

Fujairah artist a talking point

BY MARIECAR JARA-PUYOD

"CAN'T" is non-existent. And, for a woman from Kent, looking back as to how she squirmed and got overwhelmed whenever her mum repeatedly reminded and echoed about it, gives her that "mother knows best after all" feeling now.

The woman is Haley Haddow, now based in Fujairah as a housewife, mother and fused glass artist.

For Haddow, being a housewife and mother was a given situation, when she and her Scottish husband who, she met in Ras Al Khaimah a decade back, decided to give up the hectic life in West London, five years ago.

"We lived in Kent, worked in Central London and had a crazy commuter life," she told The Gulf Today recently.

The trained IT telephone consultant said: "Working in London was lovely. We had a beautiful house."

"But, we did not feel it as our home because of the busy lifestyle," she went on to say.



Haley Haddow at work in her own fusing glass studio in Fujairah

"And, we wanted a family," she continued.

Thus, given the opportunity in 2004 and knowing they could build a family in the UAE from their exposure to the country years ago, the couple packed up even if Haddow was heavy with a child then headed off to the northern emirate where they have been residing for the past five years with a three-year-

old daughter and a one-and-a-half-year-old son.

On being an artist

Being a full-fledged homemaker surrounded by friends in the same mold, the 38-year-old artist, currently holding simultaneous exposures of her over 60 glass fused art pieces at the Le Meridien Al Aqah in Fujairah and the private 18 A Gallery in Ras Al Khaimah, volunteered her passion for the arts has been there since her youth.

"I have been fascinated with colour," Haddow said, adding that because of her love for the feel of fabrics and texture, she got into interior designing later on, making their homes in Kent as well as in Fujairah her platforms.

She said it is primarily her fascination with colour which ignited her attraction to fused glass, art pieces of which she had to chance to touch and admire in the last two years of journeying back and forth to the United King-



Haley Haddow

dom, specifically to her husband's hometown in Scotland, where art galleries as well as a coffee shop have been replete with.

Another plus is the variety of forms and shapes that the glass illumines, depending on the location of the sunlight at certain

times of the day, which differentiates the stuff from the rest.

But, it is her mother's "there is no such word as can't" which pushed her.

"Something in me clicked when I saw those art pieces in the galleries. I got attracted with the colours, the tactile...I just knew I would love to create something like those," she said, claiming that in the next round of vacation to the UK, she got into a few days course of fused glass making.

"And you know where that is? Only (a walking distance away) from where we used to live in Kent," she exclaimed with laughter.

"I say it is my mum and her no such word as can't which became a big factor in my decision to do something which I thought I would not be in," Haddow said.

"Now, I can say that we can do something and we can achieve whatever we want and be successful in it even if it is not about commercial success," she also said.

She emphasised on the strength of hard work essential to any achievement one aspires for.

"Coming back from London and from the course, I immediately researched where I could buy the cheapest but of good quality kiln and glass," Haddow said.

Pointing out the hours she has laboured in her new craft juggling it with her being a 24/7 wife and mother, she ended by saying that with her three-year-old daughter who, like her in her younger days, spends a great deal with her colouring books, she has been mouthing what her mum used to tell her about "can't."



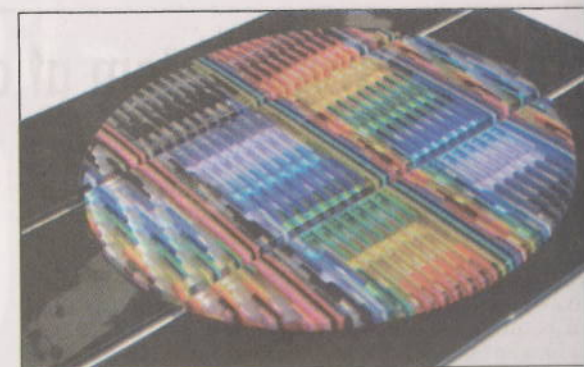
Chocolate Swirl.



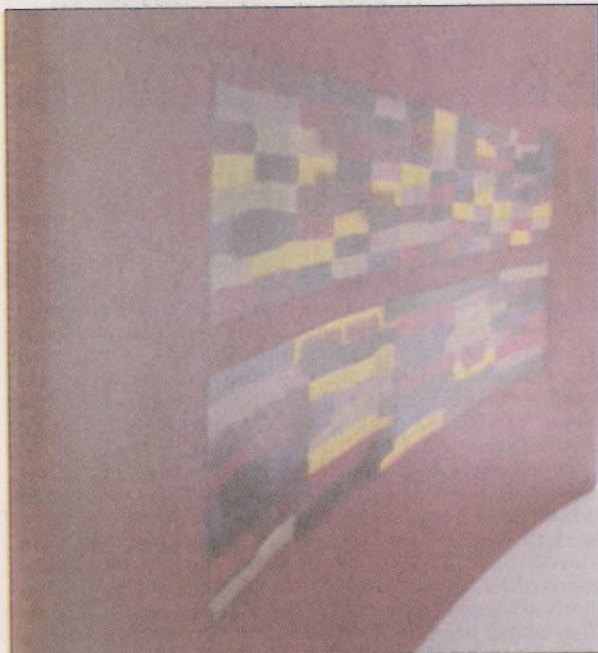
Touchy Feeley.



Purple Passage.



Herringbone.



Bordello.



Fractured Language.

What is fused glass?

ACCORDING to Haley Haddow, "Fused glass is the process of taking sheets of glass and 'fusing' them together.

"Layers of glass are melted together using a kiln which is a specialised type of oven. The higher the heat temperature, the glass layers become completely fused together resulting in one piece. Lower temperatures can result in glass pieces sticking together but leaving a tactile 3-D effect.

"To create a design, pieces of glass are cut using a glass cutter and assembled onto a ceramic

shelf. The assembled glass design is then put into the kiln and based on size and thickness, a specific firing schedule is prepared and programmed into the kiln for the initial firing at temperatures between 1200 degrees Fahrenheit to 1700 degrees Fahrenheit.

"As the kiln heats up, the glass contracts, expands and adheres together. The piece must then be cooled (annealed) at an appropriate rate for the size and thickness to ensure the results are a solid durable piece of glass. Different tempera-

tures could be used to alter the glass and can last anywhere from six to 24 hours in one firing schedule.

Many times pieces are fired, two, three or even four times carefully controlling the process through varying the temperatures in the kiln resulting in getting the desired effect.

"To shape the piece, it is heated in the kiln at temperatures between 1100 degrees Fahrenheit and 1300 degrees Fahrenheit at which point the glass falls into or drapes over a mold."