

# Trumpets, Dressage And Oasis Spa: A Golden Age Reflected In Ubuntu's Latest Exhibition

[Posted By: Ibrahem Abdel Ghany](#) 18/09/2018



The 5th edition of "The Collector's Eye" exhibition is the first of this year's Fall art season displaying rare Egyptian contemporary pieces.

From Fathy Afifi's trumpeters (Oil on canvas, 2007) which exudes the celebratory tone of earlier years, to Guirguis Lotfy's joyful captures of newborns, Refaat Ahmed's depiction of Siwa Oasis' purification bliss to Hassan Rashed Sayed's wedding dressage, Ubuntu's exhibition "The Collector's Eye" reflects a sense of sophistication, confidence and mindful optimism. Could the dawn of Cairo's artistic golden age be upon us?



Painting by Fathy Afifi  
Photo courtesy of Ubuntu

When you walk into the gallery, you are immediately greeted with a pair of Guirguis Lotfy creations. Lotfy is a highly admired contemporary Egyptian painter, whose artwork often depicts Japanese manga-ish Coptic figures and stylized treatment. The Alexandrian artist fashions the centuries-old technique of tempera painting for his work, utilizing beeswax, egg-yolk and gold leaf.

In the ground floor of the gallery hangs an oversized canvas illustrating a picnic in the park scene, of everyday people by Lotfy. It is of Egyptians as the way they are, with a dedicated attention to each character akin to iconic paintings at old chapels which seek to individualize the depicted. The figures

seem to be carrying out ordinary activities but with glow around them as if they were holy. What, one muses, is Dr. Lotfy trying to tell us through his subjects?



Painting by Guirguis Lotfy. Photo courtesy of Ubuntu

As you enter the hallway into the inner chamber, there are a dozen sketches, drawings, gorgeous acrylic paperwork by Seif Wanly. They are a geometric

choreography of forms and a tailored spread of colors, that is distinctively Wanly.

Many of the sketches are of everyday objects: candles, glass bottles and houses from upper Egypt, but Wanly gave them life. The artist has gone as far as even anthropomorphize them: some look tired, some alert, and others are just wondering what they will have for dinner that evening. Wanly's pieces are also interesting as one can distinguish light touches of cubist influence; they are very pleasing to the eye.

In the alcove gallery on the second floor, you see a large work of Umm Kulthum with the band members standing behind waiting for the diva to sing, by George Bahgoury.

Um Kulthum's mouth is singing although there is a hint of sadness in her eyes.





Um Kulthum painting by George Bakhour.  
Photo courtesy of Ubuntu

As you look on, you suddenly realize that you are not in a concert hall but might actually be in a modern-day party. There are handsome brush strokes of disco lights such raw energy and vibrancy that catapult the gazer to a party in which you cannot leave.

The ultra-modern yet primal expressionistic color used in Effat Naghy montages (Untitled, mixed media on wood, 1982) is composed of crocodile skin, bones of African birds, desert beads and illuminating stones. The catatonic contrasts of bold modern primary colors with tribal ritualistic

motifs is almost schizophrenic.

In the main gallery, there is also an earthy-tone painting of a good-looking horseman performing a wedding celebratory dressage dance, by Refaat Ahmed.



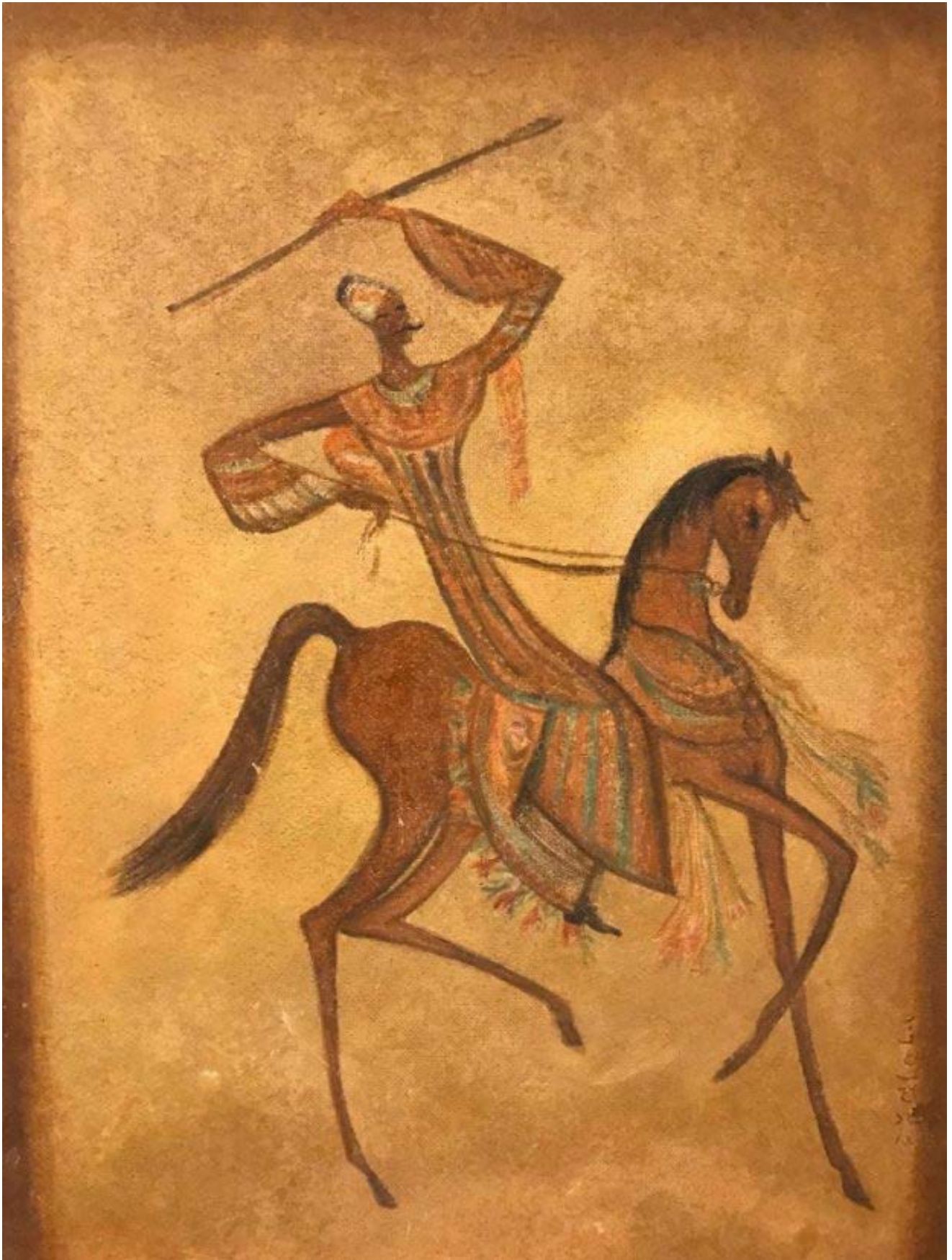
Painting by Refaat Ahmed  
Photo courtesy of Ubuntu

The elongated horse legs and tails are surreal and graceful at the same time. Ahmed has another piece downstairs, enchanted group of Siwa men in pure white Jellabiya, as if floating around a pool of water, waiting for their purification procedures (Wudu & Ghusl). It is a homage to a real Egyptian event.

Every October, during the day of the full moon, thousands of Siwan men gather around Mount Dakrur (Gebel Dakrur) to celebrate the harvest, eat and

sing together, reconcile with one another and renewing their friendships. And at night, under the moonlight, they perform a Zikr, a Sufi circular praying practice, in order to gain spiritual enlightenment and achieve union with god. Understanding that all of world's creations as one perfect complex. The goal of this meditation circle is to obtain a feeling of peace, suspense from materialistic value and straightening faith.





Painting by Refaat Ahmed. Photo courtesy of Ubuntu



Come hear the musicians blow their trumpets, feel the cool night water on your feet or simply lay back and enjoy the dressage entertainers, soak up all that celebratory mode and festive atmosphere at Ubuntu's museum quality exhibition.

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