



STUDIO

GIVING BACK

Azza Fahmy Design Studio

Photographs: Omneya Oun Text: Nile El Wardani



Egypt's ancient Pharaonic artisans are known to school children in every country in the world. However, few living Egyptian artisans are known. Jewelry designer Azza Fahmy is an exception to the rule. Fahmy enjoys world recognition and unprecedented success internationally. Now she is giving back - to her love - Egypt.

She has worked with the government on the foundation of a public jewelry training school to teach middle and high school graduates jewelry design and making; giving young talents the potential and the tools to make a better living while helping strengthen the local skills.

“For years I’ve had a vision and passion for offering aspiring designers, jewelry enthusiasts and artists a professional jewelry design education. So two years ago, I started Nubre; an initiative offering several jewelry workshop in Aswan.” The project, funded by the Delegation of the European Union in Egypt, brought in guest teachers from prestigious design schools in Europe.

Fahmy saw her students flourish under Nubre which inspired her to establish Azza Fahmy Design Studio (AFDS), the first contemporary design school in the MENA region, in collaboration with Alchimia Contemporary Jewelry School in Florence, Italy. Collaborating with Alchimia, one of the best jewelry design schools in Europe, AFDS brings visiting artists and instructors to Egypt to create a rich exchange in culture and design between Egyptian, regional and international students.

AFDS operates and teaches under the ancient Ottoman tradition. The merit of this system is to pass on the jewelry making craft from generation to generation, ensuring that the young craftspeople learn at the hands of the masters. Moreover, it preserves the magic of the craft and its authenticity.



AFDS offers students an opportunity to become contemporary designers, setting a standard of progressive visual culture, education, and handwork in the region.

The AFDS curriculum offers a three-year program of intensive education including an exchange semester in Florence. As students master skills, techniques and create their own designs they will be qualified enough to open their own design houses in the future.

Azza Fahmy believes that now is the time to focus on youth education in this critical period of Egypt's growth. Creative industries are proving to be a catalyst in boosting the Egyptian economy. Building on Egypt's cultural heritage and arts, AFDS is located in Al Fustat, the leading contemporary culture center of Cairo. Ω

"To immortalize heritage; some write books, others take photos, and I design jewelry." Azza Fahmy

Upper: Azza Fahmy hands on.

Right: Shaymaa Mohamed El Zayat's creation.

Bottom Right: Hally Yahya's rings.

