



Iranian refugee Hoda Borwayeh with artist Lauryn Arnott who painted a portrait of her for the *To Tell Another Story* exhibition. Picture: MARK BRAKE

Sharing stories

James Gratton

WHEN Lauryn Arnott escaped a violent regime in Zimbabwe in 2003, she made a promise to herself to use her artistic talents to tell the stories of those who have suffered similar hardship.

Now Arnott is one of 14 artists from across the state who is telling the stories of refugees from countries including Vietnam, Malaysia, Iran and Afghanistan.

The Australian Refugee Association exhibition, *To Tell Another's Story*, has partnered local artists with refugees in an effort to promote multiculturalism.

Arnott, who was forced to escape her home with her family after being targeted by forced land acquisition by President Robert Mugabe, says it is important to share the experiences of refugees.

"My passion comes from making paintings about people and I'm really interested in relaying stories dealing

with human content," Arnott said.

"Our exhibition is so important because it is a way where I can use my talent to share stories that people cannot explain themselves," she said.

In her portraits, Arnott depicts the lives of two Iranian women, Hoda Borwayeh and Mahruo Tahery.

Ms Borwayeh met the artist when learning English at the Hope Cafe at Clayton Wesley Uniting Church in Beulah Park.

In 2013, Ms Borwayeh came to Australia after being jailed in her home country for teaching women in secret.

Arnott says she is inspired by her subject's story.

"We are able to empower people, give them a voice and to allow others who don't understand it to know what it is like," she says.

To Tell Another's Story is on at the St Peters Town Hall Long Gallery, 101 Payneham Rd, until September 16.