

## Inspiration of Desert Environment Architecture and Heritage in Modern Mural Painting

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### Abstract:

Painters inspire decorative patterns from the desert environment and architecture that can be contrasted with reality until they reach the aesthetic values of the essence of things away from just simulating the reality.

When discussing desert architecture and heritage environment, they include the environment with its various meanings of cultural heritage, folk heritage, customs, traditions, symbols and beliefs.

### The research problem:

It demonstrates the lack of studies on the inspiration of architecture and the heritage of the desert environment in contemporary mural painting and the inspiration of intellectual contents in finding a modernized formulation of values, elements and plastic vocabulary in the arts of painting in general and in the field of mural painting in particular. From this standpoint, the research reviews several axes of the features of the desert environment heritage and how to benefit from them in modern mural painting.

### Research importance:

- 1- To shed light on the characteristics and features of the architecture and heritage of the desert environment.
- 2-To explain how heritage and desert architecture are inspired in the works of the pioneers of modern Egyptian painting, as many of the first, second and third generation artists were inspired by many symbols and heritage forms as well as desert architecture in their artworks to give them originality.
- 3-To provide an analytical study of some contemporary mural paintings and its relation with the desert heritage and environment.

### Keywords:

Mural painting - heritage - plastic values - features of the desert environment.

### ملخص:

يستلهم المصور من البيئة والعمارة الصحراوية أشكالاً زخرفية يمكن أن تكون مغايرة للواقع حتى يصل الفنان إلي القيم الجمالية لجوهر الأشياء بعيداً عن مجرد المحاكاة للواقع. وعندما نتحدث عن العمارة وتراث البيئة الصحراوية فإننا نقصد البيئة بمعانيها المختلفة من تراث ثقافي وموروث شعبي وعادات وتقاليد ورموز ومعتقدات.

### خصائص وسمات عمارة وتراث البيئة الصحراوية:

"لما كان الفن هو التعبير المتبلور لأفكار الإنسان، فمن الضروري لطبيعته أثر عبر التاريخ، فناريخ الحضارة سجل واسع لتتنوع أشكال الإبداع الفني وذلك من خلال التصوير الجداري، فهناك علاقة بين فلسفة الفن وطبيعة المجتمع وتظهر هذه

العلاقة من خلال التصوير الجداري، فهو مرآة للعصر الذي يعيش فيه الإنسان وصدي لعقبة الطبقة والبيئة التي ينتمي إليها ، وله ذلك المظهر الصرحي في تعامل الشعوب والتأثير على المجتمعات والشعوب المختلفة".

وقد ظل التصوير الجداري بمختلف أساليبه وتقنياته وتنوع موضوعاته جزءاً لا يتجزأ من نسيج العمارة في مختلف العصور" فالعمارة جزء أصيل من حضارات الإنسان فهي التي تحقق الهوية الفنية للعمل الجداري ، وكذلك الوحدة العضوية بينها وبين البيئة من ناحية أخرى ، هذا يؤكد علاقة التصوير الجداري بالعمارة بشكل خاص ، وأيضا علاقة الفن والتصوير الجداري بالجمهور والمجتمع فهي ليست علاقة محدودة أو معزولة لم تتعد المعارض والمتاحف أو الإقتناء الخاص بل لها دور هام يقع على عاتق المصور الجداري هو الخروج بالفن من هذه العلاقة المحدودة إلى مجال أوسع وهو المجتمع حيث يصل الفن إلى الجمهور في حياته اليومية بشكل سهل وفعال في تربية الذوق العام والإرتقاء بالحس الفني "

**مشكلة البحث:** تتمحور في عدم توافر دراسة حول استلهام العمارة وتراث البيئة الصحراوية في التصوير الجداري المعاصر واستلهام المضامين الفكرية في إيجاد صياغة مستحدثة للقيم والعناصر والمفردات التشكيلية في فنون التصوير عموماً وفي مجال التصوير الجداري علي وجه الخصوص ومن هذا المنطلق يستعرض البحث عدة محاور لسما تراث البيئة الصحراوية وكيفية الاستفادة منها في التصوير الجداري المعاصر .

### الكلمات الرئيسية

التصوير الجداري، التراث، القيم التشكيلية، سمات البيئة الصحراوية

### Introduction:

Sociologists think that human is the son of his environment. Geneticists believe that he is the result of genetic factors. Science denies that the individual is a mechanical product of the social and genetic dimensions, and adds a third dimension that is the creative self. If these three dimensions come together in high performance levels, they produce scholars and thinkers who make up civilization and progress.

### Research objectives:

- 1- To define the aesthetic features of desert architecture and environment in southern Egypt and oases.
- 2- To access the sources of the contemporary Egyptian artist's inspiration for the heritage and environment of the desert.

From this standpoint, the research reviews several factors of the features of the desert environment heritage and how to benefit from them in modern mural painting as follows:

- 1-Characteristics and features of the desert environment architecture and heritage.
- 2-Inspiring the desert heritage and architecture in the works of modern Egyptian painting pioneers.
- 3-An analytical study of some modern mural paintings and their relation to the desert heritage and environment.

### First: Characteristics and features of the desert environment architecture and heritage:

"Since art is the crystallized expression of human thoughts, it is necessary for its nature to have an impact throughout history. The history of civilization is a vast record of the diversity of artistic creativity forms through mural painting. There is a relationship between the philosophy

of art and the nature of society. This relationship appears through mural painting which is a mirror of the age in which a person lives and resonates with the class and the environment mentality to which he belongs and has the edifice appearance in dealing with people and influencing different societies and people. (12,19)

Mural painting has remained in its various methods, techniques and diversity of topics, an integral part of the fabric of architecture in different eras. "Architecture is an inherent part of human civilizations as it achieves the artistic identity of the mural work and its organic union with the environment. This confirms the relationship of mural painting with architecture in particular and the relationship between art and mural painting with the public and society. It is not a limited or isolated relationship that does not go beyond exhibitions and museums or private collection, but it has an important role that falls on the mural painter that is to bring art from this limited relationship to a wider field which is the society where art reaches to the audience in his daily life in an easy and effective way in order to raise the public taste and to develop the artistic sense. (12,19)

### **Architectural development in ancient Egypt:**

Egyptians used to love everything in their environment by observing it, so he realized a lot of natural sciences and Manifestations of life. Nature has inspired him all his artistic works, so it is hardly to find in the Egyptian artist's production throughout history other than the local nature which influenced him.

Understanding this truth is perhaps the key to know the ancient Egyptian art and our awareness of its facts and goals. The first thing that the ancient Egyptian artist was concerned with is the establishment of tombs that were in the pre-dynastic ages a pit in the mountain where the dead was buried, as well as what is required in his afterlife, according to his beliefs...

The pit subsequently evolved into the mastabas, then those mastabas became great architectural works with 40 rooms in some of them.

In the pre-dynastic era, there can be hardly differences among the arts that have an official character, especially painting. What distinguishes these ancient arts is that they are in the field of mural painting that dealt with some hunting topics. They are painted directly on the stones in a way that does not need preparation, or to designate specific areas for the design of the units inside them. The units of the mural drawings appeared one by one as if they were endless bands. What is excited in those ancient paintings is that they avoid in most cases depicting natural views, while they intend to make forms and units in a decorative or geometric mold. When drawing animals or birds, they are expressed in a simple way, dominated by a magical or totemic character. Some of the drawings are executed on old units with overlapping forms. Most of these drawings on the one hand seem as if they were drawn by pens as they depend on lines, and rarely interspersed with color spaces as in the mural "Birds on the Acacia tree" (Figure1) that was drawn in the era of the Middle State. In cases where the artist wants to find color spaces, he plans in most of the cases drawn and covers them with a crossed network of lines.



Figure 1 "Birds on the Acacia tree"

The art of that period is characterized by a clear tendency of decorations, as the artist uses some units such as a helical or spiral line symbolizing the flow of water, the swastika to denote the good omen or the expression of the four seasons of cultivation. Likewise, he uses the zigzag lines to indicate the flow of water, he draws a kind of plants that is similar to the willow symbolizing a type of plant that rejuvenates the vitality of human being. He at other times paints squares and triangles inscriptions to express some other symbols related to agriculture. As for animals such as crocodiles, seahorse and types of pelicans, which were abundant in various swamps flooding the country at the time, he depicts them very brief and very similar to the linear motifs of nature decorative. These drawings which were carried out on the stones and sometimes on the pottery, disappeared gradually at the beginning of the Dynasties era (7,9). The ancient Egyptian artist was able to draw inspiration from nature, including birds and animals, and to record on the walls of these Mastabas a complete picture of the Egyptian life and the nature in which he lives, from plants, globe, sycamore trees and peasant animals such as the ox. These inscriptions were colored with bright colors in which he did not resort to tricks of shade and light, but rather were clear colors derived from his land and his plants (2,7)

The ancient Egyptian artist naturally tends to decoration style, and he was inspired by elements in nature and then transformed into decorative units such as lotus flower, papyrus plant, leaves and stems of plants, winged sun disk, grape clusters and others. He was able to simplify these units while retaining their characteristics, using natural colors such as red, blue, yellow and green with some touches of black and brown colors. The ancient Egyptian artist enjoyed the power of observation, his adherence to customs and traditions, as well as his close connection to his environment and society, since art was associated with religious architecture, where he was interested in painting and glorifying idolatry and recording the prayers and chants as in Figure (2).

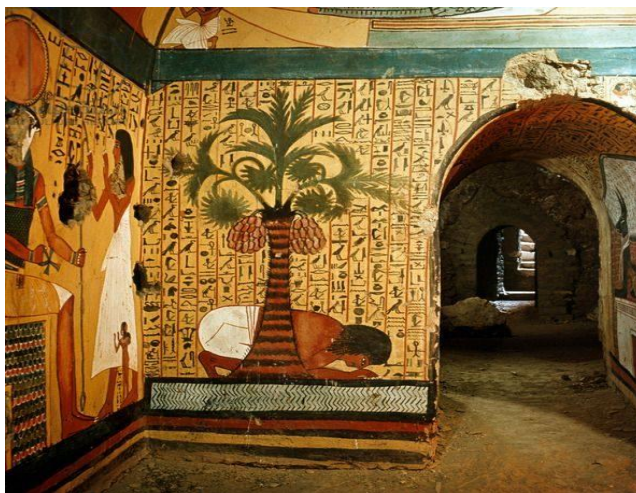


Figure (2) Deir el-Medina Temple - Qurna - Luxor - Eighteenth Dynasty.

Among the examples that illustrate this interest in religious architecture are their walls which are full of many inscriptions and colorful pictures. Although these inscriptions are few, they are sufficient to indicate that these walls were filled with images expressing religious or secular life, so the temple of the pyramid of "Suhura" dates back to the old state and has ten thousand square meters on its walls including two thousand square meters in the yard alone on the sides of the four arches, but the inscriptions did not exceed one hundred and fifty square meters, and although it has small area, it is sufficient to give a clear idea of the inscriptions and decorations that were decorating the walls of these temples (13,137:138).

#### **The impact of ancient Egyptian art on Nubian architecture and art:**

Nubia fell under the influence of the pharaohs long enough to be influenced by the Pharaonic arts, and this began since two thousand years BC. The Nubians followed the same civilized style of the ancient Egyptians, buried their dead in the Pharaonic way, and their tombs included tools and funerary furniture.

Therefore, the Nubians remained influenced by the Pharaonic character until recently, as many of the Nubian crafts and arts are dominated by the ancient Egyptian character. Many of them lead the life of their grandparents in the architecture that resembles the Pharaonic architecture and the patterns of living, fashion, jewelry, and furniture. The Nubians are more similar to the ancient Egyptians than the inhabitants of modern Egypt.

Therefore, it is not surprising that the Nubian architecture resembles the Pharaonic architecture, as the composition of the Nubian house is taken from the pattern of the Pharaonic houses. The shape of the entrance is the same shape that is found in what the Pharaohs left behind in the entrances to the palaces and temples. (1,29) The Nubian and Pharaonic gate is characterized by the use of a carved crossbar and its absence of arches and this gate is surrounded by a circular shape, whether in the form of a statue or a drawing of a circle in the form of a dome. These sculptures represent various forms of birds, animals, and circles with winding sides, which symbolize the pharaonic goddess. As for the real animal horns placed on the entrances, they are a symbol of the horns of the god Amun in the form of the Nubian ram. The cylindrical cellars are also very similar to the cellars of the grains silos of the Ramsium temple in the year 1300 BC. (4,74).

As for the decorations and mural paintings, they have great connection with what has been seen in the ancient Egyptian folk tombs in Deir al-Madina, Draa (Abu al-Naja) and other tombs that are of its folklore nature (1,30).

The bright sun is among the most prominent manifestations of Nubian nature which the Nubian artist has benefited from in the work of relief and bas-relief on the facades of the houses, which mainly depends on the daily movement of the sun from east to west with shadows and lights when reflected on shapes and bodies. (15,17) It is well known that this method has benefited the Egyptian in all historical civilizations such as Pharaonic, Coptic and Islamic. Consequently, it can be said that the Nubian use of geometric forms in the style of relief and bas-relief was inherited from previous civilizations. The sun's brightness and strength had another important effect related to the strong and clear colors used by the Nubians, as "strong light helps to brighten and strengthen the colors of shapes, and this is what is being observed in the bright and vivid colors in ancient Egyptian, Coptic and Islamic arts. (15,32)

The pensive of the geographical nature of Egypt finds the diversity and specificity that characterize art and architecture in southern Egypt and oases, so that they differ from the art and heritage of the villages of the north because of the difference in living between the two environments. There in the north is the spread of agriculture and land fertility, while in the south, there are deserts and oases that use wells and subterranean water. Thus, special intellect and symbols arise because of the difference of both natures. The people of those areas differ from those of the northern villages concerning the forms of celebrations of different customs through rituals, weddings and special costumes. The tradition of the occasions here is distinguished by special dresses of these regions, and a ritual celebration is being performed on the night of Henna representing a big celebration like a wedding day, but there is simplicity and cheap items that are present in their place of living, such as tapping on tambourines and gatherings as well as there are habits in religious celebrations. (8,38) "The mural painting, house decorating and relief colored clay sculptures flourished to compensate for natural beauty. The motifs became more diverse and focused on details. The houses were brightly colored over dry, bare rocks, as a kind of challenge as if people answered the hostile natural world by creating a world more beautiful, world invented by them. (21,35)

The contemplator of the diversity between Nubian architecture in agricultural and desert areas see that architecture in agricultural areas is more simple and less in the technical degree and mastery than in the northern regions where there is almost no agriculture. It can be said that the architectural artistic level in Nubia is high, even in the simplest houses where the horizontal lines are completely straight with no inclinations, while the vertical lines are with external inclinations and the thresholds for the openings and their positions follow the lines of regular ornaments, and the decorations are consistent and beautiful. (19,37)

House ornament in the south was rare while the use of relief mud even if it was modest in color was the most common. This is because of the rich nature with a beautiful background with gardens of palms, mangos, lemons, flowering acacia trees, green fields and golden sand. (21,35) The ornamentation and the mural paintings are among the most prominent means that express the desert environmental arts. The Nubians' passion for decoration and colors does not confine to painting the facades and walls of their homes, but extends beyond that, as the walls surrounding the gates are decorated with sunken geometrical motifs such as hollow cones or cylinders. There is also protruding motifs which appear sometimes in the form of crescents,

columns, or stars. Nubians are not satisfied with this amount of decorations, rather, they decorate these facades sweetened with bas-relief or relief with ceramic dishes mostly white or blue that are thrown on the walls. These dishes when seeing from a distance, seem as if they depict suns or planets thanks to the luster, glitter and shine that they acquire in some times of the day when the sun rays fall on them. (6,43) See Figure No. (3) and Figure No. (4).



Figure (3) Nubian House, Nubia, Egypt.



Figure (4) Nubian House, Nubia, Egypt

The desert environment architecture is characterized by noticeable cleanliness, as most of the houses are covered with lime, and its doors and facades are decorated by oxides from the desert environment. "Nubian architecture witnessed a great revival in the first half of the twentieth century as houses were well designed, with wide area and were built by stones or mud bricks, and were painted in details with bricks. These houses attracted the admiration of many Egyptian and foreign artists who visited Nubia before Lake Nasser erased all traces of the Nubian villages. (20,32)

Although "the ancient Nubia had an artistic style for all its folk arts, there is one distinct style that combines them, it represents the essence of all stages of its development from the ancient of its history, which remained for us in many of the monuments and temples that were saved on its shores to its modern civilization that some of its units could be rebuilt more than once after every ramp of the Aswan Reservoir ramparts. Despite the existence of this one style, it was divided into three elements of the population that a distinguished art school arose with each population component. Each art school is connected with a limited piece of land of the two banks and a specific number of tribes that live above that land where their families gathered in houses whose hamlets are scattered in their villages on rocks or valleys and plains. (3,71)

The architectural styles were erected by the Nubian who mastered them in the work of their three-dimensional decorations, and most of their topics are the depiction of the Kaaba, the pilgrimage, or the caravans of camels as they travel to Mecca or the ships sailing by the pilgrims, are distinguished by their accuracy in drawing or relief and bas-relief in a precise geometric decorative pattern, as shown in Figure (5).



Figure (5) Hajj drawings on the front of Noubian house, Egypt



Figure (6): Al Bajawat Village, Western Desert, Kharga Oasis.

### **Features of the desert architecture in the oases:**

The architecture of the desert east of the Nile Valley in Egypt where the hills, mountains and coasts, or in the west of the valley where sand, oases and caravans is always trying to show the sanctity and enthusiasm of the inspiring and creative man. His architecture is the best expression of the harmony of interaction among man, place and time. The ancient Bedouin who built by his own primitiveness succeeded in combining the self and collective creative ability with the inherent powers of the desert with its cruelty. He was able through this combination to form the traditional desert architecture that is seen in Al-Bujawat, Farafra and Siwa.

The oasis architecture was born around the center of life in the desert that is the springs and wells. Thus oasis architecture is the architecture that expressed the stability of the Bedouin and the nomadic society and created the required balance among the contradictions of the desert environment. (11,202)

"The scientist who studies the history of the oases documented since the beginning of the Stone Age, the ages of Dynasties, the Roman era, the Coptic and the Islamic ages, can glimpse a set of factors driving the foundations of a cultural life of a special and distinct nature, at least beyond the life of Upper Egypt and the Nile Delta on the one hand, and the life of the oases Bedouins of Egyptian and neighboring Arab deserts, geographically, on the other hand.

### **The language of desert architecture in Al-Bujawat:**

The village of Al-Bujawat is located in the depth of the Western Desert in the Al-Kharga Oasis, specifically at the foot of the plateau of Jabal Al-Tair. The urban building of Al-Bujawat, which spanned about 500 years, was influenced in its urban and architectural composition by the topographical nature of the place, the harsh climate and building materials available despite the diversity of building styles, but it was "generated through two main components: the spatial formulation that was built on the simple engineering logic stemming from the innate awareness of the desert inhabitants, as well as the formative constructive formulation, where the creative craftsman in his formations and installations depended on building with bricks with their potentials of building techniques and design and formative capabilities that are compatible with the spatial requirements and environmental factors. (11,202) See Figure (6).

### **second: Inspiring heritage and desert architecture in the works of modern Egyptian painting pioneers:**

After the 1952 revolution, the Egyptian artist began to be concerned with Nubia and the desert environment, so many first, second and third generation artists were inspired by many symbols, heritage forms and desert architecture in their artworks to add originality to their artwork.

The year 1962 witnessed a huge gathering of a large number of artists around the national project to build the High Dam, and they made many trips to register the villages of Nubia before being flooded by the water of the dam lake. They were influenced by the simplicity and originality of the Nubian arts stemming from the desert environment with its own artistic sense. Many artists from all different artistic trends participated in the accomplishment of works of art that express this unique environment.

### **The role of Luxor studio:**

Luxor's studio had an important role in introducing Egyptian artists to the southern desert environment and Nubia with its heritage. Ragheb Ayyad was the first Egyptian artist to be interested in these Egyptian forms in Upper Egypt. He painted many of his works inspired by



the south of the valley. when internal missions arrived at Luxor studios, the relationship among artists and southerners people of Nubia, Qurna, and Luxor was strengthened that their paintings became fertile grounds, where broad black eyes, hot African features and thick black hair until the paintings of southerners overwhelmed the paintings of Bint Al-Balad of Cairo, North Alexandria, or the Delta and its middle (5,47:48).

The critic Naim Ateya describes Ragheb Ayyad's love for desert environment and its heritage in the south by saying: "Expressive works by Ragheb Ayyad have often met with Negro African heritage. In his personalities, it is found inherited and indirect connections with the Negro styles that were considered in the history of modern art as a useful antidote to the Roman and Greek trends prevailing in European painting which Ragheb Ayyad studied during his youth, especially in his official mission in 1924 to Rome. (18,25)

Ragheb Ayad's style, which is characterized by expressive nature, is evident in the painting (Al-Dalluka) or (Sudanese dance) Figure (7). The painting depicts two girls dancing on the left of the plate and on the right side there is a man plays and a woman claps next to them.

Mohamed Nagy is among the early artists who took care of the desert environment and Nubia and its heritage and folklore arts. he did not stop at the borders of Luxor when he returned from Florence to touch his cultural heritage represented by Teiba antiquities and registered them perhaps to reach his aesthetic laws in order to achieve a distinct style that combines modern originality and to break through the isolation of the artist in his society, to restore his position as it was in Pharaonic Egypt, to make his modern art an edifice art that has the character of eternity. (9,41)



Figure7 Ragheb Ayyad, Dance of the Daluka, Oil on Wood.

(Figure 8) Muhammad Naji - Sketches from the South - colored Pens on paper 5.cm x 60 cm - 1933  
Museum of Egyptian Modern Art, 20 cm x 27 cm - 1931.

We find Muhammad Naji's passion for the desert environment that led him to go inside the depth of Africa until he reached Abyssinia in the south to sip from the source of its heritage and desert environment. Thus, many critics see that Abyssinia's period in Nagy's life is the sincerest of his artistic stages. Although there is an architectural sense in building the paintings of this group, it seems as if he has given his dominant engineering mind a leave and unleashed the spontaneous visual and emotional impressions without evoking the teachings of the Impressionists. This is confirmed by the powerful faces of Abyssinia mixed with a bronze color and appeared breathtakingly affluent and he was affected by the Fayoum School with its wide eyes of deep look. (9,47) Figure No. (8) shows Muhammad Naji's inspiration for the heritage of the South.

### **Third: An analytical study of some contemporary mural painting works and its relation to the desert heritage and environment:**

Many contemporary mural artists were inspired by many plastic arts elements and values which gave their artworks some originality and innovation, where they were characterized to a large extent by design, integrated construction, a touch of abstraction, decorative character and modification.

#### **Ahmed Nabil Suleiman:**

The artist talks about his artistic vision by saying: "The artist always needs something like" impetus "or creative excitement, and that comes only by returning to nature with all its richness and inexhaustible fertile giving to dialogue with forms, and caress what the coincidence makes in it in public with this foreplay and suddenly, there is a vital stimulus that is the first starting point for discovering a new world, whose leader is the artist himself with his thought, performance and emotional feeling. He transforms those vocabularies posed before him into new creatures that pulsate a pulse inspired by his inner pulse and are touched by deep sense exploding inside himself, which is similar to explosion or dancing in severe vitality but human being is always the judge as a pulse and a flow adding to the rigid shapes, or it is present by itself and with all its possessive existence and ability to reflect the artist's visions and emotions. From this standpoint, Nabil went out to nature searching and exploring for a stimulus through which his innovative compositions and visions were dropped.(1) Ahmed Nabil was inspired by the spirit of the Egyptian heritage in his portrait (Carrying Pitcher), Figure No. (9), executed in 1965, on the fabric with the colors of tempera, which mixes in their preparation boiling water with fixings of gum, glue or egg white, as well as other auxiliary media such as wax, milk, soap, flour, glycerin, honey, sugar, and other materials used by the ancient Egyptian artist.

Nabil here continues on the footsteps of his grandparents, and brings in this antique material that black-haired girl with black hair on her right shoulder, holding a brown pottery blackened in her hand and a glass cup in her left hand, while she looked like a nun under her bright white dress whose effect extended beyond her head in a similar way to the enlightening aura surrounding the heads of the saints and she-saints, perhaps to give some kind of glory to her body presented by the artist here as a model for women in his works, suggesting the majestic nation.

In his design and expressive acumen, Nabil stains most of the background of the right third of the work in the same color as the pottery jug and the female hair, in addition to these reddish orange abrasions that are drawn from the same fabric of the face and hands of the girl on the vertical back band of the antique black wall.

To enhance more structural connection to the scene, he adds the symbolic illusion that this woman is pivotal by her rigidity, struggle and purity, as she seemed united with her historical, geographical, ideological and human tributaries, based on a coherent reality towards a legendary and incomparable imagination.

Then the artist establishes the concept of this stage on the formal and intellectual levels through his work (shaking milk), which he also made by the material of the tempera on the cloth in 1967, where he starts the image painting from the right side in which the squatting woman sits in a bright white dress and a veil on her head of the same color and degree of light emitted from it. While she seemed to push the bright white milk bottle with a familiar pendulum movement

in front and back. The artist inspired by its color coding that the milk bottle is mixed with light, which was repeated with that small, enlightening bottle in the lower left corner.



Figure (9) Ahmed Nabil Suleiman - the carrier of the jug - Tempra on canvas - 65 cm x 80 cm - 1965

He depends on the intellectual and formal approach to assert the mosaic mural feeling enveloped with energy and its enlightening output, which accompany the artist in his next stage. His skill appears in the use of traditional and unconventional materials. In his work (Nahr al-Nur) Figure (10) he pushes a bird that tilts down a little bit which is looking toward the lower left corner through two red eyes, with its slender body and black feathers embroidered in red and white and orange legs. The bird and the critical mass on which it stands, with molten glass at 850 ° C appeared with rich color interlacing in a space of Emeralds and marble with small contiguous units between pink and gray. While the white pieces surrounded the bird itself that appeared as if it was swimming in a heavenly river of light. The work highlights the ability of Ahmed Nabil to control the recipient's eyes in a circular way that starts from the lower left corner by the means of the artist's remarkable design skill that he always uses to tighten the visual dialogue between the eye and the soul together. (14)

Ahmed Nabil was inspired by distinguished artistic works of the cactus, which is a plant that lives in desert conditions and environments, and it sets an example in the endurance because of its ability to withstand thirst and drought that may extend for many years. Critic Ezzeddine Naguib describes that stage by saying: In early morning in front of him are cactus flowers in his studio that he built in Ismailia desert using the raw materials of the environment. The language of silence prevails, so in the middle of this memories and dreams flow and the soul simply finds its true presence in its intimate relationship with beings and the magic behind them. The truth is that what flows is the spirit of poetry that was suffocating in Cairo. The artist lives with aloe plants in its various forms, breathes the scent of nature, and observes the movement of light falling on the shapes and the ground as the radiant colors are reflected above them. Thus, his fresh sweet journey began to build his painting free from academic rules, possessing, before the artistic vision, the whole existence and was integrated in its fabric. This is illustrated in the panel Figure (11).



Figure (10) Ahmed Nabil Suleiman, Nahr al-Nur, glass Fused, marble, and emeralds, 100 cm x 90 cm 2015.

Figure (11) Ahmed Nabil Suleiman, Fused, marble, and emeralds, 60 cm x 60 cm 2016.

Ahmed Nabil did not go far from his old figurative language, in terms of choosing the diagnostic elements, especially the girl, the horse, and the bird, and treating them with minimal artistic distortion and cylindrical embodiment, using the shades of blue which run like dreams in the nights of the moon, and borrowing shades from surreal Shagal and expressive Max Ernest and Metaphysical Karlukara. While today, he is completely away from any European touch in the use of these features, and earns his painting a pure Egyptian face, covered with the spirit of pure rural environment, and with the fragrance of poetry at the same time. The new element today is the cylindrical and spherical cactus plants closed with its secrets, that defend itself with its needle thorns as if they are desert Jellyfish radiant with magic. The question urges when watching this painting: Is it magic from the heart of reality or is it true from the heart of magic?! As for his virgin girls, they live a state of fun of the old times girls among beating tambourines, dancing in the moonlight, playing with the horse and riding his back. Perhaps it is a case of taming the instinctive fledgling power of love and the desire to reveal it together, through the sensual and moral engagement with the horse with all the equestrian and virility it represents, from strength and tenderness, from dreaming to launch them towards unknown worlds.

Huge trees appear to us as giants in the myths. Friendly animals, household birds and vocabulary of the country house play the role of chorus in a collective choir behind girls and horses. We feel in the melody of the choir the birth of love in the hearts of the girls, and its promises are evident when the horse jumps in joy, and the houses of the city behind it leap in turn, as they witness and participate in the joy of the birth. The Greek goddesses of magic and beauty respond to the ancient Egypt and make a comeback between shyness and promiscuity, with their shag hairs or their messed up strands above their sloppy hanging garments. Does Ahmed Nabil remind us of Hamid Nada? ... What distinguishes between their worlds - with Their participation to use the elements of the woman and the horse - the world of Nada is a festive ritual in the light of the day in which the fountains of sex and fertility erupt, while the world of Nabil is at night in the moonlight and is filled with a cosmic delight that transcends the sensual instincts. In the new Nabil paintings, the luminous creatures emerge from the dark cobalt blue sometimes, from the gray mist of dawn at another time, and from the silver of a blue

invisible moon at a third time. Flashes of light shine and glow here and there while nodding to the beings below, but they do not reveal their truth! (10)

Figure 12 (Female playlers) shows Ahmed Nabil's inspiration for the elements of the ancient Egyptian heritage and mixing it with the contemporary vision that is evident in the treatment of the background. It reminds us of the hills of the desert environment and creates an infinite rhythm of movement and conflict between the old and the modern.



Figure (12) Ahmed Nabil Suleiman, Female Players, Mosaic, 3m x 9m, 2017, Terminal 3, Cairo Air Port, Egypt.

#### Jihan Madkour:

Among the generations of young muralists, there are the works of the mural painter Jihan Madkour, who graduated from the Painting Department at the Faculty of Fine Arts in 1993. The artist expresses the spirit of the desert environment in many of her works. She provides in her works a contemporary mural vision based on the use of natural environmental materials in a color harmony with pieces of Mosaic and stained glass. The artist's style is illustrated in the tree painting, figure (13). It appears as if it was painted in an oasis in the middle of the desert. In the middle of the composition of the painting, a large tree radiates red color, represented in the leaves in which the artist used the red glass, highlighting its background strength that mixes with blue at the top, then the formation horizontally is cut by hills that are covered in some shades of yellow and green in its shades.

As for the plate, Figure No. (14), the painting represents a horizontal composition that are dominated by the curved waved rhythms, especially in the line rhythms of the yellow plant with an orange color in the middle of the upper painting. Its rhythms extend to combine with the cool blue tones in gray touches. The artist treated the lower half of the painting with horizontal rhythms tending to be wavy that give the painting a mixture of movement and internal music. The diagonal lines in the middle of the painting that is almost divided into two parts are similar to the desert hills that take the eye of the viewer into paths that he can almost move through the painting from top to down. She has a variety of raw materials to be used such as pieces of stone and glass mosaic with pieces of trees in the middle of the plate.



Figure (13) Jihan Madkour - a tree ... glass and mosaic Figure (14) Jihan Madkour - a variety of materials ... glass

Mosaic with wood, 60 cm x 90 cm - 2017 Epoxy with wood - 70 cm x 95 cm - 2017 m

### Mohamed Benoui:

There is in the works of the artist Mohamed Benoui, the spirit of the desert environment strongly present, through the formations that resemble the valleys in the middle of the desert with their colors that remind us of the warmth of the desert. The natural materials from clay, stone pieces and glass he used and burned helped to express the innate spirit derived from the silence of the South, as in Figure No. (15). The painting represents a scene that reminds us of the village of Al-Qurna, with its houses scattered on the mountain in various rhythms. The lines of the painting varied between the horizontal lines that dominate the large part of the painting, with the vertical lines moving in the simple houses and the road that divides the lower part of the painting as well as the sprawling mountain in the painting background.



Figure (15) Muhammad Bennawi, Miscellaneous materials and stone mosaic  
60 cm x 50 cm, 2010

Figure (16) Mohamed Bennoui, Formation, Miscellaneous materials  
and stone mosaic - 80 cm x 80 cm – 2010

In the painting “Architectural Formation” (Figure 16), the material of burnt clay with stone and its variants takes us to the world of the desert with its paths, which were laid with a structural engineering dominated by abstract thought with geometric equations in echoing rhythms between sharp angles and circular lines that give a sense of infinity. "The Valley" Figure (17) by the artist Mohamed Benoui was selected by the Committee of Fine Arts at the Egyptian Ministry of Culture to represent the Egyptian pavilion at the Venice Biennale, after offering a public competition to represent Egypt at the Biennale. This work reminds us of desert oases

from the perspective of bird eye where the eye of the viewer moves between the desert paths, valleys and houses that tend to be circular in design. The artist used in it various materials of clay, glass and metal to give a visual symphony to the viewer mixed with the spirit of the nature of the desert environment.



Figure (17) Muhammad Bennawi, Al-Wadi, Miscellaneous materials, clay, glass and stone mosaic, 500 cm x 150 cm, 2013

### The Results:

- 1-Desert architecture and mural painting have a renewed vision and not a set of stereotypes, and they are related to the society and the surrounding environment with its holistic and objective meaning.
- 2-The relationship of mural painting with architecture is an existing and inherent relationship as part of its components organically and aesthetically.
- 3-The link among mural painting and desert architecture and heritage as an integral part of its structural construct gives an important function which is its role as a social communication medium that contributes to create the artistic and cultural environment of the society.
- 4-The Luxor studio has an important role in introducing Egyptian artists to the desert environment and drawing inspiration from its rich views in their artworks.
- 5-Modern plastic artists realize the importance of the desert environment and national heritage as a source for building a modern Egyptian plastic and fine art figure who is heading towards the world.

### The Recommendations: The research comes out with several important recommendations as follows:

- 1- It is necessary to pay attention to revive the idea of Luxor studio in many desert environments, such as oases and the south.
- 2-It is better to encourage students of art faculties and researchers to take an interest in inspiring the heritage and architecture of the desert environment by offering competitions and research topics that emphasize the importance of this heritage.
- 3-It is important to preserve the Egyptian identity and its heritage through art curricula and not to focus only on Western academic teachings.

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