



My Mothers Safe
Haraniya, 2006

244X61cm

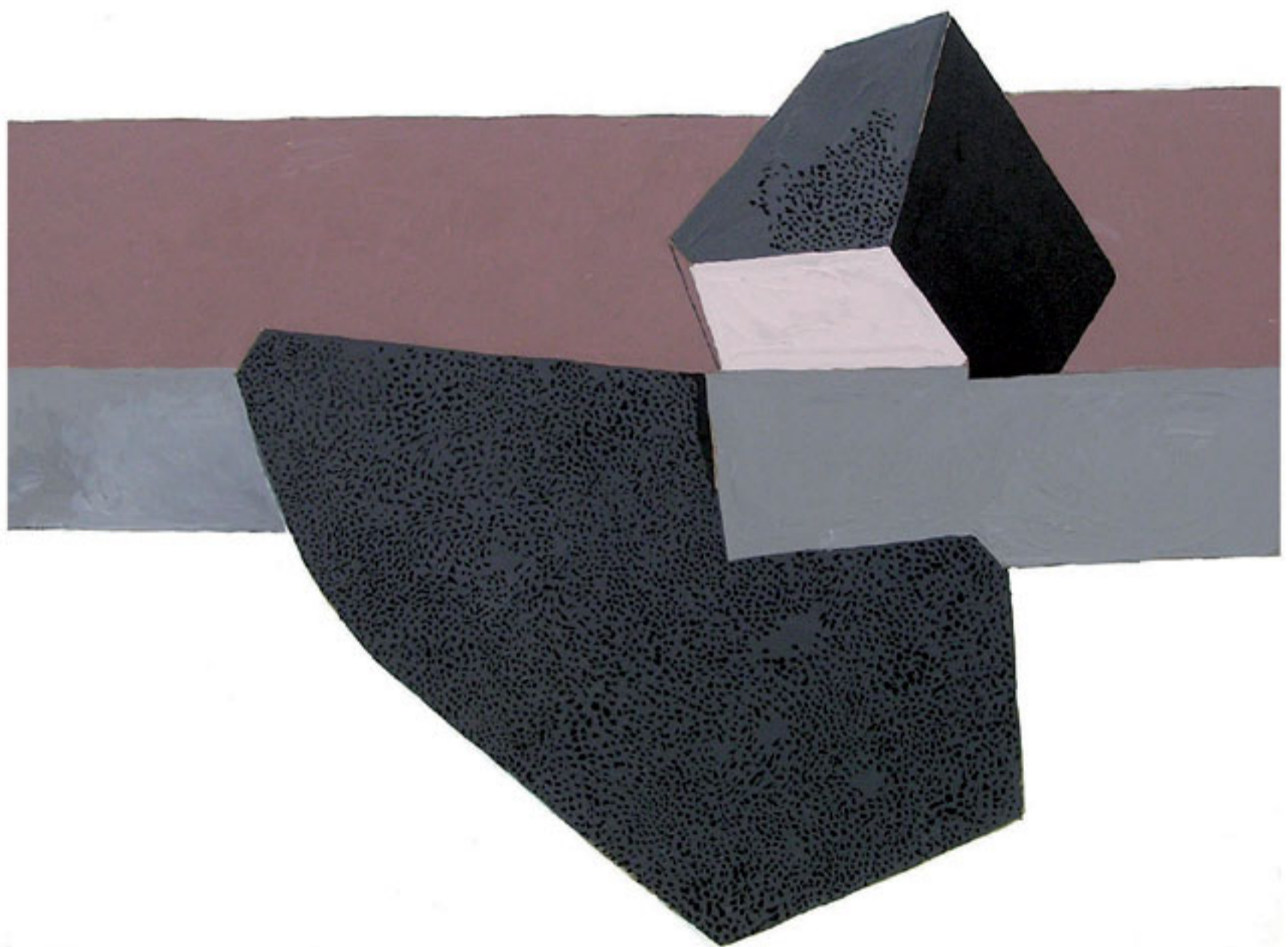
خزانة والدتي - الحرائية ٢٠٠٦



Phial - Haraniya, 2006

98.5X87.5cm

فنينة الراوند - الحرائية ٢٠٠٦



Balance - Haraniya, 2006

122X122cm

إنزان - الحرانية ٢٠٠٦



Bird Lands - Haraniya, 2006

183X122.5cm

هبوط الطير - الحرائية ٢٠٠٦



Star Bird - Haraniya, 2006

122cm(Diam)

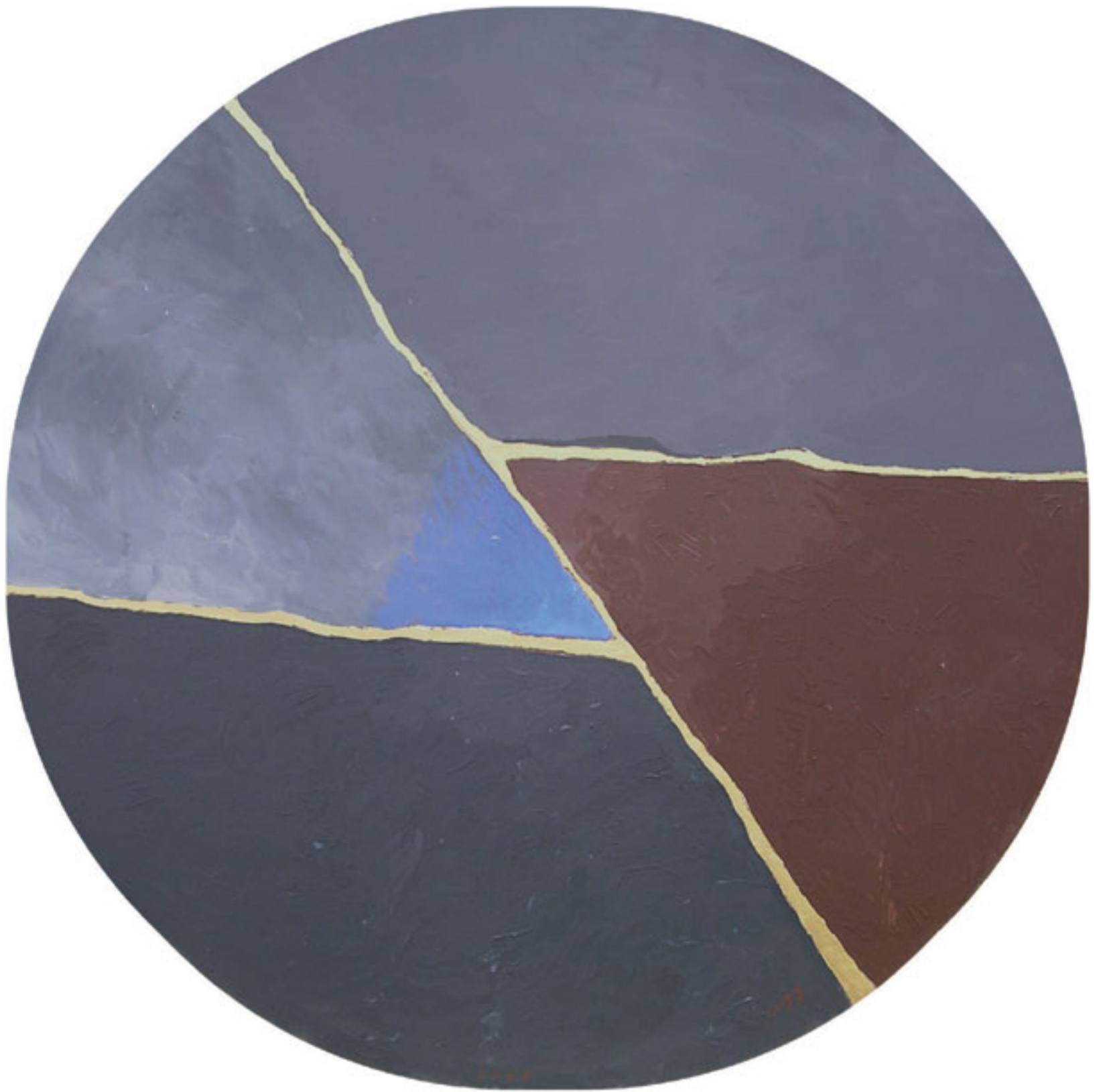
الطائر النجم - الحرانية ٢٠٠٦



Transformation - Haraniya, 2006

80cm(Diam)

تحول - الحرانية ٢٠٠٦



Eye Bird's Perspective
Haraniya, 2006

122cm(Diam)

منظور عين الطائر - الحرائية ٢٠٠٦



Icon - Haraniya, 2006

122cm(Diam)

ايقونة - الحرانية ٢٠٠٦



Nestling (1) Haraniya, 2006

70cm(Diam)

كنكوت رقم (1) - الحرائية ٢٠٠٦



Cat's Tail Haraniya, 2006

122X122cm

ذيل القط - الحرائية ٢٠٠٦



Mrs Iman Haraniya, 2006

122X55cm

مدام إيمان - الحرائية ٢٠٠٦

PAINTING



Victory 16X37X48 cm, Paris,1974



Sheikh al Balad 12X10X27.5 cm, Paris, 1974

He again asserted that the potentials of plaster to liberate the 'spirit' of the work motivated his decision to organize this Retrospective.

When I suggested to Henein that many of his latest abstracted works picked up pulsations coming from his old work, he said: "In fact, I always keep working and working. I appreciate my old and new works equally. My works, whether old or new, have the same age and history. New works are inspired by their predecessors. I do not like to abandon my history or produce a chronicle of my achievements."

There is hardly any doubt that Henein Retrospective represents a good opportunity for young generations to explore the road signs of more than 50 years of artistic experiment.

Although my contemporaries must be familiar with many of Henein's exhibits, the Retrospective invites us to watch these works together for the first time. I am confident that art critics, admirers and youth scholars will satisfy their curiosity about the hallmark, deep vision and history of such an internationally-acclaimed sculptor.

**Makram Henein,
October 2007**

Knowing that purity is a basic feature in Henein's works, I asked him whether colours would distract the viewer's attention away from the work. I also asked him: "Was your enthusiasm to plaster motivated by its white colour, which vividly highlight tones of shade on the smooth surface? Should this be the reason that these works are brightened and correspond with your mood during their execution? Are intense details incompatible with plaster?" Before he answered my questions he indicated to me that abstraction is highly recommended in sculpture. "Intense details disturb the viewer," he continued. "I love introducing the viewer directly to the theme and its idea," he added. Henein said that his appreciation of the potentials of plaster in this respect was behind his decision to dedicate this exhibition to his plaster works. "Abstraction and the brief account of the idea are the basic tools of my technique and style," he resumed. "As long as plaster is concerned, I am confident that this particular substance keeps the big truth within it," he observed. "Plaster is a beautiful and noble substance, which persuades the sculptor to handle it affectionately." Comparing plaster to marble, he said: "Marble does not take and give. marble's offerings are limited to giving a smooth surface," he said. According to Henein, marble, unlike plaster, frustrates the artist's bid to add or modify. "Plaster overshadows the materialistic signs in the work, liberating its soul and spirit," He explained. "Plaster acts like the pencil, which does not produce disturbing colours," he said, elaborating: "The pencil drawings give rise to the essence of the theme. The pencil invites you to easily and conveniently empathize with the illustrated situation."

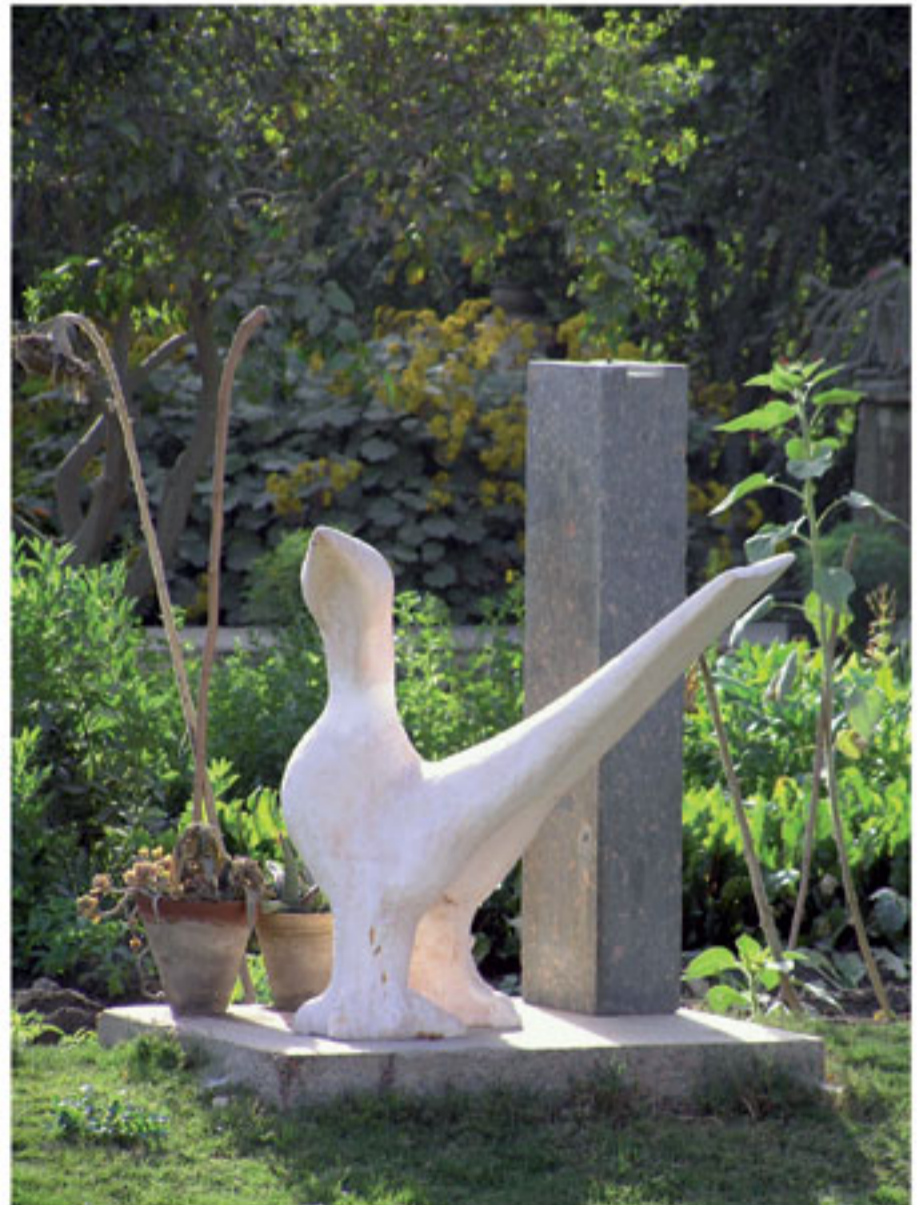


Squatting Woman 22X25X110 cm, Pietra Santa,1991 - 2006

Interesting dialogue with innovative sculptor

A deluge of questions would inundate me every time I would come across eminent sculptors. As long as Adam Henein is concerned, I am always curious about the lanes and cornerstones of his creativity. It is known that restless artists always has an eventful life. In fact, I need a big book to transcribe tens of tape recordings of interviews I had with Henein. The Henein Retrospective (in Horizon One gallery next to the Museum of Mr. and Mrs. Mahmoud Khalil) prompted me to interview the sculptor. The interview took place in his house in al-Haraniyya in September this year. We were surrounded by his plaster statues he selected for the Retrospective. There were also bronze and granite works arranged together aboard a Noah's ark-like ship, which I love to call it Henein's Ark. I prepared so many questions, which I thought would satisfy my curiosity about the philosophy and reasons behind his determination to use plaster in particular, and to which stage of his artistic career these exhibits belonged. I was also curious, whether he had restored some works or modified others. I also planned to ask him to explain the philosophy behind his keenness to exhibit works he made decades ago.

The celebrated sculptor dismissed suggestions that each piece of art should have a specific date of birth or should belong to a particular stage in the artist's career. He also confirmed that being an artist he shared the same history of his work. Commenting on his most favoured substance, he said: "Plaster is a rich substance and help produce works, which are the reflection of my character and mood." He remembered making his first work in the 1950s in the Qarna village and Luxor. "This piece has rough surfaces," he noted, accepting that he was a new graduate at that time and was influenced by great masters of sculpture such as Rodin. "My first piece was also influenced by the beautiful architectural constructions supported by strong forms," he added. During his interview, Henein explained that he abandoned the rough surface in the work after he fell under the spell of plaster and its overwhelming transparency, purity and spirituality. "I developed an intimate relationship with this substance," he noted.



A corner in Adam Henein's garden

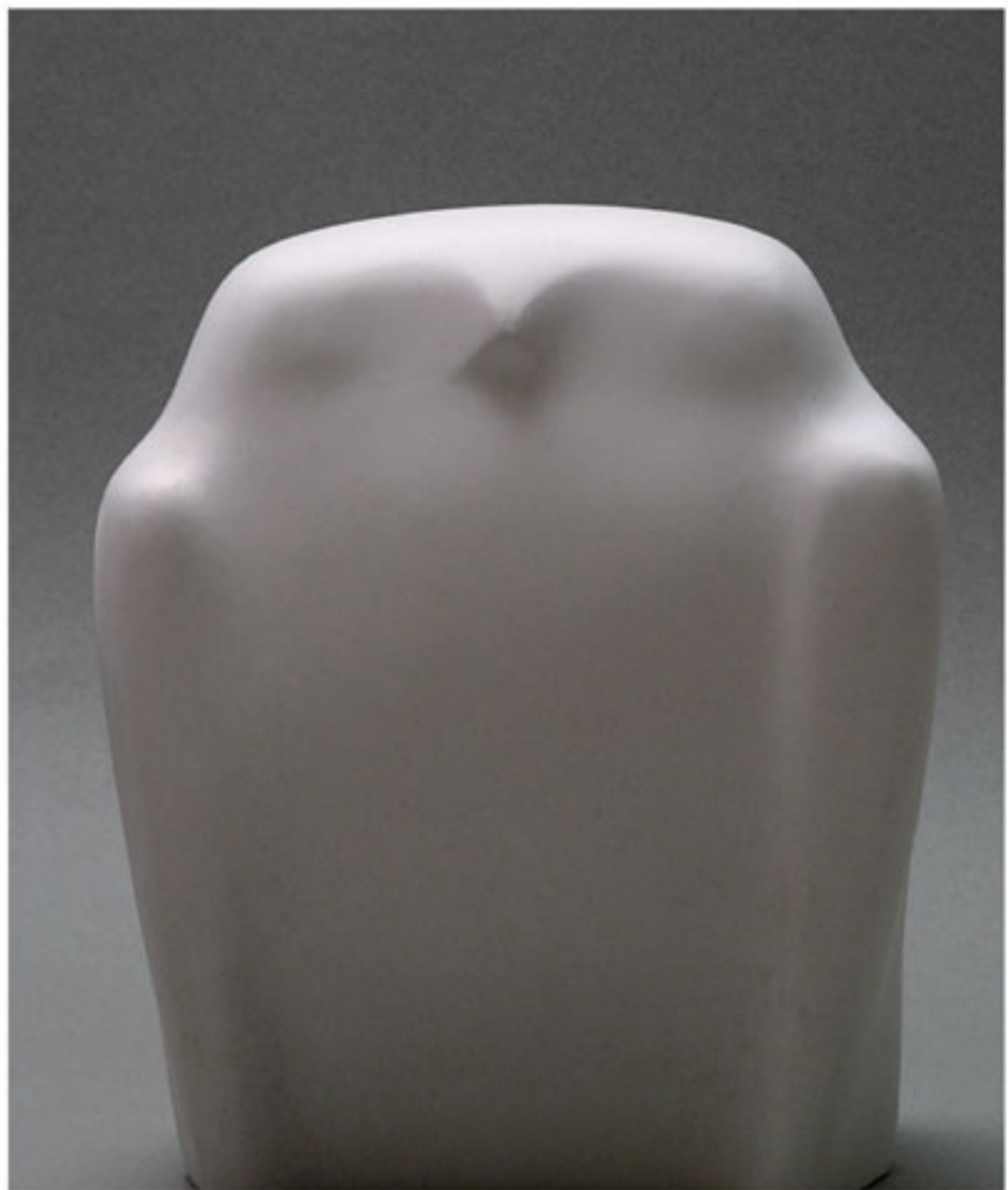
the warrior proudly takes a short step forward. Unlike traditional statues of warriors, Henein's does not display violent or hostile features. Rather, *The Warrior* exhorts us to act likewise and collect our shields to join him to defend the nation (Adam Henein empathizes with his figures, who apparently aspire to their primitive and innocent life. As art critic Ames Azar put it in 1956, the positions of these figures, albeit simple and streamlined, are popular and spontaneous). Michael Gipson said in 1983: "Modern sculptures seem to be interested in provoking a brainstorming savage shape. However, Adam Henein does not count much on the intellect. He is mainly interested in something more enigmatic than the soul. The meaning of [that something] would be appreciated only after it comes into existence and is illuminated by art.

Henein's perceptive insights and awareness of his message deepened his confidence in his project of artistic creativity. Every achievement he would make is a rendezvous motivated all the time by his nostalgia for his visit to the Egyptian Museum in Cairo in his childhood.

Henein also created works, which are charged by inner dynamism or internal struggle, regardless of their silent and inactive surface. The *Owl*, for example, symbolizes a state of nervousness and an internal struggle. The artist's Owl hold its body traditionally and is ready to swoop on its prey. Although details are abstracted radically, Henein's Owl is swathed in an awesome atmosphere, which revives folk myths and fairy tales.

The Owl was admired by art lovers. On the other hand, the statue of the Donkey represents 'a reaction'.

Coming across the statue, the viewer will sympathize with such a submissive and helpless animal, which gives the impression that it is reeling under a heavy load. The sculptor brilliantly draws the viewer's attention to the animal's reaction, regardless of the absence of loads on his back. He inspires us to empathise with such a helpless creature. Many viewers would not help but touch the statue to make sure it was not a real animal. Henein succeeded in breathing life to his creations to vent off their suppressed emotions, reactions and internal struggle.



Owl 18X18.5X23 cm, Phaela Island, 1963

Henein's empathy for his creations

Empathy between the artist and his works help us explore different answers to the enigmatic question: where did Henein come across these curiosity-arousing figures? The case in hand is the statue of Fisherman and the Fish, which represents a man embracing affectionately a big fish. Compared to the man, the size of the fish suggests an intimate relationship between a short, slim man (a small boy, perhaps) who made a fortune (the fish), which appears to be his life-long dream (According to the Egyptian folklore, fish signifies a fortune or optimism in future). Apparently, the statue is a nostalgia for a dream overwhelming the sculptor in his childhood to become an artist. The empathy developed between Henein and his statue revived his life-long dream. It was no surprise that The Fisherman and the Fish influenced many artists. The statue of The Warrior is also a good example in this respect. Egypt's shocking defeat in its war against Israel in 1967 inspired Henein's Warrior, which is the highlight of the sculptor's vision of self-defence and the protection of the home country. The statue represents a naked man, who is more kind than hostile. Holding his circular shield up and his head high,



The warrior(1) 200X85X42 cm, Phaela Island, 1964 - 1965



Such a spirituality is, moreover, a bid initiated by Henein to accept the other and reject selfishness, xenophobia, bigotry and estrangement. According to Henein's artistic project, man, Nature and every type of animals, birds, reptiles, etc, belong to the same world: Henein's ark is no less than a live system and a display of the utopian Existence. That is why Henein deliberately allocated a large area in his garden to act like his ark. Henein displays an unblemished, noble and wisely-evaluated philosophy, which takes root in our history throughout ages.



Adam Henein's Ark in Haraniya, 2000 - 2004

An elaborate spirituality

Adam Henein's spirituality is not an absolute, being provoked by frustrated hope and escapism. His works substantiate the fact that he does not reject life or its concerns. Instead, he invites us to overlook details and pay increasing attention to the gestalt and the essence. Accordingly, Henein's spirituality motivates meditation on our life and the secrets behind our existence. The sculptor's spirituality consolidates strongly the unity of humanity, which is the charter of the first creation of mankind. Henein's spirituality also evokes the warmth of mankind's big family to resist natural disasters such as floods, downpours in earlier ages and wars at present.



Art free from exoticism

Adam Henein deliberately keeps away from exoticism. Rather, he seeks to persuade the viewer to step into a wider world overwhelmed with freedom and teeming with signs of Existence. Henein's world, free from the restrictions of the substance, provided an atmosphere of spiritual co-existence with the work. Such a world is the product of years-long experience and diligent efforts. Henein has devoted his life to others. As calmly and simply as he has always been and wearing his Nubian white galabiyya, Henein receives his guests inside the house or the garden and display to them signs of his creativity and spiritual vision. His display is also sincere and illuminating. Intently gazing at the streamlined movements and bends in the work to trace the brilliant solutions, guests and friends would immediately receive beams of spirituality.



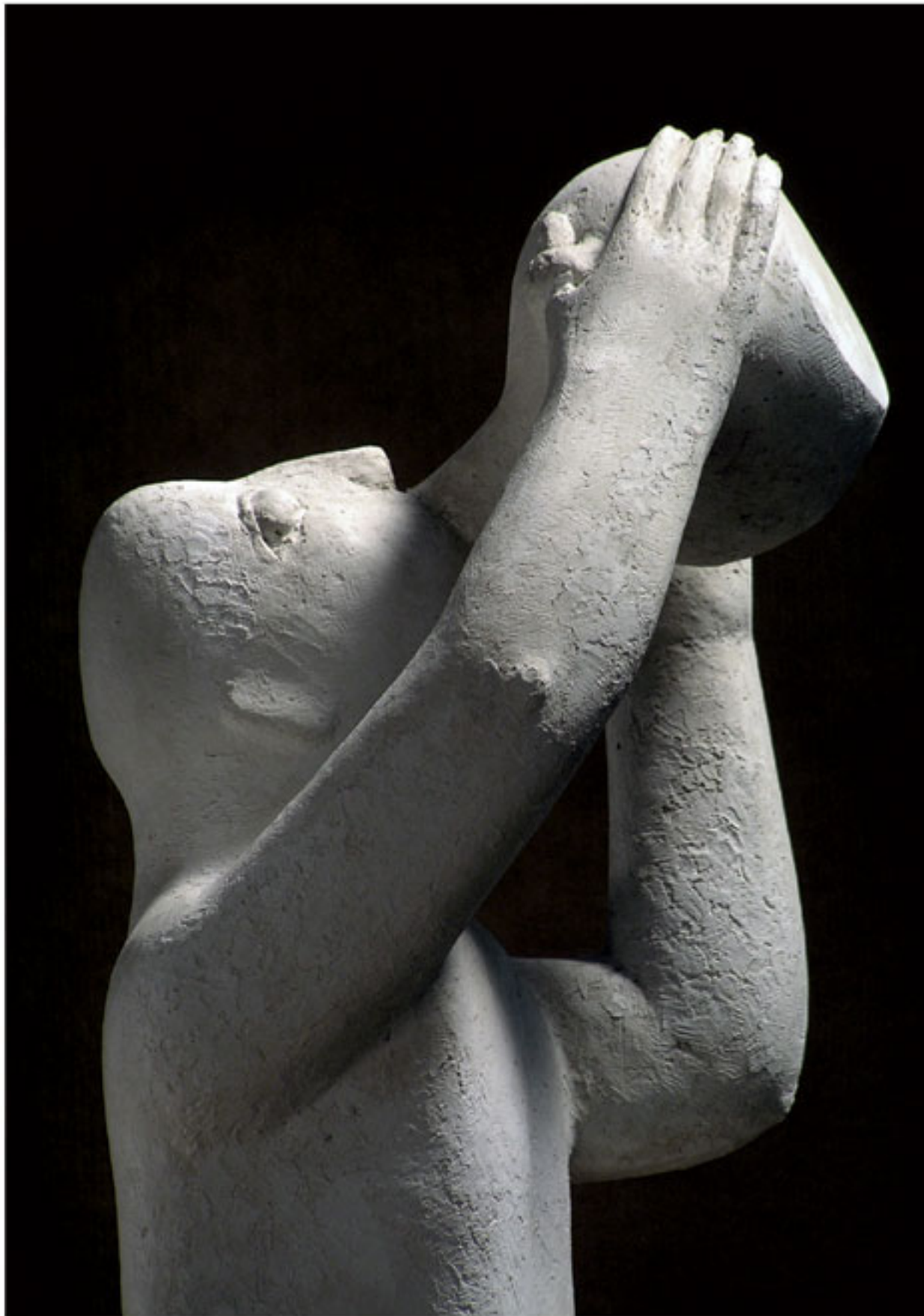
Adam Henein's house in Haraniya



Thirsty 143X29X45 cm, Phaela island, 1965

Henein was interested in Socialism, which took root in the intellectual community in early 1960s. This period witnessed the birth of his outstanding plaster works, such as The Pot-bearer, Thirst, The Bird, the Owl, Man and Fish, the Reader and the bust of Salah Jahin. Salah Jahin's bust was completed in the same day and the final touches was provided the next day.

When Henein had completed The Bird, I asked him how the bird balanced on its tail. He drew my attention to the studio's door, which was opened, indicating that he would keep gazing intently on the nature over there and on sparrows balancing vertically on the wall.



He also explained that he was more interested in the sculptural features than the anatomical dimensions.

After I visited the exhibition of British contemporary sculpture (held as part of festivities marking Cairo's millennium) in al-Andalus Garden next to the Nile and the Saad Zaghlul Square, I was confident that Adam Henein had made impressive strides to gain international recognition: his sculptures were majestically standing next to works achieved by great sculptors in the second half of the 20th century such as Henry Moore, Chadwick, Jack Lipchitz, Barbra Hepworth, Marini, etc.



Adam Henein's studio in Haraniya

Henein, whom I have known for more than half a century, is an artist, who is determined to dismantle the barriers and mingle with the people. He is widely praised by all those who know him for his gentlemanly manners and sociability. Henein is very diligent in his work. He appreciates opinions different from his own. Fully respecting the human rights of freedom, creativity and expression, he never lets down anyone who seeks his advice or help. He supports low-profile artists and is appreciative of achievements realized by spontaneous sculptors.

Our friendship goes back to late 1950s of the last century. I was living next to his studio in Abul-Mahasen al-Shazli Street in Agouza. His studio was the meeting place of many artists, such as Gamil Shafik, Nabil Tag, al-Desouki Fahmi and Zahran Salam; poets such as Abdel-Rahman al-Abnoudi, Sayed Hegab and Amal Donkol; and men of letters such as Sayed Khamis, Khairy Shalabi, Mohamed Gad and Yehia al-Taher Abdalla. Regular visitors to the studio included Adli Rezkalla, Ezzeddin Naguib, Ibrahim Ragab (music composer), Ibrahim Aslan and Mahfouz Abdel-Rahman.

Escorted by my friend Gamil Shafik, I would pay daily visits to Adam Henein, who would work for more than 12 hours a day. Poet Salah Jahin was always there sitting at the drawing desk in an inner room to write his popular *the Quartets*.

Henein's apartment was no less than a busy workshop overwhelmed with an inspiring atmosphere. As soon as we would arrive, Henein used to ceremoniously order tea for us so that we would not keep interrupting him or his friend Salah Jahin.

Henein's unprecedented achievement in this respect was attributed to his clever handling of two sources: the heritage of the Egyptian culture and history on the one hand and on the other hand the rules of modern sculpture, which were suggested by Rodin, Mayol, Henry Moore, Hans Arp and Brancusi. As long as Brancusi is concerned, Henein voted him the most influential artist, who revolutionized sculpture world-wide. Henein cleverly freed sculpture from the restrictions of the theme and in the meantime, allowed the skilled hand to move freely and spontaneously. He is confident that a skilled hand has the potential to produce the action and energy simultaneously. "The skilled hand releases the power of creativity. Feelings and imagination give birth to art," he remarked. In my point of view, Adam Henein would always constitute an enigma. This is because his work revives a simple—but mesmerizing—question, which is deeply-rooted in the history of Egyptian art. His work is a nostalgia for pristine innocence and spontaneity. His works are also a display of amusing performance under a state of ecstasy about the achievement of the ultimate goal (the discovery). Henein's work also appears to be overwhelmed by Sufi meditation on a world, which plunged into a chaotic jungle after it was ravaged by acts of greediness, selfishness, oppression and demagoguery. Henein's philosophy fills us with nostalgia for man's innocence in his infancy. Appreciating man as the unparalleled creature on the planet, Henein's work also refreshes our memory about human principles of gentleness and purity. Henein's sculpture is purged from distortions, sins, hostility, unquenched appetite for materialistic gains and despotism. There is hardly any doubt that the artist's sensitiveness and his perceptive insights reveal to us the sources of noble human qualities, such as good, the beauty and optimism, which rekindle our hope to purge and break the fetters of materialism. At this moment, we would appreciate the spirituality of an artist, who transforms stones and the terra cotta to an admirable creature in his utopian world.



Rendezvous 153X46X232 cm, Haraniya, 1990 - 2007



Yearning 62X40X130 cm, Cairo, 1960 - 2006

Henein described this newly-born international event as a great opportunity for Egyptian sculptors to come across their celebrated counterparts in different world countries. Many admirable works in public squares or in outdoor museums were born in Aswan's symposium. Henein's enthusiasm to this symposium was also motivated after he realized that such an international event would encourage Egyptian sculptors and assistants to challenge the granite. Setting a good example for his Egyptian colleagues, Henein created monumental sculptures, which are displayed admirably in the garden of his house in al-Haraniyya village. These works are now widely acknowledged as the landmarks of contemporary Egyptian sculpture.

Throughout his artistic career, Henein distinguished himself by brilliantly synchronizing the metamorphosis of the intellect image with the movement of a dexterous hand. For example, although the intellect image would be inspired by an idea or more, his skilled hand moves freely



and unrestrictedly to produce an elaborate work, which corresponds with the artist's emotions and inner feelings. Henein's remarkable technique and his determination to keep away from aesthetical restrictions or sensational expressions have been widely acknowledged by his predecessors and young generations as well.

It is known that artist Gamal al-Segeni was one of the most influential successors of great sculptors Mahmoud Mukhtar and Antoin Haggag. Interested mainly in social themes, al-Segeni paid special attention to the area of expression in the work, which was deliberately crowded with details. On the other hand, the two sculptors al-Agati and Kamal Khalifa were influenced by Alberto Giacometti and Henry Moore. But acting differently, Henein attracted the attention of sculpture community in society by revealing an extraordinary understanding and assessment of simplicity. He appeared to have been influenced by the philosophy of the ancient Egyptian sculptor. Henein was celebrated by art admirers and

critics as the third pivotal figure in sculpture community in Egypt. He was preceded by the trio: Mahmoud Mukhtar, Antoin Haggag and Mohamed Hassan; and their successors: Mansour Farag, Fathi Mahmoud, Gamal al-Segeni, Hussein al-Agati, Ahmed Osman and Mostafa Metwali. Henein also placed his stamp on the Egyptian sculpture when he unveiled his contemporary vision of the mass, its essence and spiritual potentials. His vision was highlighted as revolutionary. The Egyptian sculptor also drew the attention of the sculpture community when he succeeded in reconciling the heritage and unique traits of his native sculpture with modern rules overwhelming schools of sculpture in world countries.

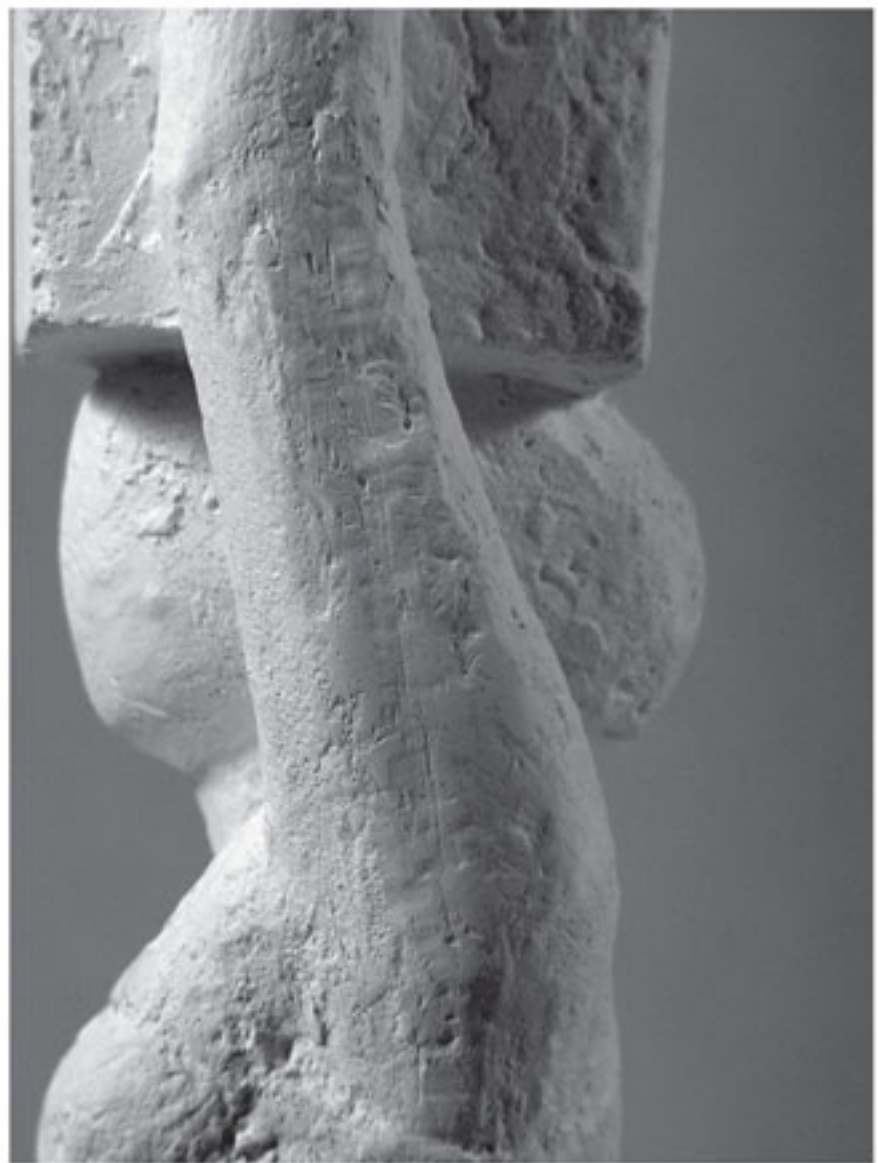
Plaster was Henein's most favoured substance at that time, regardless of the fact that he also created a bronze *Eagle*, which was placed at the entrance of the building of Al-Ahram newspaper. Moved to rest on a plinth in front of the newspaper's building, *The Eagle* was the first work by a contemporary Egyptian sculptor to be placed in a public area in 1968. Although these sculptures basically represented human and animal figures they became lyrical landmarks in the history of Egyptian sculpture. For example, the surface of Henein's work is overwhelmed with soft pulses of vivacity, which convince the viewer that Henein's creations are full of life the sculptor's hand injects into the work. This is because Henein consciously avoided restrictions of rhythm and symmetry. He carefully assesses, without exaggerating, the movement and bends of different parts of the sculpture. He also appears to be interested in a type of cubism free from right angles [sharp edges] to conveniently produce the balance of the masses and openings in the construction. As a result, regardless of its immense size, Henein's mass, whether a cubic, a sphyical, a rectangle, a conical shape, radiates with feelings and emotions. Such forms produce much more powerful emotions deep from within than from outside, especially when traditional solutions based on the substance and the shape are disregarded.

In early 1970s, Henein traveled to Paris. His 25-year stay in the French capital greatly influenced his technique and theme. His stay in Paris also prompted him to shift his interest to different substances. His achievements expressed his emotions and inner feelings more brilliantly than before. The Egyptian sculptor also revealed an extraordinary relationship with plaster—his most favoured medium in the 1950s and the 1960s. Henein's outstanding achievements in the French capital also included basalt and granite

sculptures. Moreover, he had the opportunity to pay several visits to the two Italian cities of Pietra Santa and Carrara, which are famous for their marble quarries and sculptures.

These visits motivated him to create wonderful marble statues upon his return to Paris. Commenting on his achievements during his stay in Paris, Henein says: "[the potentials and qualities] of the substance provide inspiration for the theme."

Henein, none the less, had to break his stay in Paris and return home after Minister of Culture Farouk Hosni commissioned him to restore the Sphinx. He was also assigned to supervise the International Sculpture Symposium in the Upper Egyptian city of Aswan.



Close-up of Pot - bearer 8X8X39 cm, Cairo,1953

Character and Creativity

Much of Adam Henein's fame is attributed to his burning passion for sculptures, in which enigmatic simplicity and classic rules merge peacefully. Concerning the Pharoanic art, Henein came across his ancient Egyptian predecessor in his childhood when his history teacher escorted him to visit the Egyptian Museum. The child was also interested in music, literature and poetry. Late lyricist and cartoonist Salah Jahin (1930 - 1986) was one of Henein's intimates, who also included engineer Ramses Wessa Wasif, late film director Shadi Abdel-Salam, late man of letter and novelist Ihsan Abdel-Kodous, late journalist Ahmed Bahaa-Eddin; Badr al-Dib, Alaa al-Dib, artist Abul-Enin, film director Salah Marie.

Henein graduated (with honors) from the sculpture department in the Faculty of Art in Cairo. In an acknowledgement of his artistic talent, the top graduate was awarded a two-year scholarship in Luxor Atelier in 1954. He was also awarded a scholarship in Germany in 1958. Henein decided to enter the class of artist Anthony Heller after he was informed that the German professor was an admirer of the Pharaonic art. Filled with nostalgia for his visit to the Egyptian Museum Henein seized the opportunity of his study in Germany to increase his knowledge of the secrets of works made by the ancient Egyptian sculptor. He also came across illuminating culture and knowledge of the essence of sculpture and its relationship with life on the one hand and different types of art on the other hand.



Close-up of The Warrior



In the Sixties of the 20th century Henein unveiled his artistic identity and talent when he created many works representing popular figures and creatures. He was widely acclaimed as a contemporary Egyptian sculptor. Henein's sculptures in this stage are regarded as interesting human records and documentaries radiating extraordinary light from inside. These sculptures, such as The Warrior, Pot-bearer, The Fisherman and the Fish, Thirst, bust of Salah Jahin, the Owl, the Bird, the Eagle, etc. are also considered the mirror images of their age.



Confluence of the existence

Adam Henein Retrospective sheds light on the artist's soul, ruminations, deep visions and perceptive insights. The exhibits draw our attention to the sculptor's curiosity and time-honoured question about the meaning of the existence, life; the sculptor's understanding of the annihilation, his love to his mankind and animals; and his love to birds and the simple people. That is why the Retrospective of Adam Henein should be regarded as the post-materialism confluence of the Existence.

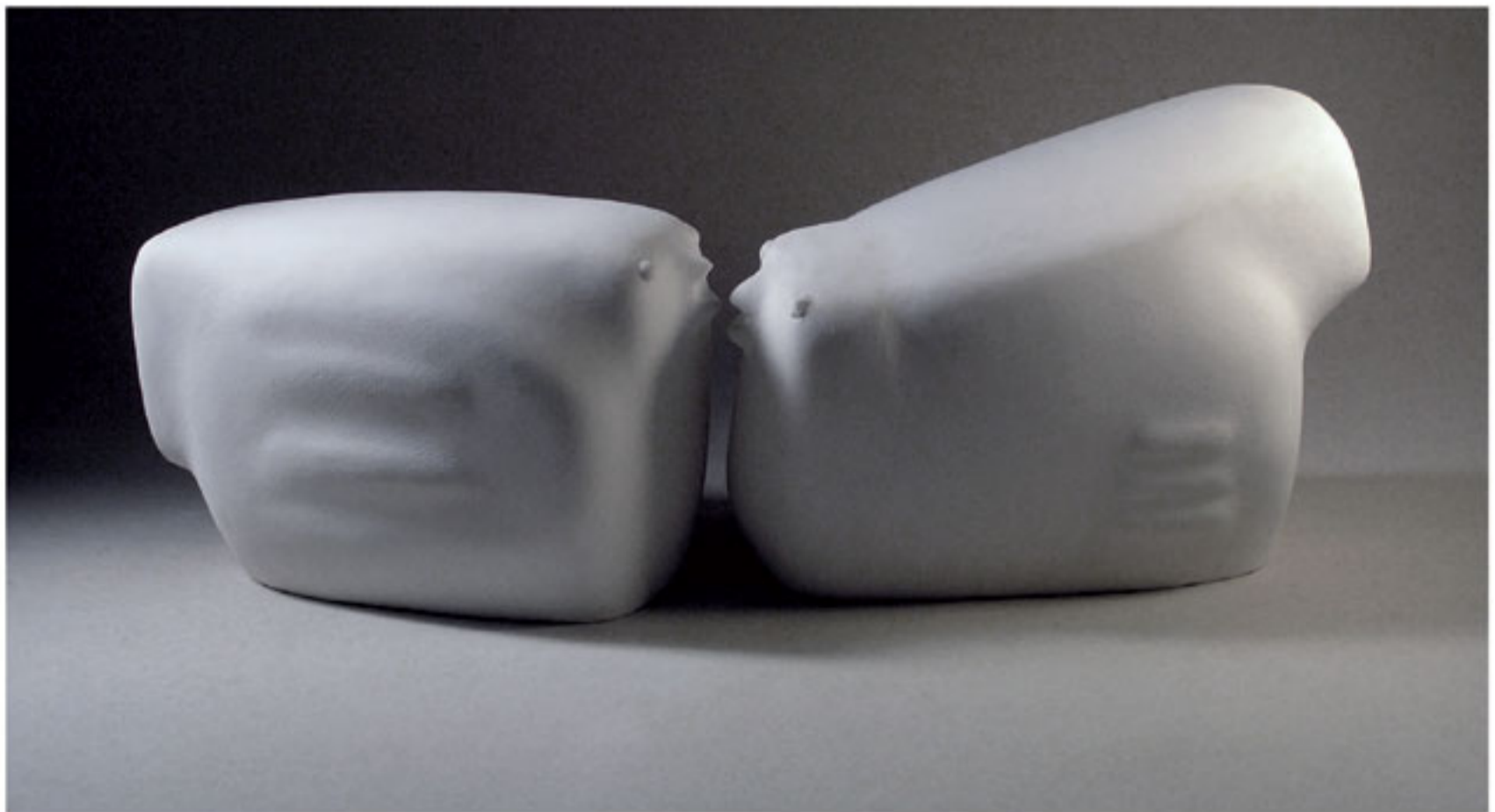
Henein Retrospective is also the resurrection of sculptures, which have the stamp of the past and the future.

Purely white Egyptian statutes guide us to the springs of limpidness and spirituality. They save us from the savageness of the age of materialism. Lights and tones of shade invite us to keep listening to the hidden music in the sculptor's works until we find ourselves enthusiastic to appreciate Henein's noble feelings and deep visions.

This Retrospective reveals to us featureless shapes on the one hand and elaborate, streamlined and eloquent solutions in the work on the other hand. We are introduced to a peaceful existence; a persuasive vision, and softly corrugated areas, which, free from surprising projections, do not shock the eye.

The palm of Henein's hand has the recuperative power to our tired eyes and souls.

The sculptor's palm produces admirable optical movements, and serene and carefully-assessed bends, which purge our eyes and hearts.



The Impossible 21.5X23X58.5 cm, Cairo, 1960



Confidence 15X22X20 cm, Haraniya, 1969

Plaster and the language of interactive dialogue

As long as sculpture is concerned, substances should not be divided into noble or poorly functional. Substances would remain in their simple state until the maker, such as the architect, handled them. However, it is the gifted and experienced artist, who appreciates the extraordinary potentials of the substance, digs up its secrets and breathes life into it to create a work of art.

Plaster, in particular, was at the centre of many big achievements made by the ancient Egyptian artist and his successors. Many of these plaster-made achievements are represented by the Tanagra statues in the Graeco-Roman Museum; the Cartonage, the portraits of mummies, crowns capping pillars made in the Coptic age, gravestones guarded by statues of lions, eagles and saints. The Muslim artisan's appreciation of plaster and its potentials is manifested vividly in motifs and decorative details featured on domes, friezes, *mukarnasat*, etc.

Plaster is also featured prominently and admirably on the facades and entrances of palaces and buildings decorated with portraits of lions, eagles, floral patterns, balcony balustrades or rails, window frames, openings and decorative details on their doors. During the architecture renaissance under Khedive Ismail plaster decorative patterns and forms were extensively used to adorn the entrance of palaces. Today's architects of posh villas and houses in des res areas appear to be strong admirers of plaster decorative elements.

The functionality of plaster would have been limited to architecture unless artists appreciated its potentials by using it for moulding bronze, artificial stone or polyester works. Plaster has also been used widely by art students in sculpture department to train their hands.

That is why it is not a surprise that plaster attracted the attention of contemporary artists at home and abroad. Concerning Egyptian sculptor Adam Henein, he came across this medium at a very important stage in his artistic career. Henein spent a long time developing an admirable and fruitful dialogue with plaster before some of his creations morphed into bronze and wooden works.

This wonderful Retrospective of Adam Henein is a display of a dialogue between a dexterous hand and a time-honoured simple substance. Henein says: "I would be extremely happy and moved when a plaster statue comes into existence to announce the birth of a new piece of art in my life." Describing plaster as the most suitable medium for an interactive dialogue, he adds: "When I come across plaster, an endlessly interactive and fruitful dialogue develops between us."

Hermit of Egyptian sculpture

By Makram Henein

Introduction:

The work of art is the perfect ethereal—not imaginative—rendezvous for the artist's immortal soul and different human emotions and feelings. The work of art is also the medium created by the talented artist to vividly display his values, meanings and ideas to the viewer, who has the choice whether to accept or reject them. If it happened that the viewer was appreciative of the artist's call a fruitful interaction would be developed between the viewer and the work. At this moment, the work of art would constitute an essential part of the intellectual image, which positively and easily influences the people's lives. Moreover, masterpieces, free from the restrictions of their contemporary time, would endlessly reveal aesthetics values, thoughts and interactive dialogue.



Exhibition of Transparency and Light

By Mohamed Salmawi

I was visiting my friend Dominique Baudis, the former Mayor of the French city of Toulouse, to wish him good luck in his new office as the chairman of le monde arabe institute in Paris. My attention was attracted by an admirable statute, as tall as the average man and was standing prominently in the room. When I remarked that the statute had not been there before, M. Baudis said: "You are quite right." He confirmed to me that it was his decision to have this statue in his office. "I am confident that this statute is one of the best pieces of the institute's art collection," he observed. When I suggested that the statue should remind me of Egyptian sculptor Adam Henein, Mr. Baudis nodded enthusiastically adding: "Adam Henein is not only an Egyptian artist. He is an internationally-acclaimed sculptor"

The statue was made from dark gray granite. That was why I was astonished that in his new exhibition Henein shifted his interest to the bright white plaster, which is used traditionally by sculptors to create the prototypes of their granite or bronze statutes. Apparently, Henein appears to be determined to display his pristine creations—not statues moulded from bronze. Perhaps, Henein is displaying sculptures after shedding their stone veil, regardless of its colour; or their valuable or otherwise, metal dress. In so doing, Henein must be acting like a painter, who would reveal his pencil sketches, which are innocently free from bright colours or decorative details. Some people would be surprised that great sculptor Mahmoud Mukhtar had a predilection for plaster. Many of admirable works Mukhtar left in his studio were created from this substance. Moreover, compared to his granite and bronze statues in public squares, Mukhtar's plaster creations should be regarded more important and admirable: they are still vividly displaying the creator's fingerprints and hand touches.

Admittedly, I could not conceal my astonishment when Henein informed me his new exhibition was entirely devoted to his plaster sculptures; I was awestruck when I came face to face with these works.

Henein's exhibition stands for a bet the sculptor wisely and courageously placed. The exhibits are swathed in an extraordinary veil—or, perhaps, they have no dress at all. Henein is introducing us to naked sculptures he placed in an extraordinary atmosphere after their birth. The sculptor has also brilliantly liberated the light hidden within these works. Henein's works this time give off a light so transparent and bright that granite and bronze sculptures would be solid and lifeless.



Light is the heart of sculpture .. plaster is the heart of purity. Unlike many other substances, plaster is peaceful, self -fulfilled, alluring and lively. Like precious stones and wood, the beauty of plaster motivates the aesthetic values of the shape. This Retrospective highlights my attempts to resist the allures of sculpture and directly communicate with the truth. My ultimate goal is to reveal purged sculpture and naked truth. I always watch fascinated when pure lights falls on a peaceful substance, which does not disturb its beauty and sweetness. This is because the light reflects peacefully and sincerely off the surface of such a substance. Adam, God 's first man, was made naked.

Adam Henein

Adam Henein

Adam Henein kindly invites us to tour the lanes of his deep memory. Our road signs are his plaster works in his Retrospective. Plaster has the potentials to reveal the inner purity, which is Henein's life-giving source. Henein's plaster works are full of life; the Mother Nature is the prime source of his inspiration. Henein appreciates beauty in the head of a bird or the face of an expectant female. He appreciates the innocence of a cat; the curiosity-arousing silence of a squatter. Henein does not pay much attention to details in the work. Rather, he is greatly interested in the mass and its different surfaces. Gazing intently at Henein's works, the viewer will be overwhelmed with warm feelings. This is because Henein's works are the abstraction of his character, the expression of his self and the unique features of his style. Henein deliberately created his works from plaster to communicate conveniently and interactively with the viewer. This substance is distinguished for its potentials and richness, which appreciate the artist's endeavours to empathise with his creatures, birds, the human image in his [the artist's] eye. Using the elements of his environment Henein sculpts fabrics of intertwined relationship. Is it his nostalgia for the primitive stage of his career, his thoughts and themes, which prompted Henein's decision to have this tour? Or does Henein seek to provide a new understanding of plaster so that we could borrow his vision to go back to our pristine memories and the pure reality of what lies within us? Regardless of his motives in this respect, Henein drew our attention to his success to free himself from the substance hegemony and its control so that the idea alone overwhelms the viewer. Henein Retrospective is part of the ambitions of this calm Horizon One Hall to celebrate such a noble creativity. It goes without saying that Horizon One Hall is glittering with Henein's plaster work.

artist Ehab El-Labban

Director of Horizon One Hall

Adam Henein's creatures are born from mythical visions of deeply-rooted Egyptian approach. Accordingly, they appear to be light-born creatures within plaster. Henein's creatures soar above the reality to develop charismatically into impressive shapes. They are not representational works; they belong to Henein's own world, in which he breathed his life and emotions to address the viewer's spirit before it attracts his/her eye. Henein's creatures escort you to explore Egypt's soil and its Nile; and smell the scent of its trees.

Dr. Salah al-Melegi
Chairman of the Central Administration
for Museums & Exhibitions

Hey Adam, is it true that you brought the clouds down at the ends of the peasant's galabiyya, while he was drinking from a simple pot to quench his thirst?

Would you, Adam, explain to us how you controlled your wild beasts, introducing us, instead, to very tame and affectionate animals?

Would you tell us how the sculpture would perform a ceremonial ablution at a babbling brook formed in the womb of snow?

Why, Adam, did eagles, birds, faces and even solid masses voluntarily fall under your spell? Did you not brandish your chisel at them? Or do you chant mantras to create your sculptures?

Show us your left shoulder to reveal a time-honoured alluvial stamp believed to have been left there by the Nile.

Sorry Adam, soft whispers of your works made me feel drowsy when I was playing a CD at home to suggest an introduction to the catalogue of your exhibition.

I wondered whether I should elaborate on the dimensions of your works, descriptions, their aesthetic values or the history. Perhaps, the analytical description of the embossed or the relief features; the polished or otherwise should receive much more attention than the brief account of soul's concerns, emotions or phantasmagoria transmuted into a small amount of plaster.

You are warmly welcomed in Horizon One, Adam.

Your admirers, students and friends are lined up to welcome you.

You are warmly welcomed in the Sector of Fine Arts.

Mohsen Shaalan
Head of the Sector of Fine Arts

Adam Henein's work will remain a strong evidence to the greatness of such an artist, whose Egyptian identity takes root in his motherland, its potentials and time-honoured civilization.

Henein provides a new dimension to his plaster works: they appear to be swathed in a bright light, which gives them an eternal existence within his Utopian world.

Celebrating the Henein Retrospective in Horizon One Hall we hope the sculptor will continue his fruitful contribution to art movement in Egypt and abroad. Henein's achievements have always been the source of inspiration to generations of his admirers.

**Minister of Culture
Farouk Hosni**

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Adam Henein

Adam Henein

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