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Expression and Coding in Iraqi Art:Adel Kamel as a Model

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Abstract

This study has four chapters on me, the first of which is the general framework of the research, while the second chapter in the current study included the theoretical framework that contained two axes of knowledge, the first of which was: expression in contemporary Iraqi art, while the second axis included coding in contemporary Iraqi art.At the end of the third chapter, the researcher mentioned the indicators that emerged from this chapter. As for the research procedures, in which the researcher specified his research community with (20) works from which the researcher intentionally chose his research samples that were determined as (2) work. Artist Adel Kamel's memory is rich in historical, mythological, political and social issues of multiple origins from ancient Iraqi, Arab and Islamic, and popular myths, from which he draws expressive images and symbols that he employs in intellectual and artistic formulations that express the problems of contemporary man. The artist formulates his ideas within plastic structures with an apparent expressive dimension, after another implicit symbolic dimension, and the first dimension is related to the nature of the shapes and the methods of their formulation, while the symbolic dimension arises through the addition of the elements of space, time, the surrounding atmosphere and the relationships between the shapes. Moreover, the researcher reached a set of conclusions, the most important of which is the expression representing the artist's mirror that reflects his observations and direct life experiences, while coding represents the summary of his deep reflections and inner thoughts about what he sees and lives in life. Artist Adel Kamel works in light of specific ideas that lead him to choose the appropriate techniques and materials to show and embody them in a work loaded with special intellectual and aesthetic values. The artist's artistic skills serve his aesthetic orientations with an encyclopedic horizon open to the various philosophical and aesthetic propositions that he places in their appropriate apparent contexts.

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Problem

The artist's work is based mainly on the principle of expression, so the artist works to express a specific content or a specific position on issues of life and the world, and therefore the artwork in the end is an expression of something or an idea, even if the artwork is an abstract based on color relationships and plastic structures. Purely, therefore, it expresses the artist's vision and his selfconcept of beauty, meaning that expression is a principle inherent in the core of the creative product, while the artist employs the symbol as part of the desired expression process, as he places the symbol in the context of the artistic formation to be indicative of a specific idea and serves the general context of the artistic expression intended by the structure. Most of the international artists from different eras and places use common symbols in their cultures or derived from their heritage and history in order to be understandable and readable and analyzed by the audience of recipients, and some artists have a creative peculiarity distinct from others that stems from the diversity of their expressive means that they employ in their work. Sue, who was able to work in the fields of drawing at the level of planning, color photography, sculpture, ceramics, installation and all these artistic races give the artist the ability to excel and excel in his creative work.

1. 2 Research Importance

The research comes as an added link to the theoretical side of plastic art, especially in the aesthetic aspects. Current research serves researchers in Faculties of Fine Arts, Institutes of Fine Arts, artists, intellectuals, and those interested in the art of modernity.

1. 3 Research Aims

The current research aims to uncover the expression and coding systems in Adel Kamel's works.

1.4 Research Limits

Objective limits are all the works of artist Adel Kamel, executed with various materials and artistic means. The temporal boundaries of 1977 - 2017. 1977 is the date of the graduation of artist Adel Kamel from the Institute of Fine Arts, Baghdad. 2017 is the date of the death of the artist and critic, Adel Kamel. The spatial boundaries are represented in Iraq.

1. 5 Defining Terminology

Expressing a thing is expressing it with a sign, a word, or a model image. The expression is also given to the means upon which a person relies in transmitting his thoughts, emotions (1). Coding is a conscious creative act that aims to transform things into symbols in order to achieve a social or philosophical goal linked to wisdom or history with the intention of glorification, or artistic linked to the aesthetic aspect (2). Individualism includes literature and art, or social dimensions such as popular and linguistic symbols in circulation (3). The procedural definition is the arrangement of

subjective emotions and the transformation of shapes into symbols in the artwork on the structural and content levels (4).

2. Theoretical Background

2. 1 Expression in Contemporary Iraqi Art

The artist, Nuri al-Rawi, writes when Baghdad was living under the Ottoman Empire, he did not know the paint tube, but even the colored pencils with which the children of its schools play today, as Shaker Hassan Al Said mentions, saying the modern development in the cultural arts in Iraq, Including the art of painting did not become possible until after the aesthetic values of global thought crystallized in it, as the successive colonies of Iraq since 1258 - 1958 were destructive to everything in Iraq, and that the preliminary stage of the days of Abdul Qadir Rassam and his companions did not allow these firsts any stylistic capabilities except for simulating nature and depicting rigid life and subjects. And therefore, their topics did not go beyond the documentary style, as Abdul Qadir Al-Rassam depicts scenes of the Tigris in Baghdad, Muhammad Salih Zaki portrays the characters in an academic style, and Muhammad Salim, as sons of his generation, withdraws to European traditions (5).

Despite this, the experiences of many artists are still far from the artistic climate, which will crystallize after the first half of this century, as the problem of importing European art styles represented the greatest fear of the Iraqi artist, and the pioneering Iraqi artists returned to their homeland with ambitions to express their ideas. For languages that their society understands and confirms their own national identity, from here the pioneers presented the first patterns of their artistic expression as a way of experimenting and trying and searching for answers that they get through the responses of their audience in the form of expressive successes through which the artist communicates with his audience.

Individualism focused on proving their artistic abilities and introducing their audiences to what they have learned in Europe, and in the following stages the obsession rose to emphasize the authenticity of their works and visions (6). The techniques of the artistic image have also witnessed successive developments that have led to major transformations in the methods of artistic expression, and international art has witnessed the introduction of new techniques and treatments in art and its multiple means of expression that ranged in the extent of their efficiency and successes to the distinctive artistic work that often reflects thought and depth in proposition and dealing at the level of culture, technology and expression the aesthetic, and the plastic arts have witnessed radical transformations and major changes at the level of concepts, tools, techniques and methods of artistic expression, as the process of reception takes personal paths related to the recipient himself and not to the artist or artistic effect or method of expression and despite all these theorems and philosophical and critical visions, expression remains an essential part of the artistic work.

It is the goal of the artist and the goal of the recipient, who remains in dire need of foundations, signals, or central signs that guide him during the process of taste, understanding and analysis in order for his taste and understanding of the expression to be in the right direction. The correct artistic expression that the artist intended or said by the artwork, the relationship between doubt the content or the visible and the invisible is a sensitive and dangerous relationship that cannot be bridged, linked and documented except through artistic expression that represents the only and certain way between form and content (7).

The Iraqi artist Nizar Selim had a simplified expressive tendency that traces the experiences of the creator Jawad Salim with caution, as he did not deviate from the direct employment of the heritage scenes derived from the life of the ordinary Baghdadi individual, as his works show the vocabulary of Iraqi homes, Baghdadi costumes, and his figures are always in confrontation with the recipient and they are They perform actions and movements that are a direct recording of what is happening in the daily practices of sellers, builders, fishermen in the Tigris, bakers, and other scenes that are copied from the usual stereotypical practices of people. The artist reproduces them in a formative behavior that gives them the characteristics of the expressive image through simplification, reductionism and some innovative color treatments (8) as in Figure (1).



Figure (1): By Nizar Salim

Artist Shaker Hassan Al Said believes that contemporary Iraqi art after the fifties has entered into a technical expressive crisis through its relationship with the materials and raw materials of painting, which it is trying to renew and override its traditional problems in order to make room for more expression, ideas and renewed visions that have become incompatible with scientific and artistic developments. The level of the civilized world, as new generations of Iraqi painters have come to reject the old styles of expression related to line, color, mass, realistic shape or axis.

The Iraqi artist has become able to break into the world of technical developments that plague Western art and lead it quickly to successive major transformations in a stage called the post Modernity, however, Iraqi art was still living in the inheritance complex that has bound it since its inception, as it does not want to abandon its heritage or its own national imprint on the one hand, and on the other hand it wants to go into artistic currents that declare war on the heritage and work to remove it by all means (9). The artist Shaker

Hassan Al Said has also been interested in establishing a contemplative approach in plastic art based on the reduction of real-world images and signs that the artist captures from the spontaneous writings on the walls of popular Iraqi alleys and the effects formed on the dilapidated surfaces of time in which he finds patterns of spontaneous spiritual expressions that express the imagination of the Iraqi individual, the popular sense, and the abstract forms that stimulate the imaginations of the meditator with their spiritual, historical and psychological depth, as the artist devoted his artistic life to the production of works of mystical proportions based on a few artistic elements that wander in free spaces and raise in the recipient various ideas and visions that lead to deep thinking and contemplation of the nature Creation, existence and the power of the great creator (10) as in Figure (2).



Figure (2): Evacuation Returning by Shaker Hassan Al Said

2. 2 Coding in Contemporary Iraqi Art

Plastic art deals with signs and symbols that serve intellectual trends and special artistic visions that differ from one artist to another, and the artist must succeed in introducing the most expressive symbols into the artistic structures that he installs so that the symbols do not appear forcibly inserted into the artwork or remain alien to the composition or lose their symbolism in the event that Its shift from its original semantic functions, and the contemporary Iraqi artist finds himself in front of a tremendous store of aesthetic, intellectual and artistic heritage symbols from the depth of history from the creations of the civilizations of Sumer, Akkad, Babylon and Ashur, passing through the great Islamic arts and the innovations of the Baghdad School of Islamic Painting and the innovations of Arabic calligraphy arts with his various artistic formations and Islamic decorative arts of all kinds Engineering, vegetarianism, writing, and local Iraqi folk arts represented in the popular arts of weaving rugs or road arts on copper, leather and fashion industries, and the authentic Iraqi folk pottery industries (11).

The ancient Iraqi literary heritage represented in ancient epics or pre-Islamic and pre-Islamic poetry and its brilliance in the Abbasid and Umayyad eras, then the incubator for Iraqi folk poetry in central and southern Iraq, the heritage of folk singing and the Baghdad shrines (al-Jalghi al-Baghdadi) and the art of crafting jewelry of all kinds, gold and silver, as well as the diverse cultural heritage of the Iraqi sects. The different ones from the Kurds to the Turkmen, Yazidis and others, the famous Hussaini Lamentations heritage, the rituals of the great religious ceremonies of the Christian and Sabian sects, the Kurdish heritage, the wide dictionary of proverbs and folklore myths and many others that the researcher cannot enumerate.

The wide and varied symbolic heritage incubator has generated a keen and burning desire for the Iraqi artist to introduce his country's heritage The tremendous distinction and its introduction to the world through contemporary artistic methods and formulations that contribute to its acceptance and understanding on a wide human scale and also provide the Iraqi artist with ways to reach the world while preserving his national and patriotic peculiarity that he is proud of among the peoples of the earth as he is a descendant of the oldest human civilizations (12).

Since the early beginnings of the contemporary Iraqi formation movement, the pioneering artists have set their sights on the issue of research and exploration into the components of their diverse cultural heritage to exploit and employ these symbols in creative works and achievements worthy of their history and civilization on the one hand. The trends of modernization and the ideas of modernity were victorious over the classical thought that dominated the art andculture of Europe since the Renaissance. The pioneering Iraqi artists were influenced by the orientations of their European masters who were taught by their hands, and many of them had enough courage to go through the various currents of modernist formation in search of the ideal method that guarantees them (13). However, the beginnings of the road were not optimally facilitated for these artists who took upon themselves another more difficult and complex task, namely the task of promoting the level of social taste for modern concepts of beauty and art that the Iraqi society did not know about and did not understand their philosophies due to the cognitive discontinuity that kept the Arab peoples away from their civilized position. Since the fall of Baghdad in 1258 AD, the Arab towns have lived under the weight of repeated occupations, intellectual and social backwardness, and economic decline inherited by the colonial regimes that dominated the Arab world.

So Iraqi artists began their difficult task in trying to upgrade with the level of thought and visual culture of their audience, they take difficult steps, but they are fast and serious, hoping to catch up with the art and beauty prevalent in the world (14).

The Iraqi society internally believed that art has a message greater than the beautiful and attractive form and is looking for what it believes is behind the appearance of the painting, and this matter is rooted in the Arab and Islamic culture from its close side and connected with the long-standing understanding of the arts of ancient Iraqi civilizations famous for their great creative symbolism that encompassed all aspects of life and expanded. To expand the horizons of human knowledge to include what is outside the universe and pursue its deep philosophical and mythological interpretations and all these intellectual reflections found their embodiment and material representations in the great arts of the Mesopotamian Valley in the form of symbols and signs that later took on a universal character and included the entire human intellectual heritage, as you find the theorems of religious thought and text The

Quranic implanted in the Iraqi mind and soul with its major achievements in the levels of symbolism that human thought elevates for the purpose of realizing the major cosmic realities (15).

As well as the contemplative Iraqi Sufi and Islamic heritage and the heritage of Arab poetry, which was based on the linguistic sobriety and the power of symbolism stemming from the aesthetics of the word and its expressions, and all these matters were settled in the popular and official understanding of the concepts of thought, culture and art in Iraq. A preconceived hypothesis confirms the existence of a deep human intellectual message hidden within the visual text.

Thus, Jawad Selim began to work quickly on the great to implement the larger idea that dominated his thought and art, which is the issue of searching for a balanced equation between the treatments and trends of modern European art on the one hand and between the cultural depth founding his national identity. On the other hand, he chose to work with the cubist approach in building the painting on the level of performance and style, while he found a way of symbolism in the aesthetic treasures of the ancient Iraqi art of Mesopotamia from Sumer, Babylon and Assyria, as he was influenced by the works of the artist Al Wasiti in the Baghdad School of Islamic Painting (16). He tried to work within the borders of an aesthetic field that combines Mesopotamian and Islamic symbols based on the principle of abstraction, reduction and modification to build contemporary artistic texts with a national cultural depth and a European modernist appearance in order to open for Iraqi art ways to elevate its aesthetic identity to the level of universality and coherent formal and content integration. His symbolic inspiration between the ancient Iraqi, Islamic architecture and the Iraqi popular and between the introduction of Arabic writing in the artwork and between capturing expressive scenes from daily life and that he had the ability to raise them to the level of high symbolism that transforms the scene taken from the Iraqi street into a modern art formation that can beaesthetically tasted at the level of Contemporary arts such as zaffa painting in the street (17) as in figure (3).



Figure (3): Street Musicians by Jawad Saleem

The symbolic images in the diacritical text are different from what the symbols are in the literary texts, because they take physical visual forms that can be seen visually, which gives them the preference of embodiment before the sight and they are loaded with colors, dimensions, movements, relationships and rhythms that are visible, and the poetic text is able to enrich visual texts with other symbols Added, the Arabic writings have taken an influential dimension in the march of contemporary Iraqi painting since its first inception as the movement of the letters arose with it, who found in the Arabic letter tremendous expressive and symbolic potentials that could enrich the visual visual surface with the many meanings and connotations added to the artistic composition. Omar and Jamil Hammoudiemployed letters in geometric or cubic treatments or free constructions, all aiming to show the beauty of the Arabic letter and its ability to harmonize within contemporary painting.

While the symbolism of the letter took on a wider dimension with the artist Dia al-Azzawi, who was preoccupied with the presence of the Arabic poetic text, eloquent, pre-Islamic, or contemporary in his artistic works. As Al-Azzawi drew many paintings inspired by the atmosphere of heroism and Arab horsemanship that Arab poets sang, so his works featured color formations and geometric shapes intertwined with images of horses, swords and stylized faces surrounded by passages and verses of poetry, while the artist employed his ability on Arabic calligraphy to decorate small and large lines that transformed His works are into symbolic images that retrieve the aesthetics, values and principles of authentic Arab life in a contemporary aesthetic plastic framework (18), as shown in Figure (4).



Figure (4): By Dhia Al-Azzawi

On another level, artist Rafi Al-Nasiri worked on strict engineering formations that do not allow the recipient to have much interpretation outside the text, as he submits the color and geometric structure of his work to a kind of spatial circumference that gives the main form in his work a great deal of hegemony and centralization, so it becomes the focus of attention, attention and focus of the viewer due to the lack of the colors used by the artist as he works on employing a specific number of colors that gradient and blend into each other in order to give the symbols he puts in his work to convey their messages clearly and accurately (19). All his works occupy the center of the painting and open the gates of historical contemplation in the mind of the audience, which clearly distinguishes the form of the ziggurat because it is one of the eternal historical symbols in Iraq, while the color formulations are an auxiliary factor that contributes to deepening the aesthetic and semantic dimensions of the larger symbol in the painting, and the Arabic letters employed by the Nazarene artist work on The scope of symbolism derived from the ancient Arab and Islamic culture and history and its presence in the works of the Nazarene artist is an affirmation of the spiritual and civilizational interdependence between the two identities. The ancient Iraqi and Islamic Arab have contributed to building the personality and uniqueness of the arts, culture and historical personality of the Iraqi people (20), as in Figure (5).

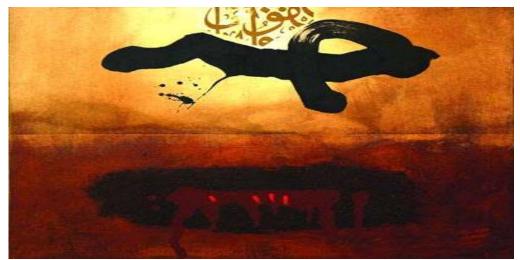


Figure (5): The Last Absenceby Rafe al-Nasiri

3. Data Analysis

3. 1 Research Procedures

Due to the large number of artistic accomplishments of the artist Adel Kamel, with expressive and symbolic influence over the methods of its operation and its various techniques, which were completed within the time period (1977_2017) AD and were identified with (20) works of art consisting of different materials and genders, in order to benefit from them to cover the research and achieve its goal.

3. 2 Research Sample

The research sample was chosen according to a specific order of the research topic, intentionally in line with the nature and topic of the research, as the researcher chose samples to represent the research needs, amounting to (2) artistic work.

3.3 Research Tool

In order to achieve the objectives of the research, the researcher relied on the indicators that resulted from the theoretical framework as an analysis tool using the descriptive analytical method as a method for analyzing the research sample, where the work is described and analyzed on the basis of general description, analysis of work on the verification of sample samples.



Form No. (1)

Title: women in nature Material: zinc print Dimensions: 18 x 33 cm Date: 1999 AD

Description

The work is a graphic print executed in a linear fashion on a rectangular piece of paper divided into four rectangles two on the top and two at the bottom separated by an inner band that represents a frame-like contour of each part of the print, and the shapes executed within these four fields are simple realistic shapes that represent female bodies Naked, two of which appear in the first rectangle at the top of the right and it contains two bodies standing behind each other, one curved towards the front, and the shapes are placed inside a triangle slanting to the left and it is lit in white, while the burnt brown color prevails in the rest of the space of the rectangle. The color is black, and the second square from the top on the left side shows a single female body standing facing the beholder with a white triangle slanting slightly to the right and the space of the rectangle is colored with burnt brown with lines and black spots scattered inside it.

The third rectangle from the right below the print has the shape of a seated woman Behind her, another female leg appears in a triangle whose head tilts towards the left slightly and is not lit, except for the white colored bodies, while the fourth rectangle at the bottom left has two bodies. D is overlapping and has a triangle whose head tilts towards the right.

Analysis

The work is divided into four equal parts, through which the artist gives equal importance to each pictorial section of it and refers it to what looks like serial life scenes that complement each other, as the first scene at the top right of the beholder contains two female bodies, one of them erect and the other curved forward towards the left, occupying a white circle The position of the head on the curved body then appears, two small white spots pointing to the bowed woman's breasts, an indication that the human head is the site of thinking and enlightenment in the human body, and the two bodies are located in an acute-angled triangle tilted to the left while it is bright that puts them in the focus of the visual focus of the beholder. The second sector, at the top left of the painting, is a full female body standing in a confrontational position and resting inside an acute-angled triangle that tilts slightly to the right, and this body appears in a movement that displays the charms of femininity in front of the recipient, and in the third sector, below the right of the painting, two female bodies are seen seated with hands stretching out to hold the lines of the triangle surrounding them As if they were holding onto the bars of the prison in which they were imprisoned, while in the fourth sector, at the bottom left of the painting, the two female bodies meet and move one towards the other A movement that suggests meeting or a desire to merge, as a hand appears on the buttocks of the female, located to the right of the scene.



Form No. (2) Title: women Material: polyester fabric Dimensions: 50 x 17 cm Date: 1998 AD

Description

The work is a longitudinal rectangle divided into 12 rectangular sectors arranged in 3 horizontal rows that are arranged with it descending towards the bottom, so that a total of 12 sectors are separated by broad black lines that cross the formation and surround it from the outside forming a black frame surrounding each rectangle and separating it from the other as it forms a frame Externally, it is surrounded by a blue band as close in size as is the outer edge

of the work. Female body shapes occupy most of the area of rectangles with front and side positions and different movements.

Analysis

Artist Adel puts his entire perspective on life through his artistic works, and the processes of expression and coding come within the limits of his own intellectual perspective of existence. The whole expressive field in which the artist's ideas revolve, as he places him in different areas and different times, sometimes he appears moving in an apparent vitality, and sometimes he is a stable static, swimming in spaces colored in blue, red, gray, green and brown, and it is a body full of femininity floating in its natural formations that the artist focuses on as the major signs of feeling, emotion and feminine existence in life, which are visible from the outside, that is, the artist tries to interrogate ideas and feelings associated with femininity through his self-perception of him, and he exhibits it in different situations, individually or double.

4. Conclusions

1. The memory of artist Adel Kamel is rich in historical, mythological, political and social issues of multiple origins from ancient Iraqi, Arab and Islamic, and popular myths, from which he draws expressive images and symbols that he employs in intellectual and artistic formulations that express the problems of contemporary man as for the whole research samples.

2. The artist Adel employs all forms according to two levels, the first is expressive, working within the limits of realistic form transmitted from nature, and another symbolic level that stems through the processes of modification, modification and additions that he makes to the form itself.

3. The need to overcome difficulties for researchers who study subjects outside Iraq, by allocating scholarships for the service of science and art.

4. The need for artistic and media institutions to take care of deepening the aesthetic awareness of students and connoisseurs of plastic art, through holding seminars and conferences, and holding critical dialogues in a way that contributes to developing and creating feasible working contexts in order to develop the reality of the plastic movement in the country.

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