



*It has been more than a week, full of sadness since the passing away of my dearest & continued Friend, eminent and pioneering 'third generation Artist' of the Egyptian Art Movement, **OMAR EL NAGDI**.*

*Al Masar Gallery and I are in mourning for the passing away of Dr. El Nagdi, and in his memory i remember our continues talks about his Art, which we would like to share with all Art Collectors in Egypt, the Middle East and throughout the world , friends of Al Masar Gallery, Art Lovers, and every viewer who has witnessed the four Stunning Solo Exhibition Al Masar Held for El Nagdi, and the Nine Group Exhibition where Nagdi has been a corner stone in the curating of those 'more than a dozen' magnificent Exhibitions at Al Masar Gallery from 2009 to 2018. God bless his soul and may Allah Almighty embrace his soul in heaven...*



In 2009 while I was curating his first Solo at Al Masar Gallery titled : EGYPTIANISM, we came across some old critiques on his works, such...

### **Omar El Nagdi and the Egyptian Symbols**

Omar El Nagdi is a sufficient proof that he is an artist with exceptional gifts for symbolic design and what amounts to positive splendor of color, the artist who has absorbed the decorative traditions of Near East is evident, but he has done more than echo the mannerisms of Egyptian line and the rich harmonies of Persian color. He has adapted them both to personal ends, for his art is a means of serious communication and what he communicates is deeply felt understanding of Egyptian life- the peasant life of Egypt today, but somehow translated into the timeless symbolism that we think of as typical Egyptian art from the beginning of Egyptian civilization which seems to add the overtones of religious ritual to the structural basis of architecture.

If this artist were no more than a decorator his work would still be a delight, but because he is also half humanist, half mystic and his art becomes moving as well as delightful. The meaning that works its way up to the surface and throughout it comes from a deeper level than that of the observant eye.

**Eric Newton, UK.**

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Omar El Nagdi and the **Human Aspect in His Art**

When you enter the world of El-Nagdi, you will find yourself in world full of both contradictions and harmony. It is a world full of multiple colors, dimensions and shapes. However, behind these contradictions and diversities you will discover the unity inherited in them. Yet, the most vital recognition will be the realization that the human aspect is the most existing element or rather the only one in his artistic works. No matter how much abstractionism or contradiction in colors, the human aspect is still there in its pride, elevation, brightness, joy and sadness.

There could appear two faces of a man and woman, yet there is some sort of silence and affectionate intimacy, you may see one human face but there is no hint of isolation or alienation, but rather a joyful silence and strong desire for life.

El Nagdi's sources are diversified as he has benefited from Assyrian art, Christian Icons and Egyptian Folklore. You may also wonder whether he has benefited from Gaston Klimt's school of art or perhaps elsewhere? I might say "possibly", but El-Nagdi succeeded in mixing these schools to create his own unique style that surpasses all these schools and his fellow artists. His unique employment of colors varies from a painting to another. One painting could seem peacefully quiet, while in another it might seem to be exploding like an erupting volcano.

The depth of his Egyptianism is expressed in the pharaonic features of his characters and the way they are placed, as well as the movements of their hands. The ancient Egyptian symbols are well employed and mixed in the texture of his masterpieces, not as ornamental elements, but rather as living elements, bonding the past and the present. The Islamic trend is well apparent and prominent in his rejection of the direct semi-photographic imitation of nature or man. Furthermore, his paintings that consist of words and letters are related to other works and the line he employs is uninterrupted and continues. For instance, in his painting the "Harp Player" he utilizes space and colors elaborately into one unit and the uninterrupted black line that exists in most of his paintings, ends

dramatically with his signature, which becomes a part of the painting's texture.

When we analyze his work of art in terms of grand theory, anti-art and small narrative, we find that his work is full of abstractionism and experimentalism, yet his small narrative is deeply rooted in the grand story of man in his joys and sadness as well as the artistic heritage of humanity in general.

**Dr. Abdel El-Wahab El-Messairy**

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**Omar El Nagdi | [A Lifetime Journey](#)**

In 1950, by the age of 19, Omar El Nagdi was introduced to the Egyptian Plastic Art movement. He was known as a deep admirer of the origins of the Plastic Art genus and shortly he established his own unique style, which distinguished him through time from other contemporary artists.

His first artistic phase started with the historical, intellectual and actual study of heritage, grasping the combination threads of the Islamic architectural elements such Dovetailed Formations, Mosque Ornaments & Exchanged Stalactite, However, His real beginning was when it was announced that the new statue had taken a new track and that it had several aspects and subjects in one embodiment of the mass and vacuum equation, which is the open way for

absolute creation. In the second phase Omar El Nagdi was characterized by the one line painting, starting by the theme on the drawing surface from the beginning to the end (i.e. from the very beginning to eternity). In the third phase he introduces the fifth dimension employing the five fingers at once; each finger for one color: vermillion red + Karina red + Prussian blue + Nile blue + ferny green: He paints the element on the required surface with the five fingers at one time where the threads intermingle, overlap and diverge so that the viewer experience these as illusionary embodiments painted in the vacuum between the painting surface and viewer's distance in the light vacuum.

In the fourth phase Omar El Nagdi introduces the artist of the moment that generates from the artist's emotions of a certain issue at "that" moment, which is the time moment of creation generating from the actual viewing of the incident.

This is the moment of truth that precedes creation and is followed by the technical style that suits the subject raised. The creative and original phases of El Nagdi are still flowing, adding to the depth and abundance of the art. Thus Omar El Nagdi, has emerged globally and still maintaining the heritage and delight of his origin.

**Dr. Hesham El Sherif**

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**In 2010, Al Masa Gallery Curated the second Solo Exhibition for Nagdi, which i Named, IMPULSIVE EXPRESSIONISM, and on that topic, 'Omar El Nagdi wrote':**

### **Impulsive Expressionism | 2010 & 2013**

What does really Momenticism or Impulsive Expressionism ideology mean? It is the impulsive expression that distinguishes between rational certainty and conscious tangible creativity which falls within the scope of realistic

Western schools affiliated to Western civilizations which is the Greek civilization, and Eastern civilizations which belong to schools of symbolism & timelessness down to absolute abstraction.

Here we should say that the certainty of the apparent unconscious with its abundant emotions is nothing but an expression of the most accurate, absolute and sincere emotions that holds sincere and pure spiritual strongholds in the consciousness of the artist who first receives the unexpected shock of the spark of inspiration and translates it into an artwork while going through a significant spiritual and creative journey.

That unexpected spark of inspiration moves into a state of dormancy, that grows into an artwork that reveals a reservoir of secrets that confirms the artist's moment of astonishment upon getting inspired which is an unconscious stage that gets fulfilled with a sincere work of art that speaks of his own path of identity from the moment the spark of inspiration hits him to the moment he falls back from the unconscious to the reality, that's how an equilibrium is formed in an innovative creation of an artwork.

**Omar El Nagdi , 27/ 3/ 2010**



### تعبيرية اللحظات

ماذا يعني المذهب اللحظي ؟ هو المذهب الذي يعبر عن انفعال الفنان بأي موضوع في أي لحظة ، يكون فيها نفسياً مستعداً للتعبير الفوري عن هذا الموضوع ..... بغض النظر عن أسلوب تعبيره وأسلوب التعبير في هذه اللحظة يتحدد باللحظة الانفعالية الإبداعية الوقتية للفنان.

من هذه اللحظة الانفعالية التي هي وليدة ما يختزنه الفنان في اللاوعي من صدمه الموضوع الذي أنفعل به والذي أثاره أثناء اللحظة الانفعالية في خروج هذا المخزون إلى الوعي الذي يترجمه في لحظتها إلى عمل فني.

والجديد في هذا المذهب أن الفنان له حرية التنقل من أسلوب إلى آخر دون التقيد بمدرسة محددة، بمعنى أنه يمكنه أن يعبر في العمل الفني الواحد بأكثر من أسلوب حسب ما يمليه الموضوع لذلك .. إن القيد الوحيد الذي يتقيد به الفنان هو انفعاله اللحظي بالموضوع الذي يريد أن يعبر عنه بصدق وإبداع حقيقي معبراً عن الشرارة الأولى الكامنة في المخزون الداخلي للفنان والذي تحرك بانفعاله اللحظي تجاه موضوع التعبير نفسه. والحقيقة أن المدرسة اللحظية لها جذور وانتماء للفطرة الإنسانية التي توالى عليها علي مدي التاريخ الإنساني، وقد أصبح هذا المذهب في شخصيته المستخلصة من تاريخ البشرية واعدة بالجديد، أولاً... وهو المحتمل للتطور غير المألوف للمدارس الفنية السابقة ...

والمذهب اللحظي تعدي الفنون التشكيلية إلى إبداعات الفنون الأخرى كالشعر والأدب والفنون التعبيرية منها السينما والمسرح المعاصر وهكذا ينتج الفنان التشكيلي كل يوم أفقاً جديدة في التعبير الفني ليرضي طموحاته الإبداعية التي تكشف كل يوم جديداً ممتعاً له وللمشاهد. والفنان التشكيلي له رسالته الثقافية التي تضيف

إليه وإلى شخصيته الجديد من خلال إطلاعه علي تجارب الآخرين سواء بالرؤية أو بقراءة الشعر والأدب والعلم  
- ومن خلال مشاهداته واستمتاعه بالفنون التعبيرية الأخرى.

من هذا المنطلق يمكنني أن أقول من خلال قراءاتي لفنوننا وأدبنا العربي القديم ..... التقطت هذه اللحظة  
الممتعة التي اكتشفت فيها هذا المذهب اللحظي الذي كان ساعداً في فنونهم وآدابهم مما جعلني أتمسك به  
وأعيد اكتشافه من جديد من منحي آخري عالمنا المعاصر من خلال تأكيد علي اللحظة الوقتية الانفعالية في  
تعبيري الفني الذي أصبح يحمل سمات هذه المدرسة اللحظية ، مما يؤكد أن اللحظة التي تحدث الشرارة الأولى  
بتلمس خوالج النفس بمقادير التعبير النفسي والجسدي والكيميائي بالحدث الذي أشار له الوعي الإنساني ...  
بالأطراف المتجاذبة ، فتتزاوج المتناقضات بالمتكاملات لحظة الغوص في قنوات مخزون الفنان ليطرحها علي  
سطح وقائم بالإبداع الذي ينشره - صدق الحدث المنفعل به فترة الاندماج الكلي .

والله الموفق ، عمر النجدي ، 27 مارس 2010.



### Surrounding Memories | 2014 – 2015

Al Masar Gallery for Contemporary Art had the pleasure to curate the Fourth solo exhibition by renowned Artist **Omar El Nagdi** titled; "Surrounding Memories". The exhibition showcased the artist's most recent works at that time, along with a number of his older work. The exhibition displays paintings depicting the artist's memories of surrounding sceneries of which he kept in his subconscious. It is the memories of scenes captured from his daily life that haunts him till the moment



he walks into his studio to bring them out into tangible reality. Every painting is an expressive reflection of an incident that evoked his emotions enough to make it to his conscious through marvelous masterpieces.

El Nagdi's pictorial vocabulary is rooted in his home country's politics and in the lives led by Cairo citizens. He obtains such profuse imagery by combining poetry with elements inherited from 20th century artistic trends namely Expressionism, Cubism and Fauvism. The paintings in this exhibition fuse different sources of inspiration. El Nagdi depicts the jovial and opulent festivities of Egyptian traditions in many of his paintings. Bright colors highlighted by gold leaf in some areas burst out from some of his paintings. The dynamism rendered through the complex composition of figures and decorative patterns echo the lavish festivities & social traditions. El Nagdi paints the liveliness of Egyptian social traditional scenes. The Artist Omar El Nagdi had exhibited his artwork in numerous solo and group exhibitions at Al Masar Gallery for Contemporary Art; which is the artist's exclusive representing gallery and sole agent. Three solo exhibitions of which are: Egyptianism | 2009, Impulsive Expressionism | 2010, Impulsive Expressionism II | 2013.



### ذكريات محيطية

الذكريات المحيطية بي من كل جانب ما هي الا ذكريات تعبيرية لبعض الحضات الفارقة مرئياً بين اليقين العاقل والوعي وانتقالها للابداع الملموس المتأثر بمشاهد من الحياة اليومية المحيطية بي. أنها مشاهد بعقلي الباطن سرعان ما تتفتح لي أسرار مخزونها الغيبي للحظة، تلك اللحظة التي ما هي إلا مرحلة الوعي الذي يعيش بها الفنان لحظة خلاص وجدانه وبصدق الأداء في عمل فني يحاور فيه مسار أبداعه المستمر الممزوج بهويته الفنية . وعندما يرتد الوعي الي واقعه , عندئذ يحدث أتران لقطباهما في ولادة أعمال فنية جديدة ومبتكرة.

عمر النجدي , 2014



### **Advantages of the of Islamic Art Aesthetics in the work of 'Omar El-Nagdi'.**

Islamic art is one of the richest arts known to human over the centuries. It has manifested the ability of the Islamic Art in giving distinctive character of different ideological orientation since the beginning, which left a huge asset of heritage in many places and different times, and reflected its influence in Contemporary Egyptian art especially in the work of an Egyptian artist "**Omar El - Nagdi**" who has a unique artistic vision, which is considered as one of the most important artists of the world who indeed took advantage of the aesthetics of Islamic art in the formulation of various artistic topics through his artistic creations and with his own unique vision.

**Dr. Sahar Shams Al-Din**



### **عمر النجدي ( 1931 – 2019 ) | السيرة الذاتية "المختصرة"**

ولد عمر النجدي بالقاهرة، 1931 حصد في حياته العديد من شهادات التقدير والجوائز الفنية منذ حدثته بداية بحصوله علي جائزة كلية الفنون الجميلة عام 1952، وبعدها انهي دراسته للفن بكلية الفنون الجميله أيضاً عام 1953...

سافر النجدي للخارج بعد ذلك ليستكمل دراساته في الفن، بداية بدراسة فن الخزف في روسيا، ثم توجه ألي فينيسيا، إيطاليا ليستكمل دراسته ومحاكاته للفن، وحصل هناك علي دبلوم الفن من أكاديمية الفنون الجميلة بفينيسيا عام 1964، كما حصل أيضا علي دبلوم النقد الفني من معهد روسكن للنقد بفينيسيا، و دبلوم في فن المزاييك من أكاديمية الفنون برافيينا، إيطاليا.

ساهمت دراسات النجدي بالخارج في التعرف عليه دولياً، فشارك بنفس الوقت بالسنتينيات في بينالي الأسكندرية الدولي عام 1960 و أيضا بدورته لعام 1966. أما في أوروبا: شارك عمر النجدي بينالي فينيسيا عام 1962، بينالي باريس، 1966، بينالي لوبيانا، 1967، بينالي فينيسيا مرة أخرى، 1968... كما اشترك بالعديد من المعارض و الخاصة ، وأخرها: العديد من المعارض الجماعية منذ عام 2009، وأربعة معارض فردية رئيسية للفنان بقاعة المسار للفن المعاصر بالقاهرة عام 2009، 2010، 2013 و 2014.

عمل عمر النجدي أستاذاً للفن بكلية الفنون التطبيقية ، و مشرفاً علي العديد من رسائل الدكتوراه في الفن حتي قبيل وفاته 21 مارس 2019.

"سيظل عمر النجدي معنا من خلال صداقته وأنسانيته ، سيرته الذاتية الممتدة، تجربته الثرية في الفن، و أعماله الفنية الرائعة المنتشرة بمتاحف مصر و متاحف عالمية، والعشرات من المجموعات الفنية الخاصة المنتشرة بدول عديدة بالعالم".



*Omar El Nagdi will always remain live in our memories and will continue enriching our souls with the valuable legacy and majesty of his life time Arts...*

*Waleed Abdulkhalek*

Waleed Abdulkhalek

Curator . Director

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