





**Germany or Lebanon?**

Neither. The World.

**Define emotions.**

Someone else's emotion can trigger off mine and that's why I press the shutter button. I think emotions control everything in our lives.

**What was your first published project? How did it come about – and what did you learn from it?**

My first published advertising piece was when I was doing work experience in an ad agency in New York. I was 20 years old and I helped direct a poster for a ballet called Ballet Hispanico. I went to my first proper shoot and helped pick the images, fonts etc. It was a very proud moment when I went to the opening and saw the poster I worked on hanging outside the theatre!

**Which of your works best describes the direction of your career?**

If my career is in advertising then it has to be my latest TV commercial, a nice little ad that I just finished for Wrigley's. It was a classic piece of old school humour that will hopefully win a few awards! If my career turns to photography then definitely my book *Emotions in Motion*. I enjoy photographing people without their knowing; I can capture very private moments and with this style I see myself taking a path towards photojournalism.

**Tell us about your book.**

The idea came to me on my first day at work in Berlin. I was very eager to start nice and fresh. I sat in the underground surrounded by serious Germans reading their morning paper, and the doors open up and in walk two blonde women completely drunk. They sat opposite me and had a tub of ice cream that they were sharing. One was using the cap of her deodorant as a spoon and the other was using her underground ticket.

**OK, the deodorant cap is going way too far...**

Wait, there's more. They were both giggling and eating the ice cream, and the next thing that happened made me regret not having my camera with me: They both started to kiss and lick ice cream off each others' chins. We are talking 8.30am. For two years after that my camera didn't leave my side.

**Who do you want to see your work?**

Don McCullin, but he already has – I hope – because I sent him a copy of the book. And there is David Lynch of course, but I can't find his address!

**Whom would you love to take a portrait of?**

Osama Bin Laden.

**Any collaborations?**

No, I like to work alone. But if Don McCullin asked me nicely I might agree!

**Is photography your full-time job?**

No, but I wish it was.

**Your ultimate inspiration...**

Different people inspire me for different things, I can't name one person or thing.

**What do you think of the state of art in the Arab world?**

I'm very proud of our art, so proud as a matter of fact that my wife and I are about to open a shop called FEN in Berlin and one of the things we are specialising in will be modern Arab art. There's a lot more plans for the future. I quite like having my plate overflowing!

**Are there any young Arab photographers we should keep our eye on?**

Yeah, me!

**Does your work carry a message?**

I think each person sees their own message so there isn't one particular message to be told. It's all about perception.

**If you had the world's attention for 60 seconds, what would you say?**

Interesting question. I'm not sure anyone would listen anyway... I would have to say something like: "Stop war, Stop poverty, Stop pollution, Stop AIDS... and hey, don't forget to buy my book, you'll find it on Amazon.com and most bookshops in Europe, Japan and soon in America. Also please come and visit our shop in Berlin, which will open in summer. If you need more information you can find my email on my website... Are my 60 seconds up?"

**What do you believe?**

I believe this is my last question, thanks to everyone who read the whole interview right to the end!

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Turn over the page for a special look at Toufic's book, *Emotions in Motions*. ●