

ARTIST STATEMENT : SAWSAN AL SARRAF

Life works in cycles. Birth and death, happiness and sadness, gain and loss, hope and fear; such are the patterns of our lives. This statement is not about myself, the artist, it is about Sawsan Al Sarraf as a human being, my cycle as I have experienced it until this moment and the next.

As a child, I didn't need to talk about my art, and make statements about it since it was pure and simple; it reflected my spontaneous self-expression and my little knowledge about life.

As an adolescent, I was living in a fantasy world. I avoided criticism because it was so personal to me. I was proud that I can express my thoughts and feelings freely, but I didn't want to be judged as a person through my artwork.

More than twenty years ago, I became and still am a mother of two daughters. When my girls needed me the most, my time and my identity were dedicated to them. Perfection was my intention at that time; I wanted to be a perfect mother and wife, a perfect entertainer, a perfect cook. That was how my art developed at that point in my journey. I worried about every small detail, and overworked my art, in frustration.

My present phase is the closest I have reached to maturity. I didn't reach this phase by number of years but by the experiences that have shaped my life and my identity. Ultimately, my reaction to the richness I have come across, from my rich cultural heritage, to my ongoing education, has led me to one point: traveling all the way through these adventures opened the door to my spiritual growth which was my essential destiny. The wisdom grows in my heart more than in my head.

*To find a Pearl dive deep into the ocean
don't look in fountains
To find a pearl you must
emerge from the water of life always thirsty
-Rumi*

One Sufi master defines Sufism, "Anyone can learn the outer forms of prayer and worship, Sufism seeks to develop a heart that can pray". I needed to go back to my childhood to remember to take life abstractly; relearning how to simplify and free my spirit bearing no limitation of space and time. Since I am still evolving and searching in this path, my artwork is seeking the same destiny.