

Riham ElSadany: Fantasmagoria

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“I never paint reality. I always paint a parallel world.” says Riham ElSadany (b. 1978), who is also known as Riham AbouSeada. Her solo show, “Fantasmagoria” takes place at ArtTalks gallery this month. The artist, who has a Ph.D. in Performance Arts, says that her studies of human psychology and the Egyptian personality inspire her work. Her influences include Amedeo Modigliani, Fernando Botero, Pablo Picasso, Tamara de Lempicka, Frida Kahlo and Gustav Klimt .



"Law of the Cat's Dinner," acrylic on wood, 2009.

ElSadany's paintings are replete with psychological symbolism, like "Law of the Cat's Dinner" (2009) in which a group of men and women sit around a long dining room table, not making eye contact with each other. Instead of plates or food, a group of black cats stalk across the table, signifying the dark secrets that these people are afraid to share with each other.



“Twister,” acrylic on canvas, 2013.

The artist’s interest in Egyptian history and civilization, from Pharaonic times to the present, also informs her paintings. “Twister” (2013), a portrait of a defiant looking woman with golden horns growing out of her head evokes ancient Egyptian mythology in which the gods are half-human, half-animal. The artist explains that the horns signify personal power in a depiction of the woman’s inner world. “She might have horns, but she’s the only one that can see them,” says ElSadany.



“Silent Tear,” oil on wood, 2009.

Women are the heroines of ElSadany’s work, but she says that this is not a feminist statement, but rather that, as a woman herself, she identifies strongly with female emotions, “so it’s easy to express their feelings, because I know them.” She indicates her painting “Silent Tear,” in which the protagonist is crying, caught between two staircases signifying being stuck between two lives or two worlds. “She is sad but she is not weak,” says the artist. The artist says she aims to create women who are “beautiful and powerful and strong.”

For the artist’s biography, click [here](#).

For more of the artist’s work see: www.rihamelsadany.com