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Thank God it's Friday

Posted on February 6, 2015

Salah Abdel Kerim in Cairo, Wael Shawky in New York

Two current exhibitions – Salah Abdel Kerim at Safarkhan Art Gallery in Cairo, and Wael Shawky at the MoMA PS1 in New York – serve as a reminder that Egyptian art has so much more to offer than the usual mummies, pyramids, King Tut and Queen Cleopatra.



Christoph Scholz
Director SC Exhibitions

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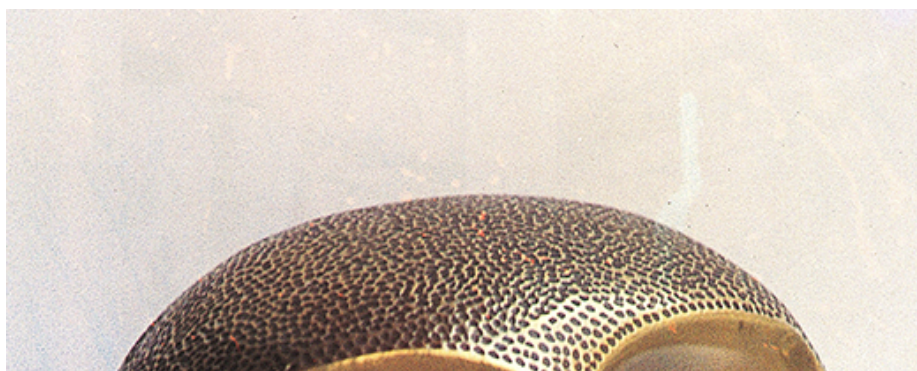
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A celebration of today's most





Le hibou (1)

1980, Salah Abdel Kérim

During the many years we spent working on our Tutankhamun exhibition, Egypt's capital of Cairo became almost a second home to me, and **whenever I'm in the city a visit to the Safarkhan Art Gallery on 6 Brazil Street is a must. The Safarkhan institution is run by two wonderful ladies, Sherwet Shafei and her daughter Mona Said.** It was actually Mona who introduced contemporary Egyptian art to me back in 2011 – the year of Egypt's revolution – when we produced the Festival of Egyptian Culture in Frankfurt. The Safarkhan Gallery also brought two exhibitions to Frankfurt – “To Egypt with Love” and “Egyptian Art Today”.

Salah Abdel Kerim (1925 – 1988), a renowned figure in the history of modern Egyptian art, is the subject of a unique new show at the gallery, open until February 27. Abdel Kerim is known for his diverse creations across mediums including sculpture, oil painting and ceramics, as well as theatre décor, costumes, and national and international posters and murals. Shown here are scans from a vintage catalogue, showing some works from Mr Kerim's oeuvre – a scarab sculpture, a TV logo, and an owl. One of the owls (a gift from Sherwet Shafei and Mona Said), sits in my home in Bayreuth, and this mystical, magical bird is the guardian of our house, making me dream of Cairo and the Nile whenever I see her.

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Salah Abdel Kerim

January 22 – February 27

Safarkhan Art Gallery

7 Brazil Street, Zamalek, Cairo, Egypt

safarkhan.com

[@safarkhanarts](https://twitter.com/safarkhanarts)

The strong, coarse, immediate nature of Salah Abdel Kerim's work corresponds with the artistic creations of **Wael Shawky**, who opened his first big solo show at the MoMA PS1 in New York just a few days ago. I had the pleasure of becoming familiar with Mr Shawky's work last year at London's Serpentine Gallery, and he is without doubt one of the most exciting artists to emerge from the Middle East in recent years. His work, which takes the form of installations, performances and films, explores history, culture, and the effect of globalisation on contemporary society. In addition to his work as an artist, Shawky also runs a studio study programme for young artists in Alexandria, Egypt.

Featured in the new MoMA PS1 show, entitled "Cabaret Crusades", is the artist's trilogy of videos, which tells the history of the Crusades from an entirely new perspective, using 200 year-old wooden marionettes in place of actors. As well as the existing films, "Cabaret Crusades: The Horror Show" and "Cabaret Crusades: The Path to Cairo", the gallery will be presenting the debut of the third and final film in the series, "Cabaret Crusades: The Secrets of Karbala". I am very much looking forward to seeing this missing piece in a few weeks, on my next trip to New York.

Wael Shawky: Cabaret Crusades

January 31 – August 31

MoMA PS1

22-25 Jackson Avenue, Long Island City, New York, USA

momaps1.org

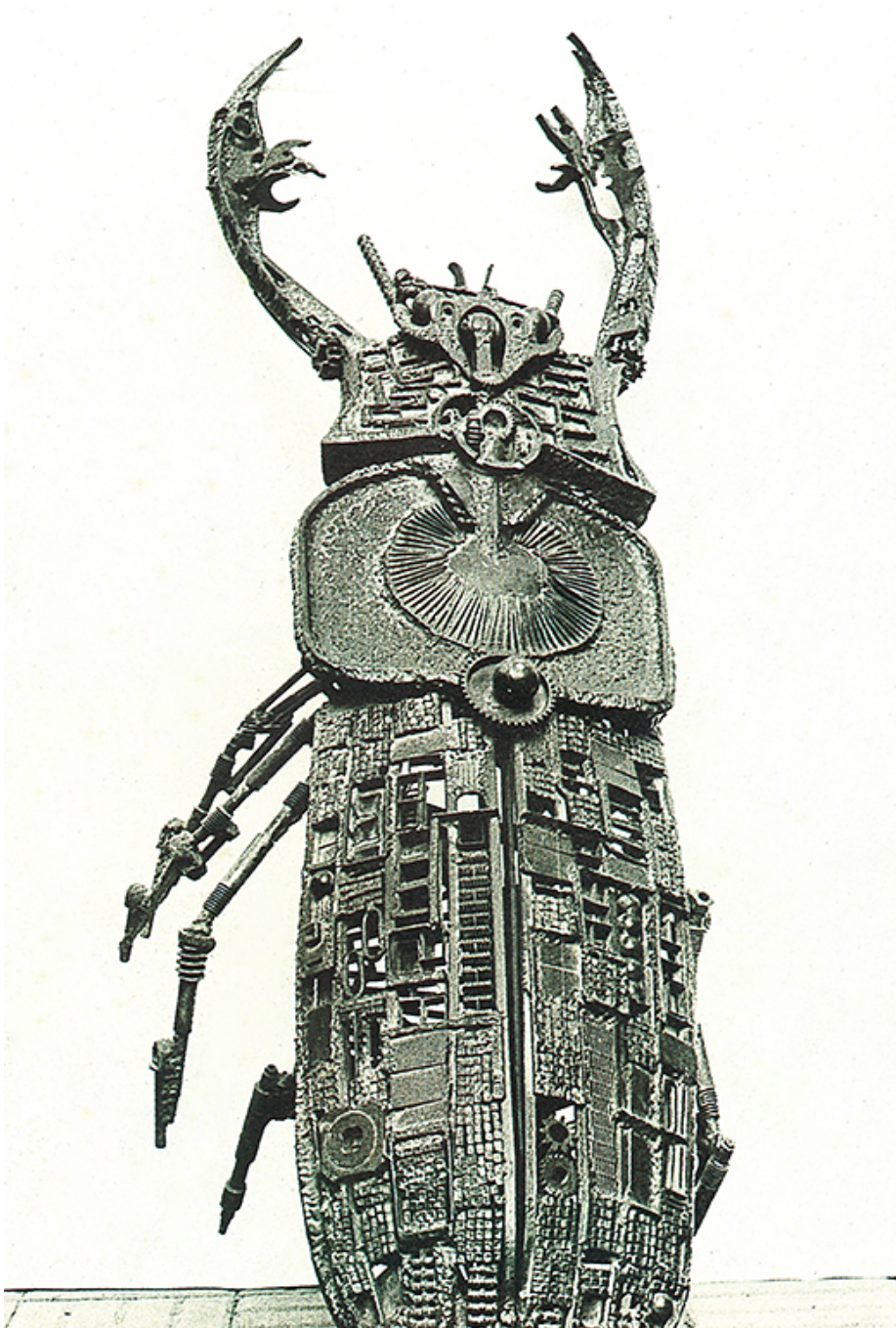
[@MoMAPS1](https://twitter.com/MoMAPS1)

Egypt can be proud to have such cultural ambassadors!

Best wishes

Christoph Scholz
Director SC Exhibitions

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Le scarabée

1970, Salah Abdel Kérim

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