

# I'm Every Woman

## "Breaking the Veils" at the Hattiesburg Depot

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William Faulkner once wrote, "It is [a poet's] privilege to help man endure by lifting his heart, by reminding him of the courage and honor and hope and pride and compassion and pity and sacrifice which have been the glory of the past. The poet's voice need not merely be the record of man; it can be one of the props, the pillars, to help him endure and prevail."

The truth of these words holds also for the artist. Art, too, can say much more than is expressed by the mere image on canvas.

The works included in the *Breaking the Veils* exhibit (showing at the Hattiesburg Depot) are by women from many nations. The artists are Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, and Hindus. They represent women at all stages of life--young professionals, mothers, grandmothers--and from 20 different nations throughout the Muslim world. These works represent varying perspectives as well.

As I viewed the collection last evening, I realized that I could relate to this exhibit across a wide array of perspectives.

- **As a woman**, I see in these pieces all of the same ideas, hopes, fears, and dreams that I have experienced.
- **As an art lover**, I see the talent of 52 women and admire their passion, their skill, and their eye for detail.
- **As an educator**, I look to this exhibit as an opportunity to teach every visitor about the fascinating people and cultures of such places as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, and Jordan.
- **As a Hattiesburg native**, I see the potential to demonstrate through this artwork that we are a culturally aware, open, and receptive community that values diversity while holding fast to the best of tradition.
- **As the President of The University of Southern Mississippi**, I see a chance to shine on a national stage as we host an exhibit that has toured Europe and Australia. It opened its US tour at the Clinton Presidential Library this summer, and will leave us in December as it makes its way to the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

Many thanks to all who made this remarkable event a reality.

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Wow.

I bet the sorority blog readers are reaching for their hankies. It appears clear that the summer books are completed and the fall books have not yet arrived. Nothing to dress up for, nothing to judge; these must truly be trying times for you, Martha. Chin up.