

WINGS AND ROOTS

AN ADVENTURE IN ART, LITERATURE AND LIFE



Shawkat Al-Rubaie

Éléments sous droits d'auteur

knowledge, and that left on me fingerprints of the joy and pleasure and comfort, so I restored it whenever my longing for freedom intensified. I have sensed that on faces of people whom I met with, in their audio, visual arts, in the national and historical legacies, in the tissues and details of nations and communities which I visited and lived there.

I was pleased and made the others happy, I succeeded and failed, loved and liked, went back to my internal world. Within the past four decades I failed to write one poem so I hid my love for the real experience of poetry. I could not write one satisfied story and gave up trying again. But, I found myself in painting and artistic criticism. I was free to express through painting, so I have become an impressive color vistas in Modern Art's spaces, and have made my art and writings a nice reed for breezes of the poetical spirit, and a light from the flame of the art experience which was deeply dug into me. When I developed a keen sense of life and reality, abandoned the meaning of isolation and alienation, leaving the impact of excessive, shocking first experiences. My feelings to love life had deepened.

There were four critical stations: years of study art, between 1956 and 1962; years of maturity, which extended until the year 1972, including the study under supervision of Jawad Salim, Faiq Hassan, Ismael Shaekhli, Faraj **Abbo**, Nazeeha Salim in painting, and Valentinou in pottery, and Hashim Alkhatat in Arabic calligraphy and decoration.

In that period I worked in journalism as a supervisor editor of Fine Arts pages of "Almustaqbal" newspaper. Also, I published a lot of critical articles about Iraqi and Arabic artists, and impressionism, such as "Paul Cézanne vision of post-impressionism", which was published in 1962 in "Almoattin" newspaper, which was supervised by the cinematic director Qassim Hawal. I edited, with the short story writer, Khalil Rasheed a book about Abdulameer Almusawi and his poetry (1967) and collected together his unpublished poems and published (The Blue Harbor—1968).

My first book was (An introduction in history of Iraqi art) which published by Ministry of Culture in Iraq in 1970, and then I have continued publishing my books one after one. Those books now are among the important resources which have kept the important stages of painting art in Iraq, and this book is one of them.

What distinguishes the voice of Iraqi artist, writer and poet and intellectual, is the freedom as it faces and rejects guardianship. That voice has moved from a combination of bipolar world, after the second war and the accrued questions of culture and literature, and outbreak of regional wars in East Asia, Africa and Latin America and in Palestine, Afghanistan and Iraq. From here we can understand the call for commitment, and seek to integrate the arts, literature and their motivations and goals within a broader project to change society. However, we must wonder about the themes and ideas that framing the concept of freedom and commitment. With the beginning of the twentieth century the literary culture had deeply entrenched classic tradition. The world needed new creators who can develop humanitarian traditions of art and literature. The need became more wanted.

So such as this unique creator, artist and poet have come. They were with huge innovation and aspirations of amazing metaphorically expressivity, an artist paints the walls of villages and cities, and poet talks to millions

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“No body would take me by the hand and walk me to the, Institute of Fine Arts “ says. “There I would draw & paint 40 minutes which is what my professor arranged for. I’ll never forget how he smile when I started with the green light color with my fingers—that I will never forget! my professor Faiq Hassen & jawad Salim “& Hashem Alkhatat. Faraj Abbo, Ismail Alshaikly, laizssky, Valetinos, Naziha Salim, Abd alrahman Alkailany.

Shawkat took a hard work in the 1969’ to teach at the Institute of teaching in Basrah.& in 1975 he went to the Ministry of culture & Arts.and worked in T.V. & news papers.

He went to the University of Baghdad in 1958, & his intention was to take Holy Orders. Here he met his lifelong friend Mahood Ahmed.. Here they first heard of the Brotherhood.

In Baghdad in the mid 1959s he met his artistic hero Jawad Salim, who became his mentor, & they were friends until Jawad death in 1961. He also met Esmail Alshaikly. Fareg Abbo then moved to London, sharing rooms with AnArabian Artistic. He assisted in the creation of the unsuccessful mural at the Union of Youth Artistis.

Shawkat was a nervous highly-strung individual. He combined a monkish love of ancient legend,. He had a classical artistic trait of suffering nervous collapse after the completion of a major work.. In the early 19840s Shawkat made his first visit to Paris. . In the mid 1996s, he started to visit Milano,in Italy gain a reputation as a painter, & to sell some picturesin his one man Exhibition there & heald three Exhibition more .

In the 1997s Shawkat became gradually more successful,in his works. He became friendly with the aristocratic artist& writer Miss, Nancy Leifghton, , who produced some excellent drawings of him. His diffidence, & reluctance to exhibit publicly, however, still meant he was unknown to the wider public. In 1997, Shawkat was persuaded to exhibit at the Greenlight Gallery, & virtually overnight became a famous painter. In the 1998s, he, being regarded as yonger greatest living artists.. He had been created a baronet Nancy,s mather, but was unhappy about accepting the honour, & he told friends that the contempt of his friend Nancy Leifghton for it was withering.. He was the most interesting & most loveable of all these great artists, & one of our greatest late 20th century painters in Iraq.

He was completely delighted and taken by surprise when every one has seen the current show “Exposed: The Nude, Landscaps, Druings” at the Baghdad Museum of modern Art. What surprised me was the unbiased historical approach to the theme of the show. Most museums that dare to present his Impressionist works, & Academic art have accompanying text that is tongue-in-cheek or satirically critical of the work. They justify the fact that they have even allowed themselves to offer the exhibit on the grounds that it deserves “some” historical representation, and then they poke fun of the work in the usual manner, calling the pieces trite but titillating, or academically impressive (said derisively) but saccharine and inane. But Shawkat gives serious insight into the Iraqiian controversy of nudity and sexuality. The text for the paintings (and in the beautiful catalogue) explains, with respect, what the artists of that era were trying to do. Yes, there was trivial and

Rafa, was born on the 14th of October, 1973 in Basrah, & became a mechanic engineer, Ruba was born on the 15th of September 1975 in Baghdad & became a graphic designer. & Karim was born on the 28th of October 1983 in Baghdad, & became an engineer in petroleum services LLC.

However, according to the family history. The family stayed under one roof for an inordinately long period of time at the same road in Al-Jidaidah area.

The Ottoman Educations changed the schooling system, nationalizing most of it. However. We know many lovely things of his childhood & youth. But given the “loner” image which he later projected, one can imagine that he was shy and non assertive. With the possible exception of his grades and drawing ability he probably had an undistinguished school-boy career. Like so many artists he was probably the “school artist” wherever he was. His home life was probably dominated by his father, who saw to it that all the sons followed his lead into the family profession of trading of (tea & sugar). Shawkat, went to his own direction.

Shawkat was born in, Amarah City, the 14th of March, 1940, grew up in it, and attended high school in Amrah. He studied Art at Baghdad University, Academy of Fine Arts in Iraq, and did a graduation project in “Arts philosophy, literature, and theology of Arts”.

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