

Exhibit will open gateway to Islam

The National Gallery of the Cayman Islands opens an intriguing exhibition next week entitled 'Windows To My World' featuring a poignant collection of images, poetry and prose by Rabeeah Dilbert that capture the Islamic culture, its beliefs and its people.

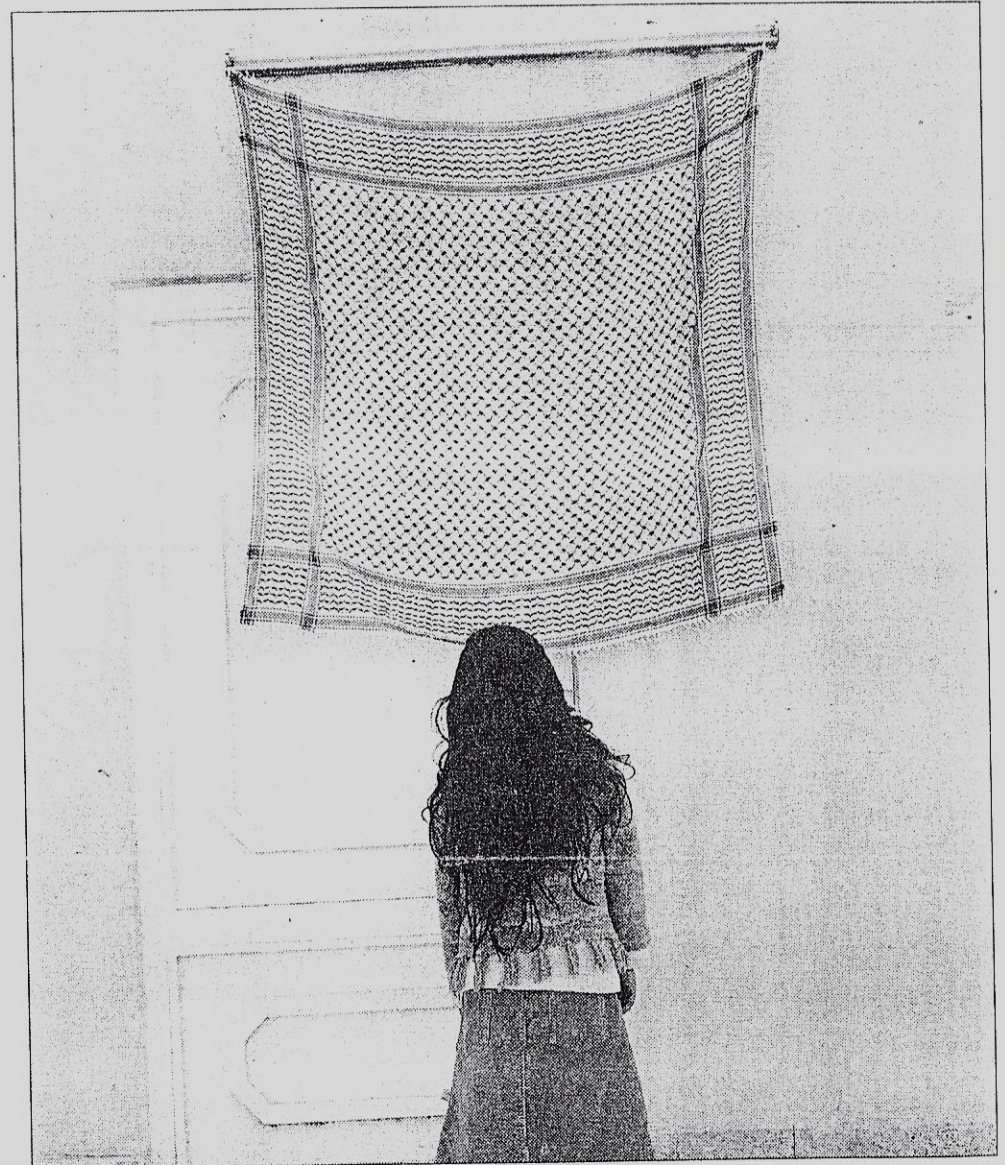
Rabeeah Dilbert was born in Cayman Brac in 1972. Although her interest and ability in poetry, art, and writing were evident at a very early age, she pursued a degree in Economics at the University of Tampa, Florida. During this time, Rabeeah reverted to Islam. In 1999,

she and her family moved to Houston, Texas, where she pursued her dream of becoming a writer. There, she also created and successfully launched FIT IT – a unique fitness program for the Muslim community. Then, in 2000, Rabeeah and her family moved to Saudi Arabia in order to learn more about their religion.

Today, as well as being a published writer for Q-Kids Comics, Rabeeah has written, and illustrated, a children's book which is due to be published in a few months. Her first, small book of poetry, *One*, is also forthcoming, extracts of which appear in the show.

In fact, her photographic debut exhibition, *Windows to My World*, hosted by the National Gallery is the visual culmination of her poetry. Rabeeah forges her own path as a self-taught photo and graphic artist, revealing intriguing images into her special realm. Once there, this emerging artist utilizes her power of observation to captivate the viewer's emotions and stir their sense of humanity with photographs that are personal and intimate.

"Rabeeah creates a sense of the drama, through both colour and black and white photog-



Windows To My World By Rabeeah Dilbert

tinian people," explains Natalie Coleman, the gallery's curator. "It is easy

about a culture that is so different from our own and Rabeeah's poignant collection of images and

poetry leave us to ponder these misconceptions." The haunting photographs include portraits

One

by Rabeeah Dilbert

Perplexed by twinkling, star-littered skies,
A nocturnal ritual for searching eyes.
One who was never born, never dies,
An inner certainty undaunted by lies,
The persistent whispers of a child's mind,
She stalks the night, the truth to find.

Amazed by the strength of tiny working ants,
A daily observance where clarity is enhanced,
One who has no comparison, does not create perchance,
A burning resolve maintains a stance,
The constant interruption of childish play,
She studies her subjects by night and by day.

Intrigued by questions of the End and the First,
A passionate rite to quench a mind's thirst,
One, unlike His creation, He does not give birth,*
Affirmed by the magnificence of Heavens and Earth.
Profound issues to bewilder an ordinary child,
Her rarity emanates from every wonderful smile.

A quest that disturbs the hypocrite and evades the blind,
In unison with creation, she names her belief in time.
Guidance is an absolute mercy from the Most Kind,
A soothing arrival for the probing mind.
The One that all of creation is dependent upon,

She surrenders to Him,
He is Allah, One.

raphy, that hurls us into
the struggle of the Pales-

to form misconceptions collection of images and

graphs include portrayals of desperate children throwing stones in defense and veiled Muslim women as well as more intimate images of a child's hand tenderly caressing his father's beard. Thus, by the masterful command of subject, scene, colour and light, *Windows to My World*, is visual poetry that truly tantalizes.

"The National Gallery is proud and delighted to be the opening element in Cayman's celebration of our own, Rabeeah Dilbert, in her debut gallery exhibition, *Windows to My World*," says Ms. Coleman.

'*Windows to My World*' opens on 20 January. Call the National Gallery on 945-8111.