

WEEK IN WEEK OUT

GRAZIA
EXCLUSIVEPICTURE
PERFECT

IN THE LEAD UP TO this year's Art Dubai festival, celebrity photographer Michel Haddi will be exhibiting a collection of his works at the new unveiled Toby Art Project art space in Al Quoz on March 18. And while you may not have heard of Michel, chances are you've seen one of his iconic photos, in books, in galleries or on the wall of a fashion insider.

So just who is Michel Haddi? The French-born Algerian photographer has been snapping pictures for the past two decades and is the man credited with some of the most striking images of the world's most famous faces. There's Angelina Jolie, whom he photographed in 1991 for *French Vogue*, Denzel Washington, who was snapped for *Interview* magazine the following year, and Uma Thurman, shot for *British Vogue* in 1990. But the list goes on and on. So just how did a young man from Paris go on to become a world-renowned photographer?

"One day I was walking down Boulevard du Montparnasse and I saw a copy of *Vogue* at a kiosk that featured an image of a girl shot by Helmut Newton on its cover," he tells us. "Actually it was a picture of a mannequin, not a real person. It was absolutely wonderful and by looking at it I realised that I had a lot of the same ideas. A week later, I photographed a friend and put these two images side by side and realised that I had the potential to create a good photograph. Of course it took me 20 years to fully understand what is behind an image."

So of the list of celebrities he's worked with, we just had to find out which ones were his favourites. "I loved working with Liza Minnelli, Blondie (Debbie Harry), Clint Eastwood and Johnny Depp," he says.

"When I think of fashion photographers, past and present, I think of names such as Cecil Beaton, Irving Penn, Richard Avedon, David Bailey, Helmut Newton and Mario Testino," said HH Sheikh Lulu M Al Sabah, Partner and Founder of JAMM, an independent art advisory that will be hosting the exhibition. "Their works are now sold at galleries and at auction and viewed as art. We felt it was time to showcase the work of a fashion photographer from our own region. Being part Algerian, Michel Haddi represents the mix between East and West."

Nicholas Cage for *Deftour* magazine, 1990Angelina Jolie for *French Vogue*, 1991Johnny Depp for *Premiere* magazine, 1992Denzel Washington for *Interview* magazine, 1992Uma Thurman for *British Vogue*, 1990Uma Thurman for *British Vogue*, 1990

To see Michel's iconic images, be sure to check out his exhibition opening on March 18 and running until March 31 at Toby Art Projects, Block 1, Warehouse 11, Al-Quoz, close to Al Serkal Avenue. **1**