

Art for Charity

Auction of works
by Raouf Rifai
to take fundraising
up a gear



A BMW Art Car, first ever in Lebanon and the Middle East by a famous artist



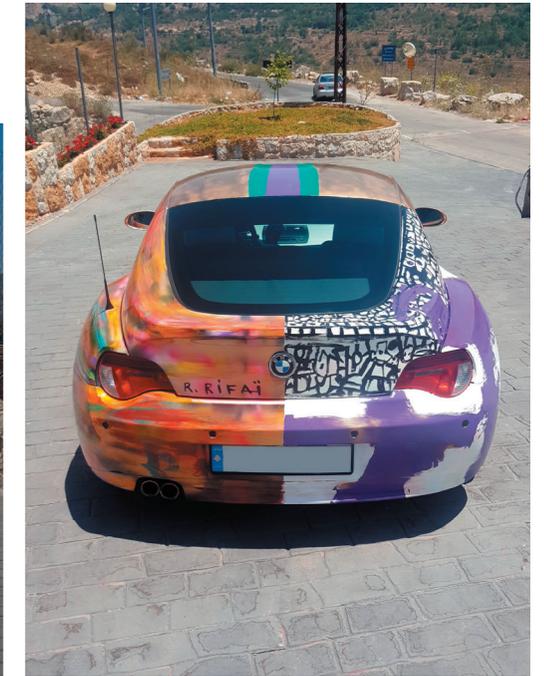
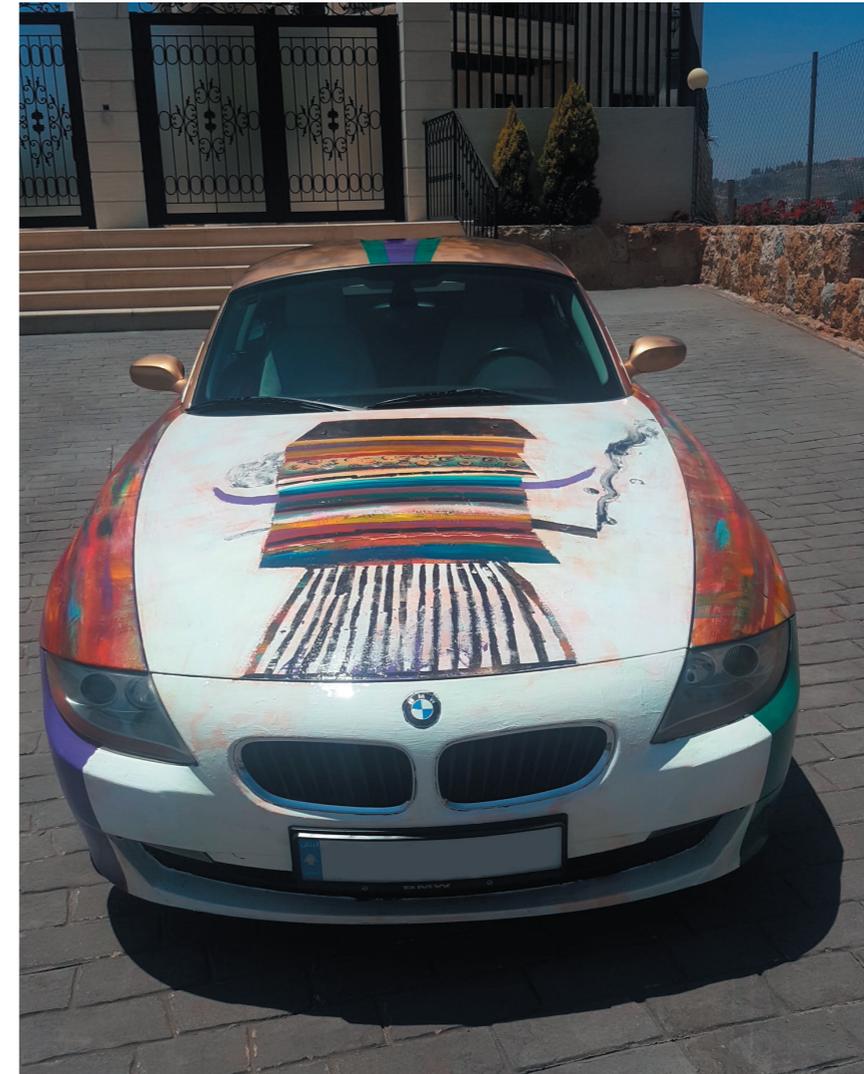
The Story behind the Car, by the owner

A collector of both classic cars and art since an early age, I was always fascinated by moving art, which led to me travelling around the world just to look at and admire these beautiful pieces, including Porsches and Mercedes, displayed in museums. Most recently, I visited the **BMW museum in Munich**, where I discovered one of the most exciting collections of cars painted by world famous artists, such as; Lichtenstein; Warhol; Koons; Stella; Calder; Rauschenberg; Holzer; and Elíasson, to name but a few.

Since a BMW 3.0 CSL painted by Alexander Calder lined up for the Le Mans 24-hour race exactly 46 years ago, the **BMW Art Car Collection** has fascinated both art and design enthusiasts, as well as car and technology fans all around the world.

Ever since the invention of the motorcar, artists have drawn inspiration from the thrill of speed, from the phenomenon of mobility to racing cars as examples of modern sculpture. Since 1975, **BMW Art Cars** have been a central feature of this story. The idea for the BMW Art Cars was the brainchild of French racing driver and art enthusiast Hervé Poulain. Forty-six years ago, Poulain asked his friend, the artist Alexander Calder, to apply his creative talents to his race car. Together with Jochen Neerpasch, then BMW Motorsport Director, they created the first BMW Art Car, and it became an instant crowd favourite on the racetrack. Since then, new additions to the BMW Art Car Collection have been made over the years at irregular intervals, including unique works of art from artists such as Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, David Hockney and Jeff Koons.

Just as the artists had varying styles, the BMWs differed greatly, transformed into works of art by means of a wide range of graphic and artistic techniques, from pure racers to rare sports cars, via production vehicles. The results are correspondingly diverse, with no two vehicles alike; it was left to each artist to choose the technology that suited them. Browsing through the **BMW Art Cars gallery**, with its 19 unique pieces, there are only three questions left unanswered: when will **Art Car no. 20** appear? which artist will use it to immortalize them in this legendary BMW collection? and, most importantly, which BMW model will be used?



- **BMW Z4 Coupe of 2007**
- Life cycle (2006–2008) is **12,819 Z4 3.0 s.i coupés**.
- Equipped with the **3.0 s.i. Developing 265-hp**.
- Eye-catching exterior, created under BMW design boss **Adrian van Hooydonk**
- **Long sweeping hood, front fenders and frameless doors**

The Car

And here comes the choice of the car. My **BMW Z4 Coupe of 2007** was the perfect car for the project. The worldwide model breakdown for the BMW Z4 Coupe over its life cycle (2006– 2008) is **12,819 Z4 3.0 s.i coupés**. Even from its introduction in 2006, the Coupé was relatively rare. Only two cars were imported into Lebanon by the official BMW dealership in 2007, equipped with the **3.0 s.i. Developing 265-hp**. The eye-catching exterior, created under BMW design boss Adrian van Hooydonk, is evidence that BMW's controversial flame-surfacing design theme has now matured sufficiently, with a good deal of the bodywork, including its **long sweeping hood, front fenders and frameless doors**, arguably more elegant than its open-top sibling.

The Choice of the Artist

As a lover of **Dr. Raouf Rifai's** art, in particular his **'Darwiche'** character, it was inevitable that I would choose him to apply his artistic talent to the car project. No living famous Lebanese and Middle Eastern modern artist have ever undergone such a project, it was obvious that no less than an "A" grade artist must be commissioned for the job. Born in Lebanon in 1954, Raouf Rifai lives and works in Beirut. He holds a Ph.D in Urban Planning from the Sorbonne- Paris I, and teaches art at the Lebanese University. Rifai has taken part in numerous Collective shows throughout Europe; the United States the Middle East and Japan. In the early phase of his career (1982-1984), Raouf Rifai's work was preoccupied with the **environment, nature and light**. From 1985, tradition, especially folklore and folk characters, emerged as a recurring theme in his work. In 1995, he spent 3 years exploring, through his art, the history of his country, Lebanon, before coming back to an **environmental theme** from 1999 to 2007 Rifai introduced the "Darwiche" as the point of departure for his art in 2008.



The Project

In the **second week of May 2021**, the car was stripped of its original black paint, masked and prepared for the artist to start on the paintwork. **High quality acrylic paints and sprays** were used for the process.

Dr. Rifai started his work on May 10, 2021 at 10am. His idea was to split the car into **four different themes**. The two sides of the car were painted with his **"Harmony" patch**, while the lower panels were painted in green and purple, leaving **the rear right wing with a pop art design**, including several tiny 'Darwiches' in black over white and purple. The roof and side mirrors are in gold, with stripes of green and purple to accentuate the feeling of it cutting through the wind. His final big **'Darwiche Smoking'** in different colours is applied on the hood over white and shades of pink, giving the car a truly stunning look from every angle.

Dr. Raouf finished his work at around 10pm on the same day. His **signature** can be seen on the left front side of the bumper and at the rear trunk lid. After leaving the paint to rest for three days, it was clear-coated with **three layers of premium lacquer in an auto spray oven** and left to rest for another week.

Since then, the car has been garage kept and never driven or shown to the public. The buyer will receive over **200 photos and videos** documenting the complete process, from start to finish. The colours are stated on the title of the car and will be registered under the name of the new owner legally.