

Eliminating disc

For her art is a way to express her perception, dreams, and aspirations of women. Meet Ella Prakash who started her really special journey with art at the age of 20

TDT | Manama

Harpreet Kaur

Bahrain-based Indian artist Ella Prakash is best known for her inventive techniques and vibrant use of colours. Started her art career in 1984, art for her has been a way to express her perception, dreams, and aspirations of women.

Focusing on the topic of discriminations and double standards faced within the walls of her society. She always visually manages to incorporate all the elements of this topic and create an impact insincere positivity.

Being a celebrated artist across the globe, Ella has been mentioned in numerous national and international press such as Blouin Art info, West London Living, Notting Hill & Holland Park Magazine, Gulf daily news, Deccan Chronicle and Delhi Millennium post.

Ella, who is currently the Ambassador for Arts of India in Bahrain, also held exhibitions in London, New York, Miami, Hamburg, India and UAE.

“When you start painting you always have a base idea of what your finished work should be but more importantly allow yourself to prepare as many as alterations of your base idea. Simply because once your mind has decided to steer your thoughts, you start to unravel the emotions and strokes that you never thought you could express,” Ella told Tribune.

Art to liberation

“My art focuses closely on the medium of painting, which seems almost like a liberation, opening up the potential to give



Ella Prakash's painting Titled 'My World'

Ella Prakash is the is areas dynam of col ing of "L

SEIZING OP

Using art to beat the odds at refugee camp

CNN | Amman

Sitting alone outside a ramshackle caravan in Jordan's Zaatari Refugee Camp, Mohamed Jokhadar sips coffee from a stained cup and reflects.

Jokhadar is a Syrian refugee who, like so many refugees around the world, was violently torn from the life he once knew by civil war. Living in a refugee camp, he had to face reality. “I came to the realisation that I'm here and I'm not leaving,” he says.

Amid the canvas tents, temporary buildings and lost hope, Jokhadar chose to embrace his new life and seize opportunities within the camp.

Today, he not only owns a barber shop, but operates as an artist who chronicles the horrors unfolding in his homeland.

Refugee crisis

The Zaatari Refugee Camp, in Mafraq Governorate, opened in 2012 to host Syrians, like Jokhadar, fleeing military conflict in their country. Today, it is home to approximately 80,000 Syrian refugees, according to the UNHCR.

There are 68.5 million people worldwide who have been forcibly displaced, according to the UNHCR, and the increasing number of refugees, internally displaced people and asylum-seekers is mainly being driven by the war in Syria, the body said in 2014.

The Zaatari Refugee Camp, however, is no longer the desolate, foreboding place it once was. In just six years, it has been transformed from a barren tract of land into a bustling metropolis, thanks to its inhabitants' talent, zeal and determination to build a real community.

Tough choices

Jokhadar, aged 32, and his family were forced to leave their home in the city of Homs, in 2012, after extreme



Syrian refugee Mohamed Jokhadar in front of a mural he painted at the Zaatari Camp

shelling overtook the city.

Syrian Mohamed Jokhadar painting on a caravan, adding some colour to the Zaatari Refugee Camp.

At first, they moved within Syria. “We thought we'd stay in an area close to the Syrian border until the situation in Homs got calmer,” he says. But it never did.

In January 2013, Jokhadar entered the Zaatari Camp on foot with his wife and nine-month-old daughter. He was accompanied by his elderly parents, his brother and sister-in-law, and their three children.

Two years later, inside the caravan, he started a business.

“I knew living in a refugee camp was a sacrifice, but you have to do it for your family.”

A change in situation

In Syria, Jokhadar started a business