



CLAY-WORKS - CONTINUITY OF COPTIC HERITAGE FROM ANCIENT EGYPTIAN TIMES

There are multiple examples of funerary pottery in ancient Egyptian tombs that date back as far as 4,500BC. The art and craft of pottery and ceramics was continued by Coptic craftsmen and adapted in various periods of Egypt's history: Hellenic, Roman, Persian, Islamic to modern days.

Some of the most common Coptic clay-works are lanterns and fragrant holy water containers. St. Mark's Coptic Museum has a clay lantern dating the 7th century and a St. Mina fragrant water container from St. Mina Monastery. Two unique contemporary terra cotta artefacts in the Museum's collection are a small hanging plate and figurine. The plate is of the bust of St. Mary and the

Divine Child. The plate was created at the Wissa Wassef Harania Centre in Cairo on the occasion of the apparition of St. Mary on the dome of Virgin Mary Church in Zeitoun, 1968. The figurine is of the "Holy Family in Egypt" in typically folkloric and Upper Egyptian clothing styles.



St. Mary and the Divine Child

This artefact is the work of Said Antoun, a well known craftsman in the last century from Garagos, Upper Egypt. Garagos has been one of the key centers of clay work since ancient Egyptian times.

To expand St. Mark Museum's clay work collection, a ceramic workshop in Cairo was commissioned to create a twelve piece Nativity scene. And inspired by an icon of Maguerite Nakhla's at St. Mary's Church in Zamalek, we also commissioned a figurine of St. Mary and St. Elizabeth embracing each other. Both of these works are in the same style as the one of the Holy Family figurine and will be exhibited for the first time at the upcoming Coptic Festival.

Exhibition of Coptic Artists in Canada

St. Mark's Coptic Museum has launched an ambitious and exciting new project to show-case twenty-first century Coptic artists in Canada. This exhibition will be the first of its kind in North America. The main purpose of this exhibition is to discover contemporary artworks created by Copts.

We will be working on this project in three phases:

Phase one will hold an open call for Coptic artists in selected areas of Southern Ontario.

Phase two will hold an open call for Coptic artists across Canada.

Phase three will hold an international open call.

The exhibitions will be held in a reputable gallery in Toronto.

The Phase 1 exhibition will be held in the summer of 2011.

Sandy Saad, a Museum volunteer, is assisting this summer with Phase one as part of the curatorial internship requirement towards her Masters degree from the Department of Fine Arts, U of T.

Coptic artists in Canada are invited to make submissions of their works. For more information, email: stmarkmuseum@gmail.com or call 416 319 0476



The Holy Family in Egypt

Third Annual Coptic Studies Symposium Marks Several “Firsts”

The Third Annual Coptic Studies Symposium at the University of Toronto (May 29, 2010) marked several “firsts”: after the incorporation of the Canadian Society for Coptic Studies (CSCS) last May, the First Annual General Meeting of Members was held just prior to the Symposium on 29 May 2010, at which time the first Board of Directors of the Society was elected; the first volume of the Journal of the Canadian Society for Coptic Studies (2010) was launched; and for the first time the Canadian Society for Coptic Studies sponsored a symposium together with the U of T’s Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations and St. Mark’s Coptic Museum.

The following CSCS members, elected to the first Board of Directors at the AGM will now have the responsibility of spearheading the Society’s goals:

- President: Dr. Ramez Boutros (Lecturer, NMC, University of Toronto)
- Vice President: Dr. Anne Moore (Associate Professor, Department of Religious Studies, University of Calgary)
- Treasurer: Mr. Ihab Khalil (Independent Researcher)
- Secretary: Dr. Helene Moussa (Volunteer Curator, St. Mark’s Coptic Museum)

Members-at-Large:

- Dr. Jitse Dijkstra (Associate Professor and Head of Classics, Ottawa University; and,
- Dr. Lyn Green (President, (Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations), Thursdays 10am-12pm Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities), and
- Dr. Amir Harak, (Professor Syriac Studies NMC, University of Toronto)

NOTE: The Journal of the Canadian Society for Coptic Studies (2010) may be purchased at the Museum.



Twenty-two children, youth and adults have been taking wall painting classes this summer. The product of their work is to beautify and create meaning to the hallway of the Sunday School. The theme of the wall paintings respond to the question: Jesus came on earth to teach us how to live, what can we do to give back? The instructors are Sandy and Marina Saad and Rana Mallik.

Stay tuned for the Grand Opening announcement!



The Honourable Jason Kenney, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism, visited St. Mark’s Coptic Museum on June 6, 2010.

Coptic Studies at the University of Toronto

Four Coptic Studies courses will be offered academic year 2010-2011.

The instructor is Dr. Ramez Boutros:

Fall Term:

1. Introduction to Coptic Studies (Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations), Thursdays 10am-12pm
2. Coptic Christianity (Regis College). Thursdays (TBA)

Winter Term:

1. Coptic Art and Archaeology (Department of Near and Middle Eastern Civilizations), Thursdays 10am-12pm
2. Christianity in Africa (University of St. Michael’s College) Thursdays (TBA)

**Don’t Miss !!
The 2010
Coptic Festival
September
11, 12 & 13!**