

Reconnecting Arts

Supporting Middle Eastern Creatives



Leena Al Ayoobi, fusing Arabian folk art and childhood memories of Japanese Manga.

Leena Al Ayoobi (https://www.instagram.com/Leenz_Art/) is a local Bahraini artist and designer. She introduces a new art style that is a fusion of Arabian folk art and Japanese manga, mainly influenced by the manga godfather Hayao Miyazaki. The cartoon was popular and still is popular in the Middle East. Find out more about Leena's work!



Tell us about yourself?

My Name is Leena Al Ayoobi, I am a local Bahraini artist and designer (Founder and owner of Dar Alfann) and a member of the Bahrain art society, my artwork is influenced by my Arabian culture and traditions with a touch of Japanese manga art style as I've been influenced by it since childhood.

I started drawing at a very early age, around 7-8 years old or as soon as I started using a pen, I used to watch TV and draw whatever I saw, that is the time I picked my style.

What influenced you to start being creative?

I've been working in the financial sector all of my life and had left art on the side, during a financial crisis in the country that affected my workplace I started picking up art again in 2014 and tried to participate in a few art events and exhibitions. I got such good feedback and encouragement, therefore I found myself again and in 2016, made art my only line of work.



What message do you want to give through your artwork?

I have many messages through my artwork, I find it easy to explain or tell a story than verbally giving explanations. I have never been a good talker or a dialogue opener but through my paintings, I can tell the stories of women of this part of the world and their journey in life and what they represent in society, in a very colorful and simple way.

What themes do you often explore in your artwork and why?

Currently, I'm focusing on traditional themes, as I'm participating in events and galleries abroad and it's a beautiful way of explaining and showing your background and culture.



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(<https://reconnectingarts.com/2017/06/01/leena-al-ayoobi-fusing-arabian-folk-art/night-stars/>)

Tell us more about your style?

I had my first solo exhibition last March in Dubai, and to my surprise, many people who visited and even the head of visual arts in Dubai culture were not familiar with the art style or the fusion of art. So I wanted to talk about it more and familiarize people with it, I started creating more paintings and trying to get my work out there.

This art style is called lowbrow pop surrealism (lowbrow art movement), it started in Los Angeles, California in the late 1970's it is also known by the name pop surrealism and is very popular in the States and other European countries and of course Asia.



What is your favorite artwork you have created and why?

My favourite artwork is called *The mask*. When I first started engaging in the art world in 2014, I was drawing differently as I was not sure how the public or art scene where I live would take in this new art style. *The mask* was a transition from my old art style that I started with to my original art style that I love which is the Japanese manga fusion so it has a mask held by a lady, the mask being of the old style of faces.

What is your most important artist tool? Is there something you can't live without in your studio?

My tools keep on breaking or getting ruined, I'm a bit harsh in my use, the most important thing that I always like to have is music, it adds feelings to the paintings.



What are your thoughts on being an artist in today's world?

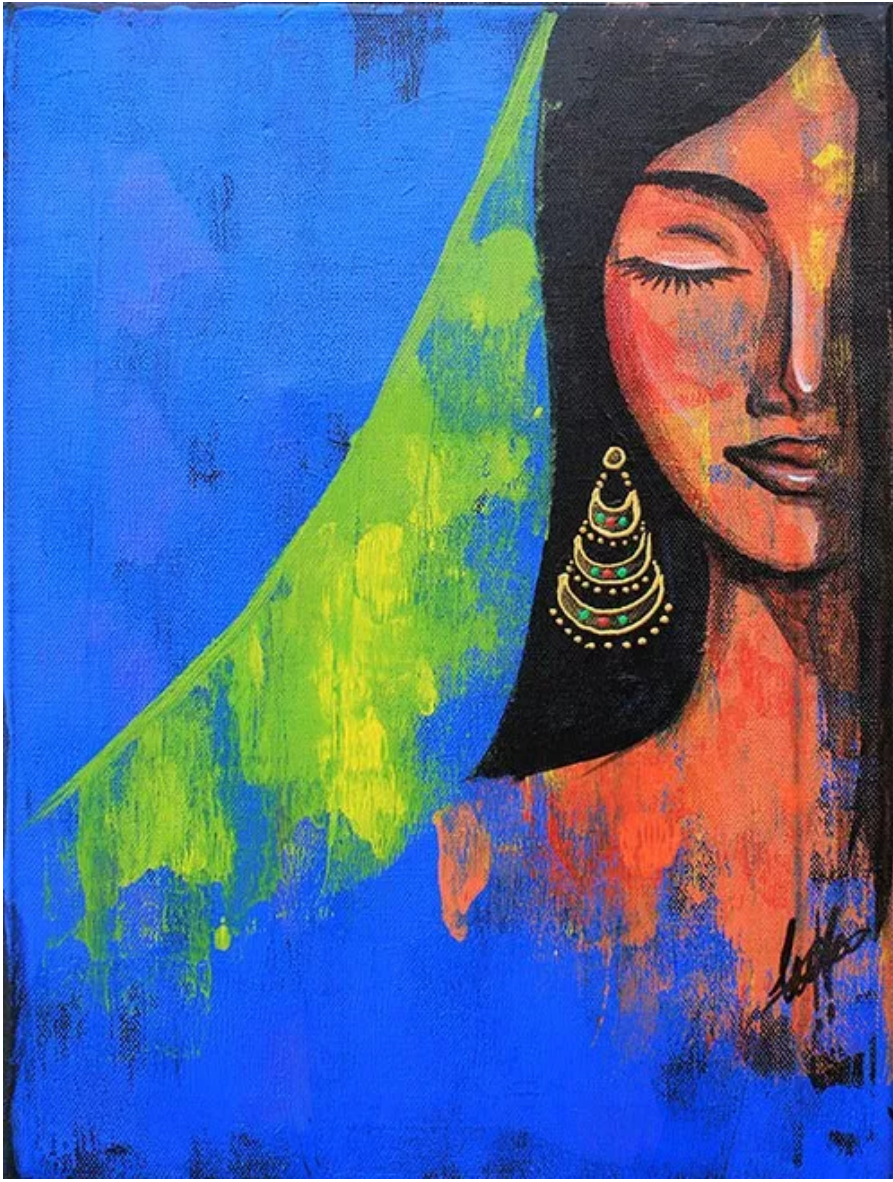
Art is a beautiful way to express so many things, it's easier to connect and be in touch with artists from any part of the world with the social media these days, it helps spread creativity.

What's the best advice you ever had about how to be more creative or what advice would you give to someone?

Don't be afraid of experimenting and trying new things, which I always advise my friends, you never know what you might invent or discover.



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(<https://reconnectingarts.com/2017/06/01/leena-al-ayoobi-fusing-arabian-folk-art/attachment/006/>)

Who are your favorite Arab artists at the moment?

There are many talented Arab artists out there, this is a very difficult question, but my number one artist which I was a fan of since my childhood and he keeps on inspiring me is Abbas Al Mousawi (<http://instagram.com/abbasalmosawiart>), he's creative with the use of color.

Check out more of Leena's work on her Instagram account!
(https://www.instagram.com/Leenz_Art/)

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