

Tribute to the oriental woman



Tales from Arabian Nights: Mona Trad Dabaji



gender-related, this exhibition is in the spirit of modernity --which doesn't go against tradition, but still ensures the continuous renaissance of traditional ideas."

An accomplished painter, Mona graduated from the American University of Beirut in Fine Arts. She has been teaching drawing and painting since 1993. For more than a decade Mona's work has appeared at various exhibitions around the world, including Africa, Beirut, Paris and Jordan. She is a member of the Lebanese Artists, Painters & Sculptors Association and Secretary at the Salon d'Automne of the Sursok Museum.

"Ten years ago, I returned home to present my personal exhibition in Lebanon. Beyond history, colour and humour, my main interest was to communicate the beauty of our tradition, the warmth of our interiors and the clarity of our blue skies. Today, my message remains the same. I aim to re-create the orient where music vibrates and scents tingle in the air. I

hope to portray an image of Orient that since Ingres, has not ceased to make the world dream," says Mona.

Drawing upon the title of the exhibition, the paintings are an interpretation of the legendary tale of Shahrazade, about the embittered king of old Persia, who had his unfaithful wife beheaded. Resentful of women, the king takes a wife to bed every night and then beheads them the following day. In a bid to prevent any more executions, the beautiful Shahrazade bravely offers herself to the king and each night, tells him enchanting tales that offer him escape into a fantasy world. As dawn - and her imminent death - would approach, Shahrazade would stop her story at a crucial point to keep the king eager to hear the conclusion and therefore delay her execution.

The exhibition is on at Jadis Gallery Dubai till November 6, 2002. The Gallery is open daily from 10 am to 1:30 pm and from 4:30 pm to 8:30 pm.

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This one is an impressive tribute to the Orient women. An exhibition of paintings by Lebanese artist Mona Trad Dabaji, titled, *Shahrazade or the 1001 faces of the oriental woman*. Mona's paintings pay tribute to the oriental women of the Gulf and the Mediterranean.

Inspired by the Shahrazade tale, Mona has drawn upon the elements of dreams, escapism, love and passion. The paintings portray women immersed with their own lives, unconstrained and impervious to

temptation -- in a world where nobody is watching them. Her paintings reveal the multiple facets of her life: at work, reading, singing or simply dreaming.

"If her drawings' forms and contours remind us of the French artist Henri Matisse, the generous figures of the women they portray would have pleased Renoir. Mona paints nostalgic slices of life. Representing Lebanon, a country destroyed and reconstructed, Mona's work forms a link between the past and the present," is how Jadis Gallery, where the exhibition is on, describes the collection.

Commenting on this unique collection, Dona Turk, Counsel General Lebanon, said, "Far from being

