

The Revival of Art

If you've ever been to Cairo, you know that Zamalek is the destination of choice for Cairene literati because of its rich wealth of art and culture. Zamalek is home to the Cairo Opera House, the School of Fine Arts of the University of Cairo, and the National Museum of Modern Arts, to mention a few. For that reason, this affluent district of Cairo has been the perfect place for Waleed AbdulKhalek to turn the famous Behler Mansions, "turn of the 20th century space, into a unique exhibition space." **Al Masar Gallery** is a home for many of Egypt's contemporary artists to showcase their talents and to share their view of the country's many social issues through art.



Al Masar Gallery of Contemporary Art has just celebrated its 5th anniversary with the first solo exhibition by artist **Ahmed Farid**. The exhibition, entitled "*Urban Diversity*," ran from May 11 to May 30 this year, and reflected the artist's interest in social divisions in the city of Cairo, which juxtaposes rich homes and luxurious hotels with slums and inhabited unfinished buildings. Farid uses a layered technique that features many colors that create "visual noise," a very real indicator of the "urban density" that is the city of Cairo. Each painting is a story of inspiration, a definitive scene from the Cairo urban landscape that is simultaneously abstract with the inclusion of faint Cairene figures. An interesting painting for me was "The White Sky," which is so dense with color and high-rise buildings that the "white sky" portion is almost negligible, which is a rather sad but true reference to the Cairo skyline.



Ahmed Farid is an autodidact Egyptian painter, born in 1950-Cairo. He made his way to the art scene after obtaining a degree in social sciences and a background in marketing communication and business. His paintings reflect much of his travels during the 70s, both local and international influences appearing in 2003 through his art.