

Visiting artist's show in Riyadh spotlights the Palestinian issue

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Muna Goetze's travel in search of self-fulfillment as an artist has brought her to the Kingdom's capital where she is presenting her works in an exhibition entitled 'Lifelines' at the upscale Areej Art Cafe at the first floor of Central Mall on Thalia Street.

The exhibition is held under the patronage of German Ambassador Dieter W. Haller and Austrian Ambassador Gregor W. Koebler and will go on until Friday, showcasing 31 abstract artworks in acrylic paint.

"The artworks reflect the artist's view of life as well as her concept of art," the German envoy said.

Goetze succeeds in getting her message across. The paintings show different colors, which evoke varied emotions. The light blue suggests peace and hope where red and crimson give the impression of confusion and

anger. "Art is the best way to unlock understanding between different cultures," said Adam Kulach, European Union head of delegation. "The images you see in the paintings," he said, "trace elements of a different culture and philosophy of life."

Abstract art is difficult to comprehend but the key to Goetze's works lies in the only titled artwork, 'Family on the Way'. It shows images of people, a family that wants to go somewhere but is unable to, because of a blockade. This inevitably calls to mind the situation of Palestinian families who could not visit relatives staying in areas, which originally belonged to them.

This results in agitation among them and skirmishes with their oppressors, which are depicted in Goetze's works that suggest anger and confusion in crimson colors punctuated with twisted black lines.

At least three artworks, referred to only as numbers 835, 836 and 837, suggest a fresh



Muna Goetze during the opening ceremony of the exhibition in Riyadh. (AN photo)

spring morning with blue as a backdrop. This seems to suggest hope and optimism.

The artist has earlier held 25 exhibits in Germany and one each in Kuwait, Tunisia, Jordan

and Vienna. In holding her show in the Kingdom's capital, Goetze's artworks are assured of patronage from Saudis and foreign nationals who have been sympathetic to the Palestinian

cause. In fact, during the opening night, a European diplomat said he wanted to buy one of the artworks.

Sabria Boudinar, cultural officer at the French Embassy, said, "The paintings are very nice and very inspiring."

But more than the monetary returns of the exhibition is the fact that as an artist, Goetze has shown a social commitment for which she will be remembered.

If Goetze has been imbued with social commitment as an artist, one reason for this is the fact that her mother is a Palestinian. Her mother worked hard to bring up her children. She went with her children to Kuwait to work.

While in Germany, Goetze used to take care of some 30 children who could not be cared for by their parents.

"She gave them a stable life. Most of them have finished their studies," said Sabine Schwarzmann-Hudeib, who works at the Germany Embassy.