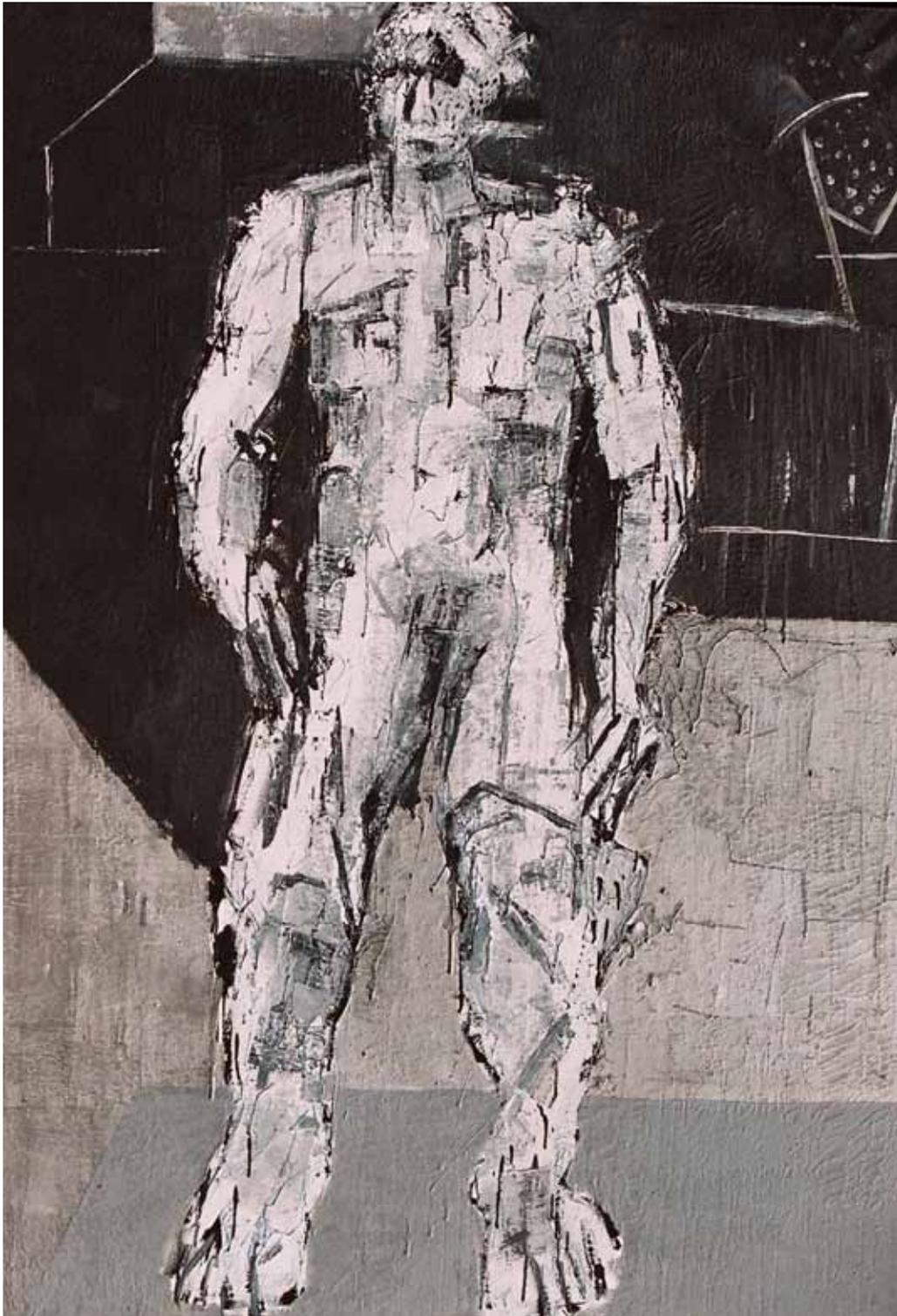


Mohammed Talaat

Born in Fayoum, Egypt in 1976, Mohammed Talaat is a painter and installation artist. He is holder of a BA in Arts and Education and MFA in painting from Helwan University. Talaat started his career by prize-winning painting awards at the Salon of Young Artists in Egypt. Early on, he was offered a side position to manage the prestigious Palace of the Arts. He belongs to a generation of young cultural managers –who are also working studio artists-- currently contracted by the Fine Arts Sector to run strategic public spaces/galleries in the country, a reform initiative taken by the Fine Arts Sector Head Mohsen Shaalan, himself an artist, in 2006.

Talaat's large canvases demonstrate an obvious inclination to figuration, and vivid painterly techniques. The artist approaches his canvases by continuously layering pastes of colour in thick brushstrokes. The surfaces are versatile for a variety of reasons; the human forms are always in motion, the colours are always layered and thickened rendering the painted surfaces visually rich, and most importantly, the content has a comprehensible and accessible visual narrative. Talaat is inspired by the daily life of urban Cairo and the interaction of the city's 'personages'; he depicts his 'stories' from such interaction. There is almost always a struggle between male and female elements on Talaat's surfaces, a subjugation of some sort. There are other living entities inspired from ancient Egyptian painting references: dogs, cats, snakes or birds, all adding to the storyline. Though the figures are flat and two-dimensional, the rich layered painterly techniques provide juxtaposition between the almost-graphic flatness and the textures that provide a physical dimension to the surface. Talaat's projects reflect on nostalgia, personal memories and perceptions of how lay individuals interact within changing urban environments.



Talaat, oil on canvas, 150x120cm, 2007