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| **Museum of Modern Egyptian Art (Mathaf al-Fann al-Misri al-Hadith)** |
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| The Museum of Modern Egyptian Art (Mathaf al-Fann al-Hadith, or Musée d’Art Moderne) began as a collection initiated in the mid-1920s, paid for by the state, and overseen by the Society of the Friends of Art. The inauguration of the museum on February 8, 1931 represented the achievement of a key component of a wider blueprint for the arts implemented by the country’s first state-run administrative body for the arts. The museum’s mandate covered the acquisition and display of both Egyptian and non-Egyptian (primarily European) works of art including oil paintings, watercolors, lithographs, etchings, sculpture, medals, and ceramics. The collection originally included works dating to as early as the eighteenth century up to the contemporary moment. Its expansion was supported by a budget allocated by the state for the purchase of works, as well as private donations. Contemporary Egyptian artists figured alongside the general public as the museum’s original target audience. The museum seemed to guarantee the Egyptian public’s access to important work. Plans devoted to restructuring Cairo’s advanced school of art often treated the museum as an important consideration. While much of the early collection came from Europe and not Egypt, as critics noted at the time, the acquisition of works by Egyptian artists was understood as part of the institution’s mandate, and the museum was seen as central to the realisation of an Egyptian ‘artistic renaissance.’    Steps taken by the Society of the Friends of Art (henceforth the SFA, est. 1923) in the mid- to late-1920s laid the grounds for the museum’s establishment. In 1924, the Ministry of Education entrusted the SFA with access to funds for the purchase of works exhibited at the annual salon. In 1927-1928, the latter were displayed as what was likely the first permanent public exhibition of modern Egyptian art in rooms at the SFA’s headquarters in the Tigrane Palace (also referred to as the *Palais Tigrane*, *la Maison des Arts*, or *Saray al-Funun al-Jamila*) at 4 Sh. Nubar (today’s Sh. al-Jumhuriyya).  In 1930, the Ministry rented the Mosseiri Palace on Sh. 26 July in downtown Cairo, and the museum’s administration was made independent of the SFA. Works were transferred to the site and the museum opened its doors the following year. It moved in 1935 to Bustan Palace at 34, Sh. Hawayati (today Sh. Bustan), Bab al-Luq, where the collection was given its first truly ‘complete and rational’ hanging, according to a former director, with works divided by school and century, and augmented with significant new donations. The museum subsequently relocated to a number of sites within downtown Cairo before being closed in 1962-1963. The collection moved to a villa in Doqqi in 1966. It opened as the Museum of Modern Egyptian Art (*Mathaf al-Fann al-Misri al-Hadith*) in its current location on the grounds of the Opera House (*Dar al Opera*) in Zamalik in the late 1980s. |
| Further reading:  (Ministry of Culture - Sector of Fine Arts)  (Ministry of Education)  (Musée d'Art Moderne (Museum of Modern Art))  (Gharib)  (Salmawy and Razzaz) |