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KHATAMI MAY QUIT

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Page 4

**FREE AT LAST**

Aid workers kidnapped in Darfur freed Saturday, return to Khartoum.

Page 5

**PATCHES OF COLOR**

Fadia Badrawi's 'Transitions' combines emotion and intuition in a sea of colors.

Page 8



CULTURE & ENTERTAINMENT

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Fadia Badrawi's world of colors

**By Mariam Hamdy**
Special to Daily News Egypt

The Gezira Art Center is currently hosting "Transitions," a new exhibit by Fadia Dereen Badrawi. An Egyptian born and raised in the United States, Badrawi's work is an interesting blend of traditional and abstract subject matter, distinguished for its competent use of color.

The show consists of various painting styles and approaches, reflecting the artist's academic background as well as her own perspective on the art she has been exposed to.

With a direct reference to post-impressionist French painter Paul Cézanne, the artist states that through her show, which accumulates the last three and a half years worth of painting, she has attempted to create a new reality rather than simply imitate it as Cézanne advised.

A difficult instruction to follow, Cézanne's method requires the artist to abandon convention and rely more on

emotion and intuition to create their art.

It's evident that this approach proved arduous for Badrawi. Her paintings exhibit an array of approaches varying from portraiture to landscapes to abstract work. The landscapes are more interesting than some of the more abstract work, yet that goes to prove her profound struggle in the creation rather than imitation of reality.

Nevertheless, all of Badrawi's styles have been executed at an admirable level, specifically the portraiture and her colored grids series.

The portraits are refreshingly academic: A perfect approach to figural modeling and an excellent balance of light and color. The portraits are of women in traditional dress, predominantly women from Siwa and Sinai. The most exceptional of these pieces is "A Siwa Bride" which depicts a profile view of a woman in traditional Siwa wedding attire, tentatively fixing her headscarf. The simplicity in the painterly approach, where

the tight details are eliminated with broad brushstrokes, allows for the most important element in the piece to shine: Color.

Badrawi's approach to her subject matters may appear traditional and somewhat repeated, yet what makes each piece unique and far from repetitive is her skilled eye for color.

"The Siwa Bride" demonstrates an accurate sense of light and shade through juxtaposition of color: The beige of the background gives way for the bright pinks, oranges and greens of her ornaments to burst in the foreground. Not only in choice of color is she successful, but more laudably, in density.

The elements of density of color are most evident in her abstract work, specifically her grid series. They are the most hypnotic aspect of the show, appearing to fulfill Badrawi's quest in creating an alternate reality altogether. With an exception of one perspective piece of graphic design quality, the paintings are seemingly impressionistic renderings of unorganized square patches of color.



Translucent and ethereal, the artists' choice of color is, yet again, perfect. Predominantly pastel in tone, the squares look as though they are floating in space.

Fadia Badrawi has presented a very personal show that provides the viewers with an

intimate glimpse to her passion for painting: An exhibition well worth a glance.

Catch "Transitions" at the Gezira Arts Center's Ragheb Ayyad Gallery. Tel: (02) 2737 3298. Open daily from 10 am to 2 pm & 5 to 9 pm

