

WASSEF BOUTROS-GHALI

B. 1924, Cairo, Egypt
Lives and works in Cairo, Egypt

EDUCATION

1946 Cairo University, Cairo, Egypt

SELECTED EXHIBITONS

- 2021** *Wassef Boutros-Ghali*, Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago, IL (*forthcoming*)
2020 *Wassef Boutros-Ghali: A Retrospective*, albertz benda, New York, NY
The Armory Show (March 5-8), Rhona Hoffman Gallery, New York, NY
2019 Art Basel Miami Beach (December 5-9), Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Miami Beach, FL

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah, UAE
Boca Raton Museum of Art, Boca Raton, FL, USA

SELECT PRESS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Clavarino, Elena. "Wassef Boutros-Ghali: A Retrospective," Graydon Carter's Air Mail, October 9, 2020.
El Chiati, Wafika. *Wassef Boutros-Ghali: A Retrospective*. Cairo, Egypt; 2003.
Grosso, Caroline. "Art Basel Miami Beach 2019: The Ultimate Guide to What to Do and What to See," L'Officiel USA. December 7, 2019.
Hawa, Kaleem. "Wassef Boutros-Ghali: A Retrospective," Brooklyn Rail, December 20, 2020.
MacAdam, Barbara. *Imaginary Geometry: Wassef Boutros-Ghali's Art*. New York, NY; 2020

EXTENDED CHRONOLOGY

- 1924** Wassef Boutros-Ghali is born in Cairo, Egypt. His family is Coptic, a Christian religious minority in Egypt.
- 1936** Wassef begins to study art in the studio of Czech realist painter Jaro Hilbert.
- 1941** Wassef enters Cairo University to train as an architect in the faculty of engineering. His instructors are trained in the Beaux Arts and his education leans towards that school rather than international modernism, although the latter is more a reflection of his sensibilities.
- 1946** Wassef graduates first in his class and wins several competitions soon thereafter.

RHONA HOFFMAN GALLERY

- 1947** After the war, Wassef, a self-proclaimed disciple of Le Corbusier, visits the architect's works in France and then travels to Switzerland to visit Bauhaus and other modernist buildings. He spends an intensive period visiting all of the major museums in Europe.
- 1950** Construction of Dar El Nil, Wassef's first architectural project is completed. The building follows the international modernist style, an exception at the time in Egypt.
- 1952** The Egyptian revolution of 1952. A coup d'état is waged by The Free Officers Movement, aimed at deposing King Farouk. Anti-monarchist and anti-aristocratic, this resulted in widespread agrarian and economic reform. Land ownership is limited to 100 acres. The Boutros-Ghali family loses a significant amount of their wealth in land re-distribution. Nonetheless, the family continues to serve and support their country.
- 1960** Political strife continues. As things become increasingly difficult in Egypt, Wassef opens an architectural office in Khartoum, Sudan (formerly Anglo Egyptian Sudan). During this period Wassef paints numerous watercolors. He also begins to paint in oil.
- 1963** Rome, Italy. Wassef moves his family to Rome, Italy, for over four years. He continues to work between Khartoum, Port Sudan, and Rome. He is asked by UNESCO to go to various countries—including Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco—to make feasibility studies for restoration of ancient monuments. Wassef sketches religious themes.
- 1969** The Sudan has its own revolution, the second for Wassef. All the banks, his main clients, are nationalized and his work diminishes. Wassef decides to leave the Sudan.
- 1971** Wassef moves to New York City for his role as Principal Technical Advisor to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).
- 1974** Wassef paints his first work in acrylic: Quand vit venir Renault.
- 1984** Retires from UNDP. Late 80s Painting Full-time. Wassef dedicates himself full-time to his art practice. His subject matter turns towards Biblical stories such as the last supper, The Entry of Christ into Jerusalem, and Entombment. These subjects are rendered in watercolor, which provides for more precision and intimacy.
- 2007** Return to Cairo. Wassef starts spending the majority of the year in Cairo. The equilibrium of geometric spaces plays a bigger role in his paintings.
- 2011** Revolution in Cairo. This represents the third revolution that Wassef has lived through.
- 2021** Still Painting. Wassef continues to paint from his studio in Dar El Nil building.