

The Streets of Makkah

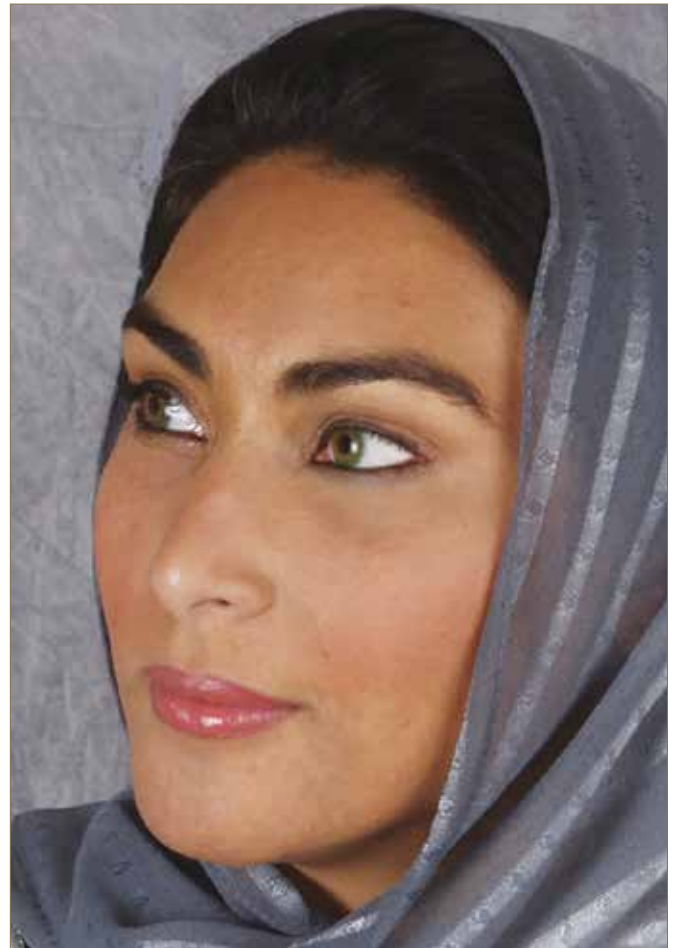
POETRY BY NIMAH NAWWAB

Nimah Ismail Nawwab was born in to a Makkan family with a long history of scholars. After graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature, Nimah worked in translation services and then started a career in public relations. Her poetry has been published on several websites, translated into numerous languages, included in anthologies and taught at schools and colleges in Arabia, the US, Canada, Singapore, Japan, India and others. She is also a poetry judge and facilitator of poetry sessions and workshops in several countries. Nimah has been nominated a Young Global Leader of the Young Global Leaders Forum, an affiliate of the World Economic Forum.

*The streets of Makkah,
Long bordered with tall, tall homes,
White-washed homes, wooden homes,
Built on every corner, mountain top, ridge,
On the valley floor of the sacred land.*

*Tall, tall homes,
Centuries old homes,
Studded with brown aged latticed windows,
Overlooking mysterious labyrinths, winding walkways,
Alleys echoing with the passage of sounds,
Voices of those long gone.*

*Voices of families, friends all known to one another,
Welcoming strangers from other lands,
Spending sheeshah*-filled nights,
Quiet nights, loud nights,
In the open on the dakkah**
Hours of tea drinking, hours of tales,
Brimming with told and untold stories,
Of past generations, present generations,
Held in the collective memory,
A memory retaining the glorious past,
Undeterred by the present.*



* Sheeshah: a water pipe used by men and women

** Dakkah: a raised bench