

on Mahmoud Saïd | Ramses Younan

The artistic life of Mahmoud Saïd starts with the beginning of the 1919 revolution. In that year, and the very few ones following, he would visit Europe every summer and witness art in museums and liberal schools. At the same time, many Egyptians devoted themselves to a "Jihad" for independence and freedom. Seeking art and seeking freedom go hand in hand.

Back then, he was still young in his third decade, as he was born in Alexandria on April 8th 1897...Five years had almost gone by before his own personalized taste started surfacing, to be his own signature style of expression and that was evident through his works : *Happy island, Burial, Life, She with the pink gown* (1926 to 1929).

As he reaches his fourth decade, he reaches the peak of his artistic maturity: *Invitation to travel* (1932) , *She with the golden braids* (1933) , *Shadufs* , *Prayer*, and *Swimmers* (1934). Then *Nadia – Nadia in the white gown, The city, The cat* (1937) and since then, marvels have been continuously made to be met with nothing but astonishment, until his works reached up to two hundred.

The artist has been blessed with being born in a well-off family which exempted him from struggling for the sake of basic life demands, as well as created the conditions for him to be enriched by a great deal of knowledge and education that hasn't been met by any of the pioneers of our modern revival, with the exception of Mohamed Naghi. The artist's early life in a house full of Arab antiques had quite an effect over his art, and manifested itself in the eastern flavour he is renowned for.

With the exclusion of both "*natures mortes*" (we know no paintings of him

of such category except one) and historical and mythological sceneries (also only one known *Saint Georges*) we can declare that Mahmoud Saïd used to tackle all subjects and topics Egyptians dealt with and tackled.

Manuscripts notes in arabic by Ramsès Younan, 1964

Translation by Muhamed Ali

© Archives Ramsès Younan

Mahmoud Saïd – *La fille aux boucles d'or* –
1933

