

My father, Oliver Hoare, first met Sheikh Nasser in 1975, shortly after he had left the Islamic art department he founded at Christie's to set up his own dealership, Ahuan Islamic Art. He always recounted what auspicious timing that meeting was, Sheikh Nasser was his first major client, and before long both he and Sheikha Hussah were also greatly valued friends.

Throughout my childhood I heard Sheikh Nasser's name spoken of time and again, my father often describing their adventures together, always accompanied by infectious delight and enthusiasm. To my young ears these stories contained in them more excitement than any of the comic books and adventure stories I was then reading. They told of an important project underway, and of admiration for a man of immense vision.

For as long as I can remember my father kept by his desk a colour photograph which was taken during one of these visits to Kuwait. It showed Sheikh Nasser and he together, standing in the middle of the desert, in front of a limousine. On the dashboard of the car balanced two huge glasses of a sherbet drink, one orange and the other lemon. Both are looking straight into the camera lens with huge grins on their faces, showing what a wonderful time they were having!

Apart from the lasting image of fun and friendship this photograph left me with, it also told me how immensely proud he was of the time he spent with Sheikh Nasser, and of what they achieved together.

In 2017, the year before he died, my father received an unexpected telephone call from Sheikh Nasser, whom he hadn't spoken to for many years. I remember during the course of that conversation how he roared and rolled with laughter while they chatted and teased each other, as if they had never been out of touch. It was easy to recognise as a sign of true friendship.

Two years later, my sister and I had the opportunity to visit Kuwait for the very first time. We spent some time with the astonishing Al-Sabah Collection of Art, which will surely forever remain a compelling legacy to Sheikh Nasser's extraordinary passion and vision. We were also exposed to his renowned generosity, flying by helicopter to pay him a

visit at his pink palace in the middle of the desert. There we spent a wonderful afternoon talking, eating and drinking tea in the shade of fruit trees, accompanied by birdsong and thousands of butterflies.

I will remember that meeting with Sheikh Nasser for many reasons, but perhaps above all for the way he greeted my sister and I, with arms outstretched and with the warmest of smiles, as if we were old friends. We both understood such a display of affection as a touching tribute to our father, and to the extraordinary times and friendship they had shared together.

Damian Hoare