

TheNational 11.02.12

**m**

saturday magazine

**MANIC MARTY**  
WHY SCORSESE  
JUST CAN'T STOP

**TRUE ROMANCE**  
ALL OUR FAVOURITE  
ON-SCREEN COUPLES

# OH, WOE IS ME

AS VALENTINE'S DAY APPROACHES, WE EXAMINE WHY WOMEN  
ARE UNHAPPY THAN EVER DESPITE SEEMINGLY HAVING IT ALL

STYLE

FASHION

OPINION

BEAUTY

ADVICE

SHOPPING

# 11

Saturday magazine

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A Muslim cleric reads from the Quran to bind the bride and groom in marriage in Jakarta (Love is in the Air, p. 18).

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#### COMING UP IN YOUR M MAGAZINE

Fashion goes to Hong Kong for a stunning 10-page photo shoot. Charlize Theron talks about happiness being overrated and her new film, *Young Adult*, and the creative director of Fabergé shares her style and passions with us.

# LIFE LESSONS

Mehrdad Mohebali, 52, is an Iranian painter who explores the conflicts of traditional versus modern, young versus old and West versus East. He has shown extensively in Iran and internationally and is hosting an exhibition now at the Etemad Gallery in Dubai

# 1

**Develop a passion for writers and reading.**

Since I was 10 years old, I've derived such pleasure from reading books that allow me to create social

relationships with the author. I love to feel connected to the writing process that informs the text rather than the subject – the Persian poet Omar Khayyám and the American novelist Richard Brautigan are examples. Read. It teaches you so much.

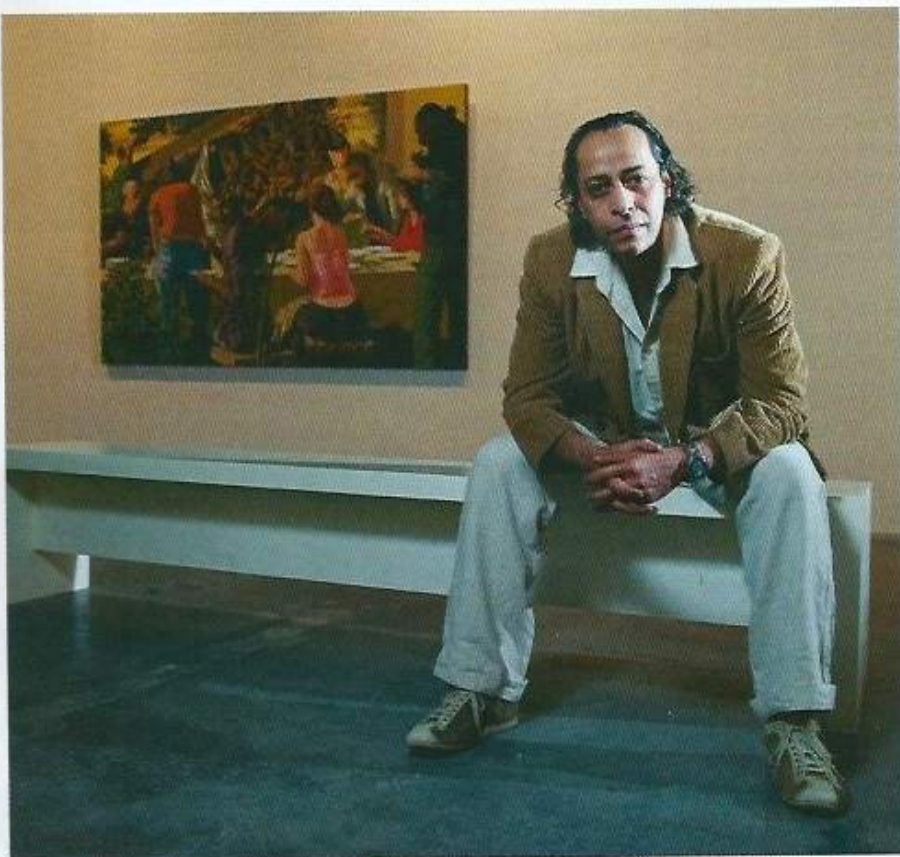
**Less judgement, more understanding.**

This is a hard lesson to learn but I try not to judge people by the philosophy that makes them function. I've learnt to follow my instincts. From people's behaviours and actions I've learnt to be honest. Art helps me to do this.

# 2

**Rebelling and reconciling is part of life.**

During my 20s I experienced moments when it was considered I was doing things against the norm. All of us tend to rebel in our youth – we all want to stretch our wings and see what we are made of – but I've concluded that at times, how society wants us to behave does not often go hand-in-hand with our individual choices. Sometimes circumstances cause us to act the way we do.



**4 Pay attention to the simple things.** During my 40s I came to realise that routine things such as reading the paper, watching the news,

going for walks, etc, though they seem small, can have monumental consequences. You may start the day thinking it's the same as the previous but then something insignificant might happen that changes everything. Be open to this. For example, I hope that one day, something small I tell my students might encourage them to become great artists.

# 5

**Learn to move on.** Now I'm in my 50s, I know that I should let go of things that bother me. I have to move forward with life. Shaking off any negativity can only set you free.

As told to Jemma Nicholls

Mr Passive by Mehrdad Mohebali runs until February 18; [www.galleryetamad.com](http://www.galleryetamad.com)