



Photo Gallery:  
Muiz street in Cairo

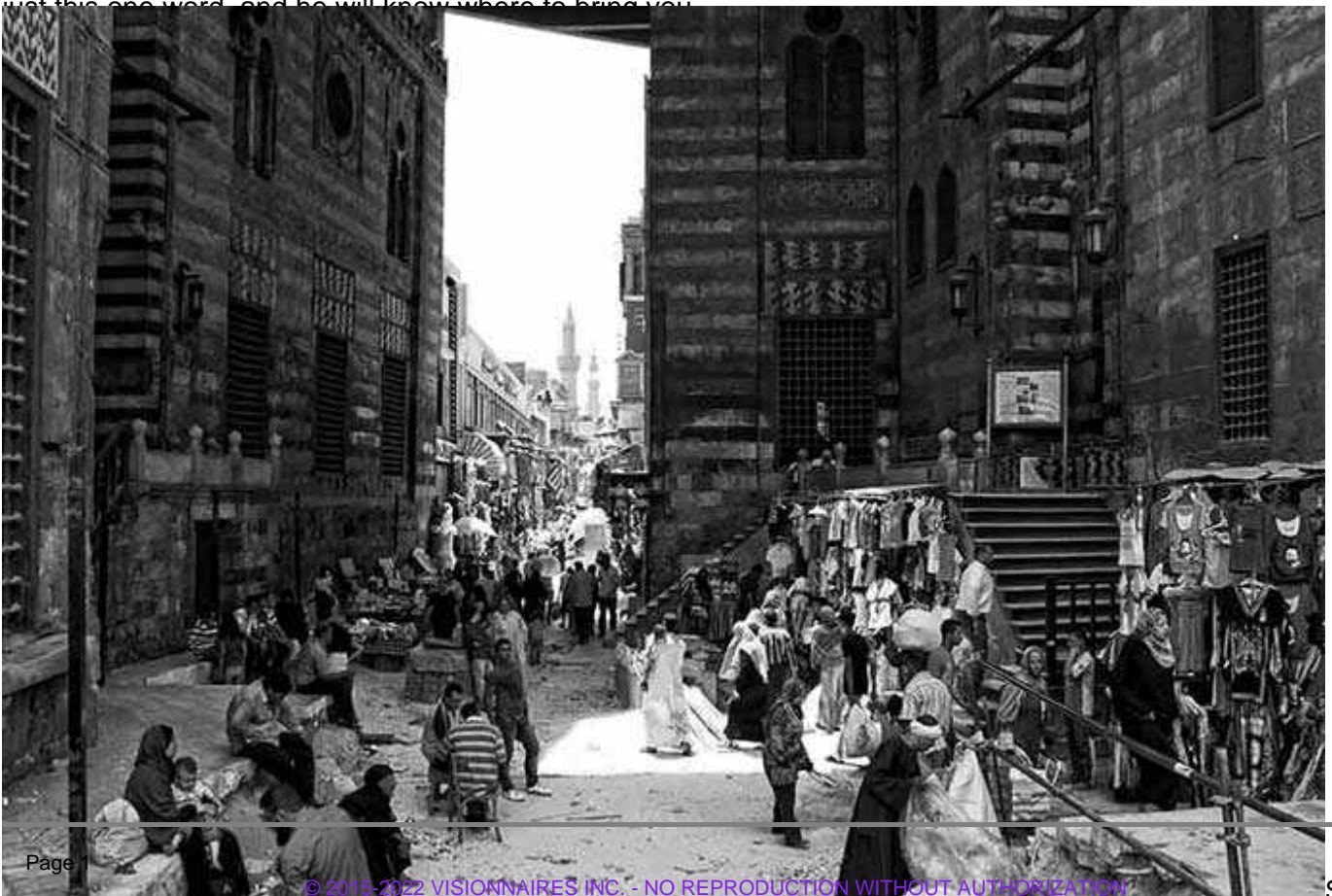
## Description

# A walk down the pulsing vein of the Mother of Cities – Photography by Roy M. Gunnels

Introduction by **Nancy Messieh**

Previously published September 16, 2017

The beige of ancient buildings, carved out of Egypt's history, is here in the heart of Cairo. Al Muiz li Din Allah. The full name, a guttural mouthful, is shortened to one word: Muiz. It is all it takes to get here. Tell any taxi driver just this one word, and he will know where to bring you.



and

car exhaust, water sprayed by shopkeepers in the summer to cool the burning stone, cats emerging from corners of buildings, contorting themselves around the legs of men standing, smoking, watching the people who walk past their wares, the street is unabashedly cliché in a way that keeps you coming back for more.

Centuries ago, it was the breathing, pulsing vein of Cairo, the mother of cities, the victorious city.



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2011, with hundreds of thousands taking to the street, as a president fell while taking the country with him into turmoil, the street changed. Cars pushed their way in and Muiz Street became a little bit more like any other street in the city, filled with pushy drivers, honking at people to clear the way, young men on motorbikes driving faster than they should, buzzing past you in the blink of an eye.

Keep walking down the street and it reveals more. A small hotel hidden in a corner you would not expect. Keep walking and the street widens. Here you'll find juice shops and a store selling large metal sculptures, the kind you find atop of a mosque's minaret. You'll find children full of the joy of childhood, playing on large rusted swings on the side of a street.

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On the other side, the pathway is little more than well trodden sand. The shops are more pedestrian, more



small side streets, there are men who open up decrepit old doors that reveal small workshops. Steps going down into a dark room reveal a man at an old sewing machine, carefully stitching pieces of leather together. In another, a young boy sharpens metal against stone, sparks flying.

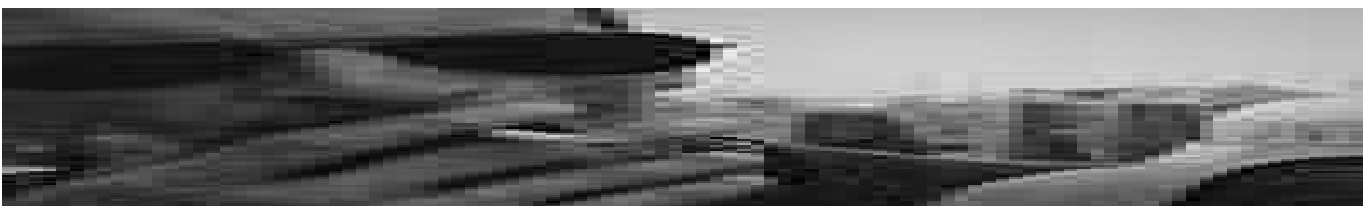
And as you continue further, the narrowing street changes with old mosques dotted with the bodies of praying men and women. You reach what seems like the end. And it once was. Here in the heart of the city, are walls that once signified the edge of Cairo. Bab Zuweila. Here Berber warriors stood guard. Here the city was under lock and key.

Today, we stand on the roof and look at a city. Cairo. Oum al Donia: the Mother of the World. The most beautiful place in the world. Full of life, and love, and disaster. Today we stand and look out over the history that is home.



You can see more of Roy's work on his website at [roygunnels.com](http://roygunnels.com). It is now in three separate galleries: works from around the world; works from the on-going project *Texas Gothic*; and the gallery that is closest to his heart, [\*Obscure Poésie\*](#).

See also: [\*Photo Gallery: Outlaw in Texas\*](#), also by Roy M. Gunnels



**Roy M. Gunnels** attended Texas Christian University and is a professional member of the National Press Photographers Association US, Frontline Freelance Registry in London, and Blink Media Listing in NYC. He is a fine-art and documentary photographer, and photojournalist. He has lived and worked across the Middle East, East Africa and Western Europe, and has been published internationally. [roygunnels.com](http://roygunnels.com)

### Category

1. Image Gallery
2. Travel

### Tags



1. Cairo
2. Egypt
3. Muiz Street
4. photo gallery
5. photographer
6. photography
7. Roy Gunnels

**Date Created**

September 2017