

# THE ART OF STORY TELLING

*Beyond the wealth of money pouring into expanding the region's skyscraper image is the resurgence of cultural heritage. Bahrain's ARTDIVANO is part of this new wave of bridging the old and new through innovative channels.*

**T**ell us a bit about ARTDIVANO – why was it set up?

ARTDIVANO's concept and philosophy is based on taking artworks by Arab artists and artists who have chosen the Arab world as their home or who are translating the world's heritage and culture into a unique language of colours and materials onto a new level. The "DIVAN" envisions the traditional way of storytelling in the Arab world. ARTDIVANO aims to spread the story of art by and from the region, carrying the tradition from the past into the present and future.

Our motto: "The Passion for Art", is driven by a strong expertise yet deep emotional approach to art and a belief that art without passion is nothing.

We are, Afaf Zainalabedin, a Bahraini former Banker and Marion Labani, a curator and artist herself, resident in Bahrain for 12 Years.

We created ARTDIVANO in January 2013 as our brain child to develop the concept of ART lounge further, a company formed in 2008 by Marion, to pursue further a life dedicated to ART to LIVE with.



MARION AND AFAF

**What are its goals?**

ARTDIVANO was set up to continue with Marion's works in developing an art consultancy further where we offer start to end solutions for our clients' art programs including design, customising, production and installation of artworks whether in hotels or private villas. Amongst our clients are: Sofitel Resort & Spa Bahrain, the Majestic Arjan by Rotana Bahrain and our latest project was the Double Tree Hilton in Qatar.

ARTDIVANO will introduce and offer for purchase with worldwide accessibility and the most secure way of online payment, original art amongst our selection of in-house produced "Made in Bahrain" Fine Art and Photography Reproduction, Sculptures and more on our soon to launch online gallery.

**Do you welcome the concept of selling art online?** Yes. We are welcoming the concept of selling art

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online. We believe this way art is more accessible and can be introduced and seen by a wider audience. At the moment our website is under construction, so we have launched "myARTDIVANO instastore", an online sales platform via Instagram. The instagram: @artdivano is set up with an online sales tool, where art lovers are able to make a purchase via credit card which users are familiar with for their online



shopping. This is a fairly new concept in the region, and we would like to encourage the hip and young as well as the conservative art lover to make a purchase online through their smart phones, tablets and laptops. As for the Middle East we are the first to launch offering art for sale via an Instastore platform.

**How has the Internet influenced the direction of the art world?**

We believe that the Internet has created a fast flow of information within the art world. This very fast way of exchanging information has surely



influenced artists all over the world by the style and art making of others. Now the whole world has become a melting pot on various Internet platforms. Everyone who is in the creative process cannot withdraw himself from this constant stream of news and visualisations of creations distributed online.

**What advice do you have for artists who have yet to find gallery representation? Should they sit back, create, and wait for that day to come? Or should they focus on self-marketing their art work?**

We highly recommend that artists should focus on the creative process of making art and letting an art consultancy take care of business related matters such as contracts with clients whether private or corporate. Marketing and Business should be taken care of by professionals supporting the artist in freeing mind and resources for the creative process. We are offering such services and welcome every artist who has decided to look for an agent to get in touch with us.

**How do you choose the artists that you represent in ARTDIVANO – what do you base your choice on?**

ARTDIVANO would like to become "the Middle Eastern online art platform" and the most comprehensive information source about art and artists from Bahrain and resident in Bahrain as well as regional art and artists.

**What future plans does ARTDIVANO have?** We have a lot of ideas but tend to take a

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systematic approach and also don't want to unveil too much at this point in time to have a surprising factor at our site when the time comes.

We are focused at Art consultancy, Archival Ink Studio and Online Gallery right now to establish ourselves and branding our name locally and regional as one of the best art - and art service providers based in the Middle East.

*Do you want to collaborate with ARTDIVANO? Get in touch: afaf@artdivano.com ; +973 3961 2886 and marion@artdivano.com; +973 3921 2060. More information about us can be found on facebook@artdivano and instagram@artdivano. www.artdivano.com is coming soon.*