

Egyptian Portrait Artist Bicar Dies

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CAIRO, Egypt (AP) _ Hussein Bicar, Egypt's well-known portrait artist and painter, has died. He was 89.

Bicar's wife, Asema, said he died Saturday and was buried the same day in Cairo. He had been bedridden for the past five months and died of old age, she said.

Born in 1913 in Alexandria, Bicar studied fine arts, and graduated from Cairo's School of Fine Arts in 1933. Working as a school teacher, Bicar taught in Morocco in the late 1930s and from there, traveled to a number of European countries, where he found inspiration for his drawings.

"Bicar was one of the pillars of Egyptian art and illustrations," said Raouf Ayad, a cartoonist and former student of Bicar's.

"He was a pioneer of children's drawings," said Ibrahim Abdel Malak, another of Bicar's students and his biographer.

In his travels in Europe and around the world, Bicar became a foreign correspondent, who wrote and illustrated his stories. He drew sketches from around the world at a time when photography was not common.

Bicar became well known in his later years for his portraits, especially those of women, Ayad said.

In one of his recent interviews, Bicar _ also a critic and professor at Cairo's Fine Arts Academy _ was quoted as saying that the eye alone cannot catch the complex feelings in a painting. "You must think to understand. You must go beyond the surface."

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