

YOUNG & SUCCESSFUL

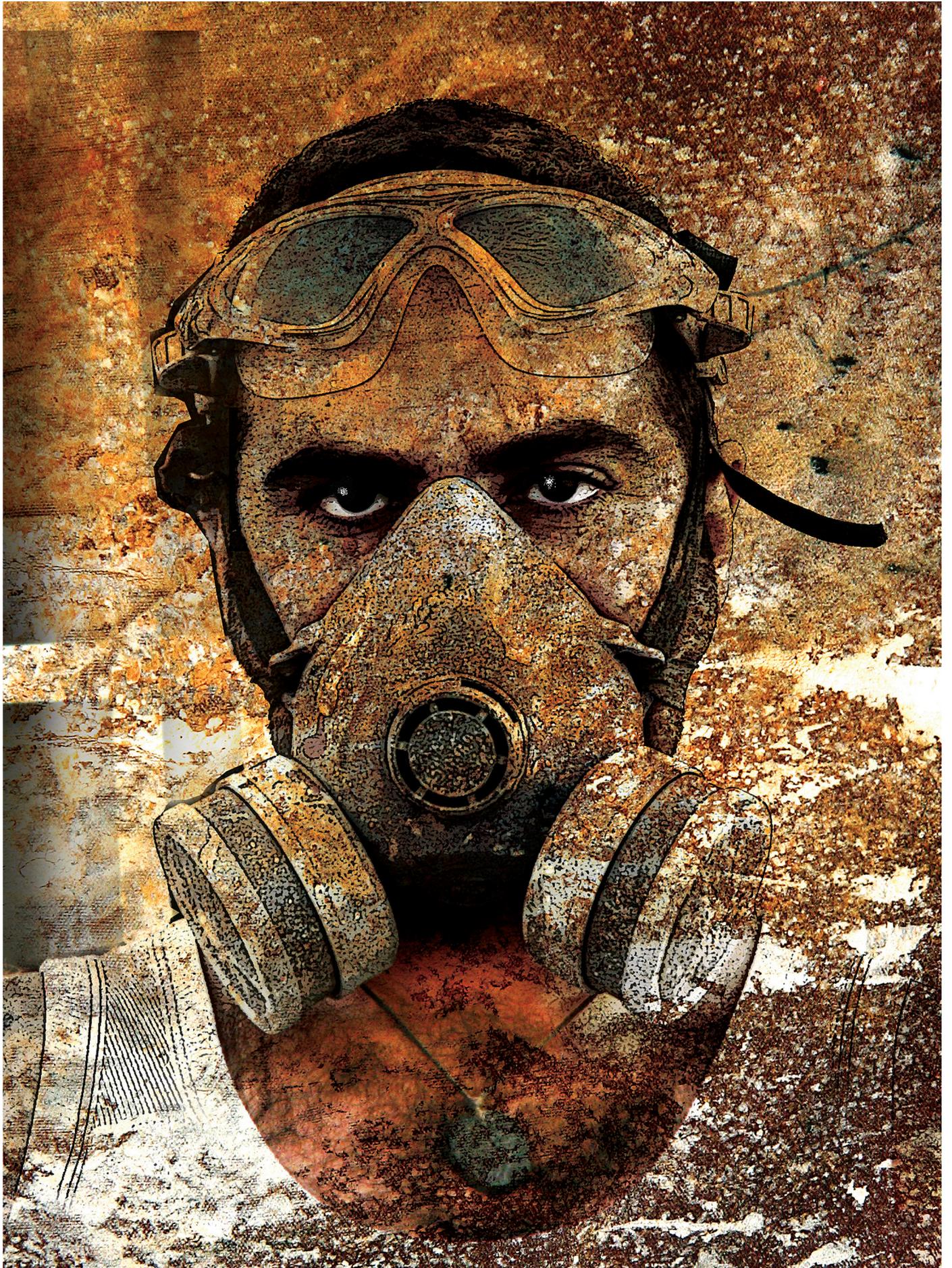
Adam Levant in association with Philips seeks out
the young successful men across the Middle East

NAME: HADI BEYDOUN

AGE: 37

EDUCATION: AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT:
GRAPHIC DESIGN

OCCUPATION: PAINTER



PHILIPS

Projects

William Lawson Campaign: Urban Building Artwork.
Tattoos for Elissa, Maysam Nahas, Wael Kfoury, Kelly Clarkson

‘CUTTING EDGE’: HADY BEYDOUN

Beginning

It all began when Hady was only fourteen years old. He was always an individualist and always wanted to be different from others around him. Painting on his T-shirt, tearing his jeans and listening to rock music were the things that gave him most pleasure, and these were the very things that distinguished him from his peers.

Hady told us how he was initially motivated to start drawing and painting. It was in 1988/99, when Lebanon was at war, and so he and his friends hardly ever went to school. One day, he explained, a guy in his neighbourhood told him about a shop which stocked T-shirts with paintings of his favourite bands, such as ‘The Scorpions’ and ‘Iron Maiden’ displayed upon them. His mother took him to buy one, but the garments were much too expensive, especially with the dollar situation at that time. She said ‘I will buy you paint and you can draw your own T-shirt.’ When Hady protested that he didn’t know how to draw, she replied ‘You don’t know how? I always see your drawings on your T-shirts while I’m washing them. It’s the paint or we go home.’

Faced with such a heavy ultimatum Hady accepted it. When he had painted his first T-shirt he wore it when he went out to meet his friends. In his own words he describes their reaction to his hand painted T-shirt.

“They went crazy and asked me where it was from?”



When Hady replied that it was his own work they asked him if he could create similar ones for them. That was the start of it – and the circle of people knowing about him - and the range of his creations just got bigger and bigger.

Progression

Between the ages of fourteen and twenty years, he spent much of his time creating, drawing and painting. Many people came to him with special requests for particular music album covers to be drawn on T-shirts. Hady

created hundreds and took great pleasure in having his work being worn by other people.

Nowadays he has worked with numerous other artists and participated in tattoo various conventions in London and Ireland.

The First Tattoo

January 20th 1995 was the momentous date of Hady’s first tattoo.

His very first introduction to the art of tattooing took place when he was

seventeen years old. A guy came to him with a tattoo magazine and asked for the same tattoo pattern to be drawn on a T-shirt. Full of amazement, Hady realized, for the first time that it was possible to draw straight onto skin.

“To be different you must be a rebel. It’s great to tattoo yourself; it’s something you do on your body. Clothes you can take off, cars can be changed, but drawing something on your skin, especially back in those days – it was something great.”

Inspired by the sight of his first tattoo, Hady was motivated to research the subject. After three years he went to London to buy his first tattoo machine. When he had finished school, he realized that the only thing he could do that was related to his passion was Graphic Design.

Style

In response to our asking Hady to tell us about his own particular style, he told us that, in his opinion, the style of an artist is as individual as their handwriting. An artist’s style springs from their character and he added that his own emotional state inevitably affected his style. He further elaborated by accentuating the feeling of rebellion that was always within him and that the fuel he ran on could be anger, excitement and/or depression.

He now is more relaxed but, for a long time, he felt ‘...is this life???’ During this time, as a sense of disappointment in the futility of life persisted, he took pains to reconstruct the fortress in his mind, wherein he lived and protected himself.

Hady enjoys expressing himself in dif-

ferent ways through various art forms. As well as tattooing he also sculpts and paints furniture. The artist, who most impresses him, mainly because of the content of his paintings, is Rembrandt. He also likes the surrealism and imagination of Salvador Dali. His favourite Lebanese artist, chosen for the excellence of his paintings, is Mohamad Rawass, who was Hady’s former tutor at AUB.

The Acceptability of Tattoos

We asked Hady if he thinks his work, especially that of tattooing, is more accepted in Lebanon and the Middle East nowadays, as opposed to twenty years ago.

He pointed out that values have changed a lot over the years and that what was forbidden previously because it was threatening and different, is now



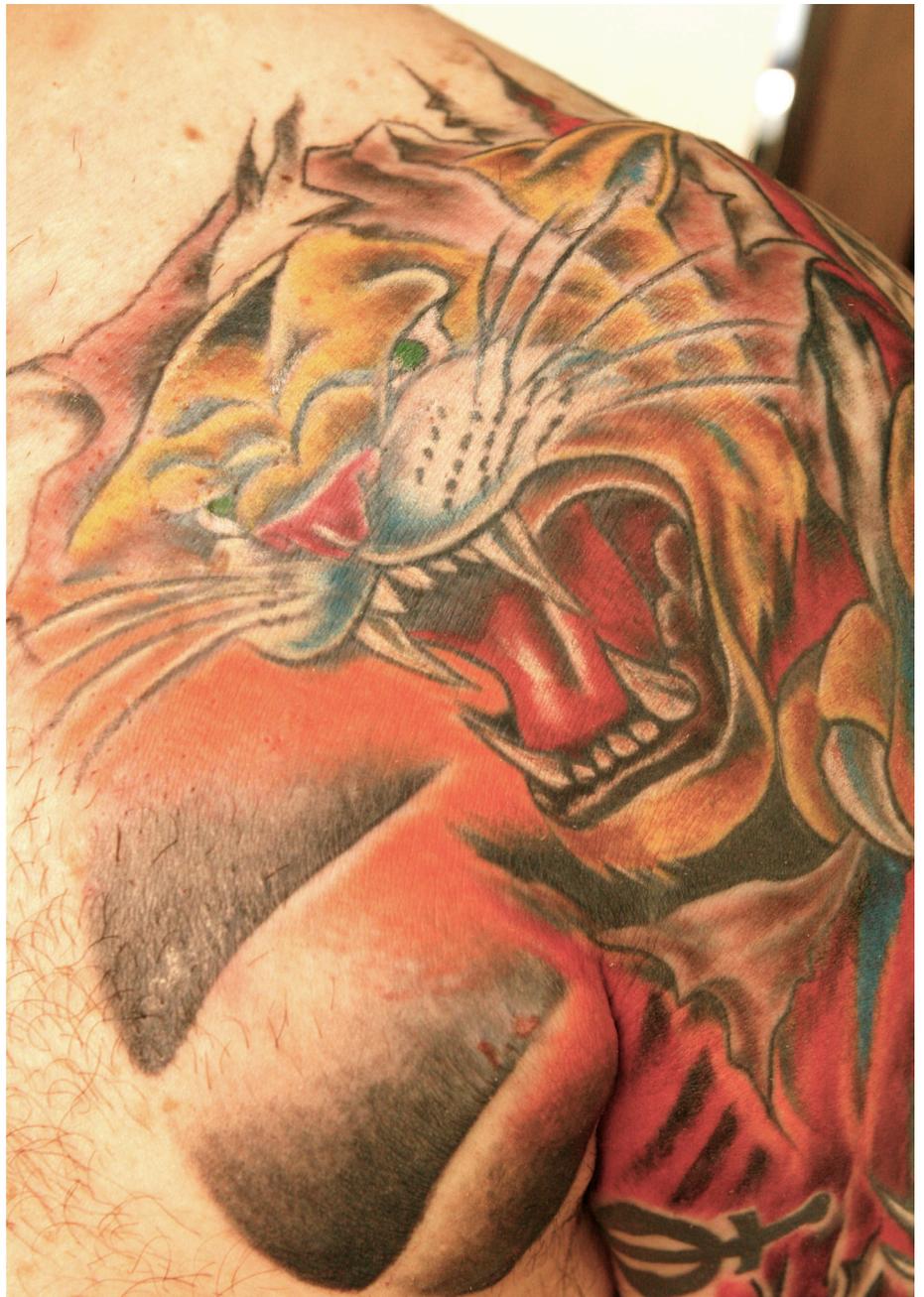
THE LINKS THAT YOU WOVE | YOU SHINE FROM THE LIGHT THAT YOU

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old fashioned. Much exposure to the art of tattooing and tattoos themselves by programmes and coverage by the media, have rendered tattoos less dangerous. The tattoo itself is a symbol of individuality and nowadays people are much more aware of their human state. "We can't deny that the USA and Europe have a big effect on Lebanon and the Middle East; not only do we import food and clothes, we also import ideas and lifestyles. Tattooing is one of them."

Difficulties

When speaking about difficulties he has experienced, Hady thought that there weren't difficult projects; rather there were difficult circumstances. Once he was due to go to Jordan for a project and so he sent his tools by cargo. The tools never arrived and so the work had to be cancelled. The most difficult thing that he had to face, although it was also a pleasure, was to go against the flow by doing something that Society views as dangerous. Hady does not regard himself as simply a technician, he believes that, in his work as a tattooist, he touches the person he is tattooing with an idea. Far from



being just a commodity, which can be bought from a store, a tattoo is something that will stay with you forever. Not only will you live with it – it will change you.

Future

Advising young people who would see their future in the world of tattooing, Hady stresses that they should always follow their passion in life. He believes that challenge is the both the fuel and the purpose – the firmer an idea is fixed in your head, the more challenging it is. There is nothing

in life which is more satisfying than producing something you love. You should also always stay positive.

"My mother always encouraged me; my dad, who is more academic, didn't in the beginning – but now, after he saw my work, he too encourages me. I love to read and write and watch movies. I would love to go to the Theatre but we don't have such things in Lebanon. For me, my work is my favourite hobby. I have no idea where I will be in the future. When I first started out I didn't know I would be here today."