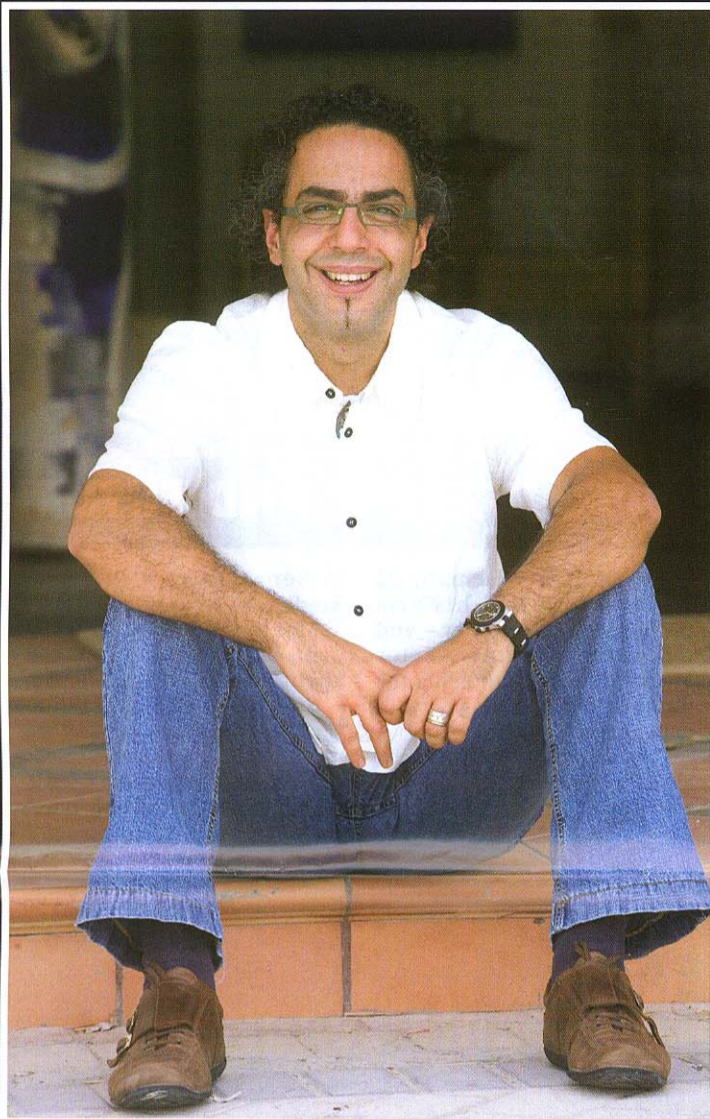
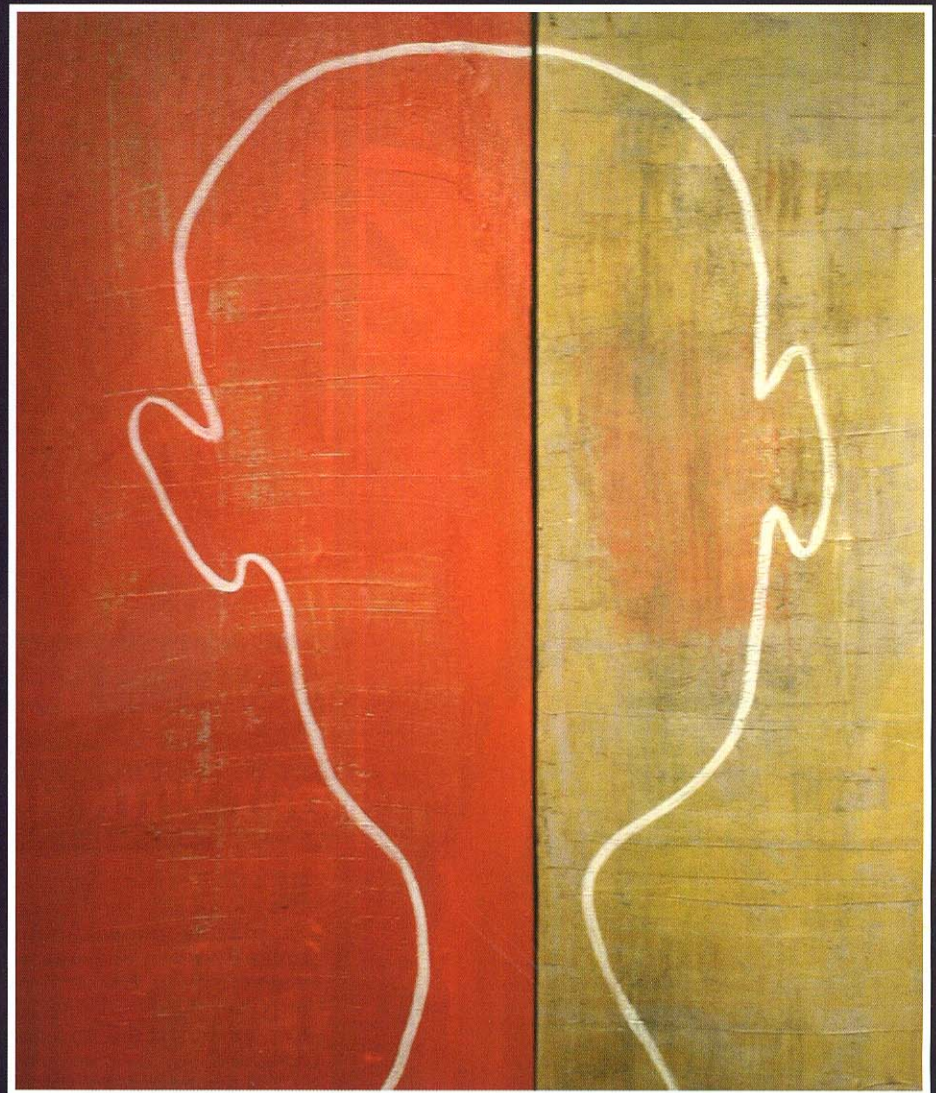


IMAD BECHARA

AND HIS UNIQUE CREATIONS



"Create what you feel like creating, and by definition it is sure to be unique," says Imad



Imad refuses to explain the inspiration behind his pieces leaving it up to the buyer to interpret

Dubai-based artist Imad Bechara reveals the inspiration behind his international success. "Everything in life inspires me," recounts Imad Bechara enthusiastically. "When I am painting I am lost in a special moment that has intense meaning, but when I am finished, that meaning is lost."

Imad positively encourages people to have a personal relationship with his work by refusing to explain his inspiration behind each piece. Instead, he gives people complete power and ownership by allowing them to interpret and suggest their own meanings. Investors in Imad's art own the piece both intellectually and physically.

"A Saudi businessman bought a painting from my recent collection, it had a large question mark on it and the words 'Where Are We Going.' For me it was about how far Dubai is going with all this building and construction, but for him, it was about how far he was going with his enterprise. It reflected his own hopes and dreams and so he bought it and hung it in his office."

This is the artist's greatest happiness, to observe people truly interacting with his art, being touched by it.

Lebanese-born, Imad, settled in Dubai 12 years ago, a move that proved a catalyst to his creative career. Now he lives in the harmonious confines of the Green Community with his wife and three children. Bechara Studio, his sole gallery space, houses disparate pieces from his various collections, a veritable history of his art, an exploration of drawing, painting, sculpture and mosaic.

"I've experimented with various media because it's an expression of who I am at the time. I'm improving, changing and growing and my work develops along with that. Everyone is constantly changing as a person, changing their job and their

environment and all these things influence your mood. I know that next year I will be painting differently from how I painted last year, using different subjects and materials. Unlike some other artists, I can guarantee I won't be producing the same things in 10 years time."

Determination blended with all the passionate colours of an artist have originated a success he could not have anticipated. Several of his works hang in the palatial homes of the Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Bahrain royal families, the sublime retreats of corporate VIPs and on the walls of five-star hotels like the Shangri-La.

"It feels great to have such high profile patrons," he says, grinning. "Although I wish we had more access, that we could enter these palaces and enjoy all the wonderful works of art in the royal collections." However, he does reveal that there may be plans afoot for a National Gallery to serve just that purpose.

With the artist community growing in size and profile across the Middle East, there are increasing opportunities for new and emerging artists. Imad himself has generated a huge following both in the Middle East and across Europe.

"Local artists should definitely exhibit in the region, but they need their work to be presented to galleries in Europe, to get them some good exposure. It's a more competitive market there and in Basel in Switzerland, one of my paintings will fetch US\$13,000, much more than in Dubai for example. It is the galleries that promote you and raise the price of your work."

Imad attributes his success to his artistic freedom, reflected in his advice to hopeful, young creatives. "Just be natural in what you are doing. Be true to yourself and remember that you don't have to copy other people, create what you feel like creating, and by definition it is sure to be unique."

HELLO!

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