

Press Release

Grand Egyptian Museum Presents Traces of Egypt, an Exhibition by Susan Hefuna



Image of Susan Hefuna Exhibition © Grand Egyptian Museum

Cairo, Egypt, March 16th, 2023: The Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM) is proud to present its first contemporary art exhibition, *Traces of Egypt*, by renowned Egyptian-German interdisciplinary artist Susan Hefuna. Commissioned by the GEM, this exhibition is a celebration of the Egyptian applique tradition, the *Khayamiya*, which dates back centuries.

In *Traces of Egypt*, Hefuna draws on her extensive experience working with textiles and collaborated with local artisans to create a series of 28 costumes made of Egyptian cotton that pay homage to the *Khayamiya* tradition. The dresses feature connected dots and lines, reminiscent of Hefuna's multilayered drawings, and are inspired by the architectural structures that she is known for, such as the large-scale wooden *Mashrabiya* screens.

The dresses are both functional and aesthetic, representing the inseparability of art and life in historical and Contemporary Egypt. They serve as a reminder of the country's rich heritage and the importance of preserving it for future generations. *Traces of Egypt* is a must-see exhibition for anyone interested in contemporary art and Egyptian culture.

The opening day of the exhibition saw a panel discussion featuring Susan Hefuna, Venetia Porter, former Curator of Islamic and Contemporary Middle East Art at the British Museum, and South African Architect Sumayya Vally, Founder of the Design Studio Counterspace and Professor of Practice at UCL, London. The panel discussed Susan's artistic approach, the significance of her use of crafts techniques from Egypt such as Khayamiya, Mashrabiya wood turning, as well as drawing, and its relevance to contemporary art.

According to Saida El Harakany, Cultural Programming Director at Legacy Development and Management, Manager and Operator of the GEM, "Traces of Egypt is a landmark exhibition for the Grand Egyptian Museum, as it marks our first contemporary art exhibition. We are proud to host the work of Susan Hefuna, a talented artist who has masterfully reinterpreted the Khayamiya tradition in a way that connects the past, present, and future of Egypt."

Meanwhile, Susan Hefuna herself remarked on her work, stating that "Through the use of the Khayamiya tradition, I aim to bring attention to the living heritages of Egypt, and the importance of connecting them to contemporary art."

The GEM is Egypt's leading cultural, commercial, and entertainment destination, and Traces of Egypt is a perfect example of the museum's commitment to showcasing Egypt's rich cultural heritage. By offering a wide range of experiences and activities, the GEM aims to make culture accessible to everyone and to contribute to Egypt's economic development.

Although the museum's interior spaces, including the galleries, are currently closed until the official opening, you can visit the exhibition by booking one of the guided tours that are available online through www.visit-gem.com. These tours provide visitors with a chance to experience the areas of the GEM that are accessible, including the Hanging Obelisk, the Grand Hall, the Glass Hall, outdoor areas, the gift shop, and retail and food and beverage outlets.

Traces of Egypt by Susan Hefuna is a unique and exciting exhibition that showcases Egypt's rich cultural heritage and its connection to contemporary art. We invite everyone to come and experience the GEM's first contemporary art exhibition and to be a part of Egypt's cultural transformation.

The exhibition will run from March 19th until June 15th, 2023.

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About the Grand Egyptian Museum

Conceived to present the world's most comprehensive collection devoted to ancient Egyptian civilisation, the Grand Egyptian Museum displays, conserves, and studies over 50,000 artefacts across seven thousand years. The Museum embraces the diversity of Egyptian history and culture to connect all visitors to creativity, knowledge, ideas, and to one another. By integrating entertainment, culture, learning and lifestyle, the Grand Egyptian Museum site incorporates a deep sense of history in an inclusive setting for all visitors seeking to celebrate, discover, and be part of Egypt's past and future.

About Legacy Development and Management

A subsidiary of Hassan Allam Holding, Legacy Development and Management specializes in the management and operation of premium destinations. Hassan Allam Holding is one of the largest privately owned corporations in Egypt and the MENA region, with over 85 years of experience in engineering, construction, building materials, and utilities, with over 45,000 employees. In March 2021, Legacy for Management and Development won the contract to provide and operate services and facilities at the Grand Egyptian Museum for 12 years. As the operator of the GEM project, Legacy adopted a new business model for museum management in Egypt to support the sustainable growth of the project. Legacy aims to integrate cultural, commercial, and entertainment experiences at the GEM to create an inspiring visitor destination and enhance Egypt's position as a world-class tourist destination, contributing significantly to Egypt's economic development.