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PLAYING HOST TO ARABIAN GULF ARTIST

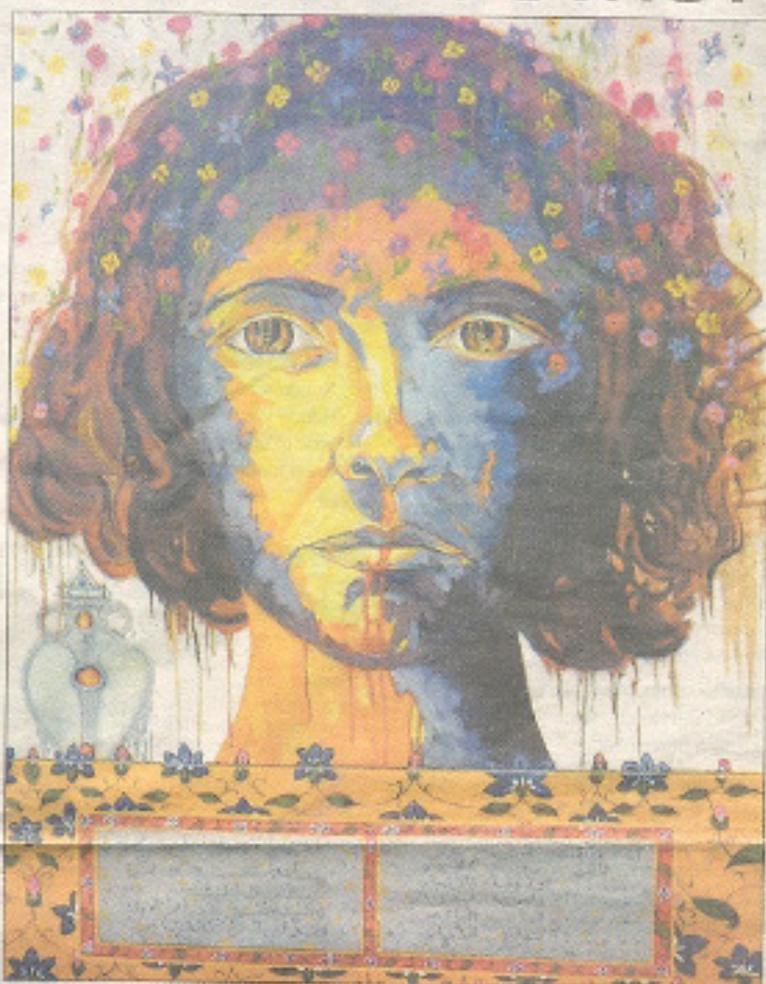
The complexity and challenge that change brings to our lives - at a cultural, social and personal level - is explored in ZAHIDAH, a compelling new exhibition by Syrian artist, Zahidah Zeytoun Millie, at Monash University Gippsland's Switchback Gallery.

Born in Syria, trained in Lebanon and now living in the United Arab Emirates, Zeytoun Millie's work is about one person searching for a way to connect with the rapid political, social and architectural change engulfing her everyday life in the Arab world.

Framed by the frustration and frequent loss caused by considerable change, Zeytoun Millie's paintings enact cultural recovery through exploring family heritage, community history and the urban transformation being seen across many Arab Gulf countries.

"ZAHIDAH is an exhibition about discovering our surroundings, and exploring how we fit - as individuals, families and communities - within the rapid architectural developments in the towns and cities we live in," Zeytoun Millie said.

"For me, and in the United Arab Emirates, this involves looking at not just the stories and events that influenced my childhood, but the current popular uprisings we are witnessing across the Arab world."



ZAHIDAH 5 ZAHIDAH ZEYTOUN MILLIE, 2012. ACRYLIC AND OIL ON CANVAS. 168 X 124CM

Building connections between the ancient civilisations of Syria and traditional Arab approaches in architecture, embroidery and calligraphy, ZAHIDAH provides the context for Zeytoun Millie to express discoveries and truths about the people close to her, and the societies in which she lives.

Exhibition curator and Switchback Gallery director Rodney Forbes said in addition to presenting a fascinating insight to the change being experienced in the Arab world, ZAHIDAH was equally relevant for a region such as the Latrobe Valley.

"While the scale and scope of change in the Latrobe Valley is a long

way from that being seen in the Arab world, the evolution of our local industries, and our need to transition to a low-carbon future makes ZAHIDAH especially relevant and timely," Mr Forbes said.

ZAHIDAH continues until 4 August at Switchback Gallery. For more information, phone 5122 6261.



the King of pop
is and
el Jackson
tribute
1 August 2012
sador
Centre

and enquiries please
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