

MILIA AT HER
ATELIER IN BEIRUT
WEARING A RED
FEATHER TOP
FROM THE S/S 2013
COLLECTION.

in Arabian women and their taste for glamour.” While Beirut is her native city, home is hard to pinpoint for the enthusiastic traveller and peace seeker.

“Where is home for me, that’s a good question. It’s everywhere and sometimes nowhere. In a world without restrictions, I’d like to live where ever I can be with my loved ones and evolve freely. My dream is to live in a fair world without violence.”

Inspiration is not hard to draw for Milia, who says it’s easily found around her at any given time. As for the designers that she most admires there is Phoebe Philo, Alexander McQueen and Jil Sanders.

“I take inspiration from many aspects of life – travelling, books, movies, or anything that provokes an emotion or evokes a memory. I have a muse but she changes. When out of reference, my muse is myself.”

Having been in fashion for so many years and having lived and studied in Paris, Milia has witnessed the changes in the Arabian industry and the differences between this part of the world and Europe.

“In the early 1990s until around the mid-2000, couture was what defined the Arabian fashion industry. Even though the demand in this sector is still quite high, the establishment of fashion schools and the rise of designers launching their ready-to-wear lines gave a different image and a more global reach to the industry.

“A noticeable difference between Arabian and European women is in their lifestyles. The majority in the Middle East tend to spend a lot of money on fashion, on luxury brands, jewellery and the couture sector. In Europe this is much less the case where practicality and functionality are much more the concern.”

European women do tend to embrace more of an individualist approach to their style, though – they appreciate a personalised look, explains Milia.

“Styling identities are more defined in European countries than in Arabia, where women tend to look like each other in order to express a sense of belonging to a specific social group, rather than building a personalised style.”

But is there a difference between these worlds when it comes to what women want? The answer is no, says Milia, adding that women the world over can all be difficult to please.