

<http://www.sauress.com/alhayat/181116>

## **Workshop for Artists from Cairo and New York**

*Yasser Sultan- Published in al hayat on 13 - 09 – 2010*

Translated by Max Tanyos, September 8, 2014

max.tanyos@gmail.com

*But a Shadow of Myself* is a project and a workshop sponsored by the Jesuit Centre for Cultural Development in Cairo with the participation of artists and enthusiasts from Cairo and New York. What's new is that the workshop will be held in the form of an interaction between both sides using the software program "Skype". The workshop will last for nine months, during which time artists from Egypt and the United States will use "Skype" to work together, brainstorm, and exchange views during the hours that fit the time between the cities of Cairo and New York. The workshop will culminate in an exhibition held at the headquarters of the Center for Jesuit.

Interestingly, the workshop is not limited to the exchange of views and opinions only, but also on a practical level, will produce joint work made collaboratively by artists from both sides.

The idea of the project began at Townhouse Gallery in Cairo during the past year under the supervision of the American Alexandra Zevin. Zevin is an artist who works teaching high school students in New York, and has many projects around the world. Zevin established many workshops for professional, emerging artists and students in New York, especially with high school students. In these workshops, Zevin relies on pushing participants to express themselves through words and images. During her visit to Cairo last year, Zevin brought with her a number of products of these workshops created in New York, and wanted to follow the same idea with a number of Egyptian emerging artists. She set up a workshop in Townhouse Gallery that lasted three weeks, and at its conclusion, an exhibition was organized including a number of works carried out in the workshop.

The idea of the workshop crystallized and the workshop project developed so that artists in New York and Cairo could work in an interactive way. The workshop would allow the exchange of ideas through the presentation of artworks painted by students and emerging artists from New York to the Cairo workshop participants, and the discussion of the work. Zevin then traveled to New York with the products of the Cairo workshop and established a workshop in New York with a group of artists, inspired by the drawings of their counterparts in Cairo.

When she returned to Egypt once again, she presented the same idea in Jesuit's Cultural Centre, but added to it the use of Skype to develop direct interaction between artists from New York and Cairo.

All of these workshops highlighted a single concept, agreed upon by all participants. This concept was the use of silhouette and moving images through a number of techniques, including stop motion and video. Participants collaborated by drawing silhouettes, and brainstormed by writing and asking questions associated with the images.

Zevin says that the project aims to find a form of direct dialogue between artists from both sides as a form of communication. The project tries to remove barriers between ideas and different cultures and the accompanying misconceptions espoused by any party towards the other. So the project is not limited to artists or professionals, but includes people with other concerns on both sides.