



**Laudi Abilama**  
*puts her favourite  
historical icons in  
contemporary  
colour*

**L**audi Abilama has a story in each of her imageries. This child of the West is heavily influenced by Middle Eastern culture, more so by people who have played a significant role in history and the creative arts. She uses traditional methods of painting and drawing to preserve the uniqueness of each piece and the meaning behind it. How exquisitely historical.

**Who are you?**

I was born in the suburbs of London to Lebanese parents. I studied art from a very young age and eventually got a BA in arts and media at the University College for Creative Arts (U.C.C.A) in Farnham, Surrey.

**How do you see art?**

Every individual has his or her own definition of art. It can never be just one thing or one definition. To me, art is freedom: freedom of expression, freedom of belief. When I am creating or viewing someone else's work I feel the power of the piece starting with a blank page. Every artist can choose to do what they please with this page; that is a freedom you can only find in art.

**Your art is focused on old iconic figures in Middle Eastern history; what do they mean to you?**

The figures that I choose to paint have at some point or another influenced me. Although they are artists from a previous generation, I made it a point to research each and everyone of them. I was always reminded of great singers such as Fairouz and Oum Koulthoum as a child, so I think it was in my history to one day come back to these figures and re-introduce them to people through my artwork.

**You have many talents. Where do you see yourself the most?**

I absolutely love what I am doing in life right now. I would love to branch out into film and other creative projects, even for charities. I feel that it is essential in life to have a creative outlet and so one day I would love to launch projects to help young people show their talent.

**Who is your audience?**

I would like to think that everyone is my audience. I would hope that older people can relate to my work because of its historical content, and younger people will see the same history represented in a contemporary way.

**Where do you exhibit? Which countries so far?**

So far I have had two exhibitions in Beirut and one in Dubai. The next step would be for me to go to Kuwait and Jordan as art culture is really expanding in both those countries. I would love for my artwork to be shown in this part of the world as my roots are in the Middle East and I feel we really need to be present in this part of the world in order to enrich our culture.