

# Aisha Alabbar opened her first gallery in Dubai

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## Aisha Alabbar, Founder of Aisha Alabbar Gallery: Showcasing Local Art To The World

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**A**isha Alabbar opened her first gallery in Dubai in November 2018. The bright, open-plan warehouse space in Al Quoz has since held exhibitions, film nights and workshops for up-and-coming local artists, as well as showcasing art from around the region. We spoke to Alabbar as she was preparing for the gallery's first Dubai Meets The World exhibition.

### What was your vision for the gallery when you first opened two months ago?

I love art and I felt that I wanted to use that to do something for our country. There are a lot of local artists with a lot of talent, and together we can do something special. Through art we can communicate across the world without talking. If we can show people our art it can help them to understand us—by looking at your art they will know who you are, what you like. We can show people our country and who we are. We are friendly, we are peaceful, we have a lot of nationalities around us. I want to show the world who we are.

I also wanted to create a space for artists. This is a new spot for them to find themselves. My ultimate vision is that Aisha Alabbar Gallery be a home for artists, so they can prove themselves if they're just starting out. I want local artists to have a chance to have a space and a chance to grow and show the outside world that they have something to say.

As an artist and photographer, I had the opportunity to create and realize my dream. We've just started, but we're starting to collect freelance artists and make a name for ourselves. Artists come here and they are really enthusiastic. They share ideas. By exchanging ideas, you can create amazing art, and art is a message for the world.

Even the government now, they are very focused on art because it's important. I think they want Dubai to be open art, for the people. They want art to be felt everywhere—in the streets, in the malls, everywhere. When visitors come, they can see the messages in a very easy way and learn about our country, our life, how we live, in a very simple and elegant way. Dubai itself has become a canvas.

### How many Arab artists are you currently showing?

We are currently exhibiting art from around ten Arab artists. They are from Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. And I exhibit my own work.

### What inspires you in your own art work?

It's like conceptual storytelling. It's difficult to talk about something that's inside you. It's a part of me. Sometimes I can't talk, but I can take pictures, I can draw. I have this in my mind and without talking I can tell people what I feel.

### When did your passion for art and photography begin?

I started to learn in 2008. I'm a photographer and I wanted to understand how a camera works, how it operates, how can I use it? Then I set about proving myself more. I took more workshops, I travelled a lot to see the world and I tried to show my work online.

### How did you design this space?

When I chose the place for the gallery, I wanted it to be a big space that could be multipurpose. We have three lines—art, fashion and cinema—and anything regarding these we can do here. We can use this space for workshops, film nights, exhibitions. We hold events and meetings here. We can do a lot of things because the place is versatile.

For example, we have shown short movies by a local Emirati director, and we are now planning to organize workshops about film and cinema. We're also starting to do new workshops in calligraphy. We are currently deciding topics and schedules for what comes next, but at the moment we are focusing on the new exhibition.

### What do you think makes this gallery unique in Dubai?

If you come here you can find everything you want, whether you're an artist or a collector. When artists come here, they feel like they're home. They've told me they find it very comfortable—they can talk and work and learn in comfort and peace.

We have a lot of things in our mind and we are only just starting. I'm very happy with how it's all coming together at the moment. I have a lot of ideas and I'm looking forward to bringing them to life.

*The thoughts expressed in this advertorial are solely those of the client.*