliers have represented far more than spaces of artistic instruction. They have served as environments where ideas take shape, artistic perspectives are transmitted across generations, and the artist's relationship with the world is continuously redefined. In this context, Neşet Günal's atelier at the Istanbul State Academy of Fine Arts should be regarded not merely as a painting studio, but as a significant intellectual and artistic center that engaged deeply with Türkiye's collective social memory.

## **The Master's Hands: Those Who Passed Through Neşet Günal's Studio**

Prepared from the Demsa Collection, *The Master's Hands: Those Who Passed Through Neşet Günal's Studio* brings together a remarkable selection of artists whose paths intersected with one of the most influential ateliers in the history of Turkish painting. Hosted at Pera Palace Hotel's Galata Exhibition Hall, this exhibition represents not only an important artistic gathering but also a significant contribution to the documentation of Türkiye's cultural and artistic heritage.

Beyond illustrating the influence of a master teacher on his students, the exhibition offers a broader narrative focusing on the evolution of figurative painting in Türkiye over the last half-century. By bringing together artists who shared the same studio environment, it explores how an artistic vision is sustained, transformed, and transmitted across generations.

The story of artists associated with Neşet Günal's atelier extends far beyond a simple list of names. What emerged from this studio was not a distinct stylistic school, but rather the transmission of a powerful way of seeing, thinking, and engaging with the world. Günal's atelier did not produce a uniform visual language; instead, it fostered a rigorous intellectual and artistic discipline that shaped generations of artists.

Neşet Günal's work occupies a pivotal place within the figurative tradition that engaged directly with the social realities of post-Republican Türkiye. Yet to define his practice solely through the lens of social realism would be insufficient. His paintings transcend sociological documentation, embodying a profound plastic and philosophical inquiry into the human condition and the weight of existence itself.

This exhibition has been conceived through works held in the Demsa Collection by artists who studied under, worked alongside, or passed through the atelier of Neşet Günal at the institution known throughout its history as the Sanayi-i Nefise School, the Istanbul State Academy of Fine Arts, Mimar Sinan University, and today, Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University. Beginning his own academic journey at the Academy in 1939, Neşet Günal went on to educate and mentor numerous artists between 1964 and 1983, remaining actively involved in studio teaching until his retirement. Some artists spent only a few semesters in his atelier, while others completed their entire artistic education under his guidance.

The exhibition features works by Neşet Günal, Ahmet Umur Deniz, Asım İşler, Artin Demirci, Aydın Ayan, Cansen Ercan, Emel Şahinkaya (Günsür), Cemal Gürsel Soyel, Cihat Aral, Fahri Sümer, Hüsnü Koldaş, İnci Eviner, İrfan Okan, İrfan Önürmen, Kasım Koçak, Kemal İskender, Mahir Güven, Mehmet Güteryüz, Nedret Sekban, Neş'e Erdok, Nevhiz Tanyeli, Resul Aytemür, Sabahattin Tuncer, Serap Murathanođlu Eyrenci, Sezai Özdemir, and Şenol Yorozlu.

*The Master's Hands: Those Who Passed Through Neşet Günal's Studio* will be on view at the Galata Exhibition Hall of Pera Palace Hotel until 31 July 2026.