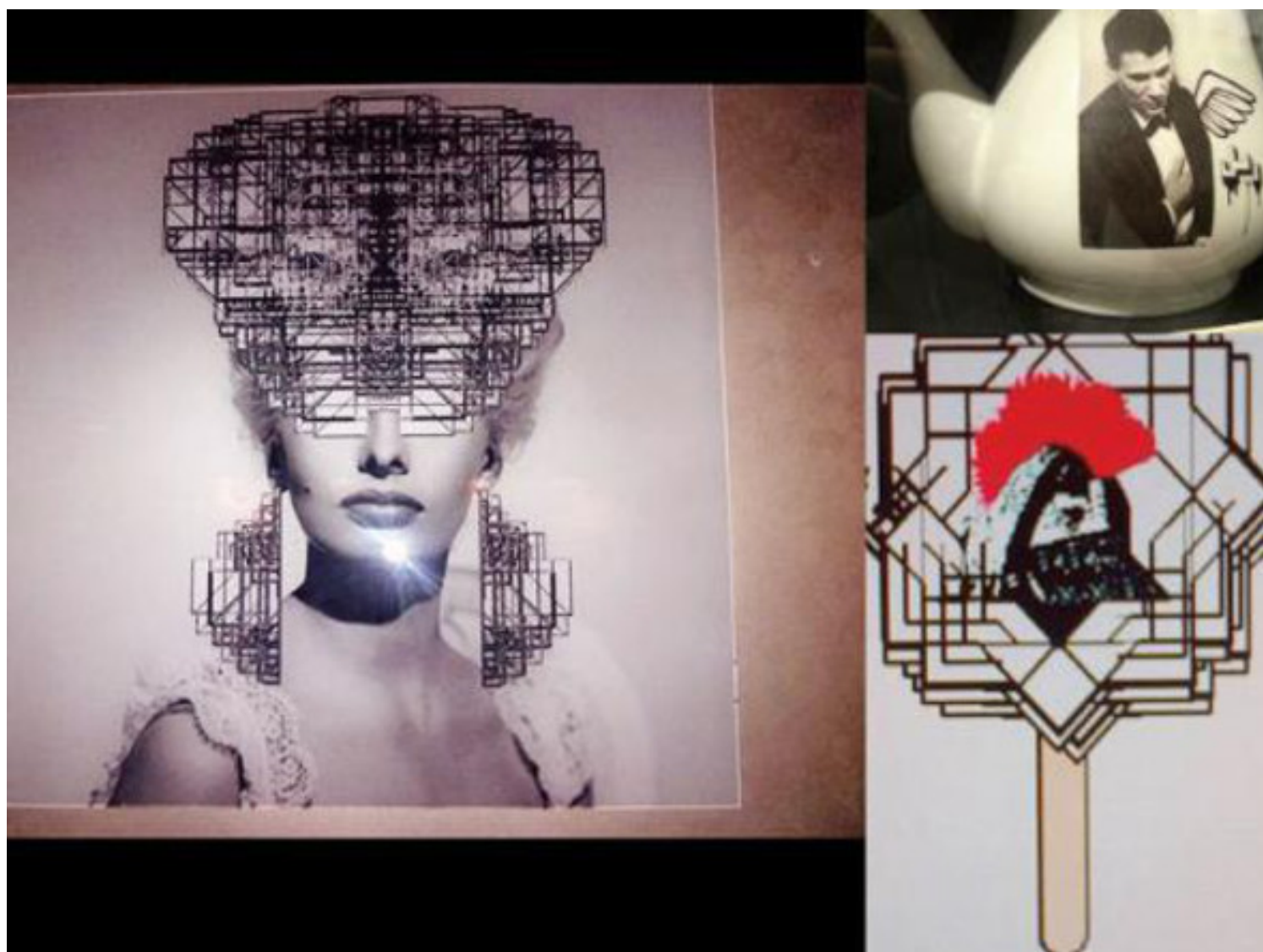




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# Saudi-based artist wants to spark social creativity



Khalid Zahid never got a chance to study art. “Most of my art is done by computer,” he said. (Photo courtesy: Saudi Gazette)

Khalid Zahid is a young Saudi based artist with an

inspiring persona that seeks to educate the world about art and help them embrace its splendor. His art is aimed at creating a bridge between creativity and human souls.

“I used to draw cartoons since I was a little kid at school and it was always a passion of mine which grew with me. I really got into it three years ago,” he said.

Khalid’s work has been showcased around the Gulf, in Jeddah’s Athr gallery (young Saudi artists), LAM art gallery in Riyadh, Desert Design gallery in Khobar and Peace exhibition in Kuwait. “My biggest achievement is people noticing my art when they see it in a gallery or anywhere.”



Referring to his journey and the current status of progress in art in the Kingdom, he said: “It is not that easy because the art seen generally in the Kingdom is not that popular but some galleries give young Saudi artists the opportunity to show their talents; and they have special exhibitions for startup or upcoming artists.”

He said such local initiatives also support artists “if they are willing and good and that’s how I started.”

The self-taught artist from a business-orientated family never got a chance to study art. “Most of my art is done by computer.”

He studied in Los Angeles and has been a part of the family business for the past eight years. “I am working in Budget Rent A Car, our family business, since I graduated from university and work as the COO of the company currently.”

He said his goal is to make the Saudi community become more aware of art as a genre. “Make them understand that art is not just a pretty picture but there is a story behind each and every piece and little detail. What I’m doing now in most of my art pieces is talk about who we are, what we represent, the Saudi community as a whole, the positives and negatives that we see in our everyday lives, the changes that are going on in our community and country, the new and upcoming generation.

“What I am trying to do is relate our daily lives with the art and make some kind of connection so when the person sees it he can relate it to him or herself to his family to what is going on in his community. In this way he will embrace and understand the piece more and become interested in art itself more.”

Talking about inspiration, he said: “My family, friends, owners of galleries that supported me and gave me the confidence and showed me the right path.” Khalid discussed the significance of social media to artists these days and said social media is a great help because it lets you reach out to people from all over the world.

“You are not only targeting art lovers in galleries, which is a small niche especially in the Saudi community.”

He ultimately wants to open up his own gallery. “And turn it into a social place where people can come and enjoy a different kind of art that they can relate to and call it a part of them.”

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## **Mariam Nihal**