

STYLE FILE: BÉNÉDICTE GIMONNET



Looking around the French artist Bénédicte Gimonnet's villa in Abu Dhabi where her paintings adorn all the available wall space, it's obvious that her inspirations are many.

"My creativity flows from the places I visit; the various cultures I discover through my travels; sights, smells, landscapes, anything that touches my senses," says Gimonnet. "When I sell my paintings the money goes into a pot and my family and I all take a trip. My children understand many languages because of this. Travel, art and culture make you curious and I love it."

Gimonnet was born in the city of Clermont-Ferrand in central France but has lived in Abu Dhabi with her husband and three children since 2009. Though her background is in finance, she has a BA in Fine Art from the Wimbledon College of Art, London. She has exhibited extensively across Europe and the rest of the world where private collectors and companies have invested in her work. Last month she showcased her art at the Abu Dhabi Ministry of Culture Centre in an exhibition entitled *UAE Through the Eyes of French Artists*.

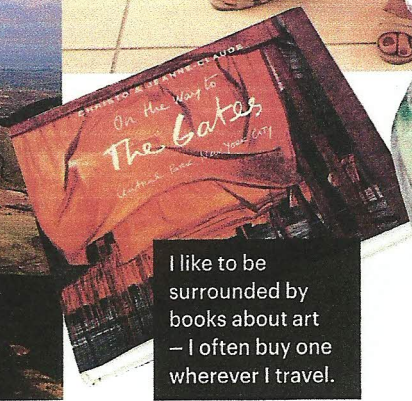
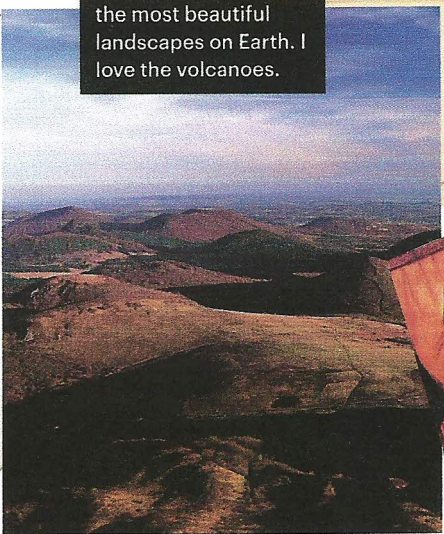
"When it comes to my art, my aim is to transport people to another place, to inspire them visually and textually," says Gimonnet. She talks to Jemma Nicholls about her art and sense of style.



I love French and Asian food – anything that is light, balanced and beautifully made.



My favourite place is the Auvergne, where I grew up. It's one of the most beautiful landscapes on Earth. I love the volcanoes.



I like to be surrounded by books about art – I often buy one wherever I travel.



I have worn Chanel Cristalle but also like Un Jardin Sur Le Nil by Hermès – it's very light.

I love visiting art galleries. My top three are the Tate Modern in London, the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the Louvre, Paris (pictured).



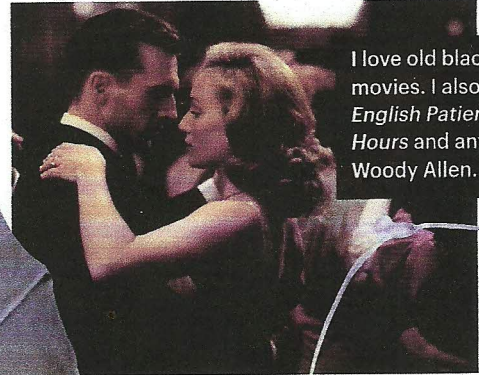
My favourite painting is by Angela Smith (an artist in London). It's an oil painting of my daughter.



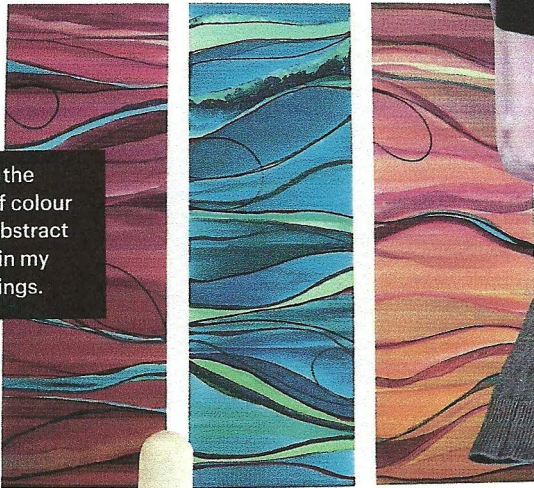
I love nail varnish. For my toes it's red, but for my fingers I like Chanel's Ballerina nail varnish.



I love old black-and-white movies. I also loved *The English Patient*, *The Hours* and anything by Woody Allen.



I love the use of colour and abstract lines in my paintings.



The last item I added to my wardrobe was a silver grey jumper from Monoprix in France. It's so elegant and I can wear it with anything.



The most important thing when it comes to clothes is accessories. A necklace, scarf or earrings can really make an outfit.



My favourite product is Estée Lauder's Advanced Night Repair. A beautician who looked half her age once told me that this was the secret to anti-ageing.



BÉNÉDICTE'S WORLD

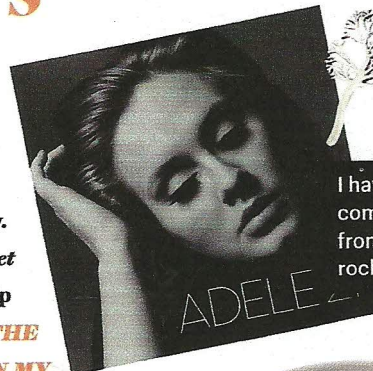
MY CAREER HIGHLIGHT IS...

when anyone falls in love with my paintings, feels the urge to own it and has the passion to explain why.

MY LIFE MOTTOS IS... *Aide-toi et le ciel t'aidera*, which means, "Help yourself and God will help you."

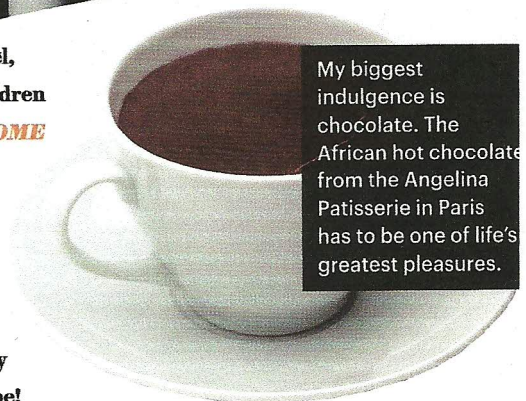
THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS IN MY LIFE ARE... family, good friends, art, travel,

learning new languages and raising my children with the same values. **I NEVER LEAVE HOME WITHOUT...** my sunglasses, Nivea lipstick and earrings. **MY STYLE SIGNIFIER IS...** less is more. This applies to everything I do. **WORDS TO DESCRIBE ME ARE...** as a child my mother gave me a Snoopy jumper with the slogan "Under my apparent calm, a storm is raging." This is me!



I have varied tastes when it comes to music – anything from classical (Mozart) to rock (Muse) and R&B (Adele).

My biggest indulgence is chocolate. The African hot chocolate from the Angelina Patisserie in Paris has to be one of life's greatest pleasures.



The art scene in the UAE is really starting to emerge. Every first Monday of the month I attend an art night at Cafe Arabia where artists can meet.

