



Press Release

On the one-year anniversary of the Egyptian revolution, Syra-Arts shows Egyptian artists strongly influenced by the last year's political events



Naglaa Samir, from the series Metamorphosis

Art Palm Beach, 21st January, 2012

On the second day of Art Palm Beach, Syra-Arts (booth number 605) shows several contemporary Egyptian artists, many strongly influenced by last year's January revolution that toppled the regime of former President Hosni Mubarak.

Endeavoring to give a glimpse of the depth and diversity of Egypt's vibrant contemporary art scene, Syra-Arts is exhibiting a range of artists, spanning different generations and a broad spectrum of styles and mediums. All are showing at Art Palm Beach for the very first time.

Sameh Ismael

Artists include one of Egypt's prominent young calligraphy artist, Sameh Ismael, known for his reinterpretation of Egypt's long-standing calligraphy heritage. In works strongly influenced by the Egyptian revolution, Ismael transforms the ancient practice of calligraphy into a uniquely modern and political expressions. His works showing at Art Palm Beach indirectly portray Egypt's revolution. For Ismael, calligraphy's manifold ways of expressing a single letter serve as a metaphor for the clamour of voices, and narratives, that came together, vying to be heard, in Tahrir Square last January. His use of graffiti elements reference his perception of Egypt as a giant wall on which opposing forces are inscribing their versions of history - a conflict of images and symbols, as differing ideologies and political views battle for supremacy in the square.

The artist's bright palette reflects his sense of optimism and hope for a better future. The many colors co-exist within one single canvas – just as the multitude of social

and political discourses, that have filled the public space in Egypt since the revolution, are all contained within a single country and identity. In his work, there is also a call for the restoration of order and harmony and an end to the turmoil and violence of political upheaval. Despite differences in color and font, his flowing letters still form the one single harmonious picture, despite the differences, calling forth the homogeneity he wishes for his country.

Naglaa Samir

A university lecture and prominent female political activist, Naglaa Samir is also a well-established Egyptian contemporary painter much concerned in her work with the mutability of life and change.

Showing at Art Palm Beach are painting works from her series Metamorphosis. The inspiration for Metamorphosis was a dead dragon-fly she chanced upon, lying on the ground, devoured by ants. For the artist, the insect world best explains the circle of life. In her work, dragon-fly is being transformed into a new being through the ants. It is going to end its life cycle by transforming into another life form. This embodies change – the constant state of flux that is not only inevitable but necessary in our lives. Naglaa Samir tells us we should welcome and accept change.



Sameh Ismael

Syra-arts (booth number 605) is a company dedicated to promoting some of Egypt's leading contemporary artists in America.

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