

HIND ROSTOM

The World's Greatest Actress
Actress (A Synopsis)

Maximilien de Lafayette



To Lady
Hind Ransom
The Greatest
Actress in
The world.

Amillia D.
New York, March 20, 1911

THE HISTORY OF
THE WORLD'S GREATEST ACTRESS



May

مستند رستم
تاریخچه سینما ایران



Hind Rostom: The Greatest Actress of all Time (Synopsis)

Hind Rostom
The World's Greatest Actress
(A Synopsis)

Maximilien de Lafayette

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Farouk Ubaysi

Who has contributed so much to this book, especially those wonderful photos and for sharing with us his insight and stories about the great Hind Rostom

Passant Hassen Reda

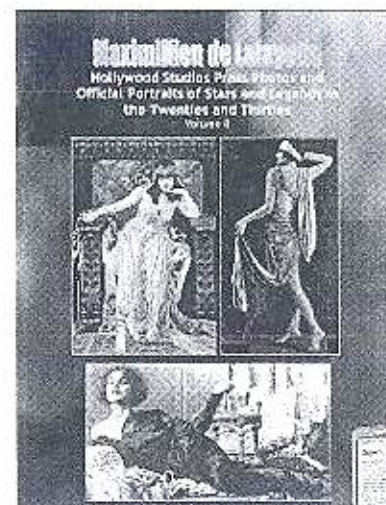
Who facilitated our contact with her mother, Lady Hind



Hind Rostom: *"My
life is not for
sale!"*

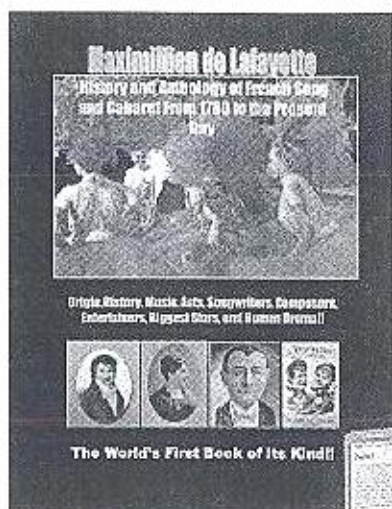
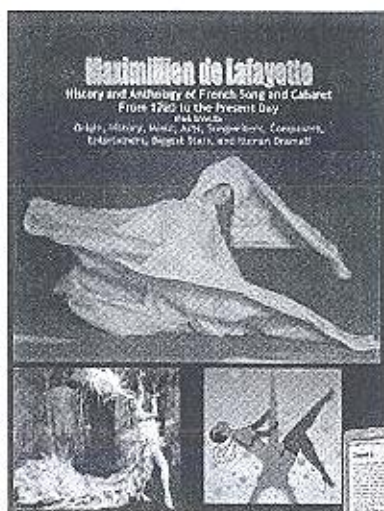
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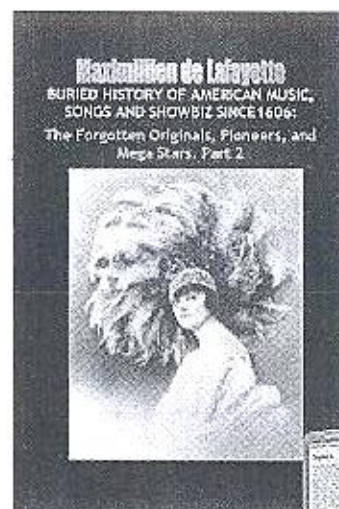
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The world's first book of its kind. Comprehensive and illustrated history and story of the French music, song, cabaret, composers, singers, entertainers, dancers, songwriters, producers from 1760 to the present day. It contains information, and photos (Rare, vintage) not readily available in books written in English. A massive and fun set of 3 volumes, illustrating all the aspects of the French showbiz-cabaret-cafes, the drama, ups and downs, and the lives of the most colorful and provocative stars, celebrities, and legends of the era.



Buried History of American Music, Songs and Showbiz Since 1606: The Forgotten Originals, Pioneers, and Mega Stars. 2 Volumes (America's Musical Heritage and Treasures)

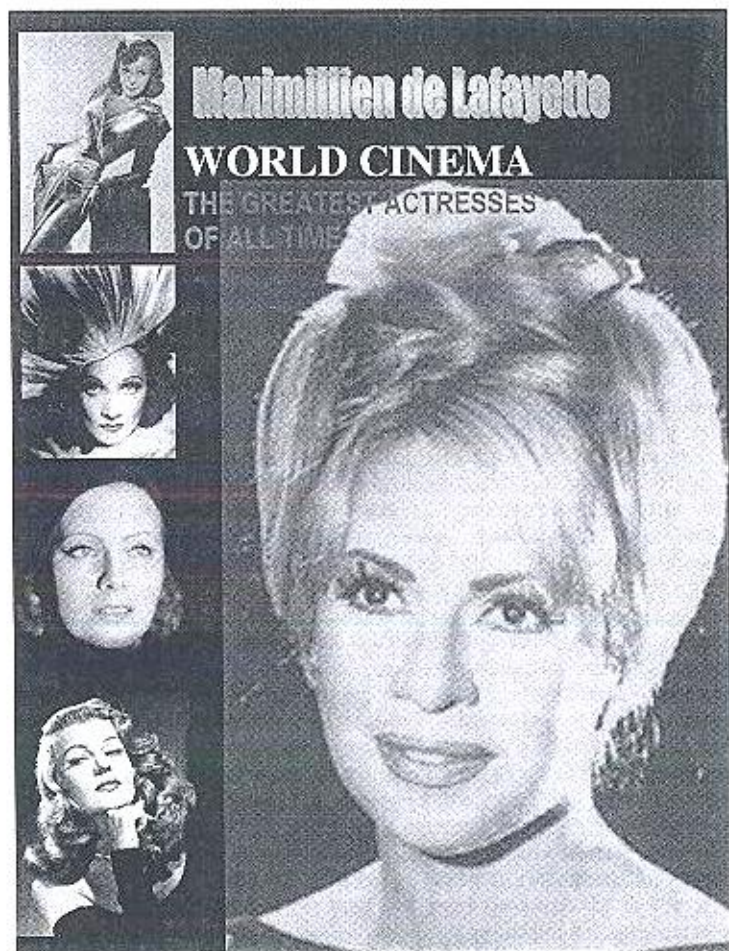
A must have book.

The ultimate reference to America's music treasures, and greatest artists of all time, who are totally forgotten now! Showbiz is an unmerciful and ungrateful business. How easy and how fast we forget the yesteryears biggest and greatest names, pioneers and legends of entertainment showbiz, theater, cinema and music. Well, this magnificent book is a tribute to those fabulous artists, who once upon a time, were the most famous people in the world, and now, they are totally forgotten.

Finally, you will revisit and rediscover them here in this book that took Maximilien de Lafayette years to write and present it with all the glamour, fame, beauty, and human drama that surrounded the lives and times of those forgotten stars. Thousands of names and hundreds upon hundreds of photos (Rare, vintage, never published before) are lavishly presented in this work. Some of those stars wrote the world most famous tunes, yet, they died, penniless, in absolute poverty and buried in obscurity and drama, because they did not know how to protect their interests. This is a massive work, unparalleled in its depth, research, and wealth of information. It takes us back to the dawn of showbiz, music and songs of America, from the very beginning, from 1606 to the present day. All the biggest names, tunes, shows and productions for almost 300 years of showbiz!

Check out this Series:
World Cinema, The Greatest Actresses of All Time

Lady Hind Rostom appeared on the cover of 6 books. You can purchase the Mega Book Edition, which contains 5 volumes, and/or purchase 5 separate volumes.



Cover of the Mega Book Edition

The 5 Volume Series



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Introduction

This is not the biography of Lady Hind Rostom; it is simply a modest synopsis of chosen events, important blurbs, and what international stars have said about her throughout the years.

This is a first attempt to shed some lights on the illustrious career of the Queen of the Egyptian cinema.

In a forthcoming book, I will be writing an in-depth study and critiques of her films, and the impact she had upon the Egyptian silver screen, and Egyptian stars and starlets.

I followed up the career of Lady Hind Rostom for approximately fifty years. I was deeply impressed by the wide range of styles, genres and roles she played; no other Egyptian actress has ever accomplished this.

On the international level, yes, Bette Davis, Simone Signoret and Ida Lupino did. Thus, this extraordinary talent transmutes Lady Rostom into an international star and an unmatched diva of the golden years of cinema, both Egyptian and foreign.

*** **

The Looks and Ethnic Identity in Art/Cinema: The Aristocratic/Foreign Looks of Lady Hind Rostom.

Those who – and especially Egyptian actresses – felt threatened by her talent and ascension to fame and popularity claimed that Hind Rostom looks too foreign, not Egyptian enough to either be

recognized an authentic Egyptian actress, or qualified to project on the screen the core, fabric and essence of Egyptian themes and every daily life.

They based their claim upon her European physical appearance. At the very beginning of her career, and a few days before she took her first screen test, directors and producers could not believe that she could read Arabic; they were fully convinced that she was European, and hesitated to give her a chance. One of them even asked her to read two lines from an Egyptian newspaper, to make sure that indeed she could read Arabic!

Her competitors held this against her, but of course they failed, and Lady Hind Rostom took the Arab world by storm. Having a European flair could be a plus for a Middle Eastern artist, and those who claim that an Egyptian artist should look 100% Egyptian, and a Syrian painter should only paint Syrian landscapes and themes, and a Lebanese singer should only sing Majals and Ataaba and songs from the remote Lebanese villages are deadly wrong! For art and talents have no looks, and no ethnicity. Art is universal, and belongs to nations of the world and to people from all walks of life. It is not limited by regional barriers.

As a matter of fact, a deeply rooted and shaped artistic ethnicity could kill the career of an artist, or at least limit his/her audience and the sphere of global success.

The Rahbani and Fairouz became well-known world-wide (To a certain degree), because their music transcended regional and geographical borders.

Marie Ataya, a superb Lebanese singer with a magnificent voice did not make it on an international scale, because she was too Lebanese in her singing. Mohammad Abdel Mottaleb did not reach universal fame, because he was too Egyptian.

Mohammad Abdel Wahab and Farid Al Atrash did attain world fame because their music was both Egyptian and international.

At one time, and in order to discredit Abdel Wahab, his foes claimed that he stole his best compositions and Alhaan (Songs, Compositions) from Bach, Beethoven and Chopin, especially in his introductions and overtures. And those who hated the guts of Farid Al Atrash claimed that Farid stole his best work and particularly his Oud Takasim from Spanish composers.

Yes, at one time in the history of Egyptian cinema and arts, foreign culture and appearance and their ramifications/influence

on Arab artists were considered an intrusion, and a distortion of the national art.

Veteran of the early days of Egyptian cinema, Bishara Wakeem did not reach a global fame, despite his loveable and fabulous performances, because he was too Lebanese in a "too Egyptian" pictures. He is remembered by few in a very limited area, and frozen time and space.

Ironically, the "very much" Italian Sophia Loren made it big time in Hollywood. The "very much" European Hedy Lamarr, Marlene Dietrich and Greta Garbo took Hollywood and the universe by storm. This leads me to a very striking and enlightening event that happened in early seventies in Beirut, while I was asked occasionally to sit on the panel of Arab and Lebanese beauty pageants, and participate in the election of beauty queens in the Middle East.



Photo: Georgina Rizk was crowned Miss Universe Pageant in Miami Beach, Florida, in 1971. She did not look "too Lebanese"! So what?

My friend Raymond Loire, then, president of the Committee of Miss Lebanon (Miss Liban) and a member of the Committee of Election of Miss Lebanon, Mr. Basem El Jiser (Noted celebrity

From Mousaitbe, Beirut) entered into a heated debate over the ethnic looks of Miss Georgina Rizk who was one of the 37 contestants in the Lebanese Beauty Pageant.

I was there with Raymond, at the time they were yelling at each other. Raymond told Mr. El Jiser, "We are not going to elect Georgina Rizk, because she does not look typical Lebanese, and you have to remember that our beauty queen is going to represent Lebanon at the Miss Universe event. Georgina looks foreigner, I don't know, French, Swedish...she is not the right choice..."

Mr. El Jiser went ballistic and replied, "I don't give a damn Raymond, Swedish or German is bullshit, we are going to elect

her, and remember what I am going to tell you now, Raymond, she will win Miss Universe because she has an international sex appeal."

And as you know the rest is history.

Miss Georgina Rizk was elected Miss Universe in 1971 because of her international (Non-Ethnic) flair and beauty.

Years later, at the Cosmos (His favorite hangout), Raymond admitted to me that he was wrong, and yes, Georgina was the perfect choice.

The very same thing applies to Lady Hind Rostom; yes, she is too pretty, yes, she is too aristocratic; yes, she looks too European, and yes, her father was a Turk; and yes, she studied in a French Catholic school in Alexandria and was influenced by European culture, yes...yes...yes...but her refined looks and European-international flair blended with an enormous talent created the First Queen of the Egyptian Cinema.

So, Barlinti Abdel Hamid was wrong when she said, "Hind is not an authentic Egyptian actress, she looks Agnabiya" (Foreigner)." Mariam Fakher-Eddin and Nadia Lutfi names were once upon a time whispered in Europe and the United States, because of their looks (Non-Arab Physiognomy).



Photo: Marina Vlady, a major French actress of a Russian origin.

The French did not say, Vlady looks too much Russian!

I do not mean any offense to Arab and Egyptian nationals; Egyptian looking actresses are fabulous, but it does not hurt to have a sophisticated European character and flair added to your ethnic looks.

In a couple of polls/surveys in Europe and the United States, Lady Hind Rostom was selected as one of the 10 most beautiful women in the world, side-by-side Ava Gardner, Marina

Vlady, Greta Garbo, Hedy Lamarr and Rita Hayworth. No! Marilyn Monroe was not chosen.



Hind Rostom's Secret?

What is her secret?

There is no secret! You see what you get and you get what you see. Sheer elegance, class and aristocracy! And blend it with presence, and intoxicating talent, and you get Hind Rostom.

Most certainly talent is the greatest asset of an actress/actor, but it comes in the second phase. Once I asked Frank Sinatra, "In one line, what is the secret of success in the entertainment industry?" He replied "99% luck." And I asked him again, "What about talent?" He replied, "It comes later".

I was not astonished but pensive, and Frank rushed to add, "Don't you get it kid? Looks, presence is all what it takes to be lucky."

I got it.

Just pause for a second and think about these two words:

a-Looks

b-Presence

Very true, without looks, you go no where.

An actor/actress got to have looks to shine like a star.

And presence is what makes the looks and talent emerge and stay where it should stay. Hind Rostom had the looks, the presence, the talent, and of course luck.

Louis B. Mayer once said to a Hollywood's star, "Don't worry, just sit there and look pretty, and let the camera do its trick." So then, beauty is paramount. Most definitely, but success will fade away if it is solely based upon beauty. You got to have that Hind Rostom "un je ne sais quoi" to stay in business!

How important were the looks in the golden age of the Egyptian cinema?

Very important.

Cinema's insiders know very well that the elegant and classy beauty of an actress expand the horizon and perimeter of the roles and characters she could play, and/or be offered to her by a director or a producer.

Hollywood's chronicles and history show that this happened all the time in the American cinema, and the perfect examples were Hedy Lamarr, Gene Tierny, Grace Kelly, Audrey Hepburn, Ava Gardner, and Jane Russell.

In Egypt, Hind Rostom, took the lion's share.

*** **

Versatility, Diversity and Improvisation

I don't think Faten Hamama, Chadia, Barlinti Abdel Hamid, Samia Gamal, Mariam Fakher Eddin, Shwikar or Souad Hosni could have played Chafika Al Kobtia...not even Nour El Houda, Na'ima Akef, Tahyia Karioka or Lubna Abdel Aziz.

Lady Hind Rostom was perfect for the role; for she could play any role, ranging from a nun to a femme fatale. Her versatility and improvisations are limitless and endless.

In addition, Lady Hind Rostom's magical face could project any expression, and emanate all sorts of feelings and inner reactions. Henri Langlois once said, "Hind Rostom's face is richer and larger than the screen itself...and the woman is larger than life, at least in her films."



Hind Rostom with Imaad Hamdi.

Just look at her face, aristocratic, elegant, classy. Great looks!
This what Sinatra was talking about!

A few years after his phenomenal success, Sean Connery rejected all the forthcoming James Bond roles/films because he did not want to be "enslaved" by a cliché. He said, he was fed up with one type of roles; he wanted to do something else. He felt very limited playing and playing again the same role.

Al Pacino said the very same thing. And in this context, Lady Hind Rostom said, "I was never typecast into playing one role. I've played every type of woman." And she did.

Grosso modo, Lady Hind Rostom is the true and only First Lady of the Egyptian cinema, and without any doubt, the universe's greatest actress.

Orson Welles once said, "Consistency is good in food, not in art, for it kills it...and what is consistency? Simply mediocrity." He meant, artists should always come up with something new, original and unexpected, that's the only way to nourish creativity and originality. Lady Hind Rostom knew that very well.

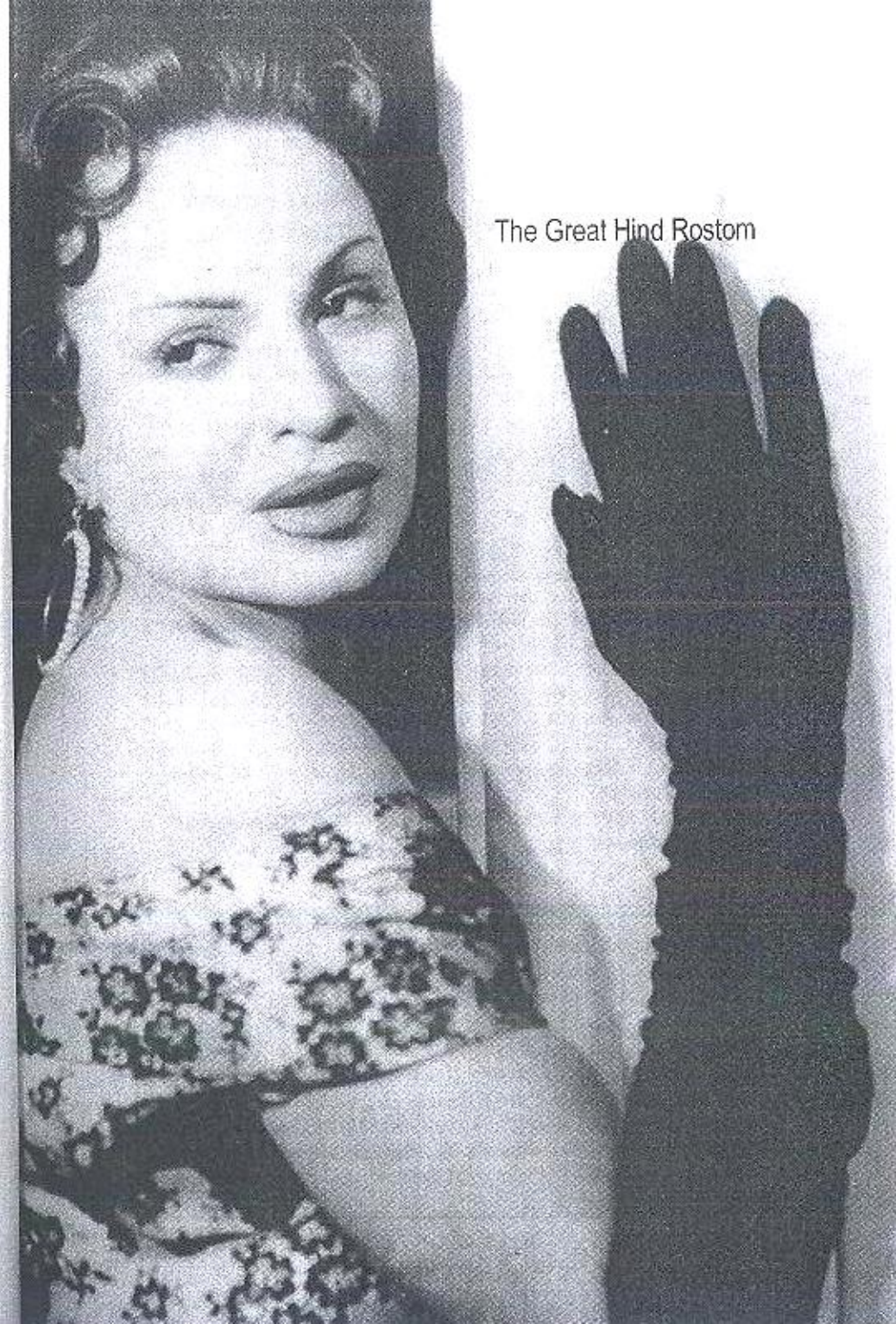
And by the way, Welles was a great fan of Lady Hind Rostom. And the list of her admirers include Simone Signoret, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr., Jocelyne Jocya, Ismail Yassin, Farid Al Atrash, Nour El Houda, Henri Langlois, Marcello Mastroianni, you name it...

I hope you will enjoy reading this book, and you are welcome to write to me at dclafayette6@aol.com if you have any pertinent information, news and stories about Lady Hind Rostom, that I could use in my new book on her career and accomplishments.

Maximilien de Lafayette
New York, Berlin, 2011.

*** **

The Great Hind Rostom





Hind Rostom, the
Greatest Actress of
all time!!

**Hind Rostom is
magic in motion! A
pulverizing talent, a
stunning beauty, and
an artistic presence
that transcends time,
space and
immortality!**

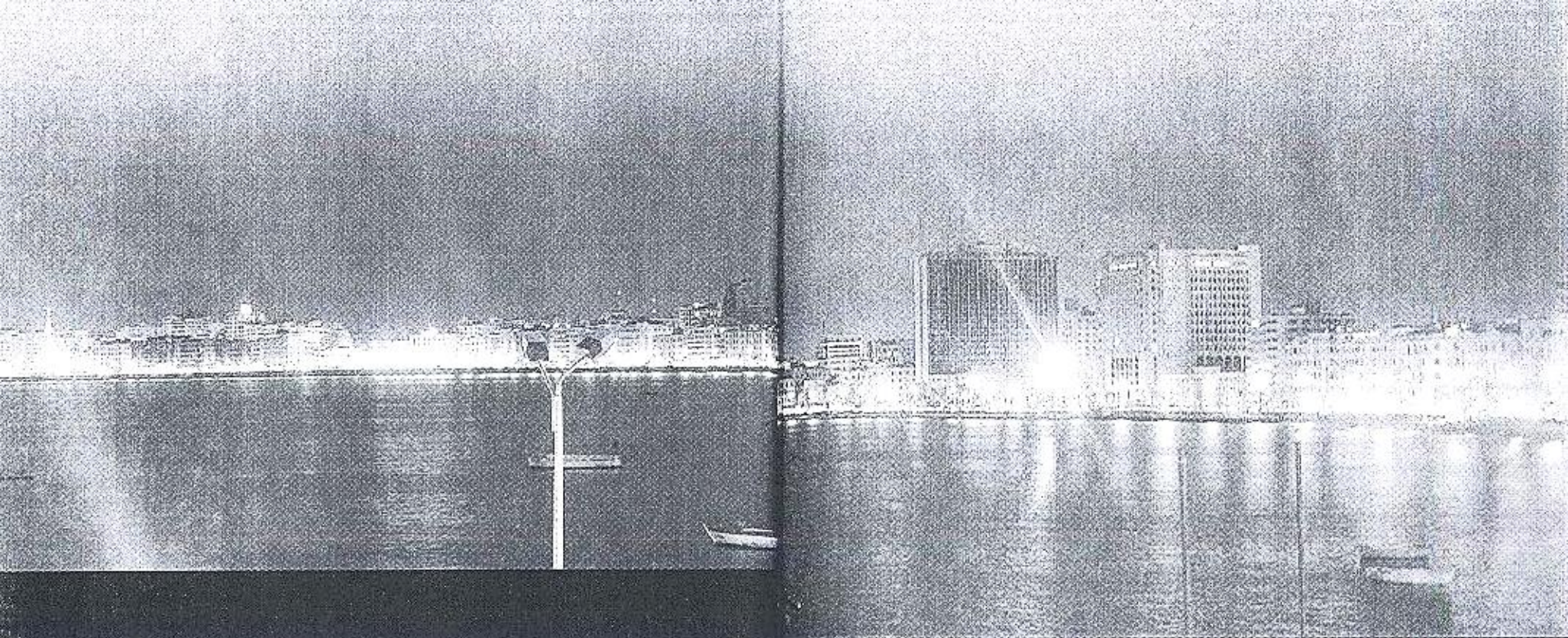
I have been following the career of this astonishing star for 50 years. Hind Rostom was born Hind Hussein Morad, in Moharam Bek, Alexandria, in Egypt on November 12, 1931. She was discovered by Hassan Al Imam, a famous Egyptian director, who in 1952, gave her the lead in "Al-Gassad" (The Body). She made her debut in the film "Azhaar wa Ashwak" opposite Yehia Shahin. She was married twice; her first husband was Hassan Reda, a movie director, and the father of her only daughter Pessant. Her second husband was the late Dr. Mohammad Fayyad, a noted physician in Egypt.

No star in the Eastern and Western hemispheres, and in the motion pictures' history can rival the talent, the presence, the class, the style, and the mesmerizing magic of Lady Hind Rostom, the Queen of the Egyptian and Arab cinema! Hind Rostom is a living legend, a gem, whose artistic talent, and the warmth of her heart are larger than the world we live in. She excelled in comedy, drama, melodrama, and brought to the silver screen an extra dimension of unmatched creativity and improvisation. She totally absorbed the roles she played, and transmuted herself into an absolute realism that echoes the most miniscule and fragile detail of the persona and the character she portrayed on the screen.

Her versatility is beyond belief; it is immeasurable. Whether she was playing a nun, a woman of the night, a teaser, a seductress or a femme fatale, Hind Rostom conveyed the true message of the character she projected on the screen.

No special effects, no tricks of the camera, no sophisticated lighting techniques, and no cinematographic camouflage were ever used to bring to life, her breathtaking talent. Back then, in the golden age of the Egyptian cinema, only the talent of the artist and the creative visions of the director were the backbone of the picture; this, made it much harder on the actor/actress to be convincing and authentic. And convincing and authentic Hind Rostom was.





Alexandria, the glittering hometown of Lady Hind Rostom...and of course, she shined brighter than all the lights of Alexandria.



There is no doubt in my mind, if the film "Chafika Al Koubtia" (Chafika the Copt Girl), in which Hind Rostom took the lead, was produced in the United States, and Hind was an American actress, Hind would have won an OSCAR for best actress.

It is pity, that she relinquished her career in 1980, when she was on the top of the world.

Why? Because she wanted her public and adoring fans to remember her at her best.

Numerous producers and directors tried in vain to convince her to return to the screen; Hind Rostom rejected all their offers.

And her rejection brought sorrow to my heart.

The Arab audience called her the ultimate seductress, the divine queen of seduction.

The French nicknamed her "La Divine Fatale" (The Fatal Divine). The Hollywood Reporter called her the 'Sarah Bernhardt of Egypt'. And many viewed her as the Marilyn Monroe of the Arab cinema. But there is a paramount difference between Hind Rostom the Ultimate Sex Symbol of the Egyptian cinema, and her Hollywood and European counterparts.

While Monroe, Hedy Lamarr and Brigitte Bardot appeared naked in several scenes, and cashed on their sexual aura, Hind Rostom rejected nudity. She never appeared naked or half naked in any of her scenes. She explained that art is in the performance not in the display of flesh, and talent should emerge from within, from your heart and mind, and not from your skin. Well said, my lady!

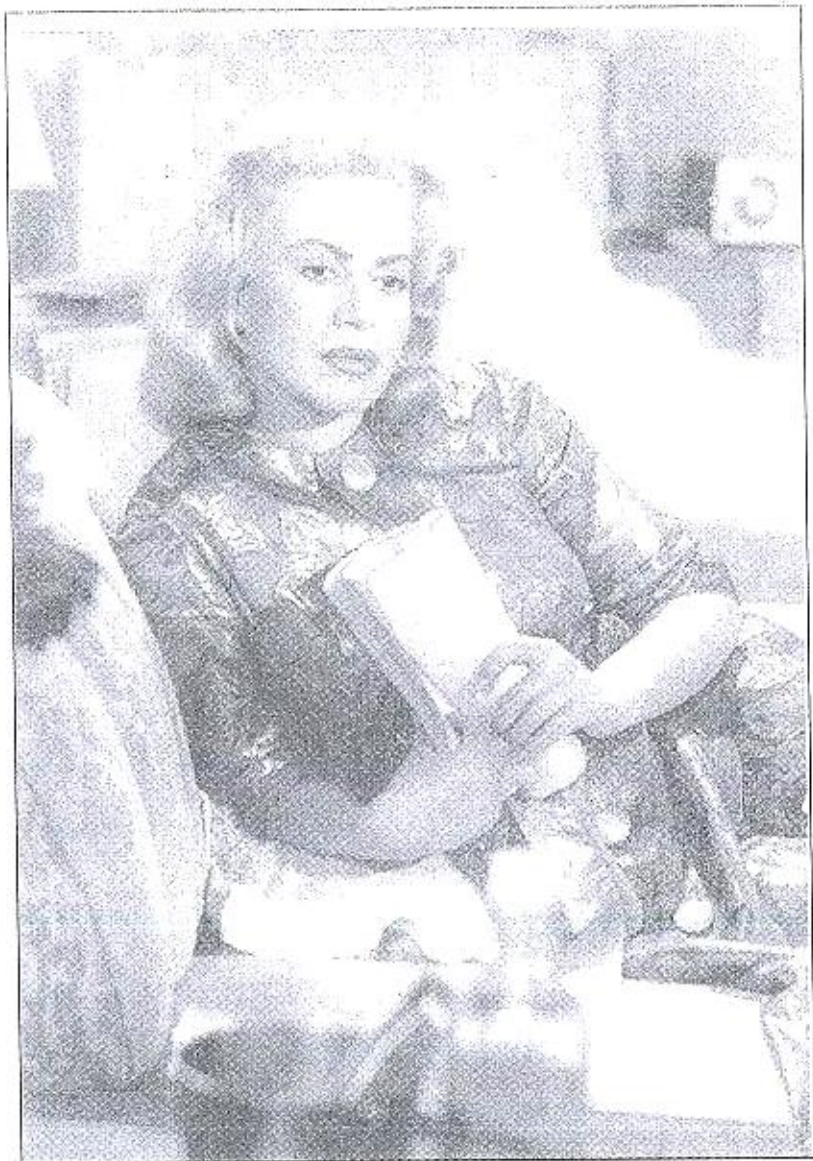
This is why, you are the greatest! There is no question, Hind Rostom was a sensual, sensuous and erotic ball of fire on the big screen; her eyes, her sexy facial expressions, the way she walks and transmits that risqué message with a twist from her body's contour, even her voice, how she opens her mouth and freezes her burning lips before your hungry eyes, everything about her was arousing and exciting, however, she remained untouched, untouchable, and unstained! And that's was part of her magic, perhaps her technique and inimitable flair.

She played the woman of the night, the gold digger, the teaser, the femme fatale par excellence, the challenger, you name it, but Lady Hind Rostom throughout this chain of machiavellic metamorphosis remained adorable and so close to the heart of the audience. Many Egyptian actresses tried to immitate her, but they failed, because they did not have Hind Rostom's "un je ne said quoi".

Simply put, the MAGIC! And perhaps more, the CLASS she had.



*** **





The stunning Hind Rostom with superstar Farid Al Atrash.

Hind: My life is not for sale!

Hind Rostom is real, honest, humble, and truthful; fame, glittering lights, red carpet, money and power meant nothing to her, for in December 2002, she turned down an offer of one million Egyptian pounds for her biography; an Egyptian satellite channel asked her to portray her life in a drama series. Hind Rostom refused, simply because she did not want to sell her life as a form of entertainment. And being a very private person, she told the producers that her life is nobody's business. Nowadays, how many Hollywood's celebrities would turn down such an offer? None!



Hind Rostom is in her own league, a very special and rare one...way above the banality, shallowness and greed of Hollywood, Broadway and Vegas big shots!

And it was reported that "The renowned Egyptian actress made a statement when she turned down belly dancer Fifi Abdo's invitation to attend a party held at Hind Rostoms' honour."

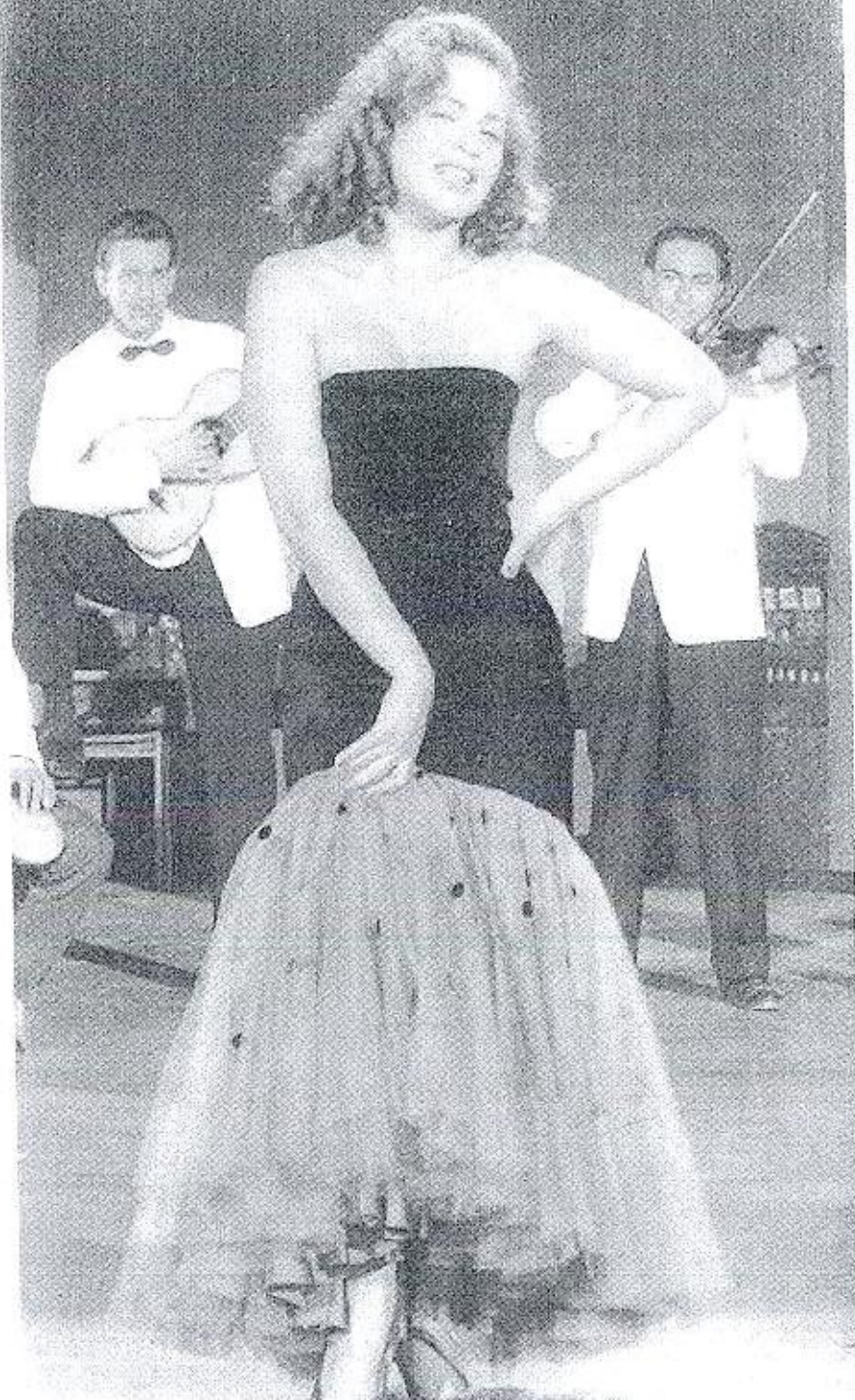
Spectacular Success and an Illustrious Career

Her performance in the 1955 film "Banat el lail" "Women of the Night" catapulted her career, and transformed her into a mega star overnight. There is no weakness in her performance, and a strong presence was her major asset. Of course, her stunning looks, and refined mannerism opened doors, but it was the talent in an astonishing avalanche of versatility and improvisation that made her a superstar and a legend.

Among her most memorable pictures are:

- Chafika Al Coptia, 1963 (A masterpiece)
- Bab El Hadid or Cairo Station with Farid Shawki, 1958
- Ibn Hamidu, 1957
- Sira' fi al-Nil (Duel in the Nile), opposite Omar Sharif and Rushdy Abaza, 1959
- La Anam (I do not Sleep, or Sleepless), opposite Omar Sharif, Faten Hamama (Ex-wife of Sharif), and Rushdi Abaza, 1958

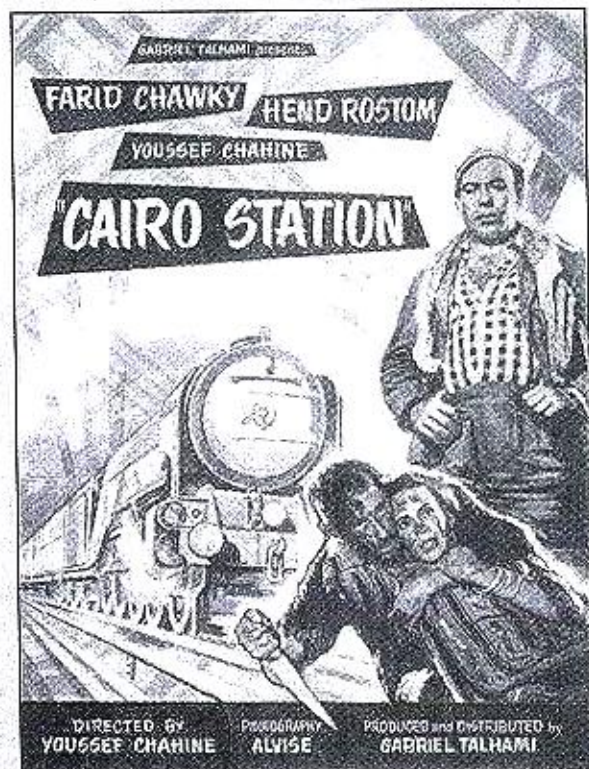
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Hind Rostom: *"Loyalty is essential in my life...and I learned it from my dogs...And one of the most important virtues is forgiveness..."*



Filmography



Filmography

- El-Gaban we el-houb , 1975
- Aatham tefl fel alam, 1975
- Ana we benty wa el-houb, 1974
- Wonders of Time, 1974
- Wokr al-ashrar, 1972
- Madrasatee al-hisnaa, 1971
- The second groom, 1967
- Exit from paradise, 1967
- The Bachelor Husband, 1966
- Three Robbers, 1966
- The Pledge, 1966
- The Man and His Women, 1966
- Immortal Love, 1965
- Adam's Apple, 1966
- The Nun, 1965
- Nightmares, 1965
- A Husband's confession, 1965
- A Woman on the Outside, 1964
- Chafika the Copt Girl, 1963
- A Pearl Among Women, 1962
- Tomorrow Will Be Another Day, 1962
- The Way of Heroes, 1961
- The Agony of Love, 1961
- The Mature Teenager, 1961
- Blood on the Nile, 1961
- Man without a Heart, 1960
- Men in the Storm, 1960
- Between Heaven and Earth, 1960
- Crime of Love, 1959
- The Big Brother, 1959
- The Last Love, 1959
- The Inn of Surprises, 1959
- I Won't Forget You, 1959
- Awatef, 1959
- Unspoken Love, 1959
- A Kiss in the Night, 1959



- Duel on the Nile, 1959
- Ismail Yassine in the Mental Hospital, 1958
- The Iron Gate, 1958
- Struggle for Life, 1958
- A Gift from Heaven, 1958
- Betrayal of Women, 1958
- The Midnight Driver, 1958
- Touha, 1957
- No Tomorrow, 1958
- Hamidu's Son, 1957
- The Great Love, 1957
- You are my lover, 1957
- A Wife's Confession, 1956
- The Flesh, 1955
- Women of the Night, 1955
- The Cheat, 1957
- Class Distinctions, 1954
- The Unjust Angel, 1954
- Love in the Shadows, 1953
- The Road to Happiness, 1953
- Guard Your Tongue, 1953
- The Victory of Islam, 1952
- Some Are Bright, 1950
- Father Amine, 1950
- Gawaher (Gems), 1949
- According to One's Means, 1949
- The Father, 1947
- The Greatest Sacrifice, 1947
- Flowers and Thorns, 1947 (Her debut)

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Worth Mentioning



Worth Mentioning:

- 1-Despite the fact that she was a fabulous Cha Cha Cha and Cuban Mambo dancer, and she moved like a dream, Hind Rostom was never fond of Raks Sharki (Belly-dancing), for as she said, this kind of dance is "against my taste and nature." Nevertheless, she did dance the Raks Sharki in some of her movies, and she looked sinfully fabulous!
- 2-In a recent interview Hind Rostom stated that she wakes up early every day, drinks a cup of tea while reading the newspaper, and she goes to bed no later than 10:00 PM.



7-Sophia Loren,
8-Sarita Montiel,
9-Heddy Lamarr,
10-Greta Garbo.



- 3-She said: "I look out for my family and their well being, and make sure they are happy and all right. I feel very proud for choosing the right road."
- 4-In the fifties, Hind Rostom was considered one of the 10 most beautiful women in the world.
- In a poll/survey conducted in the Middle East in 1959, Hind Rostom was chosen as the most popular actress in the Arab world, followed by Faten Hamama and Magda.
- 5-In a poll conducted in 1979, the readers of La Femme Magazine selected the 10 most striking actresses of all time; and those who participated in the survey came from all walks of life and nationalities. And this is the result of the survey in this order:

1-Ava Gardner,
2-Rita Hayworth,
3-Hind Rostom,
4-Marilyn Monroe,
5-Gene Tierney,
6-Brigitte Bardot,

The Most Striking Actresses in the World According to an international poll/survey



Ava Gardner



Rita Hayworth



Hind Rostom



Marilyn Monroe



Sophia Loren



Sarita Montiel



Gene Tierney



Brigitte Bardot



Hedy Lamarr



Greta Garbo

- 6-In addition to her title "The Queen of the Egyptian Cinema", people call her the First Lady of Egypt.
- 7-Hind Rostom is extremely loyal to her friends: She was chosen to play the lead in the picture "Madam X" (Al Imraat Al Majhoula) and Hassan Al Imam, who discovered her years ago was to direct the picture. Al Imam had a heated debate with the producer and quit. She could have stayed and finished the film, but her loyalty and gratitude to Al Imam would not allow her to do so, et voila she quit too, and the lead went to Chadia. And she told friends, "No regrets, on the contrary, I got a better role....I played Chafika Al Kobtia," which is by the way, her best film. This is the very particular film that made Hind Rostom an international star. The picture was seen in 85 countries. And copies of poster of the film were sold like hot cake around the world. In Beirut, a poster copy was sold for 30 Lebanese pounds, a huge price at the time, considering that the price of a show ticket was 3 pounds, and the salary of a teacher was 350 pounds.
- 8-In France, the poster was sold for a much higher price. And why? Because Hind Rostom was on the poster. In 1989, in Washington, DC, USA, a copy of the same poster was auctioned and sold for \$1,000.
- 9-Among all the Egyptian actresses, Hind Rostom has the highest IQ. She is the brightest, the most intelligent, and the most socially powerful in the country. And she speaks French with an aristocratic accent. After all, she is the Queen of the Egyptian Cinema.
- 10-When Hind Rostom talks, the media listens.
- 11-Asking Dean Martin what does he like most about Egypt, the Pyramids, the Suez Canal? And he replied: "Chicha and Hind Rostom." Sammy Davis Jr., was not far away, he heard Dean and whispered in my ears, "Rostom first, and Chicha next."



- 12-No monkey-business: One day, Abdel Halim Hafez (The Frank Sinatra of the Arab World) asked Hind Rostom to co-star with him in a new film "Abi Fawka Al Shajara", he described as very unique and popular. She read the script and she was not very happy about it. Abdel Halim asked her to come over to his hotel to discuss the matter. Well, she told him, there is nothing but kissing in this film, I am not going to do it. He was totally shocked! You have to remember, he was the most famous Arab singer of the era, and millions of women adored him. He told her, what are you talking about? You will be kissing me. I am Abdel Halim Hafez!!!! And calmly, she replied, "And I am Hind Rostom!" And she walked out.
- 13-She lives in a stunning apartment in Al Zamalek, in Cairo, full of antiques, arts, figurines, bronze statues and

rare exquisite French pieces. She had a statue of Buddha prominently displayed on a coffee table, and you could not miss the magnificent and huge tapestry (Gobelin) on the wall in her living room. It jumps at you.

- 14-She wakes up everyday at 5:00 AM, and goes early to bed, no later than 10:00 PM.
- 15-She loves to watch TV, and especially what is going on in cinema, arts, and the new Egyptian way of life. She commented on the TV and cinema productions of today, and said very clearly that what she is currently seeing does not reflect the true Egypt! She added, however there are some few excellent TV programs, and the Egyptian TV channels have very good anchorwomen and hosts. But this is not enough, "we need improvement and better quality in our programs and series, because TV is an important learning and education tool." She continued, "There are some very exceptional new people on TV and in the media, I recognize the faces, but I do not know all their names."
- 16-She speaks fervently about family values and the respect of parents. "The father and the mother are very important in our society, and the new generation must learn how to respect them, the way we did in our days. We have changed; Egypt is no longer the old Egypt I knew, in some areas."
- 17-She no longer goes to cinema theaters, almost never. She stays home and watches films and programs alone, sometimes with a very few friends, but generally alone.
- 18-She stayed married to her second husband, Dr. Fayyad for 50 years, until he passed away in 2009, and often she refers to him as a "Prince", a prince in knowledge, a prince in character, a prince in behavior. She is still very fond of him, and his photos are all over the place in her living room.



- 19-One of her favorite roles is one she played in "Imrat 'Al Hamesh", (A Woman on the Outside), 1964. In this particular film, she danced like a dream, despite the fact that Belly dancing is not her cup of tea. She never liked it, because as she said "is contrary to my nature." She told a reporter, "I don't know how to dance, I never did. Ali Reda had to teach me everything...everything from the beginning. I had to spend a whole year with him taking dance lessons. He was meticulous, a perfectionist, and very demanding. She said verbatim, "I don't like Belly dancing...I don't like it all, but I love its music." However, many believed, including actors who co-starred in many of her films, like Farid Al Atrash and Chadya, that she was a terrific dancer. Al Atrash use to stand behind the camera and watch her dancing with an enormous joy, and he could not refrain himself from "dancing, shaking and baking behind the camera and looking at me," said Hind Rostom.
- 20-She always looks stunning in red and black, and her physical looks totally change when she wears white; she becomes aristoeratically celestial.

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From left to right: Hussein Riyad, Fateen Hamama (Ex-wife of Omar Sharif), and Hind Rostom.

Faten Hamama is called by the Arab Media "Sayidat Al Shasha Al Arabia", meaning the first lady of the Arab cinema. There is no question, Hamama is a world-class actress, and the most respected mega star in the Middle East.

Despite her enormous popularity, and a fabulous talent, Faten Hamama felt threatened by the presence of Hind Rostom. Insiders said that Hamama on many occasions avoided co-starring with Hind, fearing that Hind will steal the show and overshadow her.

Hussein Riyad admired both of them. He was a fine gentleman and an outstanding actor (Though very difficult to work with) and had co-stared with Hind and Hamama in very successful pictures; on this situation, Riyad said, Faten Hamama is our best actress, Hind Rostom is our best international star. Very delicate and diplomatic definition on his part.

It is a fact that Hamama like Barlinti Abdel Hamid, and Shwikar (A gorgeous Egyptian actress, a one time wife of the late Fouad Al Mouhandess) and many other Egyptian actresses were intimidated by Hind Rostom. They would not admit in public, but behind the curtains, they expressed their fear without hesitation. Despite this competition scenario and unpleasant ramifications, Hind Rostom always showed respect and support for the actresses and peers who worked with her, and ignored their jealousy.

Actress Barlinti Abdel Hamid said: "Hind Rostom is not a pure Egyptian actress. She is great, but she looks too European, too sophisticated to be a genuine Egyptian actress, nevertheless, she is my favorite actress."

Photo: Barlinti Abdel Hamid.



Barlinti Abdel Hamid, said: "Hind is great, but she looks too European, too sophisticated to be a genuine Egyptian actress, nevertheless, she is my favorite actress."

The public disagrees, for Hind Rostom portrayed the high class Egyptian lady as well as the true middle and lower class Egyptian woman with an absolute authenticity.

The legendary Farid Al Atrah once said, the most striking Egyptian actresses are Hind Rostom and Samia Gamal.

And Rushdi Abaza said the very same thing.

Worth mentioning here that Abaaza was

married to Gamal, and Al Atrash had a steamy romantic relationship with Gamal, but he would not marry her because she was a belly dancer.



Photo: Shwikar, a fan of Rostom.

Swikar admitted that Hind Rostom was her idol, but she rushed to say, "Any good actress who had the opportunity to play the roles Hind played would become a big star. It is sometimes a matter of luck."

On luck, Ismail Yassin told me, it is true luck plays an important role in an artist's career, but the artist must be talented, our cinema (Egyptian cinema) is a tricky business, many stars didn't make it because either they did not have the opportunities, a good role to play, or had serious disagreement with the director, and he added, a major success story would be Hind Rostom, Tahya Karioka, Hind Rostom and Omar Sharif.



Photo: Ismail Yassin, a lovely human being who profoundly and sincerely admired Hind Rostom.

He considered Hind Rostom the biggest success story in the history of the Egyptian cinema. Ismail Yassin said, the two best Egyptian actresses are Naima Akef and Hind Rostom, but he made it clear that Hind was his favorite.



Photo: Naima Akef.

He also mentioned that actresses like Hind Rostom bring class and style to the Egyptian cinema, however he admitted that "with low

budget (Productions low budget) in Egypt, our stars will never be known abroad..." then I asked him if the low budget was the only barrier or perhaps it could be the Arabic language? And he replied, "Not really, a good Arab film with subtitle and excellent actors will be fine, but the budget is the main problem."

Asking him whether the exotic looks of the Egyptian actresses, and their ethnic mannerism while acting, could look strange or too Arabic (Foreign) to European and American audience, and he was quick to answer, "on the contrary, it is a plus. "I asked him again who are the prettiest actresses with a unique talent that would appeal to a foreign audience. And without any hesitation he first mentioned Hind Rostom, then, Nadia Lutfi and Lubna Abdel Aziz. According to Yassin, Lubna Abdel Aziz has the most beautiful eyes in the Dounia (The World).



Nadia Lutfi



Lubna Abdel Aziz



Hind Rostom receiving one of her many awards.



Alain Plisson's choice: Marina Vlady, Maria Felix, Sarita Montiel, Virna Lisi, Hind Rostom.

Yassin was not the only one to be taken by the beauty of the Egyptian actresses, Alain Plisson, the publisher and editor-in-chief of Cine D'Orient was mesmerized too by the looks of the Egyptian divas; in the mid sixties, Plisson did mention to me that the charisma of a star is essential, especially in drama, and he gave as an example Marina Vlady and Michele Morgan from the French Cinema, Maria Felix (Mexican-French actress who played in Can Can), Sarita Montiel from the Spanish Cinema, Virna Lisi from the Italian Cinema, Melina Mercouri from the Greek Cinema, and Hind Rostom, from the Egyptian cinema.



Maria Felix



Melina Mercouri

Virna Lisi



Hind Rostom with her at Ataa Award in 2004.
Photo credit: Frank Ubaysi.

- 21-Etiquette, elegance, and good mannerism are essential to Hind Rostom. She said men should take care of themselves, they should dress well, and look good all the time. Elegance and style reflect the character of a person.
- 22-Faten Hamama felt threatened by Hind Rostom. She knew that in any film she will co-star with her, Hind will steal the show. In fact, Hamama was extremely jealous of Rostom, and industry insiders are fully aware of that. Hamama and Hind Rostom were not really very good friends. But they respected each other and remained on good terms, but at distance. Hamama knew that competing with Hind Rostom is almost impossible. She told a confidant, "One Hind is enough for one movie." If you watch Hamama in any of Hind Rostom's film, you will immediately notice that she avoided standing too close to her or looking at her in the eyes, because she felt that Hind Rostom's presence was overwhelming. Thus, she distant herself from Rostom as much as possible, to the dismay of the director. And the crew on the set sensed it. In fact, watching the two together is enormously entertaining; here is Hind Rostom in all her majesty, class and beauty dominating each scene as the "Ultimate Woman", and Faten Hamama despite her enormous talent acting like a perturbed or a naïve little girl.
- 23-While many stars continue to act and behave like a star at home and outside the studio, Hind Rostom managed to totally separate "Hind Rostom the superstar" from "Hind Rostom the wife and the friend." She said, "as soon as I leave the studio (The Plateau), I am myself once again, I go home and take care of my husband. And I do strongly believe a woman could not be a movie star and a devoted wife in the same time. It is impossible, she can't have two careers, an actress and a wife. I chose my husband over my career...I stopped acting, and I devoted myself entirely to my husband and my family. This is how it should be... I was a good actress and I became a perfect wife. That is the most important role in my life."

- 24-She does not like cabarets and bars. She said cabaret and bar are not the right place for a married man. Yet, on the big screen, and in some of her most illustrious pictures, Hind Rostom was the personification of debaucheries, femme fatale, intrigues, the aura of film noir, the teaser, the cabaret girl, the nightclub singer, the bar-cabaret sexy dancer, the seductress, and she was so convincing. Many began to believe that Hind Rostom is that kind of a woman, while in reality, in real life, Hind Rostom is just the opposite. She told a common friend Frank Ubaysi, "In life, I am just the opposite of what I am on the screen."
- 25-Marcello Mastroianni once told me, "Only three women in cinema could be as dramatic and refreshing as life, Sarita Montiel, Rita Hayworth and Hind Rostom."
- 26-While visiting Paris, Orson Welles told me that he could direct any actress, any actor in the world, except himself and Hind Rostom; himself because he is unpredictable and a rebel, Hind Rostom, because he would prefer to be directed by her on and off the set. What did he mean by that, it is hard to tell! The man just said it himself, he is unpredictable.
- 27-In 2009, while serving as President of New York's Federation of American Musicians, Singers and Performing Artists, Inc., (FAMSPA), I circulated a photo of Lady Hind Rostom around, more exactly in the circle of young students who were studying film and production in New York and California, and asked them to comment on the photo in one single line. Of course, they did not know who Hind Rostom was, being very young and unfamiliar with Egyptian cinema. Only one person recognized her. I did that, because I was in the process of writing a piece on Hind. Here are some of the most colorful comments I got:
 - a- Wow, Marilyn Monroe....she looks so mature here.
 - b-I saw this face somewhere, she looks like Rita Hayworth but bubblier...
 - c-Who is she? Wow...a goddess...

d-The following comment was lengthy, it came from a student who was born in Beirut. He wrote: "This is Hind Rostom. I know her. I used to ran away from school, steal money from the jar of my older brother, and go see her films...when I grew up, I lost track of her, but now and then, I would say to my fiancee, don't play hard to catch, You are not Hind Rostom."

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What the stars have said about Lady Hind Rostom

What the stars have said about Lady Hind Rostom



Photo:
Marcello
Mastroianni
and Anita
Ekberg in "La
Dolce Vita".

On Rostom, the Italian superstar Marcello Mastroianni said:
"Only three women in cinema could be as dramatic and
refreshing as life, Sarita Montiel, Rita Hayworth and Hind
Rostom."



Photo: Samia
Gamal with
Farid Al
Atrash.

The legendary Farid Al Atrah once said, the most striking Egyptian actresses are Hind Rostom and Samia Gamal. And Rushdi Abaza said the very same thing.



Photo: Orson Welles and Rita Hayworth, in "The Lady from Shanghai".

While visiting Paris, Orson Welles told me that he could direct any actress, any actor in the world, except himself and Hind Rostom; himself because he is unpredictable and a rebel, Hind Rostom, because he would prefer to be directed by her on and off the set. What did he mean by that, it is hard to tell! The man just said it himself, he is unpredictable.



Photo: Marie Munib, Hussein Riyad and Faten Hamama in "Daddy Amin".

Veteran actor Hussein Riyad said, "Faten Hamama is our best actress, Hind Rostom is our best international star."



Photo: Simone Signoret and Charlton Heston after they have received their OSCAR.

Simone Signoret, my friend for a half of a century said, "Elle a beaucoup de classe. Elle est vraiment superbe." Translation: "She (Hind Rostom) has lots

of class. She is really superb."



Photo: Dean Martin with Sammy Davis Jr.

Asking Dean Martin what does he like most about Egypt, the Pyramids, the Suez Canal? And he replied: "Chicha and Hind Rostom." Sammy Davis Jr., was not far away, he heard Dean and whispered in my ears, "Rostom first, and Chicha next."



Photo: Hind Rostom's only daughter, Passant Hassen Reda.

Asking her daughter Passant, "what do you like most about your mom?" She answered, "her loyalty to her family and friends!"



Photo: Alfred Hitchcock. He tried twice to reach Hind Rostom to offer her a lead in his pictures. His telegram and letter were intercepted by Cairo Secret Police.

28-In 1969 or probably 1970, upon visiting Habib Khoury (Khouri), originally from Egypt, and the founder of the Wax Museum in Byblos (Jbail) Lebanon, told me that Toto, his brother who was a well-known film set designer in the golden age of Hollywood, and who has designed elaborate sets for many of Alfred Hitchcock's pictures told him that Hitchcock tried twice to get Hind Rostom to star in his films. He sent her a telegram followed by a letter from a major Hollywood studio, but never received any response from Hind Rostom.



Photo: Alfred Hitchcock and Tippi Hedren.

Later on, it was found out that his correspondence was allegedly seized by Cairo "Al Moukabarat" (Egypt Secret Police), which prevented him from reaching the first lady of the Egyptian cinema. And from the grapevine we heard that Hitchcock's intention for contacting Hind Rostom was very clear.

He had major confrontation with Kim Novak and Tippi Hedren (The mother of actress Melanie Griffith) and he was seriously looking for a replacement; a star who was blonde with unusual

exotic looks, not too much foreign and not too much continental. He had to decide on two major stars, Eva Mary Saint (She won an Academy for Best Supporting Actress for her performance in "On the Waterfront", 1954, opposite Marlon Brando, and later starred in Hitchcock's "North by Northwest", 1959, opposite Cary Grant and James Mason) and Hind Rostom. But when he got not answer from Hind, he had no choice but to hire either Eva Mary Saint or Kim Novak. It is not clear what happened next.

- 29-At one time, the United Nations considered appointing Hind Rostom as a good will Ambassador. All arrangements were made, and an initial contact was established with the Egyptian government to facilitate the process. And poof, it ended where it started. Years later, it was allegedly discovered that Barlinti Abdel Hamid (She was married to Abdel Hakim Amer, the first Vice-President to President Gamal Abdel Nasser) a major star at the time, and competitor of Hind, has blocked the nomination. Hind Rostom never knew what was going on. When Barlinti was confronted with these allegations, she categorically denied any involvement and said that Hind Rostom was her favorite star.
- 30-Although she is Egyptian by birth, Hind's father is Turkish; he was from the old school and extremely traditional in his beliefs. He categorically opposed Hind's decision to go into the cinema business. And for years, he stopped talking to her and cut all relationships with his daughter. On this, Hind commented as follows, "My father, my uncles and my relatives were against my decision. They did not want me to become an actress because acting or being a movie star is contrary to their family values, tradition and beliefs. It was never done in our family."
- 31-Hind Rostom is an animal lover. She loves dogs, and at one time time she had two. She said, people are fine, but always they want something from you...but your dog wants nothing from you except love. Dogs are more

loving and loyal than humans. And she added verbatim, "I learned loyalty from my dogs."

- 32-At one time, Lady Hind Rostom became extremely powerful and influential in Egypt. Practically she was able to change the course of events on the social and political landscape of Egypt. Millions would listen to her and act and react according to what she was saying. In addition, she became the voice of the people; she spoke about justice, freedom and the Egyptian national pride, and her patriotism fervor had major implications and effects on the Middle Eastern and Arab foreign affairs, politically and socially.

It was reported that Israel became very concerned with that "cinema woman who could cause some serious troubles to the Jewish interests." But in reality, Hind was not at all interested in creating political troubles and social unrest. Any way, in order to discredit her, Mossad, allegedly and as it was reported in the Media and in Al Ahram, issued a statement revealing the name of some Egyptian dignitaries and stars who worked for Israel as spies.

Hind was on the list of the spies, always according to Mossad, of course. This viciously orchestrated campaign against Hind Rostom made a big buzz in the Middle East, but of course, nobody believed it.

Among those who were targeted by Mossad were four actresses, Nadia Lutfi, Mariam Fakhreddin, Hind Rostom, and Barlanti Abdel Hamid.

In the Al-Ahram Weekly, 9-15 March 2000, Issue No. 472, under a headline "Uproar over Israeli smear report", Mona El-Nahas wrote: "An Israeli television programme claimed two weeks ago that four Egyptian actresses -- Nadia Lutfi, Mariam Fakhreddin, Hind Rostom and Barlanti Abdel-Hamid -- had worked in the past for Mossad, the Israeli intelligence agency.

Egyptian intellectuals and entertainers sharply reacted to the Israeli claims, considering them no more than a "silly joke." They condemned the allegations, arguing that their aim is to ruin the reputation of Arab intellectuals and artists.

The Egyptian Committee for Solidarity (an NGO headed by the leftist writer Ahmed Hamroush) held a press conference last week, in which numerous intellectuals announced their full solidarity with the four performers.

They also expressed their deep appreciation "These [accusations] are part of a Zionist conspiracy which aims at tarnishing the image of national figures intent on opposing Israel," screenplay writer Fatheya El-Assal said of the "positive" roles played by these actresses in both the cinema and society."

At that time I was in Rome, Italy, and an old friend of mine who works as an investigative reporter for a major Italian daily phoned me to ask for my opinion on this ridiculous allegation, because we use to talk a lot about Egyptian cinema, and particularly Hind Rostom and Asmahan (The sister of Farish Al Atrash whom I knew very well).

He said, Rostom is a national figure in Egypt, right? What is this story? Mossad, Hind Rostom, Egyptian actresses?

What do you make out of it?

I told him, you are damned right, Hind Rostom is a national figure, and one of Egypt greatest artistic and intellectual assets, don't ever forget it. Hey Fabio, how about if I come to you and tell you that your Pope in the Vatican is the spy of the Devil, would you believe it?

He laughed and said, I got the picture...so this was intentionally done to hurt her because she was a national asset and powerful in the Egyptian society.

And I simply replied, you bet your gazebo, bambino!!



Photo: Hind Rostom in a scene from "Cairo Station" (Bab El Hadid).

- 33-Hind Rostom's 1958 film "Cairo Station" (Bab El Hadid), by Youssef Chahin, and co-starring Youssef Chahin and Farid Shawky was selected by a committee of 20 Egyptian film critics as one of the 15 best Egyptian films in 100 years.
- 34-She was well in her elements with Imad Hamdi and Ahmad Ramzi. She liked them very much.



Imad Hamdi



Ahmad Ramzi

- 35-The Egyptian Chronicles wrote: "Still I believe if Norma Jeane had knew her and her life, she would have been more than glad to live in her shoes because after 30 years Hind Rostom seemed to survive all the curses of stardom. The Queen of seduction as used to be called was wiser when she chose Hind Rostom, the human before the artist."

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Hind Rostom with Omar Sharif.

- 36-In the late sixties, around the Piscine (Swimming pool) of the Phoenicia Intercontinental Hotel, in Beirut, I asked Farid Al Atrash about his relationship with Samia Gamal. He was very frank and candid, and in an utmost sincerity he told me that he was very fond of Samia but because of his Druze heritage and some family-values traditions he could not marry her, being a belly-dancer.

And he added, I would not mind marrying an artist like Mariam Fakherdin or Hind Rostom because they are totally different, they came from a good family and they have an excellent reputation. To others, and in public he would say, "An artist is married to his art. In my case to my music, to composition, to my Oud." On another occasion, he told me that Egypt is rich with artistic heritage, and he named Asmahan as the best singer in Egypt, and Hind Rostom as the best actress in the Arab world.



Nour El Houda (Nee Alexandra Bedran)

- 37-Also in the sixties, Nour El Houda (Nee Alexandra Bedran, of a Lebanese origin), during a short visit to her relatives in Mazraa, in Beirut told me that there is only one actress in Egypt who really has a world-class quality, and this star is Hind Rostom. Both El Houda and Rostom worked with Mohammad Abdel Wahab.

- 38-A few months after the release of his film "Genghis Khan", 1965, I asked Omar Sharif during a reportage (Press interview) at the Saint George Hotel and the Phoenicia, about his favorite actors and actresses, and without hesitation he replied, Peter O'Tool, Elizabeth Taylor, Hind Rostom and Faten Hamama. For the record, at the time, Omar Sharif was still married to Faten Hamama.

It is widely accepted that Faten Hamama is the first lady of the Egyptian cinema. It is not totally correct. I have some reservation about this, for Hamama excelled only in one genre, while Hind Rostom shined brighter than the sun in an avalanche of roles, each one different from the other. Hamama could never play the roles Lady Hind Rostom played.

Hamama is great at what she does; one single style, one type of performance, one genre, and that's the end of the story. Hind Rostom's range and versatility overshadow the performance and talent of Hamama. Thus, it is Hind Rostom who de facto is the undisputed First Lady of the Egyptian cinema.

- 39-In September 1974, while staying at the Excelsior Hotel on Via Veneto in Roma, Italy, Dea Gobi, an Italian journalist called me to tell me that a portrait (Oil painting) of Hind Rostom, done by one of the artists who studied with Italy's Great Gino Severini, was sold in Viareggio to Prince Orsini for \$250,000. No other actress ever received such a treatment.

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Hind Rostom, the classiest, the most sophisticated and most talented actress in the history of world cinema.



Photo: Henri Langlois who said verbatim: "Hind Rostom is the world's greatest actress. It is a matter of time *before* she will be recognized as such..."

40- Henri Langlois, considered to be the world classic films preservation pioneer, and the co-creator of La Cinemathèque Française (Along with Jean Mitri) and the co-founder of the International Federation of Film Archives, told me verbatim, that although he was mainly concerned with old and classic French films, two of Hind Rostom's films were on his list.

And he added, in the future, Hind Rostom will be recognized as the world's greatest actress. History is not always right, and favoritism on the part of historians and critics distort the truth, he said.

And while I was in the process of writing a documentary on Louise Brooks (Henri adored her), Langlois reminded me not to forget about Rostom, and to include her in the documentary and the mega book I was writing about Hollywood, which was published 20 years later.

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Hind Rostom played all sorts of roles; an aristocrat, a nun, a peasant, a femme fatale, and she told the studios bosses and directors that she would not play the same role over and over again, and/or similar roles. Although she was already and popularly stereotyped as the stunning teaser, irresistible seductress, and sex idol, Hind Rostom defied the industry's categorization, classification and stereotyping. She explained that a true artist should never be limited by the narrow frame of a cliché. And role diversification is necessary and essential for the development of actresses potentials and talent.

On the screen, and in real life, Hind Rostom was (and still is) down to earth, pragmatic and realistic, yet, her allure and flair of elegance could not escape her.

In the eye of her public she remains the most elegant and most sophisticated lady, Egypt ever witnessed.

Anything and everything around her, in her milieu, in her lovely apartment, in her wardrobe is a signature of finesse, class and distinction. Hind Rostom was the first star and mega actress to bring to the big screen of the Egyptian cinema the aura of sophistication and class. Perhaps only Sarita Montiel, the Queen of the Spanish Cinema could duplicate her.

In this context, it would be safe to say that Hind Rostom's style was a blend of an European aristocracy and the warmth and beauty of the earth of Egypt.

Lady Hind Rostom, like her talent, is immortal.

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Hitchcock's favorite actresses at one time:

- Grace Kelly,
- Kim Novak (But later on, he tried to smash her career)
- Tippi Hedren (He literally put an end to her career)
- Eva Mary Saint (He thought highly of her, but found her to be cold and distant)
- Hind Rostom (He tried twice to reach her, but never got and answer from Hind)



Kim Novak



Grace Kelly



Tippi Hedren



Hind Rostom



Eva Mary Saint

Hitchcock had weakness for blondes; almost all his leading ladies were blondes. But in our case, she was experimenting with a new kind of a blonde; an exotic diva or even a starlet with a strange way of sophistication. He was not searching for only beauty and a beautiful "screen figure".

I think Toto Khoury or perhaps Negib Khoury or Habib Khoury, one of these three brothers (of an Egyptian origin) recommended Hind Rostom to Hitchcock, I am not sure.

Anyway, the master of the suspense was fully convinced that Rostom was a perfect choice. And he did mention to one of his cameramen, "Thanks God, Howard Hughes is not around..." because he wanted Rostom for himself! Meaning for his picture.

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The story of Hitchcock's telegram and letter to Hind Rostom is a mystery. It bothers me.

When and to whom did he send his correspondence to is unclear. Was it addressed to Hind?

To the studio she worked for or her agent?

And how come she was never aware of this enigma?

It is customary in the cinema industry to always contact an artist's agent, and never ever the artist himself/herself, whether directly or indirectly. And Hitchcock always followed the rules when it comes to how to get or "borrow a star" (As he uses to say).



Hind Rostom in a scene from the film "Sayyed Darwich".

Consequently, it is quite safe to conclude that he contacted Lady Hind's agent, or probably the studio in Cairo, she was either under contract with, or worked for.

Then the 46 million Dollars question is: Did the studio get rid of Hitchcock's correspondence(s) or Hind Rostom's agent did? Impossible to find out. This is an old story, people passed away, and there is no record whatsoever to substantiate the story. C'est la vie!

The biggest question is this: What if Hitchcock's letter did reach Lady Rostom? Then what?

Would her career be catapulted to world stardom?

Would she leave Egypt for the United States?

And would she be able to adapt to the plastic, gossipy and insane lifestyle of Hollywood?

I suppose YES, Hind Rostom would have reached immediate worldwide popularity, and being blessed with an enormous talent and a mesmerizing presence, she would have been on the top of the world and the toast of Hollywood, no doubt about it. Don't go far away, and wonder!

Look what happened to Omar Sharif!

He got an offer from Hollywood, auditioned, took a screen test, et voila Mesdames et messieurs, he became Dr. Zhivago, Genghis Khan, and the major attraction of Lawrence of Arabia!

The same would or could have happen to Hind Rostom.

In fact, Omar Sharif was NOT Hollywood's first choice.

Rushdi Abaaza was on the ticket. But Abaaza refused to take a screen test, and told Hollywood that he is an accomplished actor in Egypt and does not need to subject himself to a test!

So he turned down Hollywood' request.

And that was a big mistake.

Then, Hollywood producers contacted Omar Sharif based upon a recommendation from his close friend Peter O'Tool. First, Sharif told Hollywood why don't you look at "Ayamuna Al Hilwah" (Co-starring Omar Sharif, Faten Hamama, Ahmad Ramzi and Abdel Halim Hafez). Hollywood said NO! You come to Hollywood and you take a screen test. Sharif willingly accepted to take a screen test, and the rest is history!!

Every performer or a movie star needs Hollywood. Hind Rostom might have lost a great opportunity, but luckily and fortunately

to the Egyptian cinema, she stayed in Egypt, and brought the Egyptian silver screen to a new height!



Jocelyne Jocyia

41-France's great, Jocelyne Jocyia once said: "Not everything that came from the Middle East was glittering gold, but at least Egypt gave us something rare and very special, Dalida and Hind Rostom."



Photo of Dalida.

Unfortunately she killed herself in France. It was a big loss.

From Her Quotes



From her quotes

- The way I carried myself was also very boyish, like a soldier. My characters gave me the opportunity to be a completely different sort of woman.
- The laugh is all mine! I don't know why people loved it; it wasn't a cute laugh. It's strong and loud – not feminine at all – it's actually quite rough.
- I was never typecast into playing one role. I've played every type of woman.



- On her silver screen competitors, she said: No one! I am unique. Most of the actresses of that era looked Arab, for example Faten Hamama, Shadia and Magda. But there were three of us, Mariam Fakhr El Din, Nadia Lofty and I, who looked very different. We were special.
- I used to love spending money on lavish luxuries, from jewellery to cars, but after that movie I started to control myself. I didn't want to end up like Shafika El Ebteya
- I looked very foreign and the first thing they asked me was if I could speak Arabic. I told them I was Egyptian but they didn't believe me.
- I'm actually very masculine, would you believe that? When I was a teenager I was a complete tomboy; playing football, messing about on my bike and wearing trainers when the other girls wore heels.
- I hate fashion these days. Why wear jeans to every occasion, day or night? In my day people were so elegant and sophisticated. We used to go to the cinema in furs.





- I don't want to write my biography. This is my personal life and it belongs to me. I refuse to sell my life as a means of entertainment. It is of no one's concern.
- I was 40 when I finally decided to quit, and while it was very hard, I wanted to go out on top.
- Fayyad and I shared everything and my life with him surpassed my stardom and fame.



- Since my husband died, I've stopped dreaming. I have no more dreams.
- These days movies are too commercial, they're driven by the bottom line and all actors care about is their pay check.

Interviews with Lady Hind Rostom

Interviews with Lady Hind Rostom

From an exclusive interview with Lady Hind Rostom, on March 4, 2011.

M=Maximilien de Lafayette

HR=Lady Hind Rostom

Note: Answers are "As is", and unedited.

M: What is the most important lesson or experience you have learned from working in the Egyptian cinema, at a professional level?

HR: The most important is passion, and to have loyalty to the cinema, not money.



Photo: Hind Rostom playing the role of a nun.

M: Everybody has some sort of regrets in life. What are yours?

HR: My regret was that I didn't make drama for television

M: From all the roles you played and they are so many, which one is your favorite? Is it The Nun (Al Rahiba) or Chafika Al Kobia? Or something else?

HR: It was Chafika al Kobia, though it was very hard.



Photo: Hind Rostom with Rushdi Abaza

M: Is it true you have become a recluse person? And why?

HR: Yes I am a recluse person. Why? I don't know?

M: Who were the easiest and most difficult directors, actors and actresses you have worked with?

HR: There is no such thing as easy directors, actors, and actresses. They are all difficult. This is the nature of the business. The most difficult directors were Hassan el Imam, and Youssif Shahin. The most difficult actors were Hussein Riyad, Mahmoud el Miligi, and Amina Rizk.



Youssif (Yousef) Shahin.

Note: on Hind, Youssif Shahin said, "She is the best of our actresses, but she was stubborn, she jokes a lot, and made me loose my temper...sometimes I had to yell at her to stop joking...but she was extraordinary..."



Mahmood Al Miligi

Note: He was a superb actor, but difficult to work with. He wanted to run the show and do it his way. On two occasions he had a confrontation with Hind. But she handled the situation perfectly. Al Miligi had no special respect for female actresses. In the presence of Hind, he acted tough, he argued a lot and displayed anger. Hind knew pretty well how to put him in his place.

Nevertheless, Mahmood Al Miligi had an enormous respect for Lady Hind Rostom. But on one occasion he asked director Youssef Shahin, "Why always Hind Rostom has to get first billing?" Meaning why her name should always appear first in the credits. And Shahin answered, "She is the film." Well said.



Amina Rizk

Note: Amina Rizk was a tough cookie. No question she was a magnificent actress, but so difficult to work with. And needless to say she was threatened by Hind Rostom. She considered herself as the Grande Dame of the Egyptian cinema and a true pioneer. To a certain degree, she was challenged by Hind Rostom; a challenge she created herself in her own mind. Many of the set-crew who worked with both Rizk and Hind would tell you that Rizk in fact was tempestuous, while Hind Rostom was a sweetheart, always joyful and considerate, and treated each one of them with respect, professionalism, and of course laughs...loud laughs! And they loved it.

M: Here in the United States we hear a lot of stories of stars' jealousy...some envy the successful ones, and many bitterly criticize or badmouth others, the most notorious ones were Betty Davis and Joan Crawford, those two hated each other. In your case, did you have any confrontation with actresses or actors in the Egyptian cinema?

Why? And how did you deal with it?

HR: Faten Hamama, because she believes that she is the number one in the Egyptian cinema. Yes she is her line only. She can't play all characters like I do.

So she is not number one, and frankly I ignore this title.

How do I deal with others' jealousy?

I just ignore it.

M: What is the most important asset an actor or an actress should have to succeed in an acting career? How was it during your days (In the past) and now?

HR: To be honest to her craft, to be committed to what she does, to work hard and be truthful. This is the essence of art, and the road to success.

M: Did the Egyptian Cinema change the last 25 years?

HR: Yes the Egyptian cinema changed the last 25 years ago.

M: Did time and age change the way you see and understand the world?

HR: No because I left the cinema over than 30 years, and I was living my time only with my family. The age maybe makes me more passionate.

M: What do you think of those world famous actresses who appear naked in movies, superstars like Hedy Lamarr, Colette Colbert, Sharon Stone?

In Hollywood, it is some very necessary, or an actress would not get a job. Is it, or was it similar in the good old days and modern days of the Egyptian Cinema?

HR: The American cinema has a completely different culture, so they can make what the director and the story want, but in Egyptian cinema things are different and complicated. You will find more freedom in the Moroccan cinema.

M: From the modern and contemporary actors and actresses in Egypt, who do you think will make it big and become known worldwide?

HR: There is no one until now who is or can be known worldwide.

M: I know you are very loyal to you friends, but in addition to loyalty, which are the 3 most important virtues in a human being? Generosity? Perhaps forgiveness or something else?

HR: Forgiveness is the most important one.



*** **



Chafiq Al Kobtia' Candlestick Belly Dance

From an interview (As Is) with Hind Rostom by Maissa Azab, March 2009.

Azab talks exclusively to the icon about her loves, losses, highs, lows and what it took to change the face of Arab cinema forever. They just don't make stars like these anymore. Killer looks, seductive curves and lashings of talent. Hind Rostom was – and is – all woman.

She was the ultimate Egyptian sex symbol; as tantalizing in couture gowns as she was in a galabeya. In an era when starlets were calm, collected and demure, she burst onto the screen with style, grace and gregariousness. She made everything just that little bit sexier.

Yet Rostom wasn't just sexy in the 60 plus movies in which she starred from the late 1940s to her final role in 1975. She was strong. This wasn't a damsel in distress. This was a woman that went looking for distress, and if she did get into trouble, her feminine wiles soon got her out.

When she appeared in her first film, *El Tadhya El Kobra* (The Greatest Sacrifice) at the tender age of 16, she was already much more than the wistful wallflower audiences had come to expect. But it wasn't until 1955 that her true talent shone, in her first starring role in Hussein El Emam's *Banat El Leil* (Girls of the Night). She played a seductress like no other Arab woman before her. She wasn't just a voluptuous vixen; she was a woman to be reckoned with.

Rostom cemented her icon status with a riveting role as a femme fatale selling soft drinks at Cairo's Ramses train station. Youssef Chahine's revolutionary film, *Bab El Hadid* (Cairo Station) was banned from theatres for 12 years due to issues of poverty, sex and temptation. In the film Rostom's character is caught in the middle of a love triangle which turns obsessive, in a world poverty-stricken by government injustice.

Selling kazooza at a train station doesn't exactly scream femme fatale. But as she shimmies her hips and flutters her eyelashes, she might as well be the only woman in the world.

Her personal life has always been shrouded in mystery. She has been married twice, the first time to Hassan Reda, a director who fathered her only child *Passant*, and a second time to the admitted love of her life, Dr. Mohamed Fayyad, who died tragically early this year.

Rostom, the ultimate perfectionist, was last seen on the silver screen in the 1975 feature film *El Gaban wel Hob* (The Coward and Love), choosing to leave the limelight at the peak of her stardom. This is one femme fatale who will live forever.



Q: Let's start from the very beginning. What made you want to become an actress?

Hind: It was pure chance. I was trying to buy a ticket for a movie at Cosmos cinema, right opposite Studio Misr, but it was incredibly crowded. A woman came up to me and said she'd give me the seat next to hers, but before we went in, she had an errand to do at the studio. I was thrilled at the chance to do some celebrity spotting, so I went along with her.

Screenwriter Hussein Helmy El Mohandess and assistant director Ezz El Din Zulfikar were both there.

I looked very foreign and the first thing they asked me was if I could speak Arabic. I told them I was Egyptian but they didn't believe me. They made me read some lines and the director was impressed. He couldn't believe it was my first time acting. I was very confident back then. The more famous I became, the less confident I got.

Q: How did your family react?

Hind: They were livid. They completely stopped speaking to me! I was brought up in an aristocratic family and acting was so close to scandalous at the time. My uncles would even turn their heads to avoid looking at me when they saw me out.

We only started speaking again when I married my second husband Dr. Mohamed Fayyad.

Q: You're often dubbed the Marilyn Monroe of the Middle East; the ultimate seductress. Do you see the resemblance?

Hind: Not at all. Marilyn Monroe was a very western icon. She always played the seductress. I was never typecast into playing one role. I've played every type of woman.

Q: Which one of your characters came closest to the real Henda Rostom?

Hind: None of them! I'm actually very masculine, would you believe that? When I was a teenager I was a complete tomboy; playing football, messing about on my bike and wearing trainers when the other girls wore heels.



The way I carried myself was also very boyish, like a soldier. My characters gave me the opportunity to be a completely different sort of woman.

Q: Yet you exude femininity and sexuality on screen. Surely that can't all have been an act?

Hind: I swear it was! It was all acting. I am the complete opposite in reality.

Q: What about your trademark throaty laugh? Was that an act?

Hind: No, the laugh is all mine! I don't know why people loved it; it wasn't a cute laugh. It's strong and loud – not feminine at all – it's actually quite rough.

Q: You worked with legendary director Youssef Chahine on his first three movies. Tell us about those experiences...

Hind: Chahine's work is outstanding but takes a lot out of you. On Bab El Hadid (Cairo Station) we were filming for long hours at the Cairo train station and I would have to do costume changes in a tiny kiosk.

The film was banned in Egypt because it tackled some very controversial issues. We flew out to Monte Carlo for a screening and 7,000 people gave him a standing ovation.

He was much admired internationally, for his style and the films he made.

Q: Who would you have considered your silver screen competitors?

Hind: No one! I am unique. Most of the actresses of that era looked Arab, for example Faten Hamama, Shadia and Magda. But there were three of us, Mariam Fakh El Din, Nadia Lofty and I, who looked very different. We were special.

Q: Talk to us about your co-star and fellow silver screen icon Roushdy Abaza. Was he as handsome and charming in real life as he was on screen?

Hind: He was irresistible and amazing! I felt so secure when I worked with him and we had so much fun working together. They nicknamed us Madrasset El Moushaghebeen (School for Scoundrels). We liked to joke around a lot but once the director yelled action it was all business.

Q: Which movie is closest to your heart?

Hind: Shafika El Ebteya (Shafika the Copt). The character I was playing – the wife of Khedive Ismail – gambled away all her money playing poker. I used to love spending money on lavish luxuries, from jewellery to cars, but after that movie I started to control myself. I didn't want to end up like her!



Abdel Halim Hafez

Q: You never acted with Abdel Halim Hafez? Why is that?

Hind: We were supposed to work together in *Abi Fawk El Shagara* (My Father Atop a Tree). Scriptwriter Ehsan Abdel Koudous wanted me specifically for the role as did Halim, but I turned it down which upset them both. I

felt my part in the movie would be insignificant and there were a lot of kissing scenes.

Q: So you never did any kissing scenes?

Hind: They disgusted me. I'd feel queasy at the very thought of them. I had a lot of arguments with directors because of that. My big argument was, "Why can't we love each other without kissing?"

Q: Like any actress, you have suffered at the hands of the press. How did you handle that?

Hind: I viewed all criticism as constructive... as long as it was professional. A famous journalist once wrote in a review that I should have stayed home. It was very harsh, but I called him and thanked him. He knew it wasn't my best work and it made me wake up and work even harder.

Q: How did you feel when Nancy Ajram channeled your style in 'Akhasmak Ah' ('I Will Upset You'), or Haifa Wehbe in 'Ragab'?

Hind: The fact that they imitated me means that what I did was a success!



Nancy Ajram



Haifa Wehbe

Q: Who could play the role of Hend Rostom in a movie of your life?

Hind: No one!

Q: During your heyday, you wore some of the most beautiful couture in the world. Have you kept any of those pieces?

Hind: Most were given away to relatives or lost somewhere, but I kept a few dresses I loved. I hate fashion these days. Why wear jeans to every occasion, day or night? In my day people were so elegant and sophisticated. We used to go to the cinema in furs.

Q: You were offered 1 million pounds to write your biography and you refused? Why?

Hind: I don't want to write my biography. This is my personal life and it belongs to me. I refuse to sell my life as a means of entertainment. It is of no one's concern.

Q: When you met and married your late husband Dr. Mohamed Fayyad you stopped acting. How has your life changed since then?

Hind: Long before I met Fayyad, I planned to stop acting at my peak. I was 40 when I finally decided to quit, and while it was very hard, I wanted to go out on top. So my marriage had nothing to do with my decision. On the contrary, Fayyad always respected my work. He knew how to treat a woman and that's what mattered most to me. I'd always been independent so it was nice to finally have a shoulder to lean on, to support me and make sure I had nothing to worry about. My life was so full after I quit acting. I was rarely at home and I spent so much time with my friends, my lovely husband and my family, whom I love more than

anything in the world. Fayyad and I shared everything and my life with him surpassed my stardom and fame.

Q: What has been your biggest challenge?

Hind: The death of my husband. He was everything to me, my lovely companion. I miss him very much.

Q: What do you dream of now?

Hind: Since my husband died, I've stopped dreaming. I have no more dreams.

Q: Do you think we will remember the stars of today like we remember those of your generation?

Hind: The industry has changed so much. We used to work for peanuts because we were sincerely invested in the stories and our characters. I wanted to create an outstanding portfolio of movies. Quantity was irrelevant, quality was everything.

It was about conveying a message through the movies. These days movies are too commercial, they're driven by the bottom line and all actors care about is their pay check. Actors used to perform with devotion and I can still remember some of my lines to this day. I even worked for free on Eshaet Hob (Rumour of Love), because the role was so good.

In those days, movies were about passion, and we were passionate about them. That's why our work will be remembered forever.

Note: Profile written by Hassan Hassan.

Photos Album



Hind Rostom in a scene from the film "Rahma Min Al Sama".



Hind Rostom in the center, surrounded by Farid Al Atrash (Center, third row) Yousef Shahin, Fakher Fakher, Mariam Fakherdin (To the right), Ahmad Ramzi (Far left), and Abdel Salam Naboulsi (Standing and smiling, last row to the left).



Hind Rostom and Mohammad Fawzi.



Hind Rostom with Mariam Fakherdin (Fakhr Aldeen), a great actress in her own right.



Hind Rostom in a scene from the film "Al Wadeea".



Hind Rostom with Ehsaan Abdel Kouddous and his sons.



Hind Rostom in a scene from the film "Kabbalni Fil' Zalaam".



Hind Rostom in a scene from the film "Kabbalni Fil' Zalaam".



Hind Rostom with Yahya Shahin.



Hind Rostom at the wedding ceremony of her daughter Pessant.



Hind Rostom in a scene from the film "Bein El Sama wa Al Ard".



Hind Rostom with Rushdi Abaaza.



Hind Rostom in a scene from the film "Al Hob Al Samet".



Hind Rostom in a scene from the film "Al Wadea".



Hind Rostom with her daughter Pessant.



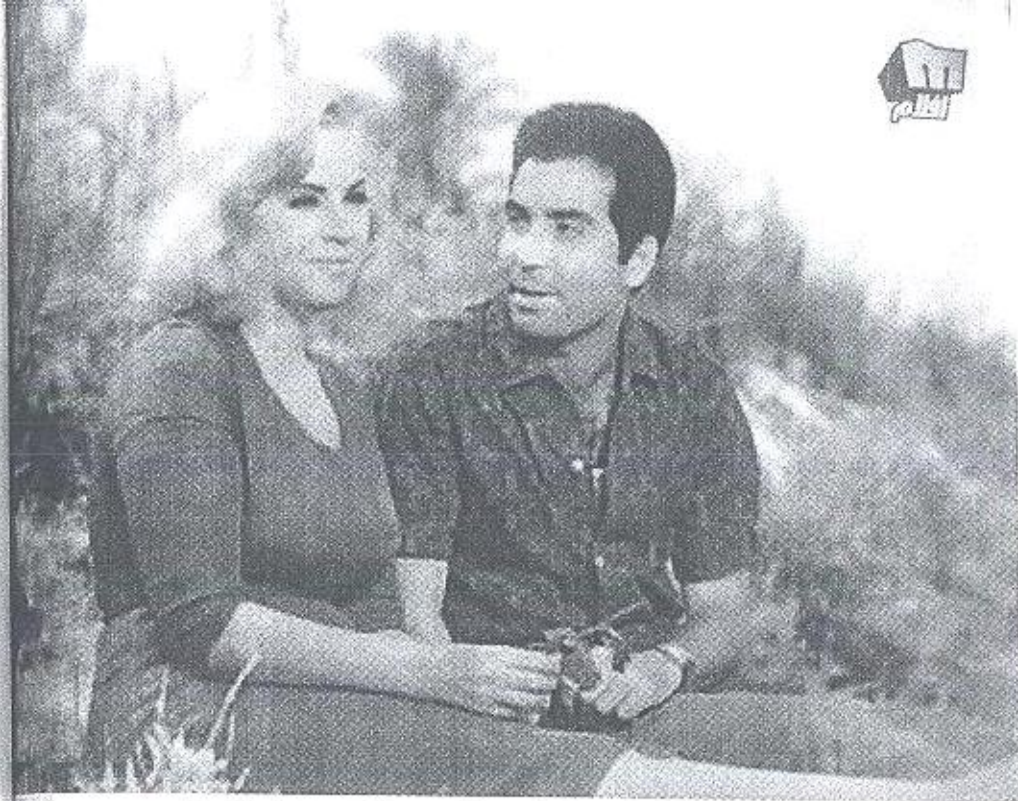
Hind Rostom in a scene from the film "Al Hob Al Khaled".



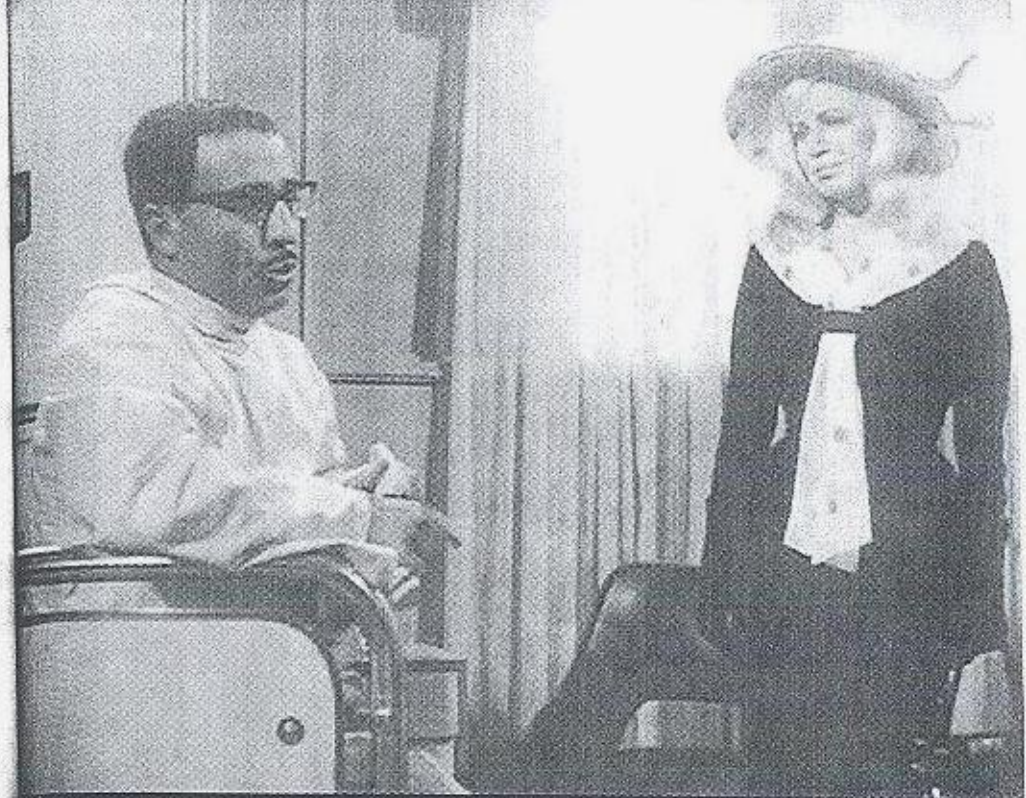
Hind Rostom with Hassan Youssef in a scene from the film "Al Hob Al Khaled."



Hind Rostom in a scene from the film "Toufahat Adam".



Hind Rostom and Hassan Youssef, in a scene from the film
"Toufahat Adam".



Hind Rostom and Fouad Al Mouhandess in a scene from the film
"Eeterafat Zogat".



Hind Rostom in a scene from the film "Shafika Al Kobtia".



Hind Rostom with Farid Al Atrash in a scene from the film "Enta Habibi".



Hind Rostom with Omar Sharif in a scene from the film
"Siraat Fil Nil".



Lady Hind Rustom dancing with her late husband, Dr. Fayyad.



Hind Rostom with Ismail Yassin in a scene from the film
"Moustashfa Al Majanin".



Hind Rostom with Abdel Salam Al Nabulsi in a scene from the film "Enta Habibi".



Hind Rostom in a scene from the film "Chafika Al Kobtia".



Lady Hind with her late husband, Dr. Fayyad.



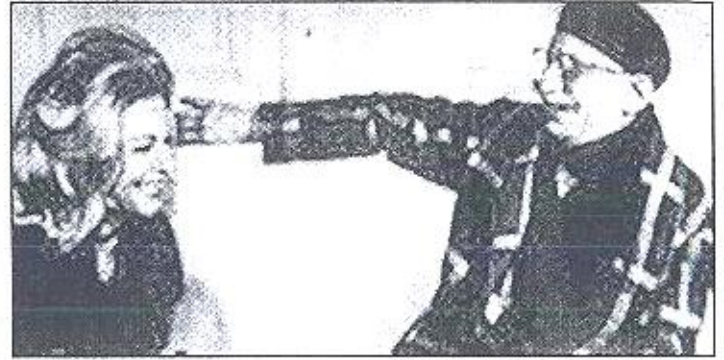
Lady Hind with her late husband, Dr. Fayyad.



Lady Hind with her late husband, Dr. Fayyad.



The Queen with her late husband, Dr. Fayyad.



Hind with Abbas Al Aqqad.



The Ultimate Class!!



Hind Rostom in a scene from the film "Bab Al Hadid".



Hind Rostom in a scene from the film "Al Zog Al 'Azeb".



Hind Rostom in a scene from the film "Saher Al Nesa'a".



Hind Rostom in a scene from the film "Al Rahiba".



Hind Rostom in a scene from the film "Saher Al Nesa'a".



Hind today.



Hind Rostom in a scene from the film "Al Hob Al Samet".



The most expressive face in the universe.





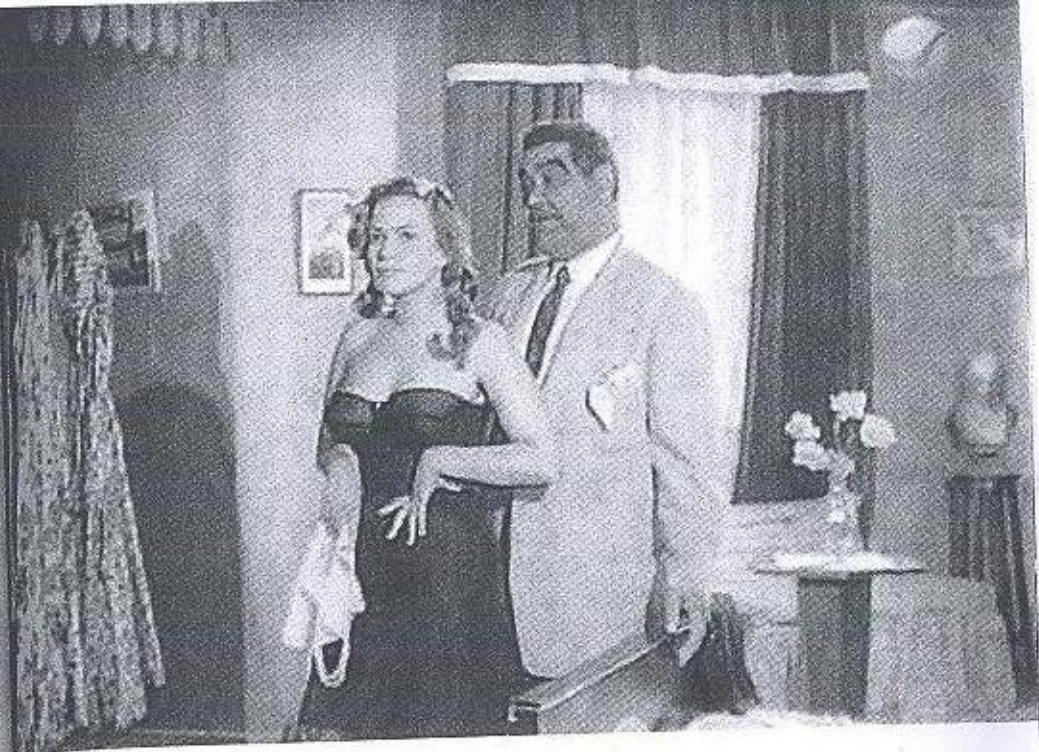




The magic is written all over her face!



Hind Rostom with Omar Sharif in a scene from the film "Enta Habibi".



Hands and face expressions.

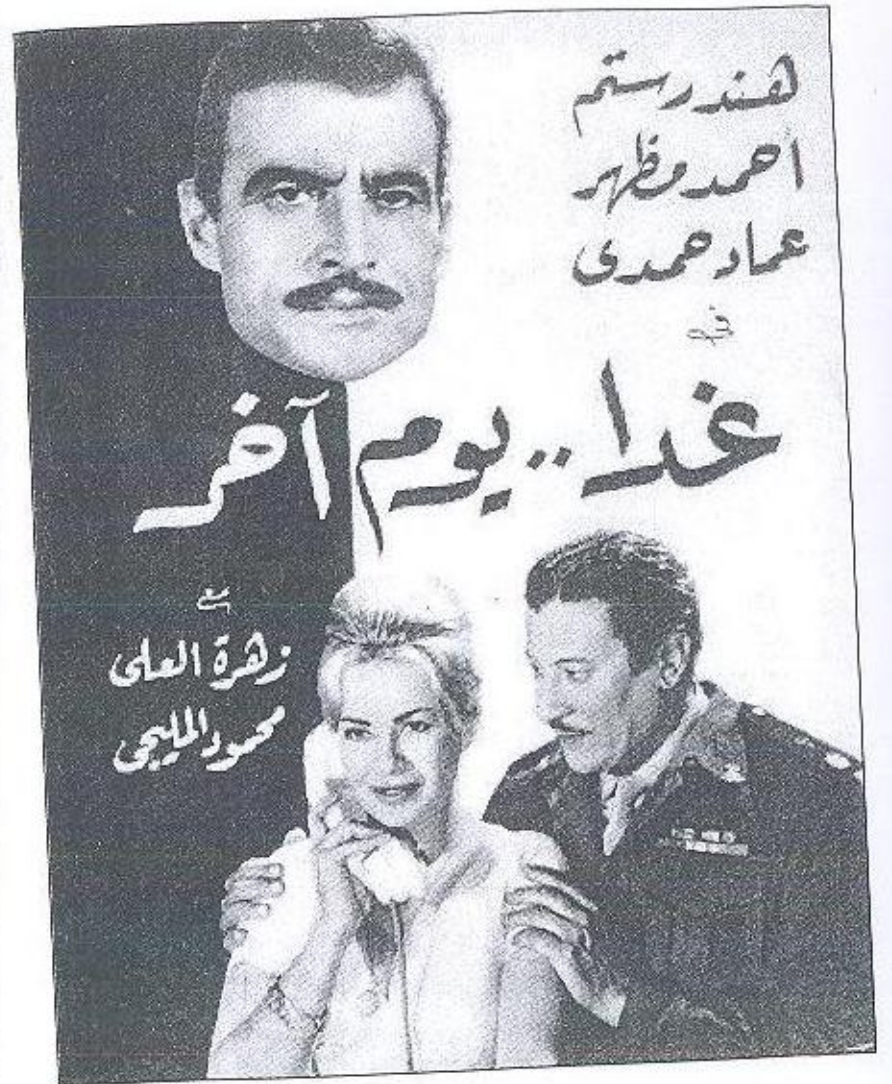


What a face!





Films' Posters







هند رستم
وزي البدوي
جسد يوسف
قولا الهندس

أمينه رستم
مسكنه رستم

صدا الامام

شفيقه القويه

باللون الطبيعي

شركة... صنع في... دمشق

عبد الإمام
يقدم فيديوهات التلخيص والإقلام

هند رستم
كلاك الشاذلي
حماد رياض
بشفاطه رشدي



الجسد

سليمان السيد بومر . محمد عثمان
كوسر . الفيزيقي أدر فانيك
لوتج . الرتبة المصرية العادة للساجا



أنتهم مسائل السيد
عنه

فريد شوقي
هند رستم
احمد رمزي

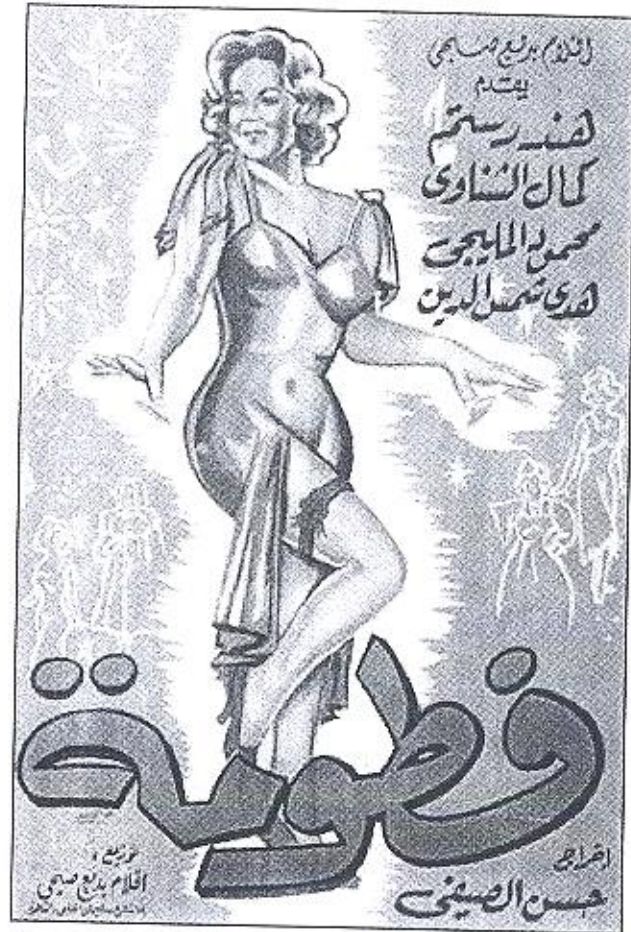
فريد رستم
محمد توفيق - فريدة زكري

الأخ الكبير

م. علي الزرقاني م. فطين عبدالوهاب

تحت إشراف وزارة الثقافة والاعلام







هشام رستم حسين قنديل
 عبدالمنعم ابراهيم سناء مظهر
 سعيد صالح صلاح السعدني
 نيل الملام محمد محمد عثمان



سهير زكي

مدرستي الحسنة

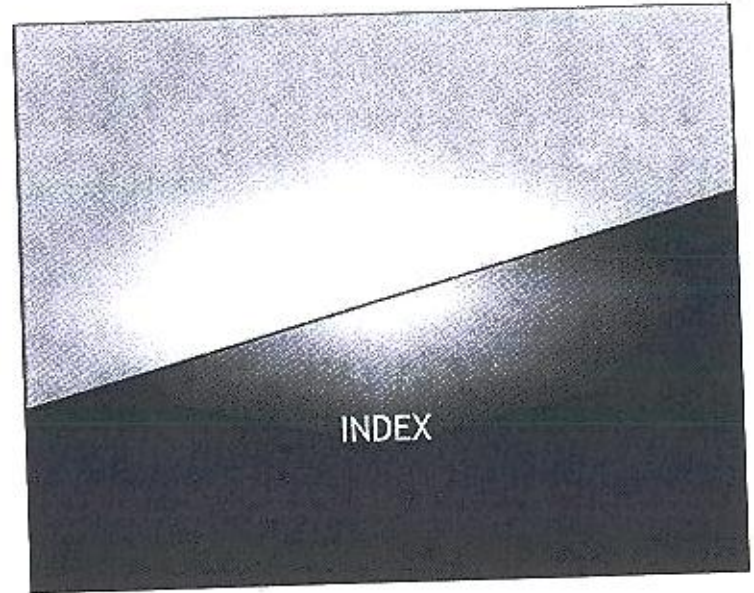
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