

Safar Khan Art Gallery: Abdel Salam Eid Exhibition



Over the years, Safar Khan Art Gallery in Zamalek has featured exhibitions by some of the top artists on the contemporary visual arts scene like Hussein Fawzy, Farouk Hosny and Ahmed Nawar to name a few. Art in Egypt as a community has become more and more inclusive, but the gallery has been able to guarantee a certain quality, and even prestige, of visual art thanks to their selections.

Abdel Salam Eid was born in 1943 in Alexandria and is a professor of Photography in the Fine Arts faculty at Alexandria University. While he has received several national and international accolades for his work in photography, this particular exhibition featured the use of many unusual mediums and materials – rope and plastic forks are two of the most peculiar.

The masterpiece of the exhibition is placed close to the entrance, to the right, and also serves as the subject of the exhibition's promotional poster. Combining photography, mosaics, and 3D sculptures of birds in the centre, the piece captures the artist's methodology quite aptly.

But Eid's interesting approach doesn't end with the unusual materials he employs, as he uses them in unusual ways, too. In another, much larger, piece, the mosaic element sees Eid use the tiles face down, revealing the rough, corrugated backside. The tiles were sliced to tiny pieces and then reassembled to form interlocking geometric patterns reminiscent of Islamic motifs. To contrast the ceramic mosaic tiles, he uses blue glass towards the top which makes the entire piece pop with colour.

One can't help but be impressed by Eid's vision in utilising simple, domestic materials available in our. The use of rope in particular demands a closer look; while it looks haphazard, closer inspection reveals well studied interlocking patterns. He achieves a strange harmony between different textures like pieces of cloth, wood and even metal parts to form a complete composition.

Aside from collages and different textures, the Ecoline paintings – similar to watercolours, but denser and closer to coloured ink with much more vibrant colours – also particularly eye-catching. The paintings reveal many forms of intersecting colours open to interpretation.

Whether you're a fan of contemporary art with the patience to observe and find an explanation in a painting or not, Abdel Salah Eid's unique approach has made for an endlessly fascinating collection.