



INTERIORS

HIDDEN GRANDEUR

Photographs: George Fakhry Text: Nile El Wardani



Top: Maison Marquis, Chaumont & Languereau bronze clock (Monumentale garniture de cheminée).

Bottom: Grand hall ceiling richly gilded reflecting the royal style of that period.



Masterpiece oil painting (1888) by French Impressionist S. Pelouse which depicts four wild hogs deep in the forest. It hangs in the central grand hall and fills an entire wall.

W. x H. 257 cm x 308 cm



Rightfully named the “Jewel of the Pyramids” this stunning mansion hails from Egypt’s Belle Epoque. Built in 1928 by the famous Italian architect Adolfo Brandani, he was later commissioned by King Fouad in 1932 to design the Faculty of Engineering at Ain Shams University in Abassiya.

This masterpiece is situated in the heart of Giza, built at a time when Al Haram Street was surrounded by fields of green leading to the greatest wonders of the world, the Giza Pyramids. The palace is beautifully positioned on a generous plot of approximately 13,000 square meters. The palace, originally owned by Ismail Sedki Pasha the former Prime Minister of Egypt in the 1930s was sold to Naim Amr Pasha in 1948. His family and inheritors inhabited the palace until 1965 when it was sold to General Salah El Mogi and his wife Bahra Qadry. Together they refurbished and furnished the palace piece by piece. Every corner of the palace



A unique hand painted antique Bechstein baby grand piano that was purchased from Papasian & Co, who were the sole agent in Egypt.





The Orientalist painting,
Albert Pesnelle, 1886
290 cm x 239 cm

is filled with memories and treasures cherished by the family. For example, Madame Qadry personally stitched many of the petit point tapestries that adorn the gilded chairs.

General El Mogi known to have played a major role in the 1956 Suez Canal War, passed away the 23rd of September 2002, just days before his 85th birthday. His wife Bahra Qadry and their only son Youssef Salah El Mogi along with his wife Nahed Sabry and their three children continue to live in the grand palace. The couple were married in the palace in 1985.

General El Mogi and Madam Qadry personally chose each treasure that filled their luxurious home. They attended antique auctions often in Alexandria and abroad which became the couple's hobby. Together they recreated the glory of Egypt's past. There were only three pieces which they acquired with the palace in 1965. These include a masterpiece oil painting (1888) by French Impressionist S. Pelouse which depicts four wild hogs deep in the forest. It hangs in the central grand hall and fills an entire wall. Another oil painting by Frenchman Albert Pesnelle (1886) depicts an oriental scene and hangs in the grand salon nearby the remarkable Venetian chandelier that was hung by steel beams embedded in the ceiling to hold the sheer weight of the vessel.

The palace is composed of three floors, each approximately 700 square meters, adding up to an impressive 2000 square meters of indoor living space. The palace is set back with a large circular driveway used in former days to welcome the elite of Egypt, dignitaries and international guests. A majestic entrance leads to a central salon measuring approximately 8x12 meters with high ceilings lavishly adorned and finely gilded in gold leaf. A truly grand



salon, a magnificent dining hall, a stellar art deco bar with all the trimmings and a smaller, yet stunningly beautiful, petit salon fill the floor. The ceilings measuring five meters are richly gilded and the ornamentation reflects the superb royal taste of the period.

A fine oak study room and an art deco smoking room overlook the front and side gardens and complete the majestic ambiance. During cold winter mornings, residents and guests can enjoy the warmth and comfort of the Egyptian sun in the simple but equally elegant jardin d'hiver. In the hot summer months, one can indulge himself in the natural breezes of the northern terrace.

The living quarters of the palace are located on the second floor. Five luxurious suites with three attached bathrooms surround a central magnificent living room measuring 8x10 meters. Three very large terraces, two exclusive to the suites and a third which serves the remaining suites wrap around the floor giving a far-reaching view of the vast gardens filled with mature mango, guava and orange trees.

An electric elevator comfortably transports four persons from the living quarters to the elegant reception floor and to the lower ground floor reserved mainly for maintenance and service staff. A king size kitchen, sleeping quarters for staff and an extremely generous storage area fill half the floor, while there is ample room for a game room, gym and/or recreation area. The kitchen itself is connected to the dining hall on the first floor by a marble staircase as well as a dumb waiter (food elevator).

The palace is also properly equipped with all the necessary amenities of today's modern living style. A chic swimming pool of elegant design with accompanying recreation rooms where you may enjoy the view of the gardens or a refreshing massage in the Jacuzzi which seats four persons. An official full-size parquet floored squash court and clay tennis court complement the sports facilities. Finally, the property includes a four car garage together with sleeping quarters for up to three drivers.

The "Jewel of the Pyramids" reminds us all of Egypt's Belle Epoque. While its residents live a very modern life style today. Some remnants of Egypt's days of glory must be maintained and protected. This is one that must not be forgotten.Ω

Top Right: Venetian chandelier that was hung by steel beams embedded in the ceiling to hold the sheer weight of the vessel, one of the few things that were acquired with the palace in 1965.

Right: This vitrine was custom made for the owner almost 30 years ago.

