

Emad Abd El-Wahab

Emad Abd El-Wahab (b. 1976) holds a BFA in painting from Alexandria University. Having spent three years in Italy as a painter and restorer of antique and ancient painting, Abd El-Wahab leads a very successful career as a painter. His exquisite painterly skills led him to be part of the restoration team that worked on the Sistine Chapel to restore some of Michelangelo's work. His paintings deal with women's issues; he is fond of the female body as a perfect sculptural element. His nudes can reflect the state of the mind of his models at the time of freezing the moment on canvas.

Abd El-Wahab thinks that one can understand a whole society from the position of its women and that it is paramount to have a liberated and free mind to attain progress.

In one of his canvases, a torso – from the neck down to the upper thighs – is painted pink and shiny, almost cartoon-like, while the rest of the torso is painted in green. Hair grows from different parts of the –allegedly—smooth skin of the perfect female form. “Distortion signifies acceptance of death”, he says. The almost hermaphrodite incorporation of male-female,



Abd El-Wahab, *Al Kaysat*, acrylic on canvas, 180x200cm, 2010

represented by the perfect feminine contours and the growing beard-like male hair, symbolize for him how males look upon females in some oriental societies as sex objects, or as simply objects.

In another painting, he explains that a woman in niqab is fantasising about glittery underwear. Often sad or sinister, sometimes gruesome, Abd El-Wahab's paintings show the influence of some of the European artists who inspire him; Oskar Kokoshka, Gustav Klimt, and Max Beckmann. He also talks about Adel El Siwi, Khaled Hafez and Mohamed Abla as artists who are very important to him.