

Art is the conversation. . . Art offers an opening for the heart. . . Art is, at least, the knowledge of where we are standing. . . We are partners straddling the universe.

- Hafiz, 14th century Persian poet and mystic

The more I think it over, the more I feel that there is nothing more truly artistic than to love people.

- Vincent van Gogh, 19th century Dutch artist

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AMEN A PRAYER FOR THE WORLD

In the midst of the present tension in the Middle East, and the increasing chasm of misunderstanding that exists between the Middle East and the West, the 2014 CARAVAN Exhibition of Visual Art is an unprecedented gathering of renowned Middle Eastern and Western artists coming together to use art as a bridge for intercultural and inter-religious dialogue.

This CARAVAN Exhibition of Visual Art focuses on Egypt and the United States. As Egypt is often considered the “mother of civilization,” this exhibition illustrates a creative demonstration of dialogue coming “out of Egypt” for the world.

48 premier and emerging artists (30 Egyptian—both Muslim and Christian, and 18 Western, of Christian and Jewish backgrounds) were invited to participate in this unique exhibition. The work of 30 Egyptian artists was first unveiled in Cairo, Egypt on June 17 at the Museum of Modern Art, and joins the work of 18 artists in the West for a joint exhibition held first in Washington D.C. at the world-renowned National Cathedral (August 31- October 6), and then in New York City (October 12- November 16) at the Cathedral of St John the Divine, the largest Gothic cathedral in the world.

With the theme “AMEN—A Prayer for the World,” the exhibition seeks to express the deep, fundamental human acknowledgement of power and hope in the universe for all peoples. While the Middle East and West may express prayer differently, it is a commonality that unites us all, serving as a “universal bridge.” To express this commonality of prayer, four different poses of prayer in a life-size 3D fiberglass human form have been sculpted for this exhibition by the noted Egyptian artist Reda Abdel Rahman (who also sculpted the donkey form used for the 2013 CARAVAN exhibition) symbolizing human diversity, community and the many forms that prayer can take. Each pose loosely references a common prayer pose from each of the main monotheistic religions (Judaism, Islam and Christianity) and the fourth reflects the revelation, peace and wonderment that “prayer” can bring to all.

As an artistic group from Egypt and the West, these 48 artists are making a statement that they are together “praying” for peace, justice and well-being for all in our world. Proceeds from the sales of artwork (30%) go to the Egyptian charity Tawasol toward building a school in one of the poorest areas in Cairo (the other 70% going to each respective artist).

The exhibition is co-curated by CARAVAN Founder & President, Rev. Paul-Gordon Chandler, and the participating Egyptian artist, Reda Abdel Rahman.



CARAVAN

CARAVAN, an international intercultural and inter-religious arts non-profit, begun in 2009 in Cairo, Egypt, has the objective of building bridges through the arts between the creeds and cultures the Middle East and West. One of the flagship initiatives of CARAVAN is the globally recognized interfaith CARAVAN Exhibition of Visual Art and Festival. This unique exhibition brings together many of the Middle East's and West's premier and emerging artists to enhance understanding, respect, and deepen friendship between those of different faiths and cultures through the arts.

Each year the CARAVAN interfaith arts exhibition has garnered attention from the international press, media and art world, attracting thousands of visitors. In 2013, many thousands of Egyptians and Westerners viewed CARAVAN's public art exhibition of painted donkeys (symbolizing "Peace and Compassion") by premier artists from the Middle East and West, first throughout Cairo, followed by an estimated 120,000 people visiting CARAVAN's exhibition in London at the world renowned St. Paul's Cathedral. The London exhibition was followed by a charity auction of the artwork led by a Sotheby's auctioneer for funding charities in Egypt assisting the poor irrespective of creed.

In this 2014 CARAVAN Exhibition of Visual Art, 48 participating artists (of Muslim, Christian and Jewish backgrounds) have been given a life-size fiberglass sculpture in one of four poses of prayer to paint or decorate as they wish.

The 'model' for the sculptural prayer form is Amun, the deity of ancient Thebes in the 11th dynasty (c. 21st century BC) who is considered the first to develop religion toward monotheism. The four sculptural forms therefore communicate a modern essence of Amun, each depicted with his face. In this exhibition the historic figure of "Amun" is being associated with the word "Amen," an affirmation commonly used to conclude Christian, Muslim and Jewish prayers or blessings.

The theme for this CARAVAN exhibition, "AMEN-A Prayer for the World," is an aspirational expression of hope and goodwill coming "out of Egypt" for the peoples of the Middle East and the rest of the world.

It could not be timelier for this artistic intercultural and inter-religious initiative of peace-building, promoting a sectarian-free world.

Rev. Canon Paul-Gordon Chandler
Founder and President, CARAVAN
www.oncaravan.org



REDA ABDEL RAHMAN

THE JOINT DREAM

I met Paul for the first time five years ago and that was when he shared with me his vision for CARAVAN; the vision of connecting East and West while preserving their individual integrity and respective values.

I became a believer and an enthusiast for the cause at once and today I am the co-curator of this exhibition for the second year in a row, and a contributor to the exhibition's success.

I want to thank everyone who helped make this exhibition possible, especially my friend Paul, our leader, as well as SODIC Real Estate and its exceptional team for the support they gave us throughout. I would also like to thank the team of the Sector of Fine Arts in Egypt for hosting the exhibition in Cairo, and all the participating artists for their distinguished work. Last but not least, I would like to thank my wife and partner in life, Rasha Taher.

Reda Abdel Rahman

Co-Curator , "AMEN-A Prayer for the World," 2014 CARAVAN Exhibition

www.redaabdelrahman.com

AHMED ABDEL KARIM

STATEMENT

The statue expresses the deep spirituality in the souls of Egyptians, exhibited in beautiful Sufi performances.

The statue lived by the banks of the Nile, where plants and birds and hearts grew on it.

BIOGRAPHY

Born in 1954 in Cairo and graduated from the Faculty of Art Education in 1981. Abdel Karim was appointed demonstrator in the Department of Design four years later and was awarded an MA for study in the rhythmic patterns in geometrical Islamic Art.

In 1990 Abdel Karim earned his PhD for his thesis "Content Analysis of Islamic Geometrical Patterns" and went on in 2000 to become a Professor for a collection of research submitted to the Supreme Council of Egyptian Universities. Ahmed Abdel Karim is a member of the Cairo based syndicate of teachers and plastic artists, the Atelier de Cairo Group of Artists & Writers & Teachers & Plastic Artists and the Faculties of Art Education League.

Awards

1978 Incentive Award for designing food security postage stamps

1979 1st prize in decoration, 15th May Competition organized by the Supreme Council for Youth & Sports

1996 Golden Prize, Saudi Airlines competition



AHMED SHIHA

STATEMENT

I combined the methods of a sculptor with a painter, using the tools of both as I work with form and color together. The statue is covered in molded plastic and its shape has a deep metaphysical sense. The color conveys the sense of drama that the work requires. This is a similar approach to that of ancient Egyptian artists who attempted to make their statues lifelike, but here my approach speaks in the language of our modern times, which relies on abstract and hidden meanings. These meanings are extracted from within these forms through gathering or scattering, accumulation or explosion, divergence and convergence achieved through concave and convex forms that cast shadows which deepen this dramatic dynamic that speaks of an extreme Sufi asceticism. Upon the statue are unconventional hieroglyphs that can only be read through the existential self that is not limited by knowable writing.

This affirms that you are standing before a page in the universe that compels you to look below the surface and interact with it with humbly. A poet often possesses mysterious feelings that are difficult to contain in a known form or phrase. Here the internal feelings transform into creative energy that shapes the vessel to convey these feelings without resorting to familiar tropes. This element of surprise accompanies the viewer's visual journey and engages him in a dialogue with the work.

BIOGRAPHY

Ahmad Shiha (b.1945) is a painter who strives towards modernism. He uses special materials that adhere to the canvas surface, giving it a relief-like effect. Shiha mixes strict construction with protrusions that hint at Ancient-Egyptian-relief-like figures. Shiha is a member of the Artists and Writers Atelier in Cairo and Alexandria.

He has held numerous solo and national exhibitions, from Cairo to Los Angeles, and has received diverse awards from the Golden Medal from Alexandria University and the Certificate of Merit from the Sacramento American Cultural Center. Private acquisitions of his work are in the US, Kuwait, Spain, Germany, Iraq, Belgium, the UK, Canada, Korea and Lebanon.



AHMED TALAL

STATEMENT

'Henna Patterns'

In Upper Egypt, especially in Nubia, henna patterns are an important part of our lives. This is an inherited tradition for weddings meant to decorate the hands and feet of women. Lately in Canada, these henna patterns have started to appear to cover up hair loss resulting from chemotherapy treatment for cancer patients.

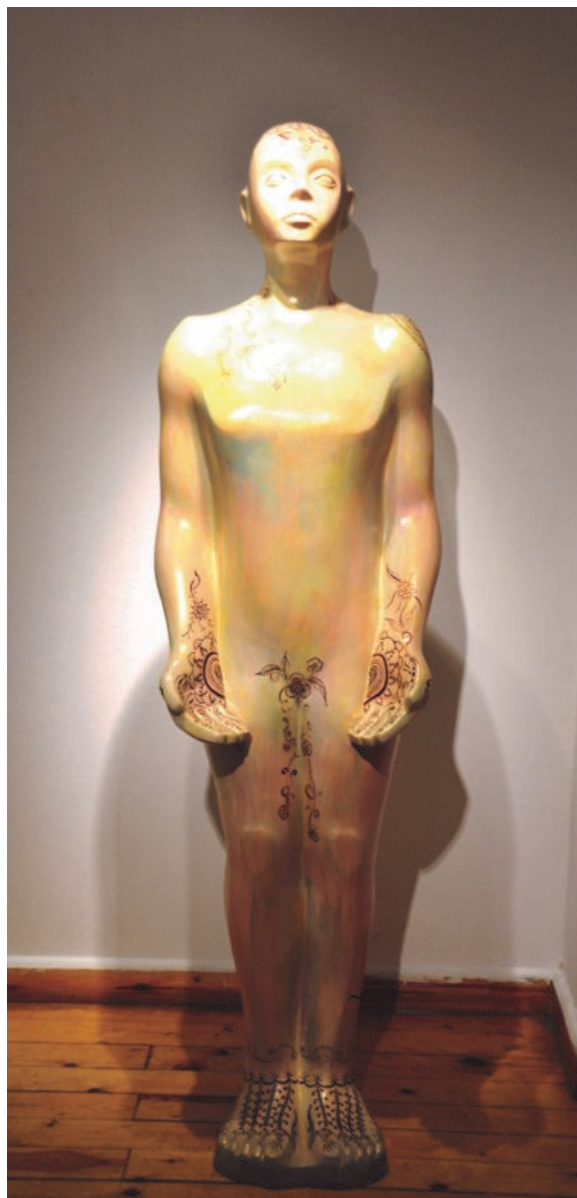
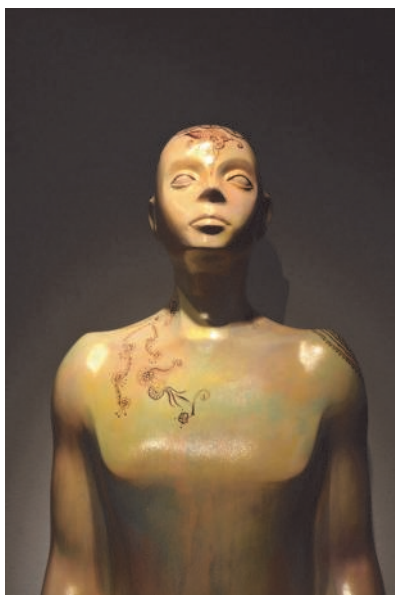
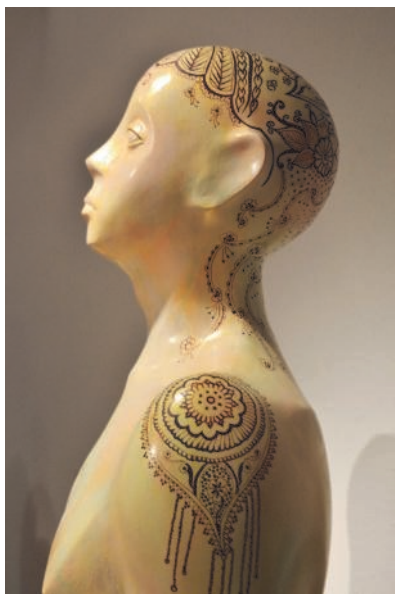
The medical community has concluded that patients' belief in their own healing can only be accomplished through psychological treatment, one of the most important elements that helps them to break free from their cycles of illness.

BIOGRAPHY

Ahmed Talal was born in Cairo where he works. Talal holds two art degrees; a B.A. in Arts and Culture (2002) and a diploma of Oil Painting (2005) from Helwan University in Cairo.

Talal's work is a continuous effort to peel away the layers of his subjects to reveal what he perceives as its true 'core' or 'heart'. The artist uses everyday symbols and elements to reflect his ideals and visions. He assigns meaning and value to simple objects or practices and presents them in a way that evokes layers of thinking. In Talal's world, no object is to be over-looked or taken for granted. His use of color is progressive and his technique strikes the perfect balance between modern and classic.

Talal has participated in many international and solo exhibitions and is an active participant in the visual arts scene in Cairo.



AMMAR ABOU BAKR

STATEMENT

'Pink Camouflage'

". . . and God saw this was not good"

- Amal Donqul, Egyptian poet, 1940–1983

BIOGRAPHY

"If you write poetry, you should write poetry that's close to the people. If you create art, you should use it in a public way so as to be close to the hearts of the people, and they will help you to do more."

Ammar Abou Bakr's drive to educate and communicate through art has taken his work from the atelier to the public space; his murals are as much about his own artistic expression as they are generating and contributing to a larger dialogue with the public.

Abou Bakr's works have cased walls in Cairo, Luxor, Alexandria, Beirut, Frankfurt, Berlin, Amsterdam and Brussels, journaling the Egyptian Revolution's many turning points, as well as themes about Coptic and Islamic culture, folk art and Egyptian history.

Since 2008, Abou Bakr has also worked as a supervisor in the Luxor International Studio, providing an opportunity for international artistic exchange. He has participated in individual and collective exhibits presenting Egypt's rich cultural heritage – its Sufi festivals, temples, architecture and rich landscapes.



AMR EL KEFRAWY

STATEMENT

Middle Eastern culture revolves around its unique language and script. The essence of the East was built on a belief in the afterlife and the worship of God Almighty, the Giver and Protector. Connecting with God comes through immersion in the holy text, the secrets of which are contained in the language, words, letters, and meanings.

The idea behind this work was based primarily on the essence of faith that in my Eastern culture takes the form of understanding and believing our text. My point of reference is the shape of the Arabic language, which has preserved our culture --or vice versa - even if the shape doesn't have a specific meaning. The beauty of the Arabic script retains the spirit and nobility of our heritage in our collective memory and in our Arab culture. These Arabic words in their lines and strokes reveal to viewers hundreds of years from the heart of the Middle East with all the complexity of its rituals, customs, enchantment, and legends.

BIOGRAPHY

Amr El-Kafrawy was born in Cairo in 1980; he lives and works in the same city. He was graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Helwan, Cairo, where he studied painting, and then from Warsaw University, Poland, where he received a diploma for poster design.

He has received many prizes in the Egyptian Youth Salon, and has been accepted at numerous artist-in-residency programs (i.e. Poland, Spain, Morocco and Switzerland).

El-Kafrawy works with deferent mediums such as drawing, painting, illustration and graphic design and printing.

He has exhibited his work in many countries besides Egypt, such as in Germany, Switzerland, Spain, Poland, Hungary, Morocco, Qatar, UAE and Cuba.



AMY E. GRAY

STATEMENT

“The Tuning Prayer”

In preparing for this project, I spent a considerable time contemplating what prayer was to me. It brought to mind a metaphor for prayer that came to me several years ago when I bought my first harp. The maker had told me “The instrument needs to be tuned every day for at least the first month, so that it will learn that it was no longer just a bundle of wood, but a harp, something that was meant to sing.” Tuning all 29 strings became a part of my morning ritual. While tuning, the thought came to me of how similar the act of tuning is to prayer.

Both, hopefully, are daily practices that require making adjustments... a turning toward something. Some days it is more difficult than others. But ultimately, if done regularly, less effort is needed to keep the instrument in tune. It is in this spirit that I have made my form into a human harp to be not only “an instrument tuned for praise” but an instrument tuned for peace.

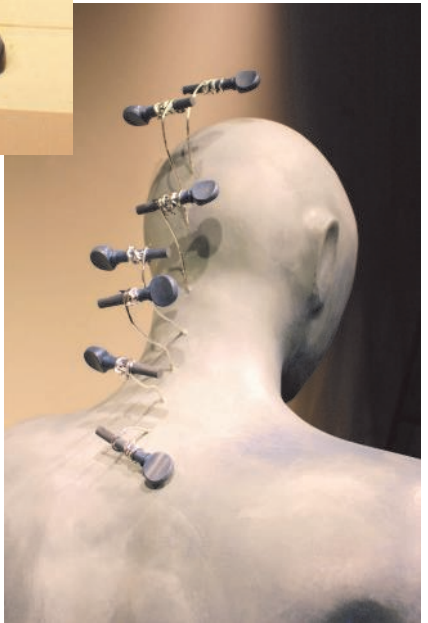
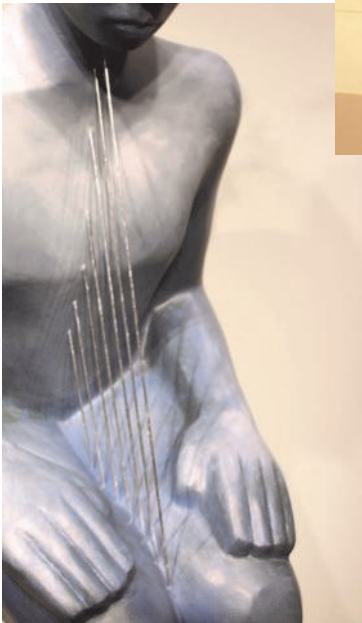
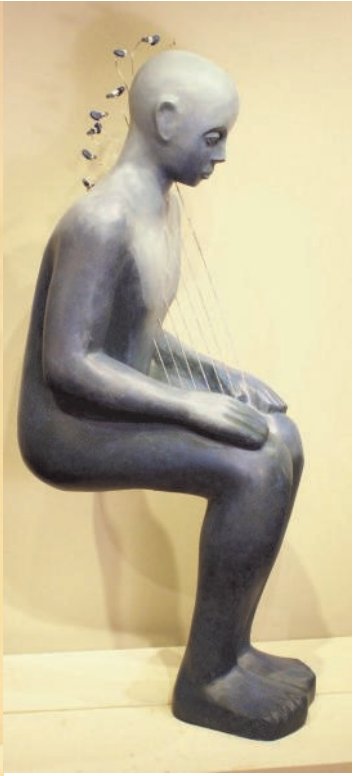
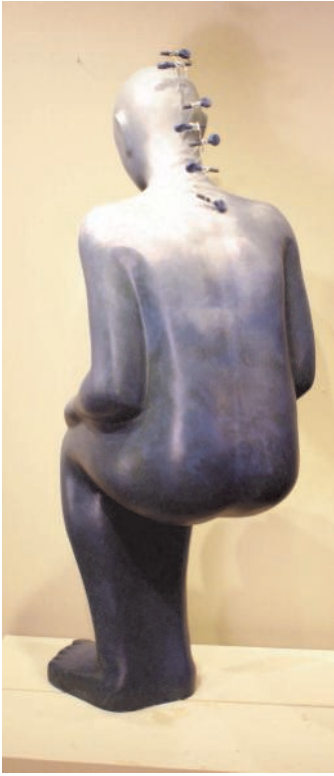
BIOGRAPHY

Amy E. Gray, an Ohio native, received her B.F.A in Illustration and Advertising from the Columbus College of Art and Design. She worked as a Graphic Editor for Wesley Mancini Ltd., a textile design studio in Charlotte, NC.

The opportunity to do artwork on a harpsichord for her church had an enormous impact on her work. The concept of art as prayer and art as a large part of her spirituality were new to her. The experience propelled her to relocate to Washington, DC to study the relationship between religion and the arts at Wesley Theological Seminary.

While at Wesley she served as intern for the Henry Luce III Center for the Arts and Religion, and as a Liturgical Designer for chapel services. Amy completed her Master of Theological Studies at Wesley Seminary with honors in 2011.

Now working as Program Administrator for the Henry Luce III Center for the Arts and Religion, Amy continues to create site specific installations for sacred spaces and teaches workshops on Religion and the Arts. She will complete her MFA in Interdisciplinary Arts with a focus on religion and the arts at Goddard College in Plainfield, VT in 2017.



ANNE-FRANCOISE GIRAUD

STATEMENT

The God Amon, also named "Hidden God" in Egyptian Civilization, embodied a profound unity. Therefore, I wanted to suggest mystery and invisibility by using superimposed bands of prayer, making the writing illegible.

The idea of unity emerges from several contrasts, between immobility and mobility, between lightness and heaviness, or between sky and earth, divine and human. The materials used are mineral (beetle stones and metal jewelry) and plant (tissue paper, cloth, pieces of palm leaves).

Furthermore, I represented lotus flowers, symbol of renewal, open or closed to evoke the cycle of life and death. Finally, the tulle crown, shaped as a bird nest, is fragile and volatile, in contrast with the plait, symbol of power for the Ancients.

This duality can also refer to the one we all have in ourselves, whatever our origin and affiliation...

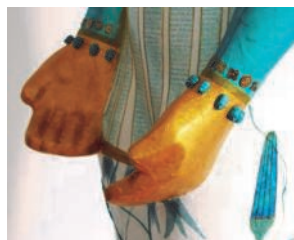
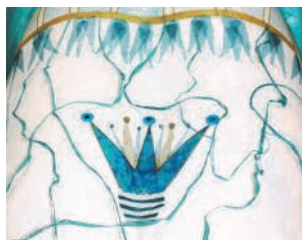
BIOGRAPHY

The creations of Anne-Françoise Giraud were born from motion, of her many travels and dance, her other passion.

Through her art, she tries to represent poetically the world around her, between dreams and reality where harmony and balance are combined.

At the moment she lives in France, in Lyon, after spending 5 years in Egypt. She took part in many exhibitions, notably in Ankara, Paris, Cairo and London (Caravan Exhibition 2013).

Her artistic activity is the thread linking these different passages.



ANNE BARBER-SHAMS

STATEMENT

“RHM”

Two of the most beloved of the Most Beautiful Names of Allah, Al-Rahman and Al-Rahim, are derived from the triconsonant root RHM, meaning womb or place of origin. I have calligraphed the root RHM in several art works. The root's feminine slant appeals to me as a woman and more importantly it contradicts the tendency to anthropomorphize the Divine as male.

RHM holds a bowl to receive requests for prayer. The phrases on the black yoke of the figure connect the Old Testament and the Koran, and are meant to unsettle the misconception that YWH and Allah are two separate deities. On the figure's right is a verse from I Kings 18:39, translated from the Hebrew by Rabbi Ted Falcon as “The Transcendent One awakens in All.” The verse on the figure's left is from the Koran, Sura 2:115, translated by Imam Jamal Rahman as “Everywhere you turn is the face of Allah.”

BIOGRAPHY

Anne Barber-Shams' cultural background is a mix of European immigrants from the British Isles on her paternal side and an immigrant Jewish grandmother from Alsace Lorraine on her maternal side. Her art education includes a year at the University of Padua in Italy and a Bachelor of Arts, Painting Emphasis, from the University of California at Santa Barbara. Her passion for peace in the Middle East and creation of art exploring the common ground between Jews, Christians, and Muslims was initiated by compelling dreams that began two decades ago. Oregon's Regional Arts and Culture Council awarded her a grant to create fused glass art and curate *The Wilderness Journey* in collaboration with the Palestinian Kanaan Kanaan and the Jew Rhoda London, exhibiting at Mittleman Jewish Community Center and Bilal Mosque. The next year she curated *Cross Cultural Bridges* with Kanaan Kanaan and Judao-Islamic copper artist Shahna Lax, exhibiting at Havurah Shalom Synagogue and First Congregational Church. Her eleven paintings and nine banners of odes in homage to the Golden Age of Andalusia, Spain, *Al-Andalus: Pardes/Paradise*, exhibited in Oregon, Washington, and Washington, DC. The June 2014 issue of *Faith and Form* features her fused glass art in her article *Interfaith Art for Interfaith Chapels*.



ARTHUR GOLDBERG

STATEMENT

This image reflects the division that can be caused between various religions as well as the light of hope it brings to our commonality. Over thousands of years, religion has caused death and destruction as people have used it as a weapon. But religion has also given hope to the oppressed, fortitude in the face of dire circumstances. With precepts that are in each person, there's a common light of kinship and a belief that shines from each of us as a bond of humanity. The founders of all religions have focused on this kinship and emphasized that we are one in the eyes of God.

In this piece, the polished stainless steel mirrors the individual. It reflects the red body symbolizing the destruction we inflict on our brothers, but also holds and exposes this "light of commonality" that emanates from within and reinforces our devotion to see each other as we see ourselves. This image incorporates this common bond of light that society rests upon as individual dots of light at the base of the image. As members of the human race, we have the responsibility to recognize this commonality in each other.

BIOGRAPHY

Award winning artist, Arthur Goldberg has worked as a Graphic and Environmental Designer all over the world for over 40 years. He has trained many designers who worked under his guidance as an art director and designer. His work can be found in cities across the U.S. from South Beach to Chicago; New York City & Boston; the Washington DC metropolitan area and even to Jerusalem, Israel.

During this long career, Mr. Goldberg found many tools to express his aesthetic vision in a variety of media, from water color and pen & ink, to acrylic and oil pastels and into neon/LED and metal sculpture – a vision found in Landscapes, Portraiture, Graphic & Environmental Design as well as "contemporary composition" in three dimensions. His art has shown in a number of one-man shows and many pieces can be found in private and public collections.

Recently, Mr. Goldberg added another award to his list when he received the honor of First Place in an international competition sponsored by "LightSpaceTime.com".



CHERIE M REDLINGER

STATEMENT

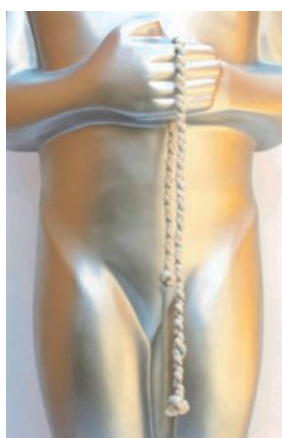
It is amazing to me that artists can come together, but politicians cannot. The religious backgrounds of the artists who have been chosen *all* stem from Abraham: Jewish, Muslim and Christian. I am not a religious artist; however, my art is influenced by what I see and experience as part of the American culture. After studying the barren standing form I was given to paint, the hugely popular movie IRONMAN came to mind and how he can save the world. You know... when the aliens invaded New York City. Therefore, I chose metallic silver as my color for the form. To me it represents the strength and resiliency that lies within each of us. On the left arm I have placed a tattoo-like representation of the religious symbol for each participating religion to represent the thread that binds us together. I placed a peace sign below it to send out to the world my prayer for spiritual clarity and peace. The tassel that is grasped in the figure's hands is to remind us of God's Commandments.

"IF ALL RELIGIONS TEACH PEACE. THEN WHY CAN'T ALL RELIGIONS ACHIEVE PEACE?"

BIOGRAPHY

C.M. Redlinger was born in Los Angeles, CA. She moved to Germany in 1983 and began to study art history. In 1990, C.M. received her BA in Art History from the University of Maryland, European Division. She returned to the United States to study printmaking and received her MA in Art from California State University, Northridge, in 1991.

C.M. has shown in a number of national and international fine art exhibits and has been an Educator. With enthusiasm Ms. Redlinger has developed and taught studio art and art history classes for afternoon school programs, fine art camps, and college level classes throughout her career. C.M. is now teaching Adult Education in Alexandria, VA. She has supported the Women's Caucus of Art beginning with the Washington, DC chapter where she was the President, on the WCA National Board and the Co-Chair for the WCA Conference 2016. Ms. Redlinger is responsible for co-founding the WCA Georgia Chapter and continues to bolster the women's art movement. Ms. Redlinger's artwork can be found in private collections and museums national and worldwide.



CHRISTINA SAJ

STATEMENT

"Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible." - Francis of Assisi

As an artist who paints icons, I come to making art with an understanding of ancient symbols. My aim is to reintroduce and explore these time honored images by using them in a vernacular which will make them familiar and engaging. St Francis, the founder of the Franciscan order embraced peacemaking and alleviating suffering. He is to many the familiar backyard grotto inhabitant and beloved patron of animals, birds and ecology. He encouraged us to embrace our core Christian values and reminds us that small incremental steps are often what bring us closer to our goals. Choosing St Francis came naturally as a means to inspire us to think about a better, more tolerant and peaceful world. In what has become known as the *Peace Prayer*, often associated with him, we are invited to replace our negative behaviors with positive ones which can bring us closer to God.

Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy.

O, Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love; For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; it is in dying that we are born again to eternal life.

BIOGRAPHY

Christina Saj is a contemporary artist whose work is rooted in traditional byzantine icon painting, while being a reflection of our modern culture. She holds a BA from Sarah Lawrence and an MFA from Bard College. Early in her career, she mastered the technique of Byzantine Icon painting, under the tutelage of the noted Ukrainian iconographer Petro Cholodny, the Younger. This traditional influence was balanced by simultaneous work with contemporary artists in New York.

Saj's work bridges the disparate aspects of ancient and modern in order to create a new interpretation of traditional themes and subjects. She actively explores a variety of media including works on paper, glass metal and wood, although primarily in two dimension. Her contemporary renditions of icons have been widely exhibited including such venues as the *American Bible Society*, *Union Theological Seminary*, *The Ukrainian Museum in New York*, *Museum of Cultural Heritage, Kiev Ukraine*, *the American Embassy in Qatar* as well as at the *White House*. Her works reside in private and museum collections in the US and abroad. In recent years the work has been published widely, especially in spiritual contexts. She lives in New Jersey with her husband and two children.



Photos ©Mahmoud Sami

CLAIRE MARIE PEARMAN

STATEMENT

'Soul'

This work is an expression of the wonder, awe, might and beauty that overcomes us when we contemplate the vastness of the sky and sea. Despite a sense of insignificance, we feel connected; touched at the deepest level by the experience.

It is this feeling that we need to trust, foster, nourish and develop through prayer.

BIOGRAPHY

Born in Turkey, Claire Marie was educated in the UK and graduated from the American University in Cairo in 1990 with a BA in Psychology. Until recently, she lived and worked in Cairo specializing in paper and metal sculptures and installations. Claire Marie's work often incorporates symbolic elements and is inspired by nature.

Her work has been exhibited both in the UK and Egypt. Claire Marie was selected the 'Resident Artist' in the distinguished Artist-in-Residence program of St. Johns Church & Interfaith Center, Cairo.

Claire Marie's artwork in 2013 for Caravan's 'In Peace and with Compassion' exhibition was selected by a prestigious panel of art judges (i.e. Christies consultants) for a group exhibition at the renowned St. Pauls Cathedral in London that over 120,000 people viewed during the course of a month.

Claire Marie has extensive experience in the coordination of large-scale artistic events, with an expertise in the implementation of public art initiatives in large cities. Her organizational, consulting and creative services are requested for art initiatives in Europe, the Mediterranean basin and the USA.



DAHLIA REFAAT

STATEMENT

'Words Of Truth'

Teil II

Those unrelentingly cruel ones, objects of compassion, maddened by delusion's evils, want only to destroy themselves and others; may they achieve the eye of wisdom, knowing what must be done and undone, and abide in the glory of friendship and love.

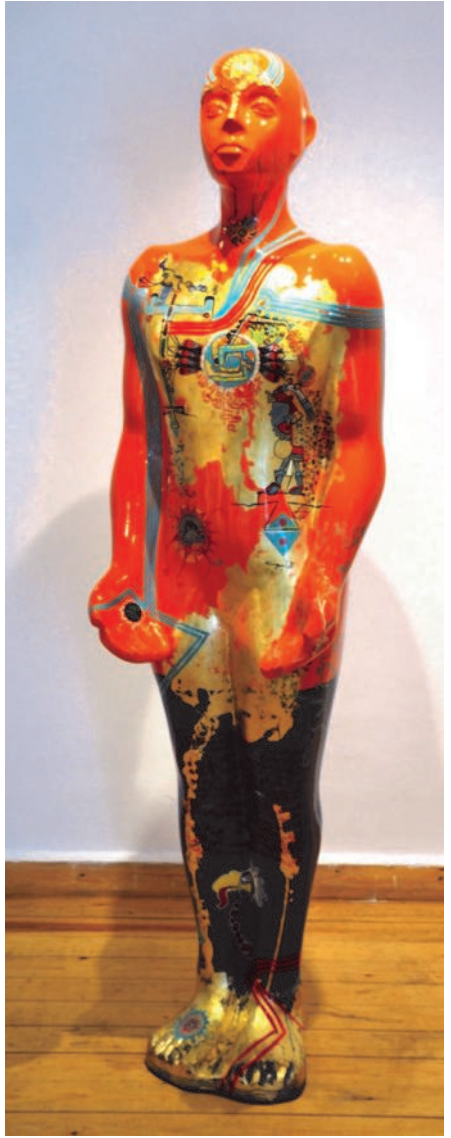
Dalai Lama

BIOGRAPHY

Born in 1979, Alexandria- Egypt. Dahlia earned her BA from the Faculty of Specific Education, Arts department-Alexandria University in 2000. In 2003 she obtained the arts education high diploma from the Faculty of Arts Education, Helwan University in Cairo.

From 2000 to the present Dahlia has done several studies in painting, digital photography and pin-hole camera. She's participated in several local and international Exhibitions since 1997. Among Dahlia's various experiences as an artist are the coordination and curating of spaces and events, the direction of workshops and training as well as working as an art director/ set designer in short feature films.

Refaat was a curator at the Jesuit Cultural Center Studio Hall, Alexandria from 2010 to 2012 and from 2005 to 2010 and has been the artistic coordinator for the Exhibitions & Art Collections Unit in Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Alex Workshop Center and El Dokkan space for arts & society in Alexandria.



DANIEL BONNELL

STATEMENT

'Illumination'

My art reflects on the ultimate human need to fulfill an intrinsic longing that extends from birth to death. Simply put, it is a need to be held. My work symbolically speaks to this notion here in this form and in my paintings, especially with darkness (black) embracing light (color), with negative space enclosing positive space, and with texture calling out to be touched. Besides painting with traditional oil and canvas, I also paint on grocery bag paper with miss-tinted house paint. In my process this surface is surrogate for human skin that reflects life, especially so, when the heavy paper is saturated with pigments, oils, wax, and fragrances. The concept of using something that was once a utilitarian container also speaks to the theme of being held. I pursue a continual reworking of a thought, idea or direction. Several versions of one painting exist yet I consider them all one-of-a-kind. One direction purges itself towards a greater meaning. Such a process is known as kenosis, or purging of the essence within each painting to create a greater work of art. This process is born out of contemplative thought and writings of the mystics. Working on modest surfaces with humble means permits this direction in a very natural manner. My paintings become a creative conductor that allows me to be held. The Amun-Amen form that I have created represents this nature of being held. The title of this work is called *Illumination*. The generic, robotic form that was the initial canvas has been humanized through the face, hands and feet. The layers of bloody gauze symbolize mans dark nature and all the global conflict that is occurring today, has occurred in the past, and shall continue in the future. The outpouring of the love of God is symbolized within an embrace of gold.

BIOGRAPHY

MFA: Painting, Savannah College of Art and Design, Savannah, Georgia 2012

BFA: Photography and Painting, Atlanta College of Art, Atlanta, Georgia 1978

Solo Exhibitions

Saint Paul's Cathedral of London, *The Paintings of Daniel Bonnell*, June-July 2004, London, England

All Hallows on the Wall Gallery, *The Work of Daniel Bonnell*, August-Sept, 2004, London, England

Selected Group Exhibitions

Beast Gallery, *Oldsy-Newsies On Line Graduate Show*, July-August 2012, Savannah GA

The Annina Nosei Gallery, *Connecting to the Spiritual*, May-June 2011, Savannah GA

White Stone Gallery, *Group Show*, January 2009, Philadelphia PA

Hayden Hayes Gallery, *Group Show*, December 2001, Colorado Springs CO



DEBORAH SOKOLOVE

STATEMENT

The rich mosaics, paintings, jewels, and precious metals that adorn many places of worship are intended to make those who enter feel as though they were already in heaven, if only for a brief moment. In all of my work, I attempt to evoke that same sense of eternity, of the divine presence, that I find in many traditional kinds of art, as well as in the gleam of flickering candles, or in a night sky filled with stars.

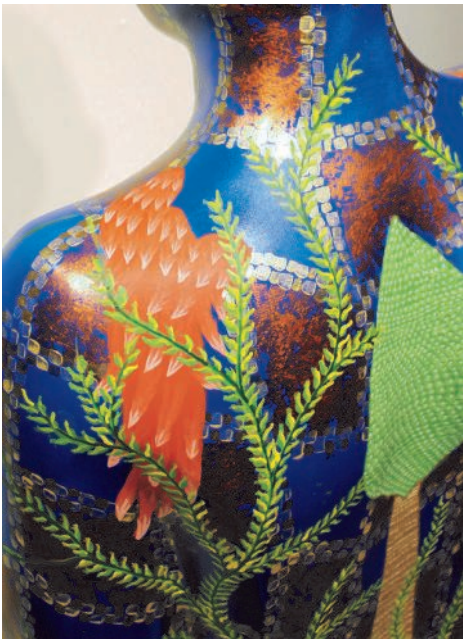
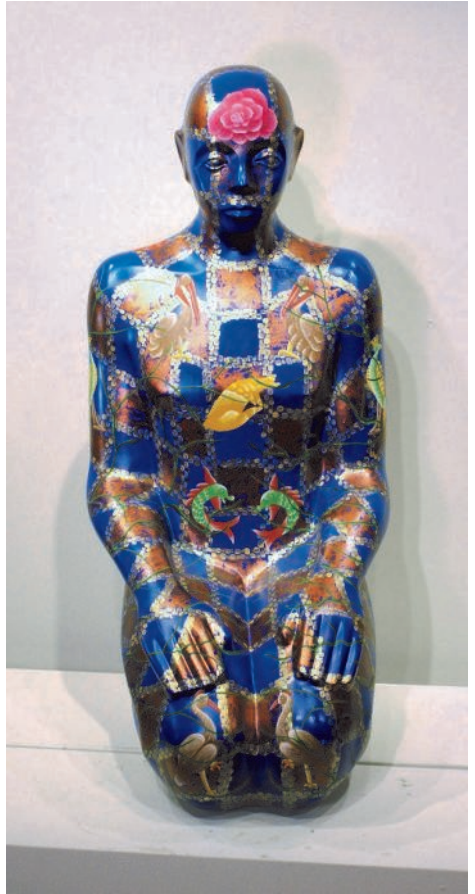
As an analogue to my belief that every time and place participates in God's self-revelation, I combine elements from the icon tradition of the Eastern branches of Christianity; the elaborate knot work found in Celtic artifacts; the space-filling patterns of Islamic tiles; folk motifs from Latin America, Africa, and Asia; and contemporary notions about art. This praying figure for the CARAVAN Amen project, like the paintings that are my more usual way of working, is intended as an offering, my own prayers made visible as an invitation to others.

BIOGRAPHY

Deborah Sokolove is the Director of the Henry Luce III Center for the Arts and Religion at Wesley Theological Seminary, where she is also Professor of Art and Worship. She received her B.A. and M.F.A. from California State University at Los Angeles; the M.T.S. from Wesley; and the Ph.D. in Liturgical Studies from Drew University. Before coming to Wesley as Artist-in-Residence in 1994, she taught art, design, and computer animation at the university level.

Her book, *Sanctifying Art: Inviting Conversation Between Artists, Theologians, and the Church* was published in 2013; *Calling on God: Inclusive Christian Prayers for Three Years of Sundays*, is due for publication in late summer 2014.

Her paintings have been shown locally and nationally, and are represented in numerous collections. Sokolove is a member of the American Academy of Religion, the North American Academy of Liturgy, Christians in the Visual Arts, and is on the Board of Directors of the Society for Religious and Theological Studies. She is a Steward of Seekers Church, an intentional Christian congregation in the tradition of Church of the Saviour, where she serves on the worship planning group and frequently preaches and leads worship.



EMAD ABDEL WAHAB

STATEMENT

'Amen'

Religion is not just a set of rituals, worship or beliefs, faith and holy times, or religious leaders. It is also a cultural inheritance accumulated throughout history that becomes a part of a local culture. This local culture connects with the experience of the community as it attempts to understand reality and find justifications for the behavior of individuals within the community.

In this work, I address the dilemma of applying religious beliefs and how we interact with them. I do so through observing how communities change and lose their sense of morality by hiding behind their religious acts. This has contributed significantly to a cultural and intellectual deterioration in the community. I want to introduce a visual shock that provokes debate and dialogue in order to reach understanding.

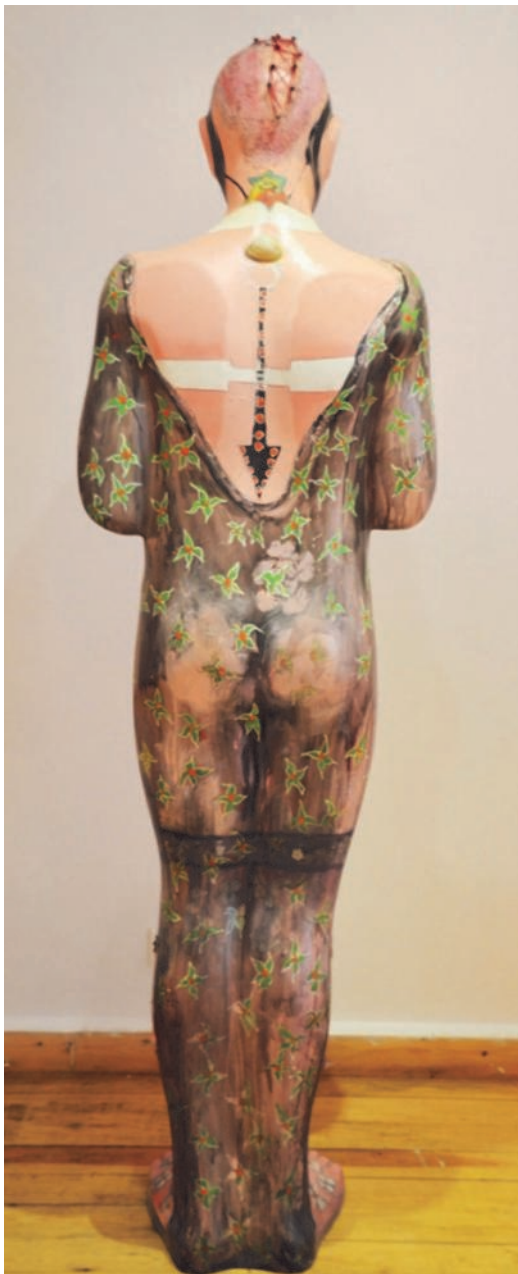
BIOGRAPHY

Born in Alexandria, Emad lives and works in Cairo. He graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts and studied art in Academy of Fine Arts in Rome – Italy.

He was the first Egyptian artist involved in the restoration work of photography museums in the Vatican , Italy working with the Italian group,2003.

Abdel Wahab represented Egypt in many international exhibitions and has received the State Prize in the Arts Art portrait and the State Award for artistic creation (Rome Prize)

He has participated in numerous international exhibitions in countries such as Egypt, Tunisia, Italy and Greece. He is also the first Egyptian artist to participate in the restoration of frescoes at the Vatican Museum.



FAGHALI ABDEL HAFIZ

STATEMENT

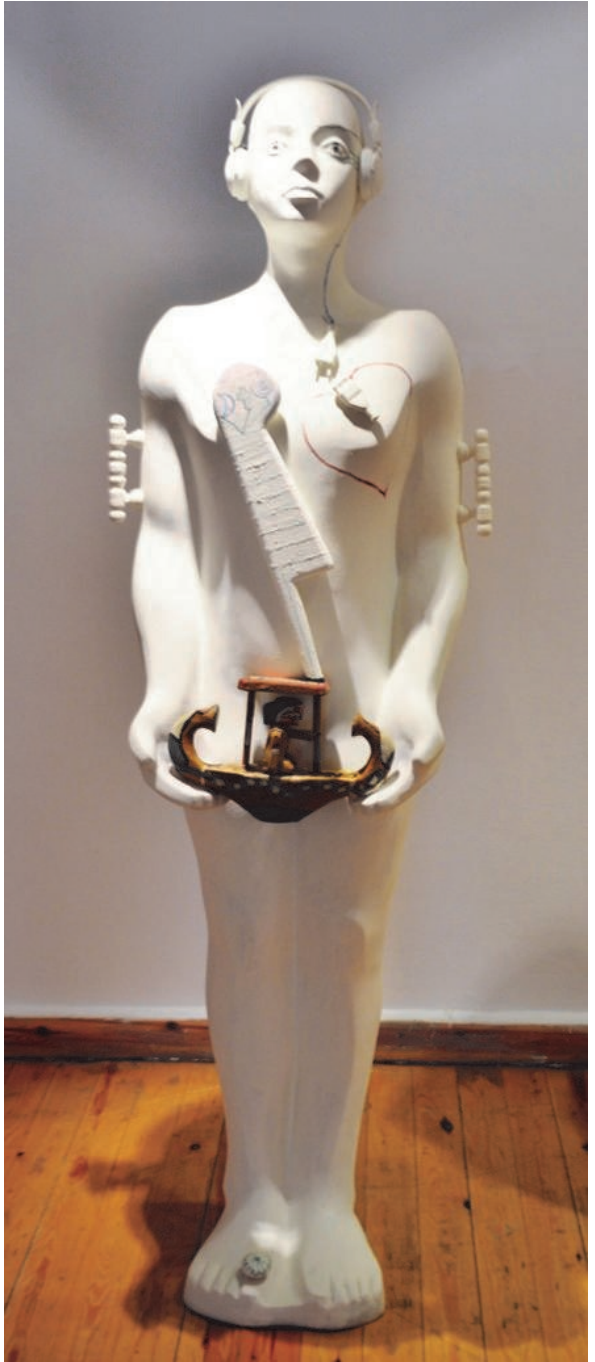
This work's goal is to send the message that we humans are friends and loved ones. Religion should unify us or at least draw us closer to each other, and it should provide forgiveness, love, harmony, and peace in this beautiful and wonderful planet that God has created. Nevertheless, the pragmatic political administrations insists on engaging in their wars by misusing religion that God had intended to spread love and brotherhood. It seems that greedy materialism always invokes scientific invention to destroy the spiritual realm.

This unprecedented materialism is controlling the world's destiny, and is evidenced by the noticeable lack in the numbers and esteem of philosophers and intellectuals. During the last three years, this greed has allowed "religious traders" to manipulate Egypt: Egypt that has always affirmed the nobility of humanity and created early human connection with Heaven. These materialist forces tried to apply their ignorant poisoned projects in Egypt without knowing Egypt's history that would make her defiant and unbreakable. Egypt is she who planted the rules of justice and love for more than seven thousand years. Unfortunately, behind all this cultural deterioration is a group who glorified science but have robbed humanity of reasons for joy and inner peace.

BIOGRAPHY

Farghali Abdel Hafiz is one of Egypt's most established artists, with a career spanning six decades and several continents. Born in 1941 and a graduate of the Academy of Fine Art in Florence, he represented Egypt in several biennials, including Sao Paolo in 1985, Venice in 1972, 1987 and 1993, and China in 2002. He was a founder of the Axis Group in 1981, one of the most influential art movements in Egypt in the Post-Modern period. He has held over twenty international exhibitions in Europe and the United States. The exhibition at Lawrie Shabibi is the first solo for Farghali Abdel Hafiz in the UAE.

Farghali Abdel Hafiz's sensual, highly textured canvases are filled with expanses of saturated colour and finely drawn detail. His work shows his deep concern with wellbeing, looking to both high and low culture, and often carrying a political message. He plays with ideas of Egyptian culture, history and exoticism. The result is a highly seductive art of braided connections that both physically and metaphorically work on many levels. In his world modern life and ancient history can comfortably co-exist.



FARID FADEL

STATEMENT

The statue represents the liturgical framework of prayer, therefore I painted the head in one color so as to flatten the most three-dimensional part of the statue. On the other hand, I painted a girl in prayer on the chest of the torso making her head very close to the heart.

In so doing, I mean to say that God is looking at the heart of worship and prayer rather than the liturgy and the religious framework. Around the girl we can see the fruit of prayer in the form of golden wheat sprouting around, reaching to the back of the statue where we found a harvest scenery. Above the cut sheaves, on the ground, we see a glorious sky ; a landscape reminding us of the prayer of Jesus when he said: Look out the fields are wild and ready for harvest.

BIOGRAPHY

Described by many people as a true "Renaissance man," Farid Fadel was born in 1958 in Assuit, Upper Egypt, into a family noted for both its musicians and its doctors. He has since excelled at medicine, art and music, taking all three gifts very seriously.

In 1973, Dr. Fadel was awarded the Pope's Medal and Vatican Award in an art contest with 50,000 participants worldwide. In 1975, on the inauguration of his fifth exhibition, the Egyptian Parliament granted him a trip to Italy to see Renaissance art, which had a strong influence on his style. He has taken part in several group shows, both in Egypt and abroad, such as the People's Show in Portland, Maine, USA (1982), where he displayed fifteen portraits. His fourteenth solo Exhibition was held at the Egyptian Cultural Center, Mayfair, London, 1989 and his 16th show in the University of Toledo, Ohio, USA. In 2000, Dr. Fadel travelled with his exhibition "On Both Sides" to the USA where it was displayed in Ohio, Connecticut and Washington D.C. Over the years he has taken part in numerous group exhibitions and held solo exhibitions around the world.



GAMAL LAMIE

STATEMENT

The world is going through a crisis, and art has an important role with an urgent message that "Prays for humanity and calls for peace."

We cannot return to the Middle Ages with authority in the hands of religious leaders. The philosopher Kant sought to wed knowledge, spirituality, and art. In Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, the choir sings "All human beings will become brothers."

The radicalized "Amen" has fallen so that the artist can raise his head in freedom, along with the Egyptian people who have declared their will and their desire to shape their future. I used molten wax to cover the statue and every time I placed a drop, I recalled above what happened on September 11, and in Syria, Egypt, Tunisia, Iraq, Libya and other all the humanitarian agonies.

I pray for world peace so that we all may sing together with Beethoven's choir hoping that all human beings will become brothers.

BIOGRAPHY

Gamal Lamie works of Art in painting, drawings and installations are inspired from human heritage and contemporary issues. The major concepts of the artworks are to emphasize the importance of culture diversity as a resource of inspiration and using Art as a common language of communication and expression to create a dialogue among civilizations.

Education

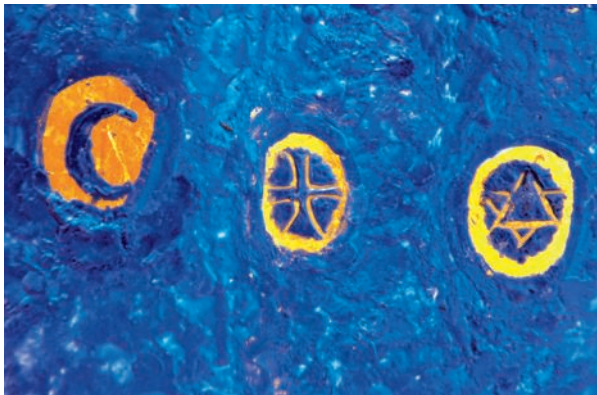
Ph.D. Helwan and New York Universities, 1981

Academy of Arts Diploma 1975

M.A. at Helwan University, 1974

Bachelor of Art, Helwan University, Cairo Egypt, 1969

He has held solo exhibitions in Egypt, Denmark, Finland, Germany, USA and Japan.



GAMIL SHAFIK

STATEMENT

'Of Peace and Goodness'

My piece speaks of peace and goodness, which is what the world needs to live in; peace and calm, refusing to engage in wars or conflicts for any reason.

BIOGRAPHY

Born In Tanta, Gharbya, Egypt, 1938.

Shafik graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts Painting Department 1962, Helwan University and then continued his studies at the Higher Institute of Appreciation 1975. Despite Gamil Shafik's painting studies he prefers to draw in black ink with very fine points and in his sculptures he uses drift wood. Shafik is also noted for his press illustrations.

He is a member of the Association of Egyptian Artists and the Cairo Atelier for writers and artists.

Selected Exhibitions:

2008 Second Egyptian Salon

2007 Black and White, Picasso Gallery.

2005 Group exhibition, Norway.

1994 Biennale Alexandria , won the jury Prize for Drawing.

1997 water color exhibition, Beirut, Lebanon.

1992 Black and white -exchanging scientific German Authorities



HAMDY REDA

STATEMENT

'See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil, do no evil'

Shizaru is the fourth monkey in the ancient Japanese proverb of the wise monkeys, symbolizing "do no evil." Between peace and passivity there is a fine line and a vast space where the human soul could get lost between doubt and certainty, choice and surrender, and a continuous sway between truth and ratification. So, although this proverb calls to ward off the evil by not letting the senses to be an easy prey for these evils, it is rarely used in this way. Rather, the trilogy of "I don't see, I don't speak, I don't hear" is an expression of submissiveness, surrender, and the acceptance of course of the events and weakness before the strong and mighty. Many artists have addressed this proverb with confirmation, disapproval, or sarcasm. I present it for you once more in form of a complex of the three to symbolize the fourth. Without any approval or disapproval but instead with a heartache very similar to that of Egyptian poet Amal Donqol who imagined the last words of Spartacus, calling the people to teach his son to bow down:

Teach him to bow down
Teach him to bow down
God did not forgive Satan's transgression
When he said no!
The meek and good-natured
Shall inherit the earth
When all is said and done
They shall inherit the earth
Because they
Are not hung!

BIOGRAPHY

Hamdy Reda is a contemporary Egyptian visual artist and curator. He lives and works in one of the outskirts of Cairo. Mr Reda's background as a painter as well as his experiments with photography forms a very solid artistic foundation for his artwork. Mr Reda's work has been exhibited at many venues inside Egypt as well as around the world, and he is a recipient of various artistic awards and recognitions. He is also interested in the North-South artistic dialogues, and South-South artistic dialogues. This is reflected in his residences and exhibitions in Europe and also in his joint exhibitions with European and local artists. Mr Reda hopes to expand his artistic dialogues to include more collaboration with artists, but also writers, poets, filmmakers, and philosophers. Hamdy Reda's feelings as an alienated artist in the Cairo elitist artistic community made him establish Artellewa as his artistic refuge. Artellewa is an independently run small art space that provides artistic services to the residents of Ard El-Lewa, which is Mr Reda's local neighborhood.



HELEN ZUGHAI B

STATEMENT

"Tree of Hope and Prayer"

A flowering vine, representing the wisdom, peace and love this figure prays for, is slowly growing.

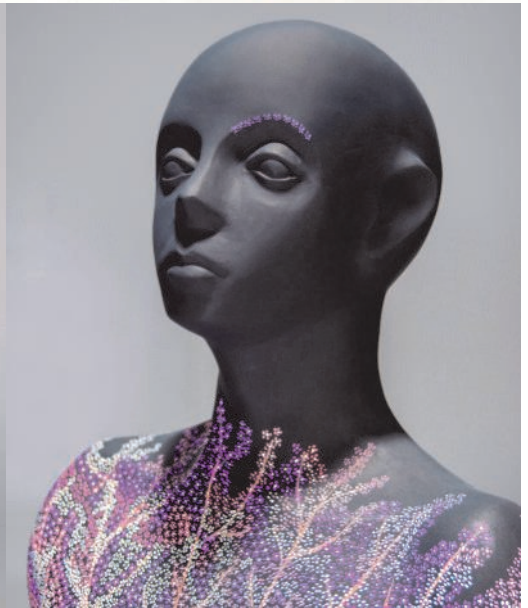
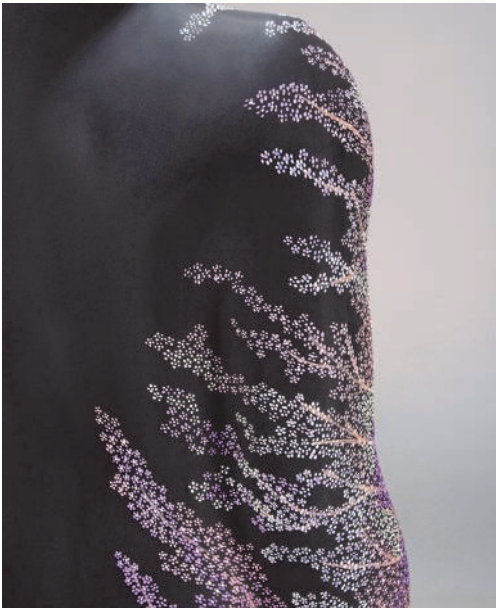
BIOGRAPHY

Helen Zughaib was born in Beirut, Lebanon, living mostly in the Middle East and Europe before coming to the United States to study art. She received her BFA from Syracuse University, College of Visual and Performing Arts.

Helen works primarily in gouache, an opaque watercolor, and ink on board.

Her work has been widely exhibited in galleries and museums in the United States, Europe and Lebanon. Her paintings are included in many private and public collections, including the White House, World Bank, Library of Congress, US Consulate General, Vancouver, Canada, American Embassy in Baghdad, Iraq, and the Arab American National Museum in Detroit, Michigan .In 2008, Helen was invited as US Cultural Envoy through the State Department, to Palestine, where she led a workshop with Palestinian women artists In Ramallah. In 2009, she was sent to Switzerland under the State Department's Speaker and Specialist Program. Her paintings have been gifted to heads of state by President Obama and former Secretary of State Hilary Clinton.

As an Arab American, Helen feels that her background in the Middle East allows her to approach the experiences she has in America in a unique way, remaining an observer of both the Arab and American cultures. She believes that the arts are one of the most important ways to help shape and foster dialogue and positive ideas about the Middle East.



Photos ©Old Town Editions

HESHAM NAWWAR

STATEMENT

We can easily excavate the depths of the earth, going through multiple layers representing times and eras lived by our fathers and ancestors. We can know how they lived and how they thought and how they perceived the world around them. We can consider their views of life and death, and their beliefs about the afterlife, and the idea of judgment accompanied by reward and punishment. Man was created for good, and so he who does evil is punished because he has violated the essential good nature of man. Even so, many believers will deny the validity of the beliefs of others, even up to the point of denying them a right to life, as if to rob them of their humanity, yet this only robs the perpetrators of their own humanity.

Therefore, let us first examine ourselves, rather than excavating the artifacts of our ancestors. If we are able to fathom our own depths, we can return to our fundamental instincts and awareness, we can remove our shrouds of intolerance that have wrapped around our souls, depriving them of love and mercy. Without those two, we are no longer human. If we are able to remove these shrouds of intolerance, we will find our hearts sprouting lush branches bearing leaves of love and peace to the world.

BIOGRAPHY

Born in 1967 Hesham Nawwar is a sculptor, painter, photographer and installation artist. Having studied at Helwan University's faculty of Fine Arts evening classes, Nawwar is clearly knowledgeable about the history of both Egyptian and European art, the latter he, like many of his Egyptian contemporaries, acquainted himself with through books and the Internet.

Nawwar took the Egyptian art scene by storm in 1989 by winning the Grand Prize for sculpture at the First Salon of Young Artists. Ever since, Nawwar has led a successful local career with occasional –but excellent– international and regional appearances like The Sharjah Biennale, the Muscat Biennale and the seminal 2001 exhibition Cairo Modern Art in Holland at the Fortis Circus Theater in Den Haag, Holland.

Select Solo Exhibitions

2010 Exhibition, Gezira Arts Center, Cairo

2008 The Celebration of the European Month for Photos, Vienna, Austria

2008 "The Dream" - Karmat Ibn Hanie Cultural Center, Ahmed Shawky Museum, Cairo



HISHAM EL ZEINY

STATEMENT

Upon receiving my polyester dummy I couldn't really see or read in it a "praying amon"more of a static, or rather a technical impulse was in it's expression for me.

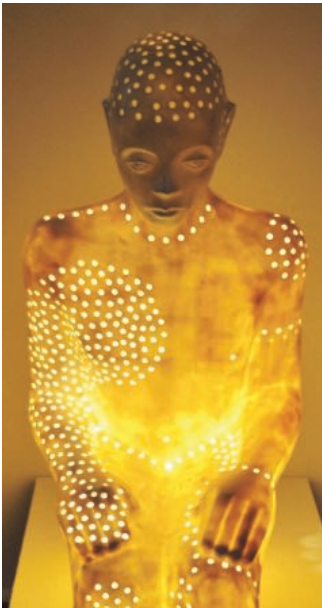
Days later, after dwelling in my imagination and visual memories, the images of humanoids out of "metropolis," the famous film by German director Fritz Lang came to mind. So I started instinctively to drill these holes into this rigid torso, as if to create openings for some imaginary wirings, or creating technical openings like in big loudspeakers to accentuate the robotics of it. That technical approach imposed itself, not to forget the symbolism of widely spread holes and inflicted injuries caused by guns in the violence during the unrests in our streets. When lit from the inside, which was an idea that came to me during the work, another aspect of that rather dull and cold humanoid unfolds. It simply gains a more meditative, contemplative aura as "light comes from within".

So here is my "praying amonoid" receiving pixellated, cosmic energies via the laptop placed in front of him.

BIOGRAPHY

I was born to a German mother and an Egyptian-Sudanese father, and therefore grew up in a multi-cultural and religiously very tolerant environment. I attended the German school in Cairo, which provided me with a solid base in language formation, which assisted me as I took many trips in various places around the world in my youth.

Initially, I found myself studying architecture with Prof. Hassan Fathy at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Cairo. While this study didn't stand in way of my great passion in arts, it did in fact lead me to my career as an artist for over 25 years. The urge for creativity and experimentation resulted in a series of solo exhibitions from 1981 onwards; initially at the Goethe Institute of Cairo, followed by 20 solo shows in Cairo's main galleries, and participation in 22 group shows (from 1970 on). The focus of the work changed from heavy material assemblages in the 1980's to collages and paintings in mixed media, possibly described as "collages of thought" inhabited by socio-cultural codes with a strong fascination by the issue of "time".



HOSSAM SAKR

STATEMENT

Amen is a word that touches my soul since early childhood, during my prayers in the mosque or behind my grandfather the Sheikh.

I go back to the history of the word, to the concepts of peace and humanity and stop at the statue in our international art project to refine the language of our clarity of thought.

The statue is static, mobile, meditative, stable, interacting with me while I provide it with every spiritual experience I went through... meditation in Zurich, candles I lit to my friends in some European cathedrals, peace between me and my old Jewish neighbour and his daughters in Paris, the silence of the mountains in Egypt and Spain, the majestic temples of Luxor and the mountains I passed by in Ethiopia on my way to Bahr Dar.

And always there is the sound of my grandfather the Sheikh which echoes in my soul... Amen

BIOGRAPHY

Hossam Sakr, born in 1967, is a Professor at the Art Education College, Helwan University, where he studied and achieved his Ph.D. He was also an instructor at the American University in Cairo and at the Education College of the University of Bahrain. He is a member of the International Full Bright Committee and an in numerous art education syndicates. He writes art critiques in the Middle East Times and other distinguished Arabic newspapers.

Sakr comes from a disciplined art school background yet in his creative process, rules have no place. An intense mental reflection underlines all his work, expressed by sophisticated techniques and a sublime sense of colors. A recurring theme enduring through the body of his work are human feelings and humanities by portraits, figures, animal imagery, alone or in unison with each other.

Sakr's work has been exhibited in museums and galleries locally and internationally in Egypt, Bahrain, France, Germany, Spain and the United States, as well as numerous private collections in New Zealand, South Africa, Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom.



KARIM ABD EL MALAK

STATEMENT

Does the sun ask us about our religion before rising up on our faces?

Does death wait to check the religion on and ID card?

Let me pray as I like

By kneeling, by raising hands or by flute, just let me

You take the reins of the earth within your hands in the blink of an eye

For some reason you take hold of the keys of the afterlife

I see you as flesh and blood

Just like me

Let the spirit swim in the sky of love... because existence is love

We are nothing but a spirit dressed in a temporary vanishing body

BIOGRAPHY

Graduate from the Faculty of Fine Arts, Minya University Graphic Department.
illustrator for Sabah El Kheir & Rosal Youssef, Egyptian local magazines.

Practice Sculpture.

Participant in the 1st Child's Biennale workshop "Fantasia 1", Cairo 2003.

Won the silver medal in the International Competition of "SHANKERS World Association", India 1993.

Exhibitions :

- Private Art Works Exhibition at Cairo Gallery, 2001.
- Public Exhibition at Ahmed Shawky Museum, Cairo 2001.
- Public Exhibition at Mahmoud Said Museum, Alexandria 2002.
- The Sixth Salon of the art work small sector.
- The Exhibition of the Newspapers Paintings, "The 1st Foundation Cycle".
- Black & White Exhibition, Cairo 2004.
- Private Art Works Exhibitions at Gallery Grant, Cairo 2004 & 2005.
- Public Exhibition at Ebdaa Art Gallery, Cairo 2007 – 2008.
- Regular Exhibitions at Degas Gallery, Alexandria.



KATHERINE NELSON

STATEMENT

“Wheat Heartland Prayer” : *Created to celebrate Earth's hard working farmers who inherently know that planting a seed is an act of faith.*

I am inspired by the legacy of human spirit contained in the luminous lands of the Palouse renowned for farming and geological history. This landscape region is visually defined by winding rhythmic flowing lines that describe, for me, a spiritually nurturing Mother Earth. Nothing remains the same on the Palouse wheat fields as change is captured in each moment of the lifecycle of wheat from germination to final harvest in the course of one season. Therein lies the Spirit in abundant changing wheat fields, the farmers' lyrical furrows engraved on the earth, the spectrum of ripening crops, and the rhythmic flow of the sky.

BIOGRAPHY

My drawings spring from the inspiration of living and traveling in some of the most spirit-embodied places in the world. I focus on the iconic American Palouse and mysterious Old World Europe, intent on depicting the delicate environmental balance of nature and its relationship to agricultural production and human consumption. I am fascinated by natural form, rhythm, texture, light, and shadow. Every location offers a unique landscape formed by geology, the elements, and human endeavor. I was born in 1964 in the Hague, Holland and spent 15 years living abroad in Holland, Germany, Turkey, and most recently in Brussels, Belgium from 2007-2010. My expatriate assignments instilled in me an appreciation for art, inspirational travel, history, and cultural immersion that continues to influence my work today.

I graduated with honors with a Bachelor of Science in Art Education from Skidmore College in 1985 and earned a Master of Arts in 1990 from SUNY Albany in Drawing. I've lived on both the East and West Coasts of the U.S., settling in St. Louis, Missouri, and exhibit my drawings in many solo, invitational, and juried exhibitions in the United States and Europe. My preferred medium is charcoal; with it I'm able to explore the interplay of light and shadow, softness and edge.



Photos ©Bill Greenblatt UPI

KHALED SOROUR

STATEMENT

'The Great Amon'

You gather your people and are compassionate toward them, your people who are different yet in harmony. Wonderful people as flowers in the garden-- they are different in sizes. They are different in looks. They are different in types. They are different in colors.

All this, and with your affection, your wisdom and your love, all the people are knitted harmoniously together loving life, adapting to it, and reacting to it.

The garden can take everyone in regardless of size or color.

All live in harmony, peace, and love.

Your garden is like a homeland that can take everyone in.

BIOGRAPHY

Born in Egypt, 1965.

Assistant Professor in Faculty of Art Education.

Member of Syndicate of Plastic Arts.

Member of Egyptian National Arts Society.

Member of Cairo Atelier for Artists and writers

Member of Association Art Education Graduate.

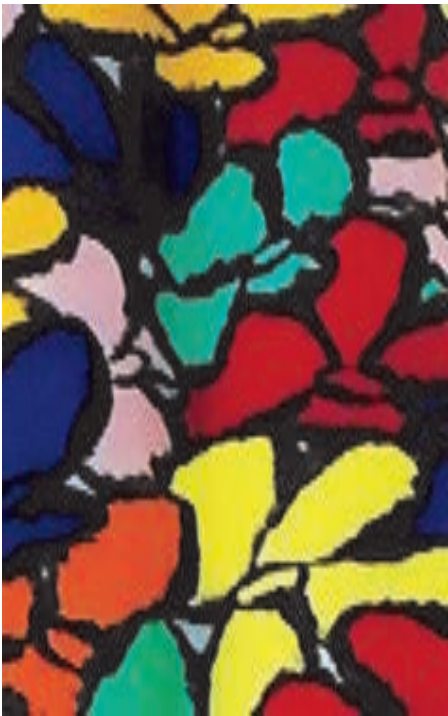
Member of National Society of Fine Arts.

Member of Ghory Artists Society.

General supervisor of the graphic design in the Public Authority for Cultural Palaces.

Member of the Committee of the plastic arts , the Supreme Council for Culture.

He has exhibited throughout the Middle East, such as in Qatar, Egypt, Dubai and Kuwait.



KIKI MCGRATH

STATEMENT

The roots of monasticism flowered in the deserts of Egypt, Syria, Palestine and Arabia in the third century CE. Men and women lived as solitary hermits or in small communities far from city centers. They developed prayer practices and traditions that influenced the foundations of Christian spirituality, and later Western monasticism. By cultivating habits of awareness and discipline, these Abbas and Ammas aspired to experience God in each moment.

The Sayings of the Desert Fathers records their teachings, gathered from an earlier oral tradition. Spiritual seekers would approach the desert elders and say: "Give me a word." Amma Theodora replied: "It is good to live in peace, for the wise man practices perpetual prayer."

In painting this form I imagined early Christians praying under a vast night sky. In their solitude they contemplate the wonder of the constellations against a divine blue darkness.

BIOGRAPHY

Kiki McGrath is an artist based in Washington, DC. Her expressive paintings veer between abstract and figurative imagery.

Having lived in Cambodia and Italy, she finds inspiration in travel and the art of other cultures. She is currently creating a body of work around pilgrimage and medieval Italian painters.

Kiki has an M.A. in Exhibition Design, and studied painting at the Corcoran College of Art and Design in Washington, DC.



LILIANNE MILGROM

STATEMENT

At a time when the world seems to be in dire need of our collective prayers, this exhibition provides a unique setting to focus on our commonalities rather than our differences. From the start of this project, I wanted to find a way to actively engage the public in dialogue and provide the viewer with an opportunity for personal prayer. I chose an angel as my emissary as angels appear in the sacred texts of Judaism, Christianity and Islam as well as in ancient manuscripts that predate these religions. These winged creatures straddle the celestial and earthly worlds acting as divine helpers, intermediaries, protectors, and messengers of God.

The QR code emblazoned on the angel's chest bridges the spiritual world and the contemporary digital world we live in. After scanning the code with our ubiquitous personal mobile devices, we can send a prayer for the world with the click of a finger. It is fitting that these prayers are then sent to the digital cloud for safe keeping. Amen.

www.virtualangel.weebly.com.

Special thanks to Rob and John at Bubbas Rods & Custom for helping me realize my vision.

BIOGRAPHY

Lilianne Milgrom is an international artist and writer on the Arts. She was born in Paris, France and spent her formative years in Australia. After living in Israel for extensive periods she now resides in the United States.

She holds a BA and DipEd from Melbourne University, and studied at the Avni Institute in Israel and the Academy of Art in San Francisco.

She has exhibited extensively in solo and group shows (including the 2013 Cluj International Ceramics Biennale) and her works can be found in private and institutional collections in England, France, Switzerland, Israel, United States, Australia and Romania.



LYNN GOLDSTEIN

STATEMENT

'The Steward'

Trees have been a central symbol of transcendence, immortality, and life in almost every culture. Without trees, we would no longer be able to exist, since they create the very air that we breathe. Without working together as groups and individuals, humans would no longer exist either. With this idea in mind, my figure is embracing trees and the trees are embracing the figure.

This image symbolically indicates that we are stewards of the land and of one another. We are all connected, and can provide comfort in times of trouble, and joy in positive moments. Our roots may help to define us, and lead us to a better understanding of others if we so choose.

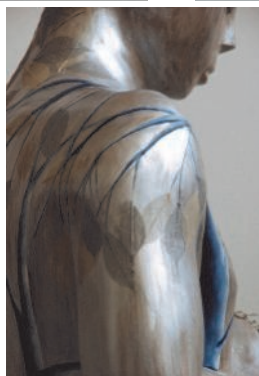
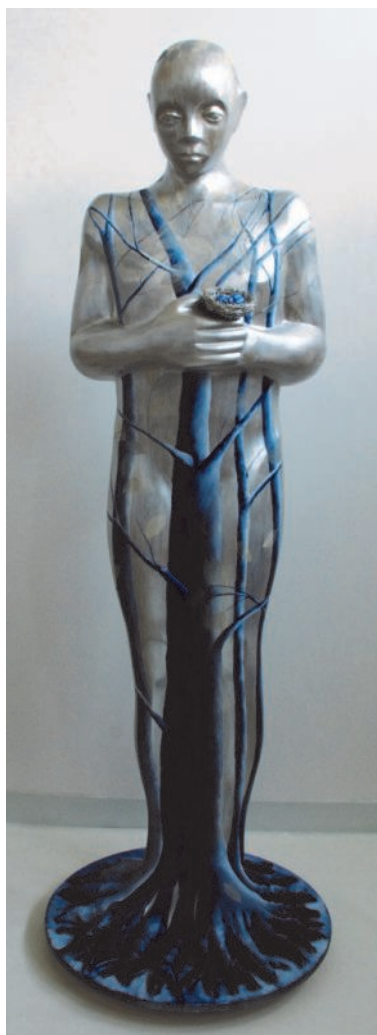
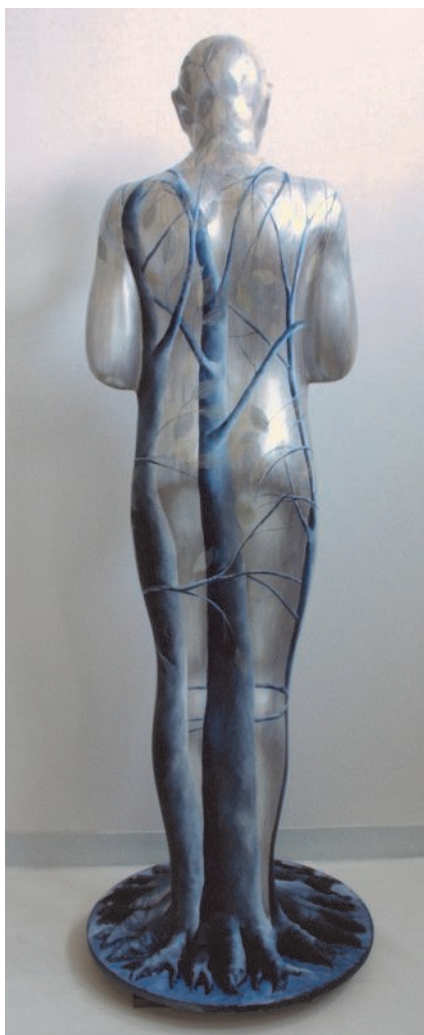
BIOGRAPHY

Lynn Goldstein developed her interest in art at a young age. While growing up in the mountains of West Virginia, Lynn's love of the landscape took root. She weaves her interest in nature, color and design into her expressive landscapes.

Lynn has exhibited widely, and won numerous awards, in juried exhibitions and galleries in the US. Her work is enjoyed in collections throughout the States and in Europe. Notably, one of her paintings was selected for the permanent collection in the Jean-Haffen Museum, in Dinan, France, upon her completion of an artist residency there in 2011. Additionally, her work was profiled in the August 2009 issue of *Pastel Journal* magazine.

A fine art graduate, Lynn has studied with some of the finest contemporary artists in the United States. Lynn is an art instructor as well. She wrote an educational article published in *Pastel Journal* encouraging artists to look at their work from a different perspective.

Lynn has taught many workshops in the mid-Atlantic region of the US, and most recently, taught a workshop in Southern France. Additionally, Lynn has also taught workshop classes at the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C.



MAHA GEORGE

STATEMENT

'Bless'

My work represents a human being praying for people in all continents. Our world is a field of conflict between good and evil, so we "ought always to pray" as it says in the Bible.

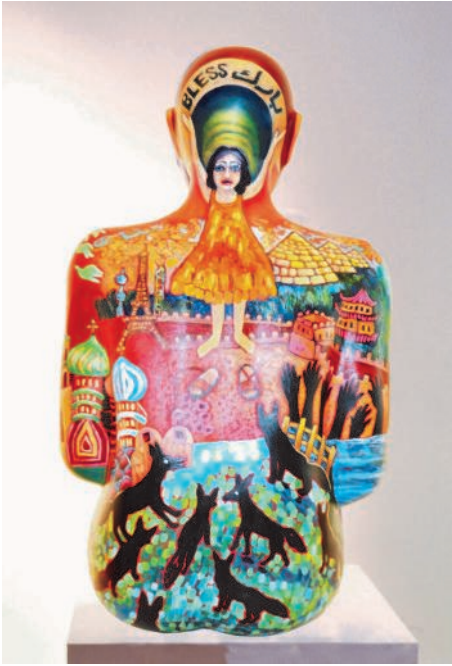
Cactus and wolves in my work are symbols of pain and devils

...but there is an Egyptian girl rising above the land asking God to bless the world with peace, mercy, and prosperity.

BIOGRAPHY

Maha George was born in Cairo, Egypt. She began painting on canvas in 1990. Throughout the 1990s Maya conducted many experiments with a variety of materials such as pens, crayons, water colors, gouache and ink, tried surfaces like grocery bags, paper, watercolor paper, carton, and with techniques like collage, mixed media, and printing. In recent years she has started experimenting with acrylic on canvas, and wood on fabric to produce quilt-like appearances. Her style is at once a kind of contemporary mix of expressionism and symbolism, and an articulation of her Egyptian culture and heritage. Currently Maya is working on a series of paintings on paper and canvas inspired by everyday life situations, with a strong focus on the experiences and feelings of women, particularly around the question of marriage.

She is an instructor of painting in Art Education College in Cairo. She received a residency at the Ucross Foundation-Wyoming, USA in 1998 and another at the Montalvo Art Center, California in 2005. She has held exhibitions, among many others, in Nuremberg, Germany in 2004, in Townhouse Gallery, Cairo in 2002, and elsewhere in Egypt.



MAHMOUD HAMDY

STATEMENT

'Amon'

One of the gods in ancient Egyptian mythology, Amon is the god of the sun and the wind and fertility. Amon created himself and can regenerate and re-create himself. Amon represents absolute perfection and a sacred space set apart from the created world. His connection with the wind elevates him easily to be one of the higher deities.

This work is a collection of points and lines that build on each other in an endless construction of fabric that is interconnected and complex. It ends at the beginning only to start over again, creating a space of prayer and elevating it to another level of peace and tranquillity.

BIOGRAPHY

Born in Giza, 1980, he graduated from the Faculty of Art Education in 2002, and now lives and works in Cairo. He has presented three solo shows: AUC Falaky Gallery in 2006, Saad Zagloul Art Center in 2008 & Gezira Art Center in 2011. He has participated in many exhibitions nationally and internationally, including the Youth Salon and Mediterranean Biennale for young artists in Italy 2008, and recently in the Arab symposium in Katara – Doha in Qatar. He has also received the Youth Salon Prize in 2009.

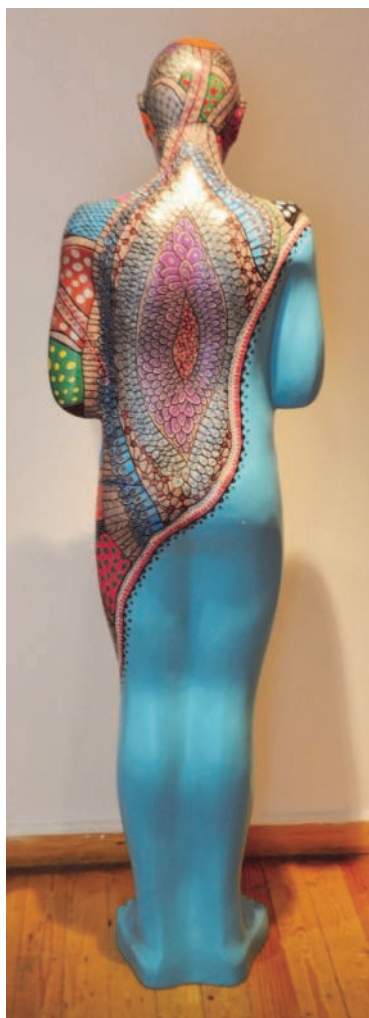
Hamdy works in the Cultural Management Field and has held the following positions:

2006 Responsible for the Falaky Gallery, AUC

2007 Manager of El Genena Theatre, Al Azhar Park, Cairo

2008 Art Program Director in Folk & Show Arts House, Ministry of Culture, Cairo

2009-2012 Manager of Karmet Ibn Hanie Cultural Center, Fine Art Sector



MARWA ADEL

STATEMENT

In any dialogue between belief systems the variance of meaning between shared terms can become an obstacle to understanding. Such an obstacle can lead to frustration, further misunderstanding, and even open hostility.

In a world where people are surrounded by darkness, ignorance, hate, anger and fear, you, the woman, is the messenger. . . for you are the one who carries all the most profound understandings of hope, believe, dream, peace and love.

When you are pregnant, you carry a pure, innocent and peaceful creature that embodies the truest understanding of these traits. Let love and peace be his/her faith and religion. If every mother kept her kids as pure as when they were born, we will live in heaven.

BIOGRAPHY

Born in 1984 in Egypt, Marwa Adel is a photographer and installation artist who works with text and photography in many of her projects. Adel holds a BA and MFA in Applied Arts from Helwan University, and teaches interdisciplinary approaches at October 6 University. Marwa has a Masters degree in Advertising Visual Identity. Her recent exhibitions include 'Sharjah Calligraphy Biennial' and 'Egyptian Art Today', Frankfurt, Germany. Marwa was winner of the '2011 Best Arab Photographer'.

Recent Group/Collective Exhibitions:

2013 Artsawa Gallery, Dubai.

2012 (WEYA) World Event Young Artists, Nottingham, UK

2012 Safar Khan, Cairo, Egypt

2012 Dak' Art Biennale de l'art africain contemporain Dakar Senegal.

2012 NordArt Exhibition, Germany.

2012 Sharjah Calligraphy Biennial, UAE

2012 Egyptian Art Today, Frankfurt, Germany.

2012 "9th European – Arab Festival of Photography– Hamburg - Germany.

2011 9th Bamako Encounters: Biennale of African Photography, National Museum of Mali.



MOHAMED ABLA

STATEMENT

'You in Me'

The mirror, holding ideas of reflection and purity, is held at an angle. If you want to see your face in it, you must lean down, you must lean with modesty, with purity.

You must pass the flowers, holding ideas of beauty and sacrifice, and then your face will be in the heart of the figure. In my heart. Surrounded by flowers.

BIOGRAPHY

Renowned Egyptian artist Mohamed Abla, winner of the prize at the 1998 Cairo Biennale and of many prestigious awards in Egypt and abroad, is a man of curious character and many faces. Born in Mansoura, Egypt, he graduated at the top of his class in 1977 from the Faculty of Fine Arts in Alexandria. Upon graduation he took part in Egypt's "Young Artists Exhibition," winning the grand prize.

His continuous travelling, has given him a broad exposure to the international art scene, and has resulted in him studying, teaching and exhibiting in galleries around the world. Abla says that he has an internal feeling that art is the key to bringing cultural and environmental awareness to people. He has an intense desire for expressing feeling through his paintings.

Abla's work focuses mainly on graphics and oil painting. His current working space is on an island in the Nile. It provides a quiet oasis and main source of inspiration. The Nile and the local Egyptian environment are prevailing themes in Abla's art, whether graphics, installation or oil paintings.



MOHAMED ABOU EL NAGA

STATEMENT

'Between the Soul and the Body'

The statue is covered with handmade paper made from plant fibers. Prayer is connected to faith and the land. Here the land is the clay made from soil and water. The paper is from plants rooted in the land and water. The passage of time is indicated by the rusting of the iron in the paper.

I was inspired by ancient Egyptian mummies, and so the statue is wrapped in this special paper as a reflection of ancient Egyptian wrappings, with the echoes of prayers resonating through thousands of years.

Then I placed the transparent tulle printed with the face of believer, bringing life and spirit to the statue. Although the statue reflects ancient Egypt, it enters into the present moment through the placement of this image of a living person.

BIOGRAPHY

Born in Egypt in 1960, Mohamed Abou el Naga graduated with honors from the Faculty of Fine Arts, Alexandria and later acquired a Masters Degree in Fine Arts and a PhD In Philosophy of Arts from Alexandria University.

Mohamed Abou El Naga studied papermaking extensively in Egypt and in Japan. Paper is a medium that has proven particularly conducive to his communicative art. He combines the tactile qualities of his handmade paper with color from natural oxides to create paintings and installations.

His images combine intuitive strokes and bold design to address subjects from history to current affairs. His work generated great interest when it went on view at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, the new Library of Alexandria, where it remains on permanent exhibition. Another installation, *Altars for Other Sacrifices*, is a more sombre presentation. It features lithographic prints and sculptures made of cast paper, inspired by ancient steles. This paper pillar, unlike the ancient stone ones, preserves natural history as well as human history in their inlaid traces of organic matter.



MOHAMED EL MASRY

STATEMENT

'The Winged'

The winged is a supernatural being or spirit, often depicted in humanoid form with feathered wings on their backs and halos around their heads, found in various religions and mythologies.

BIOGRAPHY

Based in Cairo, Egyptian artist and photographer Mohamed El Masry has received a bachelor's degree from Art Education College, Helwan University, 2004. He has finished intensive programs on visual arts and their social role, and how to employ arts to serve the society, correct behaviors, and practice social guidance. He has also received a diploma in photography and painting from Helwan University in 2006. He is a founding member in www.ofaaartists.com, a league for the winners of the Olympics golden medals in arts; a member in www.roadto2010.com since 2010; and a representative of www.africancolours.com in Egypt and North Africa.

He participated in a number of biennales and cultural festivals from 2000 to 2013 in Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Germany, China, Indonesia, India, Zambia, Ethiopia, and Italy. He has won several awards, most importantly The Golden Medal for Arts in Beijing Olympics in 2008, The Olympic Torch of the winter Olympics in Toronto in 2006, and The Memorial Medal of Banja Luka City-Bosnia. Some museums and institutions have acquired his artworks in Cairo, Indonesia, Madrid, Beijing (The Olympics Museum), and Bosnia.



MOHAMED SHAKER

STATEMENT

'The Hidden Meditation'

The statue expresses a state of meditation hidden behind melodious silence. I recall a wonderful poem (The love that will not let me sleep) by one of our greatest poets, Ahmad Shawky, put to music by the great musician Mohammed Abd El Wahab. I consider it a rare pearl in the crown of Arabic music tradition.

Just as tattoos and drawings on the human body are part of our ancient and modern visual art heritage, I felt that the message of this incredible poem harmonized with this hidden meditation behind the melodious silence. This was the idea behind this visual representation in which I used tempera and water-color paint, with touches of gold acrylic. I created a dialogue between the arts of sculpture and painting, and the arts of poetry and music, affected by the eulogy from the prince of poets Ahmad Shawky and the wonderful voice of the great musician Mohammed Abd El Wahab in my ears. In this performance, the letters and the words embrace the lines, colors, and touches.

BIOGRAPHY

Born in Mansoura in 1947, Shaker graduated with High Distinction from the Faculty of Fine Arts, Alexandria University. He has a Masters degree and PhD in murals and architecture related arts (from the Faculty of Fine Arts, Alexandria University).

Shaker is a member of;

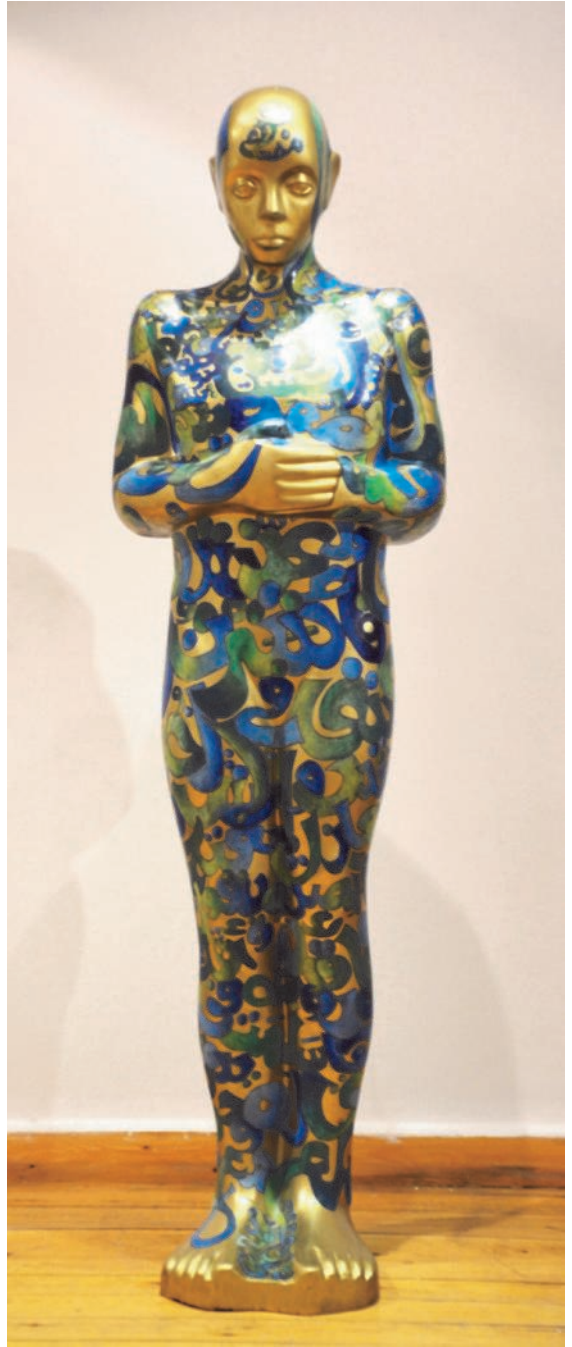
The Plastic Arts Syndicate

Artists & Writers Collective, Alexandria

International Federation of Contemporary Mosaic Artists

High Consultative Committee for Educational Development

Ex- Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts, Alexandria University



NEVEEN TAHER

STATEMENT

'Blossom'

Flowers, knowledge and people, they all blossom in one form or another. The growth and maturity evident in the beginning of spring can be symbolic of many things in our lives.

We all go through our existence with a certain level of blindness.

The blindness is sometimes personified in hypocrisy and narcissism, creating human beings intolerant to anything but their own existence.

Opening our eyes to the beauty around us, to knowledge and understanding of our surroundings can be the epitome of blossoming...and living.

BIOGRAPHY

Currently residing in Boston, Massachusetts in the United States, Neveen spends much of her time dedicated to various artisanal craft projects. She studied Political Science and Art at the American University in Cairo.

Growing up between Kuwait and Egypt, Neveen's upbringing in the Middle East has had a profound influence on her artwork. She has been living in the United States for the past 14 years.



REDA ABDEL RAHMAN

STATEMENT

When I thought of this project, and in the context of some earlier work I had done with the help of my friend Paul-Gordon Chandler, I chose Egypt as my theme.

I was inspired by the idea of the woman, who I believe is one of the most important pillars of our society. I imagined myself in front of Queen Hatshepsut or Queen Tiye or Nefertiti.

This queen is the mother of our people, and from her body extends all goodness in the form of branches giving joy and comfort and good fortune, personified by the turquoise scarabs that she bestows on everyone.

She has sat down on Set, the ancient Egyptian god of evil, as a sign of her control over the circumstances and all the evil forces of political Islam, who have wronged the Egyptian civilization.

BIOGRAPHY

Born in Ismailia, Egypt and having studied at the University of Minya at the College of Fine Arts, being surrounded by outstanding Pharaonic monuments and Coptic monasteries left a lasting impression on Reda Abdel Rahman, one of Egypt's leading contemporary artists. It has resulted in his artistic expression focusing on the relationship between what he regards as his ancient Egyptian heritage and the demands of contemporary life. One of the key focal points in his work is that happiness, indeed "a good life," are intricately related to what is grown and gleaned from the fields of Egypt and the Nile valley, and hence serves as a reoccurring theme in his art. Reda's work draws strength from the nurturing Nile which serves as a source for his creativity.

Not only has Reda enjoyed a prolific and international career in the Arts but he has also encouraged others by participating in a number of varied initiatives designed to promote artists and the Egyptian art scene. In this regard, he has been integral to the formation of internationally recognized events such as the Luxor Painting Symposium and the formation of the annual Aswan Sculpture Symposium. His artistic career has taken him around the world, from Latin America to Europe.



ROLAND PRIME

STATEMENT

I see this opportunity for my sculpture to reflect the ideas and thoughts I have had since moving to Asia. Historically it is a region with ancient connections by land and sea to the Middle East and Europe. The famous "Silk Road," is just one of many routes that carried this trade. It is a region that is equally devout, mystical and sincere as the Middle East; that has many links through trade, tourism and culture at this current time.

I have taken the color blue (lapis lazuli) as the foundation/connection that links us/me with the Middle East. A mineral that produced a color blue so sought after it was worth more than gold and yet is used by faiths to represent protection, divinity and devotion. I wanted to use Asian decorative motifs to represent these three qualities in the hope we all become one.

Using the sculptures stance, I see peace, meditation and inward reflection: sincerity.

BIOGRAPHY

Roland graduated from Canterbury Christ Church College, Kent, England with a B.A. degree in Fine Art painting and drawing. Through the exploration of art his work became gradually more three dimensional. Sculpture became an important part to his art along with painting. The sculptures were made from the discarded pieces of metal, a recycled art form. The paintings concentrated on landscape and atmosphere, both gained public and private commissions in the process.

Whilst in Cairo, as the founding *Curator* of the visual art exhibition in 2009 of the *CARAVAN Festival of the Arts, Cairo* he brought together a variety of artists from East and West, whose work reflected the inner emotions of our time. The exhibition has gained considerable publicity throughout the Middle East, Europe and now the USA.

For the last two years he has been based in the Johor region of Malaysia. His work reflects the nature of the countryside around him especially where the modern clashes with the old. He captures the beauty of the older architecture through dip pen and ink drawings, before they disappear under the rapid expansion of modern Malaysia.



SALAH EL MELIGY

STATEMENT

The walls of caves bear ancient drawings composed when man tried to understand his fear of the unknown. He invented many gods to explain the diverse phenomena of the universe as he searched for metaphysical powers. So he created art without even knowing it and grew in his understanding of legends.

In ancient Egypt, Amon was the most important and famous Egyptian god. He took on human form, with a crown on his head with two feathers, or the body of a human with a head of a ram, or the form of a whole ram. Civilizations presented earthly religions.

And then the heavenly religions came and made the word "Amen" a way to close prayers' prayers. Prayer is a spiritual relationship between a person and God. It is a gift from God. It gives us transparency and purity and tranquility. It is light, peace, and spiritual energy.

In my work I try to combine what is spiritual and emotional on one hand, and what is real and imaginary on the other to reach the spirit's energy.

BIOGRAPHY

Born in Suez in 1957, Dr. Salah El Meligy obtained his doctorate through the Graphic Art Department at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Cairo. He has participated in more than 100 international and Egyptian exhibitions, including 11 private shows. To date he has won 12 awards, 2 of which are international. His art can be found in many private & public collections throughout Egypt and abroad.

He is the former Head of Fine Arts for the Ministry of Culture in Egypt.



SIONA BENJAMIN

STATEMENT

'Shekinim'

Taking the concept of the Ardha-narishvara and the Shekinah as parallel concepts from what appears to be two distinctly different religions, I see apparent similarities. I chose the muslim prayer form, a familiar posture to me since I was raised in a Hindu and Muslim India. But I was raised Jewish in India, therefore I could look at all these fascinating religions and their beliefs and cull from their beauty and wisdom, inserting this into my art. I am a transcultural artist now living in America, trying to build bridges through my art making process. A turquoise blue skinned person, a symbol in my art of a trans-national being who belongs everywhere and nowhere at the same time. The blue from the sky and the ocean is anywhere and everywhere in this world, thus making him/her cross and merge boundary zones.

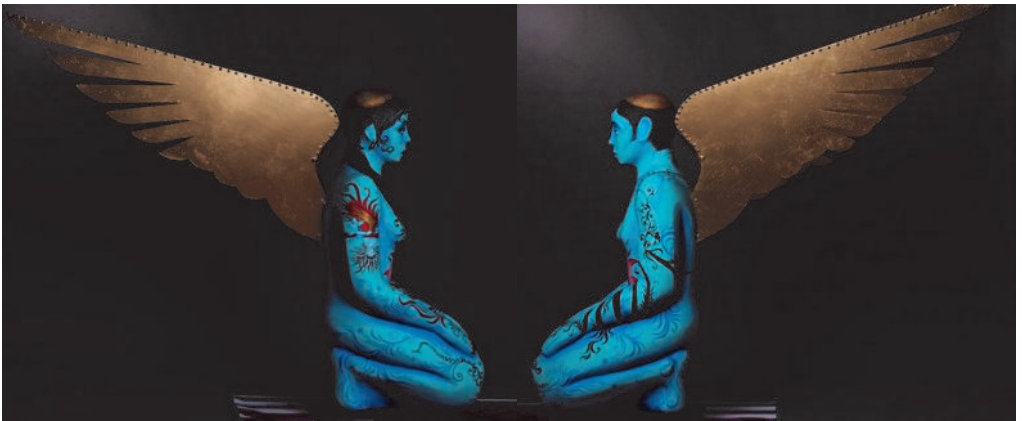
The female is the right half and the male the left. The Tefillin is like a Taveez to me and no different. Each is bound with faith and belief, each is a ritual in prayer, both bring their God closer. How can I separate the two, offsprings of the same father, brothers in bondage, sons of war, stigmata of memory. Taking flight, poised to take off, wind beneath my wings of glory and not of shame.

BIOGRAPHY

Siona Benjamin is a painter originally from Bombay, now living in the US. Her work reflects her background of being brought up Jewish in a predominantly Hindu and Muslim India. In her paintings she combines the imagery of her past with the role she plays in America today, making a mosaic inspired by both Indian miniature paintings and Sephardic icons. She has her first MFA in painting and a second MFA in Theater set design, and has exhibited in the US, Europe and Asia.

In 2010-11 she was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship for an art project titled *Faces: Weaving Indian Jewish Narratives*, in which her research was conducted in India. The first exhibit was held in October 2013 at the Prince of Wales museum in Mumbai, India and was covered by The Times of India, The Mumbai Mirror, Midday newspaper and Caravan magazine.

Her work has been featured in: The New York Times, The Chicago Tribune, The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Financial Times, The Jewish Week in NYC and NJ, The Boston Globe, Art in America, Art New England, Art and Antiques, ArtNews, Moment magazine and several newspapers, magazines, journals and books.



SOUAD ABDEL RASOUL

STATEMENT

Drawing on the body redrafts it to be more than just a piece of sculpture. Coloring it gives it energy beyond the hidden energy that was inside it from the beginning, making its presence brighter. I chose the statue in the bowing position for prayer. This is a still and peaceful position.

The lines I drew on it bring it closer and closer to heaven, as though they are successive prayers like melodies spread in the vast space. Each line and each color is a sacrifice that dissolves this weak and deficient part into that which is overall and fully perfect.

BIOGRAPHY

Born in Cairo, 1974, Souad lives and works in Egypt

Education

2005 M.A. (History of Art). Helwan University

1998 B.A. in Fine Arts. University of El Minya, Egypt

Exhibitions & Workshops

2012 Misr Gallery, Cairo

2008 Gallery Grant, Abdeen, Cairo

2007 Goethe Institute, Cairo

2007 Spring Salon, Sakia El Sawy, Cairo

2007 Townhouse, Cairo (workshop)

1999 Salon of Small Works, Japan

1998 Salon of Small Works, Museum of Modern Art, Cairo

1993-1998 El Minya, University



TAREK EL SHEIKH

STATEMENT

I chose light green paint, inspired by the color of plants, as a symbol of purity and new beginnings. I chose black lines to indicate chains and shackles.

The statue represents my personal plea to be liberated from the chains of my own making.

BIOGRAPHY

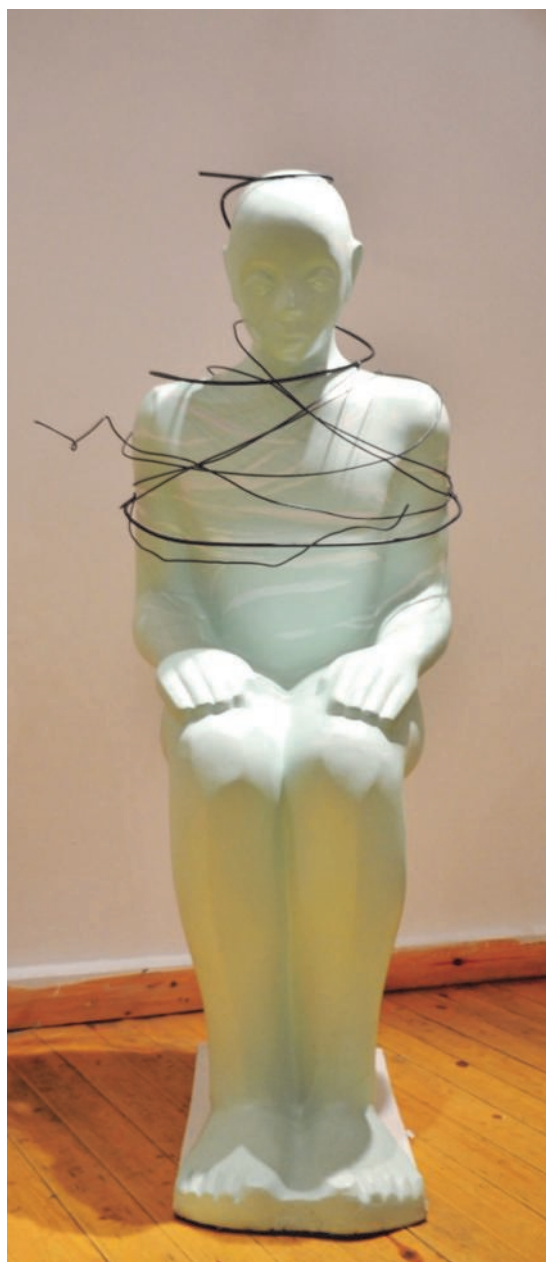
Born 1969 in Cairo. Bachelor degree of Art Education, Helwan University 1993.
Diploma in Arabic calligraphy in 1992

Group Exhibitions:

The Art Education Exhibition, Opera House Arts Palace, 2013
The Human Body, Opera house Arts Palace, 2010
The Third International Biennale in Ecuador, 2010
The first Festival of Visual Art Creation, Opera House Arts Palace, 2007/2008/2009
Exhibition held at the American University in Cairo, 2007
Exhibition of Egyptian art, Rome, Italy 2004
Fall Opening, the American University in Cairo, 2002
The 27th, 28th and 29th General Exhibitions
The 7th through 15th Youth Salons

Select Solo Exhibitions: and Prizes

Ahmad Shawky Museum, Zamalek, 2009
Painting, International Biennale, Ecuador, 2010



THOMAS XENAKIS

STATEMENT

My work in *AMEN* uses similar methods and materials for a gilded surface, as seen in Byzantine iconography. This work visually addresses the quiet, yet powerful state of prayer towards enlightenment, tranquility and the ultimate *theosis*- unification with God. Marks and patterns of light, and texture signify our need for beauty and wholeness. The dimensionality in the work appears in, on, and above the surface of the panel. Another goal of the work is to communicate energy, brilliant color, and movement using a variety of visual elements. I choose precious metals, primarily gold, to communicate these elements. Additionally, this piece addresses the nature of light. Gold is symbolic of *divinity* exemplified with real, inner, and reflected light. Creativity (creation), enlightenment (light), and beauty (goodness) are echoed through the use of gold leaf. Random sculptural marks of various kinds are symbolic of *humanity*. Visual movement in the work is the energy of our divine/human duality, striving for oneness, and inner and outer peace. Our motivation to exist in this divine/human duality is inherent in many faith journeys. Our ultimate goals are the same- to strive for natural union with God.

BIOGRAPHY

Thomas was awarded two Senior Fulbright Fellowships to Greece in 1994-1995 and 2000-2001. In 1996 he became artist-in-residence at the Wesley Theological Seminary, Luce Center for the Arts and Religion, Washington, DC. He continued his work with the sacred icon and contemporary applications to Byzantine iconography in media, methods, and subject. Thomas completed a Masters of Fine Arts at the Maryland Institute College of Art Hoffberger School of Painting in Baltimore, Maryland under the guidance of the late Grace Hartigan, Abstract Expressionist painter. Since 1998 Thomas has taught a variety of courses in drawing, design, and painting at local universities and community colleges in Washington DC area.

Mr. Xenakis is continually working in his Washington DC studio and exhibiting nationally and internationally. Since 2003 he is working on sculpted and painted mixed media gilded panels with a variety of precious metals. These works are titled *XPYSO* (meaning *GOLD* in the Greek language).

Currently, Thomas teaches drawing, design, and painting at Georgetown University in Washington DC, Marymount University in Arlington, Virginia and Prince Georges Community College in Largo, Maryland. He is represented in collections throughout the United States, Greece, France and Germany.



TRUDI Y. LUDWIG

STATEMENT

This 'Celestial Body' is rooted in a faith that God is all natural laws considered together. Science informs us that each of us contains trace amounts of elemental energy released at the violent inception of the universe's first blossom. Whether or not this conception of creation is accepted, the fact remains that if our bodies were picked apart atom by atom, we'd find that every single one of us is composed of the same few essential elements, arranged in varied measurable proportions.

A prayer goes out: Release the "I." Embrace the "We."

'Just because something can be explained doesn't mean it's not a miracle.'

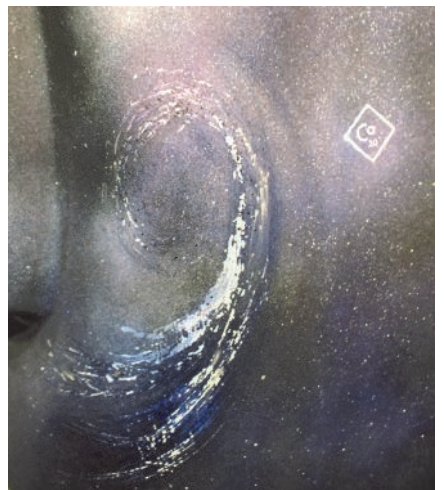
And that's divine.

BIOGRAPHY

Born and raised in Des Moines, Iowa, Trudi Y. Ludwig received her B.A. in Art and Art History, with a minor in Music History, from St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN. Ludwig received her M.A. in Art History from The George Washington University, Washington, DC, and her M.F.A. in Printmaking and Drawing from Towson University, Towson, MD. She has led Art History tours internationally.

She teaches Art History Surveys, History of Prints, Foundation Drawing and Printmaking at the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore, MD, and since 1995 has exhibited at the Washington Printmakers Gallery, Washington, DC.

Large scale woodcuts and multi-plate etchings occupy Ludwig's studio practice. Her work has been shown internationally and is included in numerous collections across the U.S., including the Library of Congress, The Baltimore Museum of Art and Georgetown University. Ludwig served as Artist-in-Residence at the Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, DC, throughout 2012, and since then she has served as Curator of the Dadian Gallery of the Luce Center for the Arts and Religion.



Wael Darwesh

STATEMENT

'Soul And Body'

The human being is dual, both soul and body. The soul is the leader and dominates over all the actions of the body because the soul inspires the body to do good or bad, to tell the truth or to lie. The soul drives the body to experience the world until it separates from it by death. During their worldly experiences, everyone must cleanse their souls and bodies. Purity is composed of two inseparable parts, sensual purity and moral purity. But the body and the soul live together, and the body is subject to the soul's inspiration from conception. Here we understand the importance of the soul's mastery over the body along with its responsibility, since the soul's purity leads the body's purity.

The main idea of this work is to focus on the contrast between outer appearance and inner essence. Purity relates to the inner soul of the human being. Therefore, purification is a soul's decision to cleanse all that is materialistic. This recalls to mind the act of cutting a tuft of hair at the end of the Haj pilgrimage as a symbol of disconnection from the world. All these scenes always come to my mind and they are the main motivation behind the idea of my work-- the purification of the soul from all malice. I wanted to confirm in my work the purity of the soul and the body together. When we survey all the heavenly religions and even worldly doctrines, we find that they all focus on the soul's purity, which surely leads to the body's purity. This is how we measure our humanity and our ongoing problem is our struggle with our souls' flaws.

BIOGRAPHY

Darwesh has worked since 1998 at the Faculty of Art at Helwan University in Cairo, where he obtained a PhD in Contemporary Painting Philosophy and an M.F.A in Painting and Drawing, and is now an Assistant Professor.

Painting projects in the past few years were inspired by American Color Field painting and French Lyrical Abstraction, where large "fields" of flat solid color harmoniously colonize large areas of the canvas to create a homogenous surface of flat picture plane, stressing on the overall consistency of form over the brush movement and brushstrokes.

Contrary to standard Color Field and Lyrical Abstraction, Darwesh for years has successfully combined abstraction styles and painterly techniques with elements of figuration and cognitive representation. Darwesh is represented by the Art Sawa Gallery in Dubai and the Safar Khan Gallery in Cairo and holds regular solo exhibitions in Egypt and the United Arab Emirates.

