

Brushstrokes & Revolutions

A lecture series on

Modern and contemporary Egyptian art.

April 28-Jul 14, 2025



Brushstrokes & Revolutions

A lecture series on modern and contemporary Egyptian art.

April, 28- July, 14, 2025

Modern and contemporary Egyptian art has long been shaped by a dynamic interplay of local heritage, international influences, and socio-political change. From its inception, it has served as both a reflection of and a response to key historical moments, embodying the nation's quest for identity, independence, and cultural revival. As Egyptian art critic, writer, and former Minister of Culture Badr Al-Din Abou Ghazi (1920–1983) observed in 1956, modern Egyptian art was not an isolated phenomenon but a "national inevitability," deeply embedded in the fabric of society and influenced by the country's political struggles (Ghazi, 1956, p. 114). Similarly, artist Liliane Karnouk highlighted the role of art in shaping national consciousness and articulating post-independence aspirations (Karnouk, 1988, p. 1).

Throughout the 20th and 21st centuries, Egyptian art has functioned as a visual archive, tracing the nation's evolution from 19th-century modernization and European-inspired reforms to the rise of nationalism, the fight against British occupation, the socialist era, and Nasserist Pan-Arabism—and reaching to the 2011 Revolution and the post-Arab Spring period. Yet, despite its significance, the political and social narratives embedded in this art remain underexplored. Beyond documenting artistic trends and styles, these works provide insight into themes of urban transformation, activism, and shifting cultural identities.

This lecture series examines the diverse historical and visual cultural dimensions of modern and contemporary Egyptian art, contextualizing it within broader discourses of identity, politics, and social change. Additionally, the talks will explore its role in transcultural exchange, international diplomacy, soft power, and cultural safeguarding, offering non-European perspectives and narratives, besides highlighting Egypt's place within a global artistic dialogue.

The titles of the lectures in this series are available for viewing, and participants may register for each lecture individually by scanning the QR code provided on the official lecture series poster or by accessing the following link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd0REjihgLx_nOXCxPdaNVTqXQEw1L_4Nly9BjBbFY1LGDtqQ/viewform?usp=header

LECTURE SERIES PROGRAM AND SPEAKERS:

◇ Monday, April 28, 2025, at 6:00 PM Berlin time / 7:00 PM Cairo time (Virtual):

Art and Revolution: Mukhtar and the 1919 Revolution as an example



By Prof. Dr. Emad Abou Ghazi

Emad Abou-Ghazi (b. January 3, 1955, Cairo) is a distinguished Egyptian historian and archivist, currently serving as Professor in the Department of Libraries, Archives, and Information Science at the Faculty of Arts, Cairo University. Renowned for his interdisciplinary expertise, Prof. Abou-Ghazi has made significant contributions to the fields of cultural heritage, archival science, and modern historical research, both within Egypt and internationally. Since 1974, he has published extensively across a diverse range of subjects, including modern and diplomatic history, archival theory and practice, art history, cultural policy, and the Palestinian question. His scholarship is characterized by a rigorous, integrative methodology that bridges historical inquiry with contemporary cultural discourse. In addition to his academic work, Prof. Abou-Ghazi has played an influential role in Egypt's civil society, actively participating in numerous non-governmental organizations dedicated to cultural and educational development. His work frequently intersects with policy, reflecting a sustained commitment to aligning scholarly research with practical applications in heritage preservation and cultural governance.

Prof. Abou-Ghazi is widely recognized for his efforts to foster dialogue between academia, public institutions, and the broader cultural sphere, positioning him as a key figure in shaping Egypt's intellectual and cultural landscape.

(The primary language of this lecture is Arabic. Real-time translation into English and German will be available via Zoom's Translated Captions feature.)

To Register:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScE-9vDV6o8AEk9kBbXIIIcNF-LMD5Sy2DuZhuLR6htuD42tQ/viewform?usp=header>

◇ Monday, May 12, 2025, at 5:00 PM Berlin time / 6:00 PM Cairo time / 8:00 PM Muscat time (Virtual):

Contexts of Egyptian Art During the First Half of the Twentieth Century



By Prof. Dr. Yasser Mongy

Yasser Ibrahim Mohamed Mongy (b. 1972) is an Egyptian academic, visual artist, and specialist in graphic arts. He earned his Bachelor's degree in Graphic Arts from the Faculty of Fine Arts, Helwan University (1996), followed by a Master's degree (2003) exploring the artistic treatment of death in printmaking, and a Ph.D. in Philosophy (2006) focusing on graphic representations of the devil and metaphysical symbols of evil. Currently an Associate Professor in the Department of Graphic Arts at Helwan University's Faculty of Fine Arts, Prof. Dr. Mongy has presented three solo exhibitions and is an active participant in Egypt's

contemporary art scene, contributing to numerous national and international exhibitions and festivals. His curatorial and critical expertise has also been recognized through appointments to various juries for Arab art and criticism competitions. He served as Secretary of the Fine Arts Committee at Egypt's Supreme Council of Culture until 2014, and since 2008, has been a contributing expert to the Civilization Lexicon project at the Academy of the Arabic Language. In 2014, he was appointed as a research and documentation consultant at the Arab Museum of Modern Art (Mathaf) in Doha. Since 2019, he has been seconded to Sultan Qaboos University in Oman, where he teaches art history and criticism in the Department of Art Education. Prof. Dr. Mongy has authored over twenty scholarly publications, primarily focused on art history, visual culture, and criticism. His writings—spanning topics in art, literature, heritage studies, documentation, and museology—have appeared in numerous Arab newspapers, academic journals, and digital platforms. His literary and critical output includes fiction, theoretical works on visual arts, and cultural critique, with notable titles such as *Artists and Heretics: Hidden Codes in the Works of Art Pioneers* and *The Project of Modernity in Arab Visual Arts*. He is the recipient of multiple accolades, including the Grand Prize at the 10th Youth Salon (1998) and the Sharjah Award for Visual Art Criticism (2008, 2009), reflecting his dual impact as both a practicing artist and a critical voice in the Arab art world.

(The primary language of this lecture is Arabic. Real-time translation into English and German will be available via Zoom's Translated Captions feature.)

To Register:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSedzCv_F37kHcVdnCw2nSoFZoL4lC0RlhWdNC8fwKLWo0r3OA/viewform?usp=header

- ◇ Monday, June 02, 2025, at 6:00 PM Berlin time / 7:00 PM Cairo time ((Virtual and in person):

From Studio to Society: Mohamed Ablā on the Role of the Artist in Contemporary



Egypt

By Artist: Mohammad Ablā

Mohamed Ablā (b. 1953, Belqas, Egypt) is a leading Egyptian visual artist and cultural activist whose work spans painting, sculpture, and graphic arts. A graduate of the Faculty of Fine Arts in Alexandria (1977), he pursued advanced studies in Europe, including sculpture in Zurich and printmaking in Vienna, which enriched his engagement with both local and global art movements. Ablā's practice is deeply rooted in contemporary Egyptian life, exploring themes of memory, identity, and social transformation through dynamic, often experimental visual languages. His work has been widely exhibited across Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas, and he is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Grand Prize of the Alexandria Biennale (1997) and the Goethe Medal (2022), becoming the first Arab artist to receive this prestigious honor.

In addition to his artistic achievements, Ablā has played a vital role in arts education and cultural preservation. He is the founder of the Fayoum Art Center (2007), a unique residency and educational space in rural Egypt, and the Egyptian Caricature Museum

(2009), the first of its kind in the Arab world. Abla continues to be an influential figure in the discourse on art, society, and cultural policy in the Arab region.

(The primary languages of this lecture are Arabic and German)

To Register:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdYQ8SSQaiwe7caMx5Ib1VVMauTm4ysBCsdIGKx3JEirXKA/viewform?usp=header>

◇ Monday, June 16, 2025, at 6:00 PM Berlin time / 7:00 PM Cairo time (Virtual):

I For Identity



By Artist Wageeh Wahaba

Wagih Wahba (b. 1950, Cairo) is a prominent Egyptian visual artist, art critic, and writer whose work has significantly shaped contemporary painting and cultural discourse in Egypt. Though initially trained in Agricultural and Cooperative Sciences, Wahba pursued independent artistic studies in Italy (1975–1978), where he actively exhibited in numerous group shows across northern Italy. Upon returning to Egypt, Wahba established a notable presence in the national art scene, presenting solo exhibitions at esteemed venues including Atelier Cairo, Mashrabia Gallery, and Picasso Gallery. He has also been a regular participant in major national and group exhibitions such as the Cairo Salon, the National Exhibition of Fine Arts, and various cultural festivals. Beyond his studio practice, Wahba has contributed extensively to arts administration and cultural policy. He has held key positions such as Head of Research and Training at the Child Culture Center (Garden City, Ministry of Culture), Chairman of the Board of Atelier Cairo for Artists and Writers, and Cultural Advisor to the Egyptian Parliament. Notably, he served as Head of the Jury for the 13th Youth Salon in 2003. As an art critic and cultural commentator, Wahba has published widely since the 1980s in leading Egyptian newspapers and journals, offering critical perspectives on art, aesthetics, and cultural thought. His artworks are housed in several prominent public collections, including the Museum of Modern Egyptian Art, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, and the Cairo Opera House.

(The primary language of this lecture is English)

To Register:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdQBRMTBFCfLoIF14IMd_h3YTFidjsGj6EGYb6k8gPtQXGTg/viewform?usp=header

◇ Monday, June 30, 2025, at 6:00 PM Berlin time / 7:00 PM Cairo time (Virtual):

Eine Ägyptische Reise durch die Kunst von Mona Ragy Enayat



by Artist Mona Enayat

Mona Ragy Enayat is an Egyptian-born visual artist and cultural mediator based in Leipzig, Germany. She studied painting, art history, and theater decoration at Helwan University in Cairo, graduating with distinction in 1987. In 1988, she became the first Egyptian artist to enroll at the Academy of Fine Arts (HGB) in Leipzig, where she studied painting, graphic arts, and book illustration. Her artistic practice centers on the human figure, exploring themes of cultural identity, social boundaries, and political transformation. Her works often incorporate symbolic elements such as the Udjat eye and calligraphic motifs, reflecting her cross-cultural experiences. Enayat actively engages in art education projects and the international women's movement, emphasizing the role of art in fostering social understanding and cultural exchange.

(The primary language of this lecture is German)

To Register:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdUSBvOf8c_d3MJhXY7dl61m7ARP2dls_3XdObwKrpvv-rhBg/viewform?usp=header

◇ Monday, July 14, 2025, at 6:00 PM Berlin time / 7:00 PM Cairo time (Virtual):

Roots and Horizons: Modern Egyptian Sculpture in a Socio-Political Context



Prof. Dr. Manal Helal

Manal Helal is a distinguished Egyptian contemporary artist, sculptor, academic, and parliamentarian. She currently holds the position of Professor of Sculpture Design and serves as Head of the Department of Sculpture, Architectural Design, and Restoration at the Faculty of Applied Arts, Helwan University, Egypt. A multidisciplinary practitioner, Professor Helal's oeuvre encompasses painting, ceramics, digital sculpture, and product design, with particular emphasis on material innovation involving aluminum, copper, clay, and PVC. Her artistic research explores the intersection of classical sculptural traditions and contemporary abstraction, often drawing inspiration from modernist figures such as Henry Moore and Constantin Brancusi. Since the outset of her academic career, Professor Helal has been an active figure in Egypt's fine art movement, contributing to numerous national and international exhibitions. Her most recent solo exhibition, *Revival of Bastet*, was held at Cardiff Metropolitan University, UK, and exemplifies her ongoing engagement with cross-cultural artistic discourse. In parallel with her artistic endeavors, Professor Helal has made significant contributions to public service and education. She is a former member of the Egyptian Parliament, a certified trainer at the National Training Academy, and an industrial design engineering consultant. She has represented Egypt in various international academic exchanges and artist residencies, with her works

featured in prominent collections across Europe, North America, and the Middle East. Deeply committed to the transformative potential of the arts, Professor Helal regards creative practice as a vital force for fostering social awareness and cultural advancement.

(The primary language of this lecture is English)

To Register:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScCk8JEbyhlsHNxQsvL8F_yR-5z9GaUUVCZDrclajOVt0ri_A/viewform?usp=header

This lecture series is presented within the framework of the Maria Reiche Fellowships Program, under the auspices of the Graduate Academy and the Professorship of Image Science in a Global Context

Faculty of Philosophy, Institute for Art and Music Studies

Technical University of Dresden



Dr. Hala H. Ghoname
Maria Reiche Fellow
Image Science in a Global
Context

Former Member of the Guest Professors Program
for the Promotion of Women in Science and
Research at Saxon Universities
Faculty of Philosophy, Institute for Art and Music
Studies
Technical University Dresden
August-Bebel-Str. 20, Raum 208
01219 Dresden
Hala.ghoname@tu-dresden.de



Prof. Dr. Kerstin
Schankweiler
Professur für
Bildwissenschaft im
globalen Kontext

Aktuelle Forschungsprojekte:
Bildproteste in den Sozialen Medien
Affektive Archive – Auslandsreisen von
Künstler:innen zur Zeit der DDR
Art in Networks – The GDR and its Global
Relations
Technische Universität Dresden
Philosophische Fakultät, Institut für Kunst-
und Musikwissenschaft
August-Bebel-Str. 20, 01219 Dresden