



The fake lives of influencers and fashionistas

'Imperfection is beauty, madness is genius and it's better to be absolutely ridiculous than absolutely boring.' —Marilyn Monroe



JUST KIDDIN', SERIOUSLY

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Nowadays, the word influencer is widely known and there are many Kuwaiti and Arab fashionistas and bloggers on social media. Back in the days when the Internet was not a dominant tool subsuming our brains and emotions under its power, we were influenced by artists, writers, philosophers, leaders and human rights activists. If the newbie fashionistas are called influencers, I wonder what Lady Diana, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Mahatma Gandhi, Marie Curie, Oprah Winfrey, Maya Angelou, Shakespeare, Khalil Gibran, Salvador Dali and Umm Kulthum would be called?!

Lady Diana's legacy of charm and charity endures, especially her campaigns for acceptance of AIDS victims and against landmines. She was able to unite people of all categories and backgrounds with her sudden death. Malcolm X, a courageous advocate for the rights of African Americans, has been called one of the greatest and most influential men in history, because he was able to start a revolution against injustice.

We cannot help but be inspired by the speeches Dr Martin Luther King. Till this day his 'I have a dream' speech sends chills down your spine and gives you goose bumps. Mahatma Gandhi was able to lead India to independence and inspired movements for civil rights and freedom by believing in nonviolent disobedience.

Marie Curie fought against discrimination and sex-

ism to win a Noble prize for discovering two elements - radium and polonium. This woman paved the way for all women to stand up and prove that they are able and capable of competing in various fields previously dominated by men.

Oprah Winfrey - this woman worked very hard to climb the ladder of success, and proved that by determination and believing in yourself, you can make it in spite of rejection. She inspires all of us with her generosity, kindness and determination, and isn't called the queen of all media for nothing. The depth, strength and the music of Maya Angelou's words, the American poet, memoirist and civil rights activist, gives you power to face life, cherish, respect and accept yourself as a woman, and embrace your race and religion.

As for William Shakespeare, he is considered one of the greatest (if not the penultimate) playwright and poet of the English language. He gave us another perspective about love and death in 'Romeo and Juliet' and left us very valuable treasures like 'Lady Macbeth', 'Antony and Cleopatra' and 'Hamlet', just to name a few.

The philosophical essayist, novelist, poet and artist Khalil Gibran wrote 'The Prophet', a book of poetic essays that achieved cult status among American youth. His opinion about life, death, children and giving and his poetic style in writing are still taught till this day, because of their depth and value.

If I want to speak about an artist that obliges us to think 'outside the box of the outside box', draw a horizontal world that is parallel to ours and add a futuristic dimensions to our brains, I would be talking about Salvador Dali. This great and innovative man stimulated our imagination and made us believe that the skies are really our limits.

Known for her extraordinary vocal ability and style, Umm Kulthum was one of the greatest and

most influential Arab singers of the 20th century. The Egyptian singer and songwriter was able with her voice, talent and lyrics to reach out to millions of people's heart and spread pure, ethnic and authentic music.

There are so many influential people that really affect and change our lives who deserve to be called "influencers". They inspire us to find our way and educate us to follow our dreams and free ourselves to be better people. I wish I can mention them all, to show them my gratitude.

I feel frustrated, sad and disappointed with some of the so-called influencers these days. Their only worth is due to their fake followers and the amount of likes, shares and subscriptions and the only thing that they offer is a complete shallowness with no depth or talent. We are being brainwashed and deceived by their fake lives that they are trying to show on social media.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not against a talented makeup artist that teaches women how to put makeup in order to feel better about themselves, I myself love to put makeup. I'm not against a good stylist or a fashionista that shows women how to dress in order to look elegant, stylish or sophisticated because personally I love fashion, but I'm against influencers that create an illusion of perfection and flawlessness that no one - not even them - can live up to in reality.

It is okay to go out without makeup because make-up doesn't define your beauty, it's okay to be heavy or have a few extra pounds around your belly or thighs, that doesn't make you less attractive. It's okay if you don't have a perfect skin, scars or a cute wrinkle around your eyes or mouth, these small marks narrate your story, where you came from or what you've been through. Influencers have a responsibility to show the imperfections that make us all human.