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The Peninsula

Iraqi artist's retrospective in Doha

BY RAYNALD RIVERA

DOHA: The simplicity of the Iraqi way of life in the past is perfectly frozen on canvas in paintings that went on display yesterday in a retrospective of works by the late Iraqi artist Faraj Abbo Al Numan at the Waqif Art Centre (WAC).

Al Numan's works are the first offering of WAC in a series of exhibitions called 'Pioneers of Arab Modern Art'.

"His works are a mirror that carries many details and specifications of Iraqi art from the 40's to the 80's," Dr Shetah Faraj Abbo Al Numan, the daughter of the artist, told *The Peninsula*.

"He has his own unique style, using lighter shades, and among his favourite subjects are Iraqis', especially Baghdadis', daily life — women, family, and his neighbourhood," Al Numan said.

Even without knowing about the artist's formal training, visitors to the exhibition can see that, indeed, the artist had entirely mastered his craft with his expert use of various media such as charcoal, oil and watercolour.

Conferred with the highest degree for art by the Academy of Fine Arts in Rome, Faraj Abbo



Dr Shetah Faraj Abbo Al Numan, daughter of Iraqi artist Faraj Abbo Al Numan, talking to visitors at the opening of an exhibition of Faraj's works last night at the Waqif Art Centre. **SALIM MATRAMKOT**

Al Numan participated in over 60 exhibitions. He was one of the main founders of the Iraqi artists' committee, in addition to being a teacher, writer, theater director and designer.

His more than a dozen works on display at WAC chronicle life

in Iraq in a kaleidoscope of colours. In 'Nile River Workers', Al Numan captures the burden of labour 60 years ago, while the solemnity and sincerity of a woman asking for God's grace is seen in 'Woman Praying'.

Lake (1980) and

Neighbourhood in Old Mosul (1968) vividly portray nature and man's communion with it in his everyday existence.

Art lovers have until June 4 to enjoy Al Numan's works at the WAC.

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