

An Expression of Art

Every piece of art acts as its own story; its very own secret waiting to be told to whosever's eyes happen to fall upon it. Zara de Haldevang talks to Bahrain-based artist Demi Mcleod, to discover the history behind her undeniable passion, the fables behind her work and what we can expect to see from this incredible talent over the forthcoming months.



Demi Mcleod's house is not just a home. In fact, it exists as more of a personal gallery, perfectly filled with examples of her work, painstakingly completed over the years. Australian by nationality, Demi's life has taken her to every corner of the world and she has lived in Malawi, Luxembourg, South Africa and the United Kingdom.

Now, after five years residing in the Kingdom of Bahrain, a country she holds a deep connection to, Demi's work has broken through an abundance of artistic layers that many struggle to achieve.

Having studied Art at the Regent Academy in London, Demi then continued to run an art business in Perth, Australia, where her daily life

consisted of promoting other artists' talents.

It wasn't until she made the transition to start her own gallery that her work started to be truly appreciated. Over the course of her life in Bahrain, Demi has showcased her paintings in four exhibitions, one of which was a solo representation with an open studio in her villa.

As you set foot into her home, you are greeted with a sense of warmth, where colour bursts from every wall. On each wall surface, Demi's paintings hang creating their own story. For an art lover, it is like finding yourself in an artistic library, where every new glance greets you with a new tale to uncover. As Demi articulately said, "It's nice when someone has to finish a story.

It makes that painting so much more personal."

The support for Demi's work in Bahrain has been phenomenal. While exploring her home, she said, "Although most of my work sells without exhibiting, a number of pieces are bought from those who have acquired a painting from a previous display. I am not a huge fan of working on commission. A project on commission usually takes no less than eight months. I think my biggest challenge is to be free; a deadline makes you less brave and in my paintings I really make a conscious effort to push myself to make them work."

An artist's studio reflects the passions of the painting's creator. Demi's studio truly epitomizes the definition of an artist's retreat, with half finished canvases resting against the walls and axels displaying work close to completion. Like any individual with an artistic drive, no work can be created without inspiration. Inspirational ideas such as sketches and magazine cutouts float on the walls as well as colour schemes, all displaying Demi's personal style and routine of building her creations.

Although she only uses paint available exclusively in Italy, a country she visits frequently to continue her artistic studies, Demi creates her own paints from raw ingredients. "When I use these paints, it feels like I'm using gold dust. My work is about layers, textures, translucent paint over colours and stencils. I am a huge fan of Banksy and very much enjoy creating my own stencils; its like an art in itself."

Demi's studio could not be more perfectly located. Tucked into one corner of her home, this sanctuary reflects not only her personality as an artist, but is also a magical corner in which to create her masterpieces. With such an abundance of ingredients and paints, each painting has its own time frame. "When I am painting,



Kanye - He's going to let you finish... apparently!

I sometimes work late into the night, and when I wake up, the colours have often changed overnight. So either I continue working on it immediately or leave it to dry, sometimes for

up to two weeks. My paintings also often compliment each other; sometimes I'm using a certain colour on one piece, and I look at another piece and experiment on it with the same colour."

Perhaps what marks Demi Mcleod as sincerely unique are the inspirations that drive her to continue her work. "Although I get really excited about working with other artists, other huge inspirations to me are music videos. I love the design, the movement and the colours. My favourite is probably George Michael's 'Older' video, which has fantastic imagery. I replay the videos and stop them in particular places to get compositional ideas."

Another artist who intrigues Demi is Eadweard Muybridge, the author of *Animals in Motion*, and the first person to capture animal and human movement in fast motion. "For my next exhibition for the Cancer Society, my work will be based on Eadweard's work, but more contemporary."

Demi Mcleod is undoubtedly a fantastic artist. In every painting, whether it was abstract or contemporary, you can learn something new about her personality that you may never have discovered.

Over the past couple of months, the art scene in Bahrain has been dramatically uncovered, and artists who truly deserve recognition are finally gaining the chance to showcase their work: Demi is no exception. Art to this particular artist is "just like food. As you get older your palate becomes more adventurous and the more you want to try."

Demi's work is a perfect example of a hidden artistic treasure chest, where every painting excites you and the longer you look at it, the more you want to keep. Such talent is definitely not to be missed.

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GO: Demi's upcoming exhibition will be held at the Capital Club from September 12 to 30. Her work is also available for viewing on the Saatchi Gallery Online. For more information on visiting her studio or future exhibitions please contact Demi Mcleod on +973 36425701, email demimcleod@hotmail.com or visit www.demimcleod.com.



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