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Laila Khan Furniturewalla Believes Her Dad, Feroz Khan Would Have Liked a Few Pieces In This Collection

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Laila Khan Furniturewalla reflects on her relationship with art and dedicating Untamed Heart to her parents Sundri and Feroz Khan.

They say, 'Art is where the heart is'. And Laila Khan Furniturewalla's solo art exhibition titled 'Untamed Heart' was a reflection of her artistic journey on canvas. Laila's art mirrors the kind soul she is and her art tells a million tales with every brush stroke.



Artist Laila Khan Furniturewalla's solo exhibition is on till April 6 at Snowball Studios and from 16th to 22nd April at Gallery Art & Soul in Worli Mumbai

A master of the medium, Laila sculpted Untamed Heart into a soiree of emotions that captures the beauty of nature through abstract forms finding solace in the power of spirituality. Meeting Laila in her happy space and understanding how much she loves her art, makes Untamed Heart a reflection of the kind and intuitive creative soul she is.

In a candid conversation with Laila, she reflects on her relationship with art, dedicating Untamed Heart to her parents Sundri and Feroz Khan and sharing the essence of Ganesha through her paintings.

FOLLOWING HER HEART

While most believe she was on a hiatus, Laila was on a spiritual quest understanding what it meant to be ready and explore art once again. Once an artist, always an artist. Laila's solo exhibition preview which was hosted on April 4 and attended by the family and friends from the film and art fraternity including Kajol, Sanjay Khan, Fardeen Khan, Sundri Khan, Zayed Khan, Esha Deol, Raveena Tandon, Alaya F, Abhishek Kapoor and Bhagyashree among others, is proof that your talent will always pave the path for you and will be celebrated with you.



Farhan & Laila Furniturewalla with their son & mother Sundri Khan & brother Fardeen Khan at the preview of Laila Khan Furniturewalla's solo art show 'UNTAMED HEART'

For Laila art is a relationship and a very deep one. Though she hadn't painted full time for a long time, she expressed that she and her heart was yearning to paint. "My entire being was yearning to paint. The thought of having this show was always there, but I couldn't do it unless a big part of me felt I was ready. For this show, I wanted to do this show back in October 2024, but I felt I wasn't ready. But then somehow April 2025 felt right. I think it's the universe that sort of conspires and tells you that it is time," expressed Laila.

Laila wanted her art and expression to be very unfiltered, raw and not be dictated by what the market wants. In a day and age, where at times artists follow what the market dictates what sells and what doesn't, Laila feels the onus is on her to be even greater since she wanted her heart to speak in its purest form.

HOMAGE TO HER CREATORS

Laila looked straight out of a painting in a multi-coloured kaftan-style dress at her preview show in Mumbai. As costume designer-fashion designer Sundri and legendary Bollywood star Feroz Khan's daughter, Laila is proud of her lineage. Untamed Heart is dedicated to her parents. "I'm very proud of my parents because they are self-made people and they were not born in the lap of luxury. They made their lives through their art and talent. My father [Feroz Khan] was a renowned name and was also ahead of his time. He was very critical of work and he wouldn't hang a painting of mine in the house, if he didn't like it. He would say no this doesn't work for me. That would encourage me to push harder. My father I think might have liked a few pieces in this collection," shares Laila.

While Feroz expressed tough love, Sundri's generosity gave Laia the confidence she needed. "My mother was generous. I was painting right from school and one day she told me 'you're going to be an artist'. She instilled a sense of confidence in me which is very important for children because sometimes they lack that you know. I am very thankful to her," adds Laila.

Someday we would love to see the mother-daughter collaborate and share their respective creativity as one to the world.

SCULPTING A VISION

"I love the three dimensional aspect and I love sculpting on canvas," shares Laila, when asked about using sand to sculpt her vision on canvas. Inspired by nature, you see her face lights up when she speaks about the medium she incorporates in her creations.

Taking us down memory lane and reminiscing about her first solo show at the Visual Arts Gallery India Habitat Centre, New Delhi in 2001, Laila mentions that she worked with sand to depict how human beings are fleeting compared to the structures we build. While the structures live to tell a story, humans who built them are long gone. That was the first time she incorporated sand and then it was in 2025 that the medium found its way back into her vision. "I think when I worked with sand way back in 1998-99 and showcased it in 2001, I was one of the few artists who worked with different mediums. It was all quite conventional back then. However, this was my calling and I just followed my heart," adds Laila.

Apart from sand, Laila has explored expressive mediums such as metal and gold leaf that has made a prominent presence in the Untamed Heart collection.

With 32 paintings telling a story, Laila shares how it's the first time she gave each painting a title. "I would never title my works because I wanted the reaction to the work to be very subjective. I didn't want to put the viewer in a direction but this time I think my intention in the work was very clear hence I titled it," shares Laila. While all her artworks in this collection are exceptional, there are a couple of works that simply stand out. They are – The Silent Wave, Hello From The Other Side, Wish You Were Here, Gauri and Deva.

COLOUR ME A STORY

This show has many firsts and we just love to see Laila explore it with so much passion. "So for the first time, because my colours, you'll see it on my website from 1996 till 2020, were mostly golds, ambers, and sienna. However, in the last few years I have used a burst of colours, which I never, ever thought I could or I would include. And it's come out in my Ganesh series, because for me, I'm depicting India in terms of colour," adds Laila.

You also see Laila play around with the gold leaf adding opulence to each masterpiece.

"I use gold because gold is connected with religious paintings, and it's connected with spirituality. Gold is very auspicious. Whether it's European art or in Baroque, a lot of gold is included. Even in churches, there's a lot of gold. So that's a form of reverence. That's why my paintings have a lot of gold in them. And I've always been very fascinated by Tanjore art, stained glass paintings in Europe. So that has translated into my work in terms of colour," shares Laila.

Laila lives by the motto work is worship and her relationship with her art showcases the beautiful bond she shares with it. "Art has to stand the test of time like some of my work. If I see it after 10 years and if I still like it then I think there was something that was achieved in that work. But they now have a life of their own; they're out of me. I built half the bridge and the other half is now the viewers," expresses Laila.

Laila Khan Furniturewalla's solo exhibition Untamed Heart is on till April 6 at Snowball Studios and from 16th to 22nd April at Gallery Art & Soul in Worli Mumbai. Do not miss it!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Akshata Shetty
Completing almost two decades in journalism, Akshata Shetty's journey from print to online journalism is a celebration of fashion, art and music. Akshata's fashion stories are about the people who celebrate the... Read More