



Photographs: George Fakhy

AL MASAR

Cairo's newest art gallery



Al Masar is Cairo's newest art gallery. This elegant exhibition space is located in Zamalek, home to many galleries, book stores and important landmarks of art and culture in Cairo, on 26th of July Street, in ground-floor premises of the well known Behler Mansions.

The inauguration was signaled by the collection featured here entitled *Overture: The Third Generation*. It showcases the works of three painters - *Farouk Hony*, *Taha Hussein* and *Mounir Casaan* and one sculptor - *Adam Henein*. All have an impressive international reputation and, as a group, represent Egypt's "third generation" of contemporary artists.

Mounir Casaan was a prolific self taught abstract artist who shocked the Egyptian art world when he first exhibited. Working with a variety of materials and techniques, he constantly experimented and created work which is now recognized internationally and has been an influence on a new generation of Egyptian artists.



Mohammed Taha Hussein is one of the outstanding artistic personalities of modern Egypt. His work has influences from both the Eastern and the Western worlds. His paintings and graphics often combine Arabic calligraphy and abstract painting.



Farouk Hony, Egypt's minister of Culture is a well known contemporary abstract painter. His 2004 exhibition entitled *Contemporary Egyptian Paintings* was hosted by the National Geographic Society in Washington D.C. He and Adam Henein, an outstanding sculptor, staged a joint exhibition in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in 2000 entitled: *Contemporary Egyptian Artists & Heirs to an Ancient Tradition*. The comment by the National Geographic that both artists have "exerted a formidable positive influence on contemporary Egyptian art" is well deserved. *Adam Henein* is both a gifted painter and formidable sculptor; he acknowledges the influence pharaonic art has had on his work. His preference for sculpture he explains as the wish to create the thing itself rather than communicate it through a pictorial medium.

All these artists communicate across cultures and speak to the international community through their art.

Waleed Abdalrhahim, the director of Al Masar, has had twenty years experience of curating and promoting art. He wants the gallery to become a venue for exposing the different generations of modern art to a public that seeks to understand and collect modern art.

Al Masar recognizes the reality that art is in a state of flux. It aims to provide a multifunctional exhibition space that serves as a platform for showing the work of Egypt's earliest artists and that of the landmark third generation of the Egyptian modern art movement. It will feature the succeeding generations as well as the innovators and artists of the future.

ALMASAR GALLERY of Contemporary Art
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