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Press Release

An exhibition of "Arts meet Crafts" will be inaugurated in Bayt al-Sinnari cultural centre on the first of February 2015. "Arts Meet Crafts: from Contemporary to Traditional" is a project that brings together contemporary Egyptian and European artists with traditional craftspeople of Cairo in the collective creation of artistic works.

In October 2014 a series of working sessions were conducted in artisans' workshops in four areas of the Greater Cairo Region. As a result, twelve works of art in metal, stone, wood, glass, pottery, stucco, and alabaster, in combination with other materials and media, were produced in a collaborative effort of artists and craftsmen.

By inviting contemporary artists to produce their work using the skills and techniques of traditional craftspeople in workshops located in underprivileged neighbourhoods, the project aims at broadening access to modern art in Egyptian society. By creating a platform for modern artists to interact directly with traditional crafts of the country, it aims at enhancing the diversity of contemporary Egyptian culture.

Indeed, in the words of Ambassador James Moran, Head of Delegation of the European Union (EU) to Egypt, "**Contemporary artists and craftsmen are invaluable resources for Egypt's culture, for its economy, and for its history. The European Union is proud of contributing to this project, thereby underlining the important links between creativity and tradition, elements which also formed the backbone of Europe's successes.**"

This initiative also benefited from the support of other institutions valuing the same objectives: the Polish Embassy, the British Council, and the Embassy of Switzerland. The project was carried out by the Cairo-based architectural practice ARCHINOS Architecture in collaboration with the Bayt al-Sinnari cultural centre, which is operated by the *Bibliotheca Alexandrina*. The exhibition shows the resulting works of the project.

The project is funded primarily by the EU Delegation to Egypt as part of its Cultural Cooperation Programme. The Programme aims at contributing to the diversity of cultural creation and improving access to it, especially in marginalised regions and informal areas.

www.artsmeetcrafts.com

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