

Art on 56th

Here it is necessary to point out the importance of detail in an artwork that is independent of shape, and that comes condensed as an inevitable result of research on the inner human emotion. The artist means by detail, accomplishing the terms of the moment and benefiting from the advantages of color. The art bursts with sentiment of emotion and honesty after all stages of experimentation have been exhausted.

The artist's journeys and repeated visits to holy, historical and archeological destinations also add to his knowledge and cultural preparation so his mind is open to different directions and cultures, making him a permanent candidate to hold the most important components of a contemporary artist, and he remains by excellence the pursuer of what is different for the sake of particularity which he does not seek as much as it seeks him. His work is the outcome of honest effort in this long and persistent experimental path of creativity.

The particularity of Nazir Ismail's experience comes from the wealthy content of his technical "laboratory", and from his expertise in preparing the appropriate colors, skilled with his own appropriated tools regarding acrylic colors, inks as well as types of processed and handmade paper which all contribute to display the beauty of the graphic effects on the surface. The artist does not distort the faces purposely, they do not accept but to be true to their form. The clarity is supported by the glow of color above the harshness of those scars that formed through the progress of time and bitterness of days.

Through his paintings, Ismail reveals secrets: theirs, or ours perhaps? These faces appear as monsters or half-sculptures of ancient gods, representing different invisible forces that were once incomprehensible to the ancient human's understanding, thousands of years ago, or maybe they represent historical heroes imagined in myths of old times and eras. " I work in an expressive manner", says Nazir Ismail, "trying to transmit the emotional and psychological state through color and lines, and the general vibe of the art. I do not wish to tell the story of a face through its complete details, I rather try to open a window of conversation with the human state".

Ghazi Aana

Nazir Ismail

Nazir Ismail born in 1948 in Damascus, Syria. Ismail has taken part in many exhibitions since 1966 in Syria, Beirut, Oman, Cairo, Paris, Zurich and Geneva. Additionally, he won the 3rd prize at the exhibition for Young Artists in Damascus in 1971, the Graphic Prize in Berlin in 1980, and the 3rd prize in the Sharqah Biennale in 1996.

His esteemed work has been on display in many institutes, and galleries. In addition to being part of private collections, some of his work adorns museums and ministries in Damascus.

His oil paintings comprise human figures, roosters, and portraits in ochre and clusters in earthy colors. His other work includes watercolor on paper infused with themes born from Arabian traditions and modern Syria.

Awards

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| 1971 | 3rd prize for youth, Damascus |
| 1990 | Intergraphic, Berlin |
| 1996 | 3rd prize biennale Sharqah |

Mystical faces calling us to meditate

Amid the romance of dreams and the bitterness of reality, lies an area of imagination often exploited by Nazir Ismail to express his understanding of life and art. He limits the human form to the facial, intensifying expressions through connotations and symbols he has sought after for some time until they became his own. His art is exclusive in its treatment of those symbols and their positioning on an initially enriched surface, resulting in artworks that seem effortless at first sight, and then they gradually start to mature in front of our eyes. Nazir Ismail particularly works on the face, a subject he views a state. To him it does not represent one person, as there are millions of people and to each face its own expression. The artist works on his subject as an inner state or a human condition he reveals each time differently, transforming it into a mummy that brings back time with its philosophical dimension.

Details of the flaunting shapes are absent for the sake of expression of visual effects that project out of the frames. It all starts with the fluidity and rigidity of the color black when drawing parts of a face's border that overlay with other faces vertically or horizontally in all his artwork regardless of the paintings' dimensions. Those faces in Ismail's art become windows through which we exchange a dialogue with those characters, different in their levels of expression shown through their eyes. Closed eyes, open inwards, or even absent altogether, those eyes add that state of Sufism to the image along with a little drama that is emphasized even more with the faces' exclamation and their attempt to reach out of the painting towards us from different angles. These faces appear to agree amongst themselves to portray their most extreme states of depression, and sometimes, even reaching death.