



Interviews » Fujairah-inspired artist to debut her work in the emirate

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The beautiful mix of serene and rugged nature and simple lifestyle, loved and enjoyed by residents of Fujairah, can not only bestow deep-felt satisfaction with life but also, it seems, inspire an artist to find her true calling.

Boryana Korcheva, a Fujairah resident from Bulgaria, has always been in love with art, but life and time had conspired to deny her what she longed for most; a chance to make art and share it with the world.

Now, her two old nemesis seem to combine well, only this time, to present her with the rarest but sweetest of peace offerings; a second chance.

On the 28th of April, Boryana will hold her first ever exhibition, at the Fujairah Tennis & Country Club. In the midst of the excitement and preparations, and in between trips to Art Dubai 2011, she sat down with Fujairah Observer to tell us about herself and her new venture.

Fujairah Observer: How did your story with art start? Was it an interest from early age or something you developed later?

Boryana Korcheva: It's something I was into as long as I can remember. Since I was a child all I wanted to do is draw and paint. When I got older, I wanted to study art at university, but parents being parents they insisted that first I should get a degree in a more traditional vocation, saying I could always paint or study art in the future.

So, always being one for thinking out-of-the-box, and being good with languages, I decided to study Arabic at Sofia University. I did, however, continue to study art very seriously on the side, but could never devote myself completely to it.

After that I had to work and I got married and so it became harder and harder to realize my dream of perusing a career as a painter.

F.O. How did you end up in Fujairah?

B.K. I first came out to the UAE about 15 years ago. We lived in Dubai and then briefly in Abu Dhabi before moving to Fujairah about three years ago. My husband's work is based here and we loved coming out here from time to time, but since my PR business dried up in Dubai, we thought why not make the move permanently.

F.O. How did living here make an impact on you?

B.K. Fujairah was like a trigger for me; it's such a beautiful space to work, the mountains, the sea and the people, as a human being and as an artist you can feel alive here.

Between me and my husband we have seven girls, but they're all grown up and have flown the nest. With my husband busy with his work, I suddenly had a lot of time on my hand and no pressure to work, and I didn't like the idea of sitting around waiting for grandchildren, so I found myself with a great opportunity to do what I always wanted to do but couldn't.

In the last three years, I started studying painting again and took it very seriously, covering most aspects of the art. Now, I'm so excited that finally this is happening; it's my dream. People have been so positive about holding an exhibition here in Fujairah and so am I. I have a friend who has expertise in the exhibition field and she will help in making this exhibition a proper art exhibition, that is to say the art will be chosen and arranged professionally and the exhibition will be a real art event.

F.O. What should we expect to see in the exhibition?

B.K. Putting on an exhibition is like publishing a book; there has to be a theme, a title and it has to tell a personal story, every painting is like a chapter in a book.

The title of the exhibition is *"Whoosh!"*. It represents the constant movement of the sea, the energy of the waves and the energy one feels in this place. I love to dive in the sea and seeing the fish and other sea life. Fish are a big part of what I'm painting now and also the mountains, fishermen and the city have all made an impact on what I paint. I feel connected to the environment and the everyday people out here and I think that's such an important thing. I speak fluent Arabic and can even differentiate between the different dialects and I love to interact with fishermen and ordinary market folk to fully feel that connection.

F.O. To most people art can feel a bit distant and intimidating, how can you bring people in and help them connect with art?

B.K. I will be there during the exhibition and will be happy to talk to people about anything they want to know or discuss. Usually art is a visual medium but I'm a very verbal person and I strongly feel art should be made more accessible to people, which is not to say simplified.

Most art discourse is full of hot air and is pseudo-philosophical, it alienates people from art and that is wrong. I

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like to fill my paintings with optimism; I feel there is too much sadness and misery out there.

F.O. How would you assess the art scene in the UAE?

B.K. I just came back from Art Dubai 2011 exhibition and there is some really good stuff from young and upcoming UAE artists. Some people complain about the art scene here but they forget it's a young country. It took Europe hundreds of years to get where it is today and this country is such a hub for everything, I'm sure it would be the same for the arts.

Fuad Mohammed Ali

The art exhibition featuring the art work of Boryana Korcheva will be held at the Fujairah Tennis & Country Club- just off Hamad bin Abdullah Street- behind Ajman University, from the 28th of April until the 5th of May.

Boryana Korcheva ...in her own words.

I immerse myself in painting with the eagerness and intensity of a lifetime of thoughts and emotions that have finally found their true outlet.

The message of my art is simple: despite of all controversies and injustices, it is a wonderful world. Directness is a very important aspect of my art: there is no theoretical scaffolding behind it. It is intended to work when looked at, not when read about. My paintings are figurative and mostly narrative, leading the viewer to an emotional journey of discovery. By deconstructing familiar shapes and reassembling them in new, unexpected ways I want to prompt the viewer to see new facets and meanings in the trivial things of everyday life, perhaps leading to deeper existential re-evaluations.

I am fortunate to live in a place bathing in sunshine all the year round, tucked between ragged, rocky mountains and a warm restless sea. I source my subjects from my immediate surroundings – a glimpse caught on a mountain road, a dive, a shape suddenly appearing in another shape, or a moment of special connection with another human being. Such encounters explode into a chain of ideas calling for artistic incarnation and so the work begins. I think of colour, line and texture as dynamic forces of passion, creation and impact. As the idea evolves, the process of painting takes over, often leading me to an unexpected outcome.

Whoosh! The Art of Joy

With concept art, video and happening art dominating the headlines, painting seems to be pushed backstage, undeservedly. What's more, a major part of contemporary art tends to be preoccupied with social criticism, frustration and determinism, without suggesting a way out.

I believe that the public is starved for simple beauty and its uplifting effect on the spirit and mind. My exhibition brings the viewers the joy of pure visual indulgence that comes with beautiful painting, seeking to rekindle optimism through a positive esthetic experience.

'Whoosh!' is a series of high energy, dynamic paintings of fish – as nature - in motion. I have chosen them as the theme of this exhibition because I believe that all the lessons which humanity needs to learn in order to survive the challenges of our time, are flagrantly evident in nature and its ways.

The second main theme is Women, presented in a series of paintings, each showing of veiled women. As a symbol of the continuity of life and its nurturing force, a source of resilience and beauty, Women take the positive message of my art to another more intimate level.

All the works included in *Whoosh!* have been inspired by and created in Fujairah. They bear the unmistakable charm and energy of this extraordinary part of the world, so rich in beauty, history and human narratives.

Comments on this article:

Posted by :
wowwww Boryana... what an article.... i love your views about the art scene here... well said.

Posted by **Cindylee**:
Interesting reading and looking forward to the exhibition. Feel inspired by the artists description of her work. Congratulations Boryana

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