

Windows to My World

A collection of photography, poetry and prose by Rabeeah Dilbert

The National Gallery of the Cayman Islands opens an intriguing exhibition 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 at their satellite gallery the Grand Old House restaurant, 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 photography, that hurls us into the struggle of the Palestinian people," explains Natalie Coleman, the gallery's curator. "It is easy to form misconceptions 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 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' runs from January 20th until March 23rd at the Grand Old House restaurant.

 "Out of the dusk they come,
 Little Knights of Freedom.
 Weapons of defence,
 Sprung from the Earth.
 Desperate to succeed,
 Abhorring surrender.
Into the battle they run,
 Hearts beating loudly
 To Freedom's drum."

Rabeeah Dilbert, 2004