

CANVAS



A painting by Abeer Mohammed Al Hadrami.jpg A painting by Abeer Mohammed Al Hadrami

The woman fighting

The National | Dubai

Abeer Mohammed Al Hadrami stores about 100 of her own paintings in her parent's three-room apartment in the port city of Mukalla, the capital of Yemen's south-eastern province, Hadramout. You'll find some inside or on top of cupboards, and even under her bed.

Al Hadrami's favourite stands out among them. It's a 50 centimetre by 70cm piece that highlights the issue of child marriage. In it, a grey-haired pregnant girl is depicted wearing a white wedding dress and carrying a small toy. An over-sized hand clutches her right shoulder. "This is the hand of the society or parents," Al Hadrami explains. "I love this artwork too much."

The young artist was born in Aden, raised in the capital, Sanaa, and now lives with her mother and father in Mukalla, where Al Hadrami also has a small studio. She has been interested in art for as long as she can remember. "At home, I used to decorate cups, clothes and plates, and art was my favourite

subject during primary school." flashes a smile and winks at her mother who nods her head and shares her memories of her daughter who, as a baby, broke cups while trying to play with them. They both laugh as they explain how Al Hadrami scratched and scribbled her drawings wherever she could find an empty space.

Chasing her dreams

It's unsurprising then that she eventually pursued a career in art, particularly as the creative bug also runs in the family. "My sister, uncles and cousins are artists. My brother is a lute player," she explains.

She was clearly influenced by them from a child, but it wasn't until she went to college that Al Hadrami had the chance to truly explore her love of art, where she met a teacher who encouraged the budding artist to chase her dreams. "My teacher, Anwar, and my parents were the agents behind my early passion for art," she recalls. "My amateur sketches were polished when I was at college from 2010 to 2014."

Yemeni artist works hard to change the perception of modern art in her conservative hometown, while struggling to raise funds for a flailing creative scene



Abeer Mohammed Al Hadrami works on a painting Abeer Mohammed Al Hadrami works on a painting

REEL

Palestinian investment banker turned a

British-Palestinian filmmaker has not looked back since swapping her business suits and briefcases for cameras and film scripts



Farah Nabulsi

Arab News | Dubai

Farah Nabulsi had started out on a clear career path. Born and raised in the UK to Palestinian parents, she studied business in London and became an institutional equity stock broker at JP Morgan Chase.

But life changed totally, she said, after she visited Palestine and witnessed the everyday indignities that Palestinians endure.

"It hit me like a ton of bricks how colossal this injustice is, and how 1948 is happening right now in the present day," Nabulsi said, referring to the exodus of several hundred thousand Palestinians when Israel was established on their homeland.

"That experience and first-hand knowledge changed me. I knew that charity and sympathy were certainly not enough."

Nabulsi swapped her business suits and briefcases for cameras and film scripts. She took it upon herself to shed light on the injustices meted out to Palestinians since their mass displacement in 1948, known to Palestinians as the Nakba (Arabic for catastrophe).

"With one foot in the West — having been born, raised and educated in London — and the other — my heritage, the blood running

through my veins — in Palestine, I recognized the unique and rather powerful position I was in, so I changed the trajectory of my life," she said.

The change was a big one, but the British-Palestinian filmmaker has not looked back ever since, saying the shift has been "absolutely liberating."

So far, Nabulsi has made three short films on Palestine. One of them, "Today They Took My Son," follows a mother as she copes with

Born and raised in the UK to Palestinian parents, Farah Nabulsi studied business in London and became an institutional equity stock broker at JP Morgan Chase before turning to film



Actors and technicians at t