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Work from an exhibition organised by Sharjah Ladies Club at the Sharjah Art Museum. Courtesy Sharjah Art Museum

Peace is the theme for Sharjah ladies' art exhibition

Anna Seaman

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This month, female artists from 24 different countries will interpret the word "peace" in an exhibition organised by Sharjah Ladies Club.

Karine Roche, a French artist who lives in Abu Dhabi and works with Art Sawa gallery in Dubai, depicts beauty in urban life. Her carefully painted skylines form the backdrop to blooms of wild flowers in stunning colours that reflect the natural environment she finds around her.

"My work can be about the city and the flowers, but the real subject is the painting itself, which is about sharing love and peace."

Taghreed Suhail, an Iraqi who lives in Sharjah, is an accomplished calligraphic artist who spent months putting together a collection of paintings that depict some of the names of Allah that denote peace. "This exhibition is inspiring for me as an artist," she says. "It is nice to get to know other artists from other countries because they drive me to do more."

Sawsan Al Zoubi, from Syria, painted evocative scenes of the old town in Damascus and a self-portrait.

Al Zoubi, who is a professor and an author, speaks passionately about her homeland and the subject of peace. "I came to this exhibition to show that all things in Syria are not like as you see in the news. We are happy people, we love life and we are very peaceful." Al Zoubi was one of many artists who travelled from their countries for the exhibition, something which organisers say adds depth to the entire event.

Sara Al Marzouqi, the manager of the art and educational centre at the Ladies Club, says that it is an opportunity for women from the Arab world and beyond to express themselves. "Nowadays we have many issues and topics to discuss through art and female artists need a platform to showcase their work," she says. "It is also a formal exhibition, so we approach the embassies and they nominate four artists, which a team of judges selects. That is why we can say that these artists truly represent their countries."

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The selection process began last year and was completed by four judges: Mattar Bin Lahej, Ebtisam Abdulaziz, Najat Makki and Khalifa Al Sheimy.

The biennial event, now in its fifth edition and boasting a different theme every time, is hosted by the Sharjah Art Museum and held under the patronage of Sheikha Jawaher Al Qasimi, the wife of the ruler of Sharjah. The opening on Monday was attended by her daughter, Sheikha Bodour.

Women & Art: Interpreting Peace runs until February 28 at the Sharjah Art Museum. There are workshops and talks planned for the period of the exhibition. Visit www.sharjahmuseums.ae for more details

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