

CULTURE

In concert: Firetti, Moser and Salmah associate to celebrate art

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Salmah Al Mansoori's artwork on the wall beside Moser's glass creations.

Muhammad Yusuf, *Features Writer*

Firetti Contemporary, the gallery where art and creative concepts align from the region and beyond, has inaugurated (June 22 – July 4), an exhibition event in collaboration with the historic glassmaking firm Moser, founded in 1857.

The unique partnership showcases a selection of outstanding glass creations and a stunning fusion of traditional craftsmanship and contemporary art, celebrating over 160 years of Moser's unparalleled expertise in glassmaking.

The newly crafted pieces are inspired by the captivating artworks of Emirati artist Salmah Al Mansoori. The limited edition of glassworks and artworks showcases Salmah's watercolour series *I Reminisce in Colours*. It delves into diverse landscapes, from the vast desert to the evolving urban environment of her birthplace, Ghayathi. Salmah strives to encapsulate the essence of a city that has profoundly influenced her identity. Ghayathi is a town in Aldhafra, in the western region of the emirate of Abu Dhabi. Situated 250 kilometres from the city of Abu Dhabi, it is 20 kilometres from the coast. Ghayathi is famous for its fertile pastures and farms. It was originally a place of gatherings of nomadic tribes. Like its neighbour city Sila, Ghayathi is also a known centre of archaeological excavation, particularly after finding fossils dating back to eight million years ago in the area of Bogar, east of Ghayathi.

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Salmah Al Mansoori is an Emirati artist.

Ghayathi and its surroundings are particularised by their fertility and attractive sceneries, date and vegetable farms. There are also small farms rich in herds of goats and sheep, bred by some of the residents who live in nomadic-style tents. Against the vast green areas in the city, the sand dunes stretch to the surrounding areas, attracting visitors to explore and enjoy them. But time has not stood still at Ghayathi. Side by side ancient historical spaces, it now has villas, green parks, shops, offices, schools, clinics and retail stores.

Through her paintings, Salmah finds solace and healing, expressing her experiences and emotions through intricate mark-making and layers of colour. Each stroke represents a fragment of her journey and a reflection of the places and spaces that hold significance in her life. A core theme of her work is the concept that a place is more than just a geographical location — it is a canvas for understanding the construction of our identities. She believes that physical locations absorb thoughts, emotions and memories. For her, a sense of place can either connect one more deeply to his or her roots or lead them to question, challenge or even reject their origins, culture, and identity.

She collects memories, whether through the fluidity of the brush and acrylic or by gathering materials and objects to serve as mediums for exploration through drawing, painting and mixed media. Her recent and upcoming exhibitions embrace a solo showcase at The Warehouse, Dubai (2023), curated by Fatima AlKurdi; appearances in The Design District, Dubai (2023); The Foundry Gallery, Dubai (2022); Puertas Adentro, Punta del Este, Uruguay (2022); and participation in The 4th International Digital Media Triennial, Poland (2021).

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Salmah (b. 2001) has also been an active participant in various residency programmes, including Volume 6, Samt Alternative Art School Residency Program, Dubai (2022), MANGO Residencia para Artistas, Argentina, and Puertas Adentro, Casa de Artista, Uruguay (2022). She is currently based in Abu Dhabi, having earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Visual Art from Zayed University, Abu Dhabi, in 2023. Moser is a Czech company focused on the production of lead-free handcrafted luxury crystal. The glassmaker began life when Ludwig Moser, a talented engraver and businessman, opened an engraving workshop and store in the spa town of Karlovy Vary.



Salmah Al Mansoori during the inaugural.

Moser is known for manufacturing stemware, decorative glassware (such as vases, ashtray, candlestick), glass gifts and art engravings. "It is one of the most collected of 20th century decorative glass and has been used everywhere, from palaces to local restaurants," notes wikipedia. The collaboration between Moser and Salmah Al Mansoori at Firetti Contemporary brings together the timeless elegance of hand-cut glass and the vibrant storytelling of contemporary art. "Guests will have the unique opportunity to witness exquisite pieces firsthand and explore the artistic dialogue between traditional craftsmanship and modern artistic expression," says the gallery. "Join us in an event that celebrates the beauty of art and the enduring legacy of craftsmanship."