

HEADS

IT WAS the great Iraqi architect **Maath Alousi** who, at Gallery Morphi, told me to dash to the 'H' minimalistic bar. Maath is an artist too and at the moment he has an exhibition at Abu Faysal, Clementos St, Lefkosia restaurant.

Fouad Naim wrote in 1991 of his paintings of "a raging scream". Alousi's three pictorial elements, i.e. the background space, the face, and the paintings' raw material, are strikingly and organically fused with each other.

The principal is that of a fragmentation of the conventional pictorial units of signification, albeit not abstract. It is as if the lines themselves simply burst from internal explosion of dissent.

Both background and face interfere with each other in tragic disfigurement. This is an apparent motion which first causes the individual features of the face to escape, then to vanish into a background which finally comes forward to constitute the eyes, then the mouth, then the forehead.

Also painted on a surface smeared with sand and sawdust, Alousi's figures look as if there is some continuation of the actual, material world around them: in the walls of the rooms, or in the town, or in the tortured, disfigured nation.

The paintings and sculpture at Abu Faysal are screaming 'inside', their grief appears to be dug out of the very sand with passion and empathy.

This profound exhibition continues until March 15. Abu Faysal's telephone number is 360353.

FACE: A painting by Maath Alousi at Abu Faysal.

