



ORGANIC ABSTRACTIONS

The sculptural depictions of Khalid Farhan



Above: Khalid Farhan
Left: Mass Flowers- bronze and stainless steel

Arabian Homes journeys through the remarkable work of Sculptor, **Khalid Farhan**, as he takes us through his inspirational passage where art is ever so brilliantly transformed into physical form. Throughout Khalid's creations there is a natural essence, held together by solidity, structure, and style.

Khalid Farhan was born in the historic town of Muharraq in the Kingdom of Bahrain. There he grew up to love art and began to explore his first artistic expressions in painting. As art continued to motivate Khalid, he decided to take off to Egypt where he gained his Bachelor's Degree in Art at the University of Cairo.

Khalid was truly inspired during his educational experiences in Egypt where he met various artists and later developed a profound interest in sculpture. From that point onwards, Khalid took part in numerous symposiums and exhibitions around the world.

His sculptural work holds a natural essence with the usage of organic shapes and nonrepresentational elements. The creativity and imagination put forth in his artistic depictions expresses a style of abstract simplicity and innovation. Khalid gives his creations meaning and as he creates, he creates with passion, sharing with his viewers the exciting world of carving art.

Up Close

AH: What gave you the inspiration to create art?

Khalid Farhan: As a child I was always artistic and I enjoyed spending my time creating things. Once I was old enough to take my artistic interests to another level, I decided to take the opportunity to pursue my education in Art. Initially, I wanted to be a painter but there was something especially empowering about sculpture that really caught my attention. It was a kind of art that, at the time, was not so popular. In fact, there weren't even that many known sculptors. Although I steered away from painting, I never failed at it. I just wanted to try something new and exciting. It's funny actually because now there's actually a good majority of sculptors in Bahrain, compared to years ago. It has really set a new trend in the art scene.

The inspiration for my creations come mostly from nature and the human figure. I enjoy intertwining the two to form abstract concepts that hold relevance and meaning to my viewers. Naturally

existing objects give me the motivation to recreate them into sculpture form, thus making a much large, real-life depiction of something that may exist ever so small.

Arabian Homes: How did you learn sculpture and develop your talent into a career?

KF: My educational experience took off in Cairo, Egypt where I focused my studies in Art. During my time in Egypt I was heavily influenced by the several artists there who gave the inspiration to pursue my artistic abilities.

In 2006, I was chosen alongside with the Bahraini painter Jaffar Al- Oraibi to stay in Paris for City Design for three months. I really enjoyed being given that opportunity and I hope someday I will be able to live in Paris and rent a studio there for my work. I feel when you go out to new places and surroundings you gain inspiration to create things; it's almost as if you can just be free and make whatever you want.

“Khalid works with natural materials where he fuses imagination and meaning to create a delicate harmony of two separate entities coming together”

Right: Abstract Sperm- bronze and stainless steel.



Right: Sweet- bronze and stainless steel.

Below: Simppetra International Sculpture Symposium- Caldas, Portugal 2006. Granite.

AH: Who are some famous artists who have been especially influential to you?

KF: The most influential artists for me have been Adam Haneen, a great Egyptian sculptor, Henry Matthews and off course the renowned Picasso.

AH: What is your sculptural style?

KF: The development of my style comes naturally to me after the series of events experienced in my life. The way of life that people undergo has so much to do with how they become and that is simply how I discovered my sculptural style. One thing though that I realized about myself is that I keep trying new styles until I am finally convinced that that style reflects my passion and artistic visions.

AH: What are the steps involved in the process?

KF: I always begin my projects with the traditional method of a sketch. Nowadays though, the new thing is 3D drawings where you actually see what the final product will look like. I have actually sampled a 3D drawing to a client of mine in Dubai and it was much more successful in translating the actual idea than in a pencil sketch.

Once I have my sketches complete, I move on to the cutting phase, which depending on the material used, can be approached in two ways:

- The Direct Sculpture- this is when the material is tough and rigid and can only be sculpted without adding to its form.
- The Indirect Sculpture- this is when the material is malleable where it can be added to and altered; here there is usually more sculpting flexibility.

AH: What materials and tools do you work with?

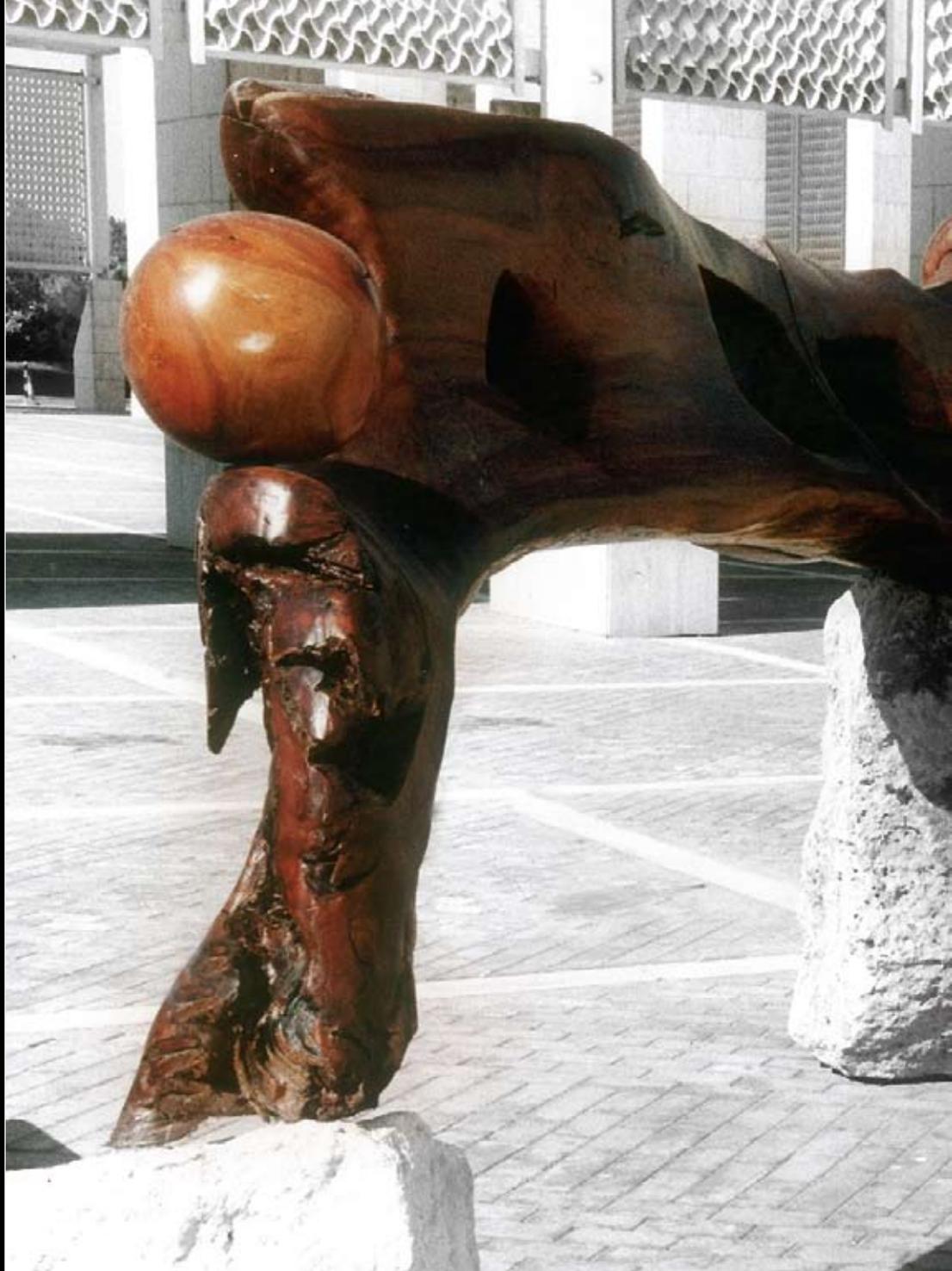
KF: When it comes to materials, I do feel somewhat limited but the lack has given the opportunity to work a lot with wood. Now, these pieces of wood have become like models for me. The only downside about wood is preserving it to last for a long time, as you can do with steel or bronze. That's why in museums, you usually see most sculptures made of some heavy, solid material. One thing about bronze that really makes it a desirable sculpting material is how naturally it changes over time; it starts to look older and tarnished. I also enjoy working with granite and marble; however, I especially love working with stone and bronze.

Good tools can also be difficult to find but nowadays we have machines to do some of the work for us. Some people might think that you need muscles to be a sculptor but that isn't true. What you need is a lot of patience, organization, creativity, and skill.

AH: How long do the sculptures take to complete?

KF: There is no time limit in doing my work except when working during sculpture symposiums





where there are certain restraints. Also, when there are sculpture competitions in various countries, there are time limits and you have to come up with your own materials; requiring a rather quick pace. The time needed for any work depends on the artist, but as for me, I like to take my time and enjoy the entire process of creativity. For example, one of my works is called "The Legend", which was collected by the Bahrain National Museum and it took me 9 months to complete. It was a tedious job for me to complete on my own, but it was certainly a challenge worthwhile.

AH: What are some challenges you face?

KF: The biggest problem for me is time. Getting started is also an obstacle because you are beginning with an empty space that you have to fill up. It's almost like staring at a blank screen when you have to write something. But, the good thing is,

once you do get started, you just can't stop. Once you grasp what you are doing you can continue to be inspired and work your hardest to achieve the final goal- the sculpture.

Another challenge that I face with sculpture is when using stone. It is very difficult to manipulate it. But, my experience helps me a lot in overcoming these dilemmas by using the proper instruments and precise techniques.

AH: Do you plan to try new techniques?

KF: Absolutely, yes. Trying new techniques helps an artist to develop and process over time. It is also pleasing to see yourself create something you never thought you would, and then see your viewers really enjoying the transformation. At the moment I am experimenting with various techniques but I have not yet pre-selected a future style which I would be ready to follow.



AH: What piece of advice would you give to someone who would like to become a sculptor?

KF: I would say that if you are gifted with the talent to sculpt you should develop your skills by participating in sculpture symposiums, seminars, and most importantly interact with other artists to enrich your mind with creativity and inspiration. Never holdback in chasing your dream and have the willpower to achieve things by never giving up. When you are after something you love and have a profound passion for, let it be and let it become your next best thing. **AH**

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Above: The Legend.
Bahrain National Museum
2002. Wood.

Left (photo strip): The Legend process series.

“Khalid considers the scientist Sigmund Freud as the key to his sculptural works as he is inspired by Freud’s vision which states that straight lines stand for the man while the lenient, curvy lines stand for the woman”