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## Who is the Egyptian artist behind today's Google Doodle?

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Bicar playing the lute by Ahmed Sabry (Wikimedia Commons)

Opening up your browser in the Middle East this morning, you will have been greeted not by the ordinary Google letters, but with a sophisticated-looking piece of artwork.

You could be forgiven for thinking that the search engine was celebrating Picasso or one of his European contemporaries. **In fact, today's Google Doodle commemorates a great of Egyptian art.**

Hussein Bicar, who would have been 104 today, was a cultural trailblazer whose talents spread across journalism, fine art, poetry and music. "He is not a single artist, he is a master of several arts," his biographer Mustafa Amin claimed.

Bicar was most accomplished, however, in painting, shunning classical European approaches to draw instead upon the styles of his nation's pharaonic past in his depictions of rural Egyptian life.

Not afraid to push the boundaries of art, he was one of the first in the region to illustrate books for children and in 1952 he launched the pioneering children's magazine Sinbad. Bicar also worked for many years as [a cartoonist and foreign correspondent](#) at the Akbar El Yom paper, during which time he traveled widely.

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We are conducting a quick survey to help us better understand our users and how to improve our website.

FROM AROUND THE WEB

Many in the Arab world have already taken to social media this morning to praise Bicar's prestigious career:



حليمة مظفر

@halimamuthfar

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حين يكون الفن التشكيلي بطعم الموسيقى والإنسان.. هكذا تجد أعمال حسين بيكار  
فنان تشكيلي وشاعر مصري محب للموسيقى الذي تحتفل google اليوم بذكراه

7:25 AM - 2 Jan 2017

67 66

When fine art has the taste of music and humanity... This is what we find in Hussein Bicar, an Egyptian visual artist and poet who loved music. Google is celebrating his birthday today.



عبدالله العجمي

@ask170

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جوجل تحتفل بمولد بلفنان التشكيلي حسين بيكار  
فنان تشكيلي متميز ينتمي إلى الجيل الثاني من الفنانين المصريين. وهو صاحب  
بصيرة نافذة، وذوق رفيع

7:21 AM - 2 Jan 2017

1

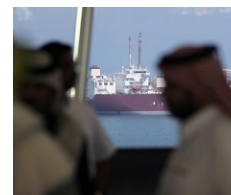
Google is celebrating the birthday of fine artist Hussein Bicar. An outstanding visual artist who belonged to the second generation of Egyptian artists. He was the possessor of insight and refined taste.



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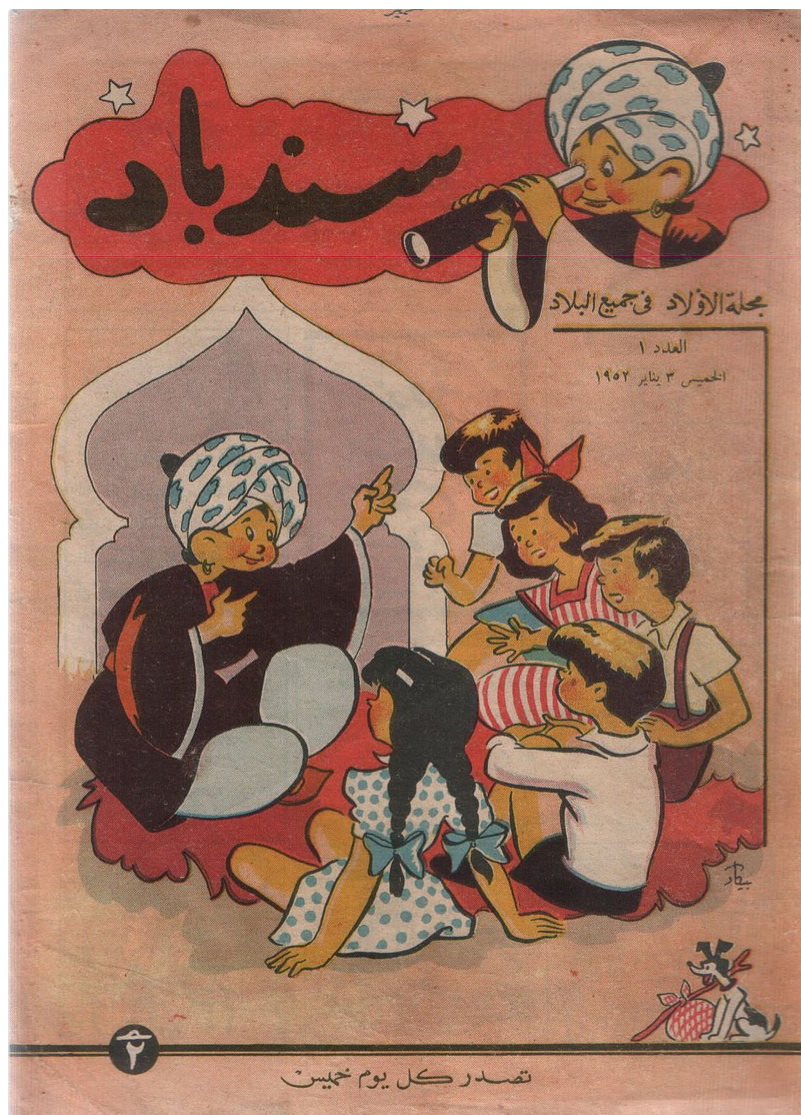
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سوسن المفلح  
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أذكر أوراقها الصفراء التي اختزننت الدهشة من طفولة أُمِّي لتنتقلها ليأيادينا الصغيرة  
نبحر في عالمها السحري. @samar122122

6:00 AM - 2 Jan 2017

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The Sinbad magazine of #HusseinBicar. I remember the amazing yellow pages that were stockpiled from my mother's childhood to be passed on to our small hands so that we could sail in their magic world.

Bicar's death in 2002 did nothing to stem the tide of his influence on the art scene in Egypt, whose effects can still be seen today. His legacy lies in his desire to innovate and expand beyond the realms of conventional artwork.

RA

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