

AUC Supports Celebration of the Life and Art of Artist Ahmed Basiony

Shady El Noshokaty, a visual artist and assistant professor at AUC's Performing and Visual Arts Department is organizing an installation by the late avant-garde artist, Ahmed Basiony, who was killed by snipers on January 28 during Egypt's Friday of Wrath protest in Tahrir Square. The installation event will take place on June 1 at the Egyptian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale.

Basiony was one of Egypt's most important contemporary artists. When his life ended at 32 years of age, Basiony immediately became an emblem of inspiration for Egyptians determined to see their nation freed from repression. A man who died for his country; an artist honored for his courage and his love, Basiony generated a following amongst his



friends, colleagues, and students who were proud to learn from his life, and eager to give to the cause he stood for on that fateful day.

In the year prior to the uprisings, Basiony had worked on a project titled “30 Days of Running in Place,” during which the artist wore a sensor-fused plastic suit he designed that measured how much he perspired and how many steps he took while jogging for an hour daily over the course of thirty days. The data was wirelessly transferred on a large screen that displayed a grid of colors that changed according to the consumption of energy and the output of perspiration. The project was intended to represent how thirty years under Mubarak regime produced no gains, only wasted energy. His work was among the first of a new generation of young Egyptian artists who use their work to articulate the political, economic and social conditions that Egyptian society endured under an oppressive government.

“There is no better opportunity than to display his last project Thirty Days Running in Place at the greatest artistic event of the year, the Venice Biennial,” said El Noshokaty, Basiony’s longtime friend and curator of the exhibition. “Ahmed Basiony struggled every moment of his life to determine a life in this country with dignity endures in our hearts and minds despite being robbed of it all,” he continued.

The Venice Biennale, where the exhibition will be shown, has been one of the most prestigious cultural institutions in the world since the first International Art Exhibition was organized in 1895. It has been at the forefront in the research and promotion of new artistic trends. The Biennale today has an attendance today of over 370,000 visitors.

The AUC Press will publish the biography of Ahmed Basiony in the fall of 2012, complementing its suite of publications documenting aspects of Egypt's revolution and the Arab Spring. The book will detail Basiony's conceptual process, address his relation to the emergence of interactive multimedia art and open source global movements across art and cultures, and feature articles written by the most important writers and art critics in Egypt and in the Middle East.

For more information about the Biennale and forthcoming book, contact the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at husevents@aucegypt.edu or call +20.2.2615.1993