



worth Dhs20 to put some money, snacks and a new Gamcha worth Dhs5 which she bought from grocery shops in labour camps and whenever she asked a labourer for his Gamcha, she handed over the package as a friendly gesture. The act gained her respect and fame among the different construction sites in her neighborhood and she was welcomed with smile in the area.

After collecting many Gamchas, she created a weaving piece to use these Gamchas but she faced a problem that she knew nothing about the weaving. She also took photographs of labourers and collected some construction material like nails which she later used in her artworks. “I visited many places in Dubai to find a loom but all in vain so I

had to go back to California and not only bought a traditional loom but also took a one-month course to learn the skill,” she told **IRIS Art Mag** in an exclusive interview on the opening night of her month-long exhibition.

While weaving fiber threads, she put photographs and pieces of Gamcha instead of threads, and created many unique artworks.

Around 60 such artworks of different sizes are part of this fiber-textile exhibition. The maximum price of the artwork is Dhs6,000.

“These artworks are not pieces of weaving but an interaction with the lonely people who are working hard to make Dubai what it is. Throughout the project, I interacted with these labour-

ers whom I have always found quite friendly,” she said.

Elise sends this message to everyone: people should at least smile whenever they saw a labourer as smile has a universal message of happiness. “We are here for a better life and so are these labourers from Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and other countries. We should respect them,” she said.

She has planned to invite some of labourers being portrayed in the exhibition and says she will give them a copy of their portraits.

A portion of the proceeds of the sale of artworks will go to the Sameness Project, an NGO working for the labourers in Dubai. — **Jamil Khan**