

Amr Mounib

Amr Mounib, has been practicing photography since he was 13 years old. Earning his degree in Communications and Visual Media from The American University in Washington D.C. where he won several awards for his work in photography and film and after serving in the US Navy both in the active and reserve forces, Mounib moved to Europe with an unforeseen career in fashion photography for a decade, studying under Foulie Elia. He then returned to Washington DC before retracing his roots in Cairo after 35 years of absence.

Mounib's family has deep roots in theatre and television that go as far back as the silent film through his grandfather Fawzi Mounib in the Egyptian film industry. His grandmother, Mary Mounib was named Egypt's "Empress of Comedy" both for her film and theatre fame. She is until this day an icon of humor engraved in the hearts of millions of Egyptians. Mounib's father was a pioneer television producer and hosted the first Egyptian interviews and game programs in the early 60s. His background left a great impact in his work and character due to the wealth of media and entertainment engraved in his family's continuing talent.

His primary interest lies in the interaction of light with his subject matter, with a focus in the spatial relationship between man-made and natural objects. Mounib uses juxtaposition to create a language of shapes and movement, contrasting the fluid nature of natural forms with the geometry of man-made objects. His compositions challenge the viewer to discover a natural light that would cross the terrains of a farmland, the shadow of a peasant's face, the gesture of a flower-giver, the mundane endeavors of a cow grazing, to shepherd herding are unveiled in a single snapshot. Growth and physics change the nature of Mounib's subject moment by moment, and that moment never repeats again. This sense of motion even lends a sense of drama to Mounib's still life studies where "There is always a hint of something happening."

In his *Enigma Series*, Mounib stages social sensibilities by revealing peculiar mysteries of an organic co-existence; the first stages of human metamorphosis sought from pressures people face everyday.

Uniformities are visually composed in a cross-cultural dimension and Mounib breaks his boundaries between his own notions of cultures by recycling a continental divide between traditions overcome by technological domination.

Recognized for an Honorable Mention Award from the International Photography Awards (2009), Mounib redefines his subjects' temporary availability and conforms that nothing is 'forever.' Losing the natural relationship between man and nature, he manipulates the appearance of man, by presenting an unidentifiable figure juxtaposed with light and raw pastels. By developing such designs from a manipulation of every sequence in the images; everything from the dye of fabric to the textures of skin – he continuously refers back to the origins of mankind; made of clay.

The forefront of the image is a Peahen feather. A classic symbol of nature and diversity; it was inspired from a hiking experience Mounib endeavored on through the Smokey Mountains of Tennessee outside of Knoxville with his canine friend who spotted a wild turkey and took off, unsuccessfully returning with its feather. Its fragility and beauty acts as a forgotten ornament held in the hand of the presenter as though it were a shielding weapon to nature.

- AE



Enigma Series, 2007. Fiber Premium Archival Paper
Image courtesy of the Artist

“I cannot escape where I come from. Taking pictures is simple, sublime. A truth-told statement: ‘A picture speaks a thousand words.’ If I can come close to 15 words then I would be successful.”