

# Inspired pursuits: designer hussein bazaza

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*MENA's creative entrepreneurs talk on what it's like to turn a passion project into a business venture, and share their insights for pursuing creative ambitions in the MENA region.*

Ever since his debut collection came out in 2012, Lebanese fashion designer has been steadily climbing up the popularity charts thanks to his signature style and, of course, the slew of industry awards he has been winning along the way- these include the *Elle Style* award for Best Upcoming Middle East Designer in 2013 and the Dubai Design and Fashion Council - *Style.com/Arabia* Fashion Prize in 2015.

“ Every collection I ever launch has a fairytale behind it,” he says. “ My creative process starts by researching a specific topic at first. After the extensive research and data retrieved from the subject, I make up a character to go with the theme of the collection. Later on, after all the pieces of my story are put together, we walk through it step-by-step all the while creating outfits to match the tale.” As someone who believes local designers are often wary of being risky, Bazaza is keen on differentiating himself from the crowd- and he certainly seems to be winning on that endeavor.

THE Q: What’s your advice for creatives who want to break into the fashion industry?

“ Those who want to break into fashion need to be confident and fearless enough to do so. First and foremost, they must study and fully understand their target market to be well aware of its needs. They also must have a to have their own character in the fashion scene all the while creating artistic pieces that are sellable. For me, in the beginning, it was rather hard,

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because it was a confusing time where some would give me so much advice, and others would throw criticism my way, so the challenge was to deal with all of that and choose which comments among them all would be a kind of guideline. The most important lesson I learned was to always believe in myself.”