

## **Hassan Sharif the Experimentalist**

**By Khalid Al Rashid**

“Love is the greatest motivator to search for self-identity, and my works were not elegies for a dear one who never dies...that is art”.

From the (Mreeja Atelier), passing through the (Art Workshop in Dubai – U.A.E) Hassan Sharif meditates in his own garden the nature or identity of things and objects, using the (Cogito Cartesian) logic, that is “Je Pense, Je Suis” meaning “I think, I exist”. In spite of all vicissitudes – that sometimes confront creators – they were not the ones to search for reality in art only. But reality follows their footsteps as far as shadow. Last week Hassan Sharif entered (Alshamisi House) in order to talk to his (praisers) about his art career was followed as a forest’s hermit or the so called in classical oriental leg ends the (Upanishads) that is closely sitting. Hassan Sharif has not been just an artist but art’s nature in perpetual movement for exposure to new human experiences, the function of art also used to be linked to its ability to communicate this nature to the other, a self-driven ego or moderation and arrogance the two basic characteristics of human nature according to “David Hume” that is “belief” in the sense of the knowing self act that produces “creation” by means of guessing secret capabilities for the sake of surpassing the ego .

So, Hassan Sharif in his art experience starting with caricature drawings, then impressionistic or abstract expressionistic painting, has felt since the year 1982 that: “a good deal of paintings from everywhere have begun to lose their importance to him. I feel no visual pleasure anymore when I view them. I also felt a gap between the painting and traditional sculpture. One should search art in this particular gap. From that time on it seemed to me that art is neither painting nor sculpture but it is “something else” and so I tried to fill up this gap”.

“Gilles Deleuze” believes that the idea of every work is derived from an impression, and that all is separable is also likely to be distinguished and all that is distinguishable is different...so this is the self physics for Hassan Sharif.

During his period of studies in London (1979 – 1984) in the “Byam Shaw School of Arts” he has begun to give things their identity then he moves this identity one after another in an experimentalism of his own affecting stable or fixed objects and he transforms the (donor) into an (inventor), being definite...a mathematician to an extent he shapes or transforms himself into it making them (works of Hassan Sharif) and nobody else.

However, since the debute of impression these works do not exist apart from his consciousness and feeling for objects. After all he is brought back to the nature generating idea, he moves it by means of criticism so as to explain the idea of separation as well as the idea of distinction that both take form in his art – and in agreement concerning the initial impression that leads to the idea distinguishes and delimits it in a work, it is also capable of a good impression, to new idea and a new distinction – if I could say in harmony with experiences of other artists e.g. (Mohamad Ahmad Ibrahim, Hussein Sharif, Mohamad Kazim and Abdullah Al sa’edi) who do the same, but each of them has his own version of impressionism, the experimentalism of Hassan Sharif, for example, is not arbitrary in as much

it distances itself from giving morals to the identity of objects surrounding him. The non-natural ego sense that builds inside him, by imparting it its conditions to prosper in art and according to criticism terms and not to negate it, having to do with the stream of consciousness. Hume states “When an idea is painted, animal spirits flock together from all neighbouring traces and ruins and they awaken other thoughts or ideas which were connected to the first one”.

Hassan Sharif in his works does not resort to it, but only leaves it. This is simply because it is not capable of being reproduced, and if we take this possibility the (idea) is going to be very different. His works were extended in a way that accepts no repetition or reproduction. So, you find in them a sense of (impressionistic exertion) and not impressions remade. An idea has no limit. It is extending, liberated or free, and changeable to an extreme.

So, there is an existing object or thing from which another one is born to exist...and this is what the artist is doing in his sincere experimentalism. The place is initially not arranged though it is visible (geo-political) and time though changing it is not capable of reproduction. This is so obvious in the experience of Hassan Sharif who makes of his works a promotion of place as well as moving time at the same time. Subjectivity in his works comes to be an imagined one. His experimentalism is moving this imagination – generativism.

Hassan Sharif says: “each experience has led me to another one and I believe that all my works since 1982 and following caricature stage of 1970’s and until now is a single experience, but a continued one. My works might have similarities but they were not repeated. Each piece or work has its own identity, this is because it came to being in its own time. Each needle stitch when perforating paper differs from the other one because their time is different. Let us consider for example the movement of the needle of a sewing machine. It is a brief and a rapid movement. In this way it reduces time, an advantage lacking in the case of a painting brush. But instead of all this I take many months to prepare my works. The viewer might think that I am (spoiling time), Actually people get involved into repeated daily life work without thinking for a moment that they were sometimes-spoiling their time. I stitch, perforate papers or imagine no more. Yes I spent time in meditation; but isn’t life after all continued meditation”.

The one who follows the work of Hassan Sharif discovers the following: Dynamism with passing time- and changes.

(Impressionistic – sensual) for place by giving it the quality of development and distinction peculiar to it. So , his works come as an invitation for eternity or continuity. They do not lie outside memory continuity that resembles to (water) not likely to be brought back, it is another movement for past and present in order to formulate a (productive) or fruitful future also not capable of being preserved. In fact Hassan Sharif as any artist was (impressed) at the very beginning by a good deal of impressionist works particularly (Paul Cezanne) in his attempt to reduce nature and transform it into geometrical shapes. Then influenced by Surrealism represented by Giorgio De Chirico) and (Rene Magritte), also by Dadaists ideas and their daily life behaviour. Then by Futurist in its trials to integrate drama, drawing and painting sculpture, music, poetry, cinema as well as all sciences and arts, ancient an modern

especially regarding life (performance). It was a movement that debuted in the year 1919 in Russia, France and Italy. Then he was (impressed) by the ideas of Russian (Kasimir Malevich) regarding his (transcendentalism) or (supermatism) also by the Italian (Piero Manzoni) then comes the French (Marcel Duchamp) with his perfect and acute vision and his obstination towards art and life and here Hassan Sharif regards life to need possibly 100 years of art – in order to beget an artist of his talent.

Hassan Sharif says “I have a feeling during my work time that I have reached a (minimal) degree of attention; the work turns into an (automatic machine process), so, it is irregular in the sense that I might commit some mistakes during my work. But these mistakes were of benefit to work in the end. They differ from mistakes of (systemic art) which is mathematical and unconscious. As for my works, they were conscious and sensual, but they lack in (attention) that usually accompanies any work of art. This is how I see mistakes in my works to transform into beauty”.

At last Hassan Sharif in front of doors, iron, wooden, aluminium and paper ones and he says: “I hit my head at all these doors. Afterwards, I stopped in front of an open door without any tissue. A hand was extended to me. It said: Welcome and I entered. But when I left, I was carrying under my arm a lot of wisdom. However, I couldn’t tell others how much wisdom. I was carrying with me. I haven’t let anyone to drop or escape, it is because wisdom is a thing to be kept under arm. And to my great honour – and this all I want – that the Ministry of Culture and Information and under high guidance of his Highness Shaikh Abdallah Bin Zayed Al Nahyan my works will be exhibited with other U.A.E. artists of whose experiences I am proud, in Germany and in the Havana International Biennale. I should thank him for his great care for artists in the U.A.E. If an artist fails he has to throw himself into the deep sea or to commit suicide. The matter is very serious...and my faith in our national institutions is great.

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**Translated by Dr.Hassan El-Rayah**