



## MISSION: FASHION

Elie Saab's latest collection is bigger and more voluptuous than ever, and it seems our gallant designer is on an even bigger quest



Lebanese designer Elie Saab, who is said to live for the night and loves to see his ladies dressed beautifully in the dark hours, has long been a leading name in haute couture.

The self-trained designer's Autumn/Winter 07/08 collection, which he recently showed in Paris, includes glittering evening dresses with plunging décolleté, bare backs, sequins, crystals and plumage worthy of any screen goddess. Classical yet unmistakably sexy, Saab's fusion of Middle Eastern spice and European finesse have appeared on the catwalks of Paris, the red carpet of the Oscar's and are much loved by royalty and actresses from around the world, including Her Majesty Queen Rania, Beyoncé and Halle Berry.

But Saab's love for his country is not just expressed in his designs. His role as advisor to new talents and competitors on LBC's reality show *Mission Fashion 07*

is a mentorship that supports and encourages talented designers in the region to keep reaching for their dreams.

Skin caught up with this spirited designer as he enjoyed some down time in Lebanon, and talked about women, design and *Mission Fashion 07*.

### What is your role in *Mission Fashion 07*? Why is the show important?

My role is strictly professional and educational. I give advice to the candidates, give them directions and choose a subject for them to work on every week. In the Arab countries there are plenty of talents in fashion design. *Mission Fashion* is about discovering those hidden talents and I want to make sure I can give them a push and try to make it easy for them. That's why I ask those who have this dream and ambition to pursue it and not to be afraid of giving it a try.

### How do you define design?

Design is a definition of art. It is a talent, something that you feel from the inside which drives you to create and be inspired. It is the fruit of the inspiration.

### How do you see today's woman?

It is hard to describe today's woman. There are many types, but in my eyes she is always feminine, elegant and most importantly with character.

### How has she changed from when you started designing?

She has always been very elegant and aware of her beauty, but she has evolved into someone who is more aware of her abilities on different levels. And she is definitely more self-confident.

### What does success mean to you?

Success is a reward for all the hard work and perseverance. It is the appreciation one gets and, needless to add, the ultimate satisfaction. ●

