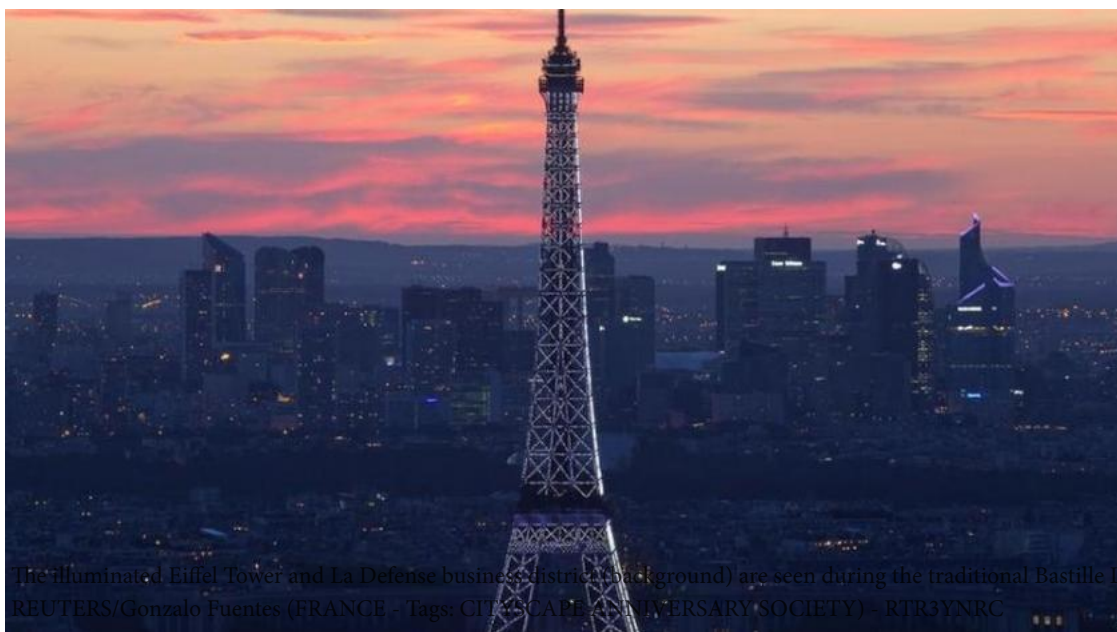


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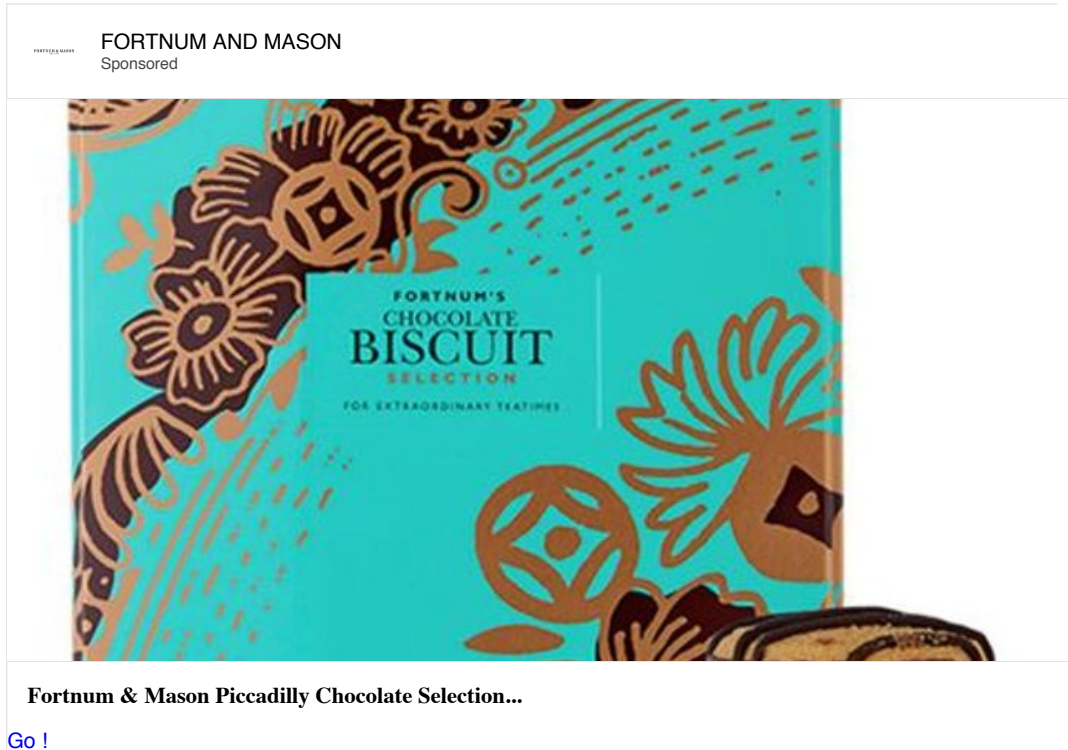
## Himat Ali...An Artist Who Speaks Through Colors

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The illuminated Eiffel Tower and La Defense business district (background) are seen during the traditional Bastille Day in Paris, July 14, 2014. REUTERS/Gonzalo Fuentes (FRANCE - Tags: CITY SCAPE, ANNIVERSARY SOCIETY) - RTR3YNRC

Paris- Asharq Al Awsat



The Kurdish referendum has made headlines in northern Iraq, however, the Iraqi-Kurdish Artist Himat Mohammed Ali has different interests. He is speaking to the world through colors instead of words. Even his name has been shortened to four letters. With these few letters, he built a wide celebrity and wandered many cities with his paintings; from Manama to Tokyo, to Paris where he settled. He was lucky to stay at a home dedicated to artists. It was built of iron bars, which were used by Gustave Eiffel, who engineered the famous Parisian tower, in constructing a suite at the universal exhibition held in the French capital in 1900.

“La Roche”, which means the beehive, is the name of this building surrounded by perennial trees and located in the 15th arrondissement of Paris. It currently houses 60 painting ateliers occupied by painters and sculptors of different nationalities. In the backyard opened on a narrow alleyway, brightly-colored paintings lure pedestrians and visitors. It is the nature with all its details, beauties, and suns, give up to Himat’s pencil willingly, as if the painter is taking us to the northern Iraqi plains embroidered with anemones and chamomiles. Did he mean it or his eyes were just washed with the greenery of nature in every place he visited? Something of the cherry tree buds on the Japanese islands must have fallen into his pockets. Therefore, before hanging the paintings on the gallery’s walls, he took them and placed them on the dense trees of La Roche’s garden at the home of artists, where they harmonized with the surrounding.

The exhibition features rectangular and round paintings that look like carpets in fancy houses. When approaching them, visitors discover amazing details and try to catch the secret behind the light emerging from them. The drawings were shining; they emit warmth and have the magic of a bright sun or a full moon. There are butterflies flying in the exhibition’s space. The exhibition also featured some folded paintings that resemble an old manuscript known as

“Sheherazade Letters”. How beautiful was to see young visitors, art students, and other elderly people. A lady and her companion, with smiles on their faces, were looking for the artist, but they met a shy man with a sharp mustache, who greeted them by shaking his head. Ali seemed muted by the events taking place in his homeland, so he used the pencil instead of his voice to draw beauty, in order to beat ugliness.

Himat was born in Kirkuk in 1960 and had organized 25 exhibitions, in Japan and Arab and European capitals. French writer and critic Bernard Noel, together with the Iraqi poet and critic Farouk Yousef, published a book entitled "The Amulets of Solitude" on the Iraqi artist.

The latter has great relations with poets. He contributed to joint exhibitions and volumes with the Syrian Adonis, French André Velter, Japanese Kutarō Ganzōumi, Bahraini Qassem Haddad, Iraqi Saadi Youssef and Moroccan Mohamed Bennis.

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