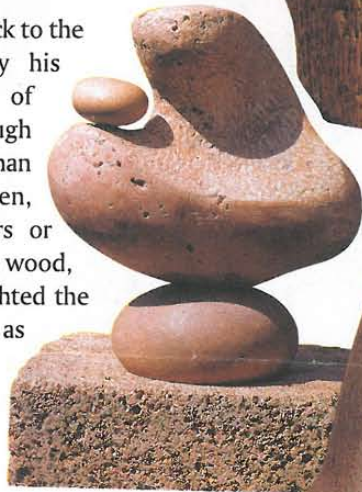


Rodin Museum in Paris and also a joint exhibition with Michel at the 'Souk des Halles'. "That felt very special, since Picasso's works were being exhibited there at the same time." Since then, he has exhibited his works locally and internationally, including London, Washington, Paris, and Tokyo, while some of his sculptures feature permanently in the Oxford Museum in London and the Modern Art Museum in Paris, as well as throughout public gardens in Lebanon.

early pieces, which date back to the 1950s, were inspired by his father's favorite subjects of birds and animals, although later, he turned to the human form, in particular women, often depicted as mothers or lovers and worked in stone, wood, or metal. Art critics highlighted the curves of his work, such as the shape of a child in its mother's womb or a woman in an embrace.



Basbous doesn't like to pigeon-hole his style. "Granted, I moved from classical sculptures to more figurative work and eventually abstracts, but I feel that even during those phases, I had developed a style of my own," he says. "Several people have told me that my work resembles that of Henry Moore, although I mostly worked with stone, while Moore worked with bronze." Basbou's

Inspiration, he says, is random. "I can be fired by the eyes of a beautiful woman, or maybe the shape of a tree," he says. And still by his beloved Rachana, where much of the artist's work stands today. The unspoiled village in North Lebanon overlooking the sea is a lynchpin for the brothers, with all three linking their success directly to their home. Little wonder, then, that when he returned from Paris, Basbous had the idea of transforming Rachana into a forum for artists and their work. Eleven years ago, his dream was realized and Rachana earned its title as an international sculpture forum attracting artists from all over the world. "I did not want Rachana to become only a local village for the arts, but an international meeting place with the aim of reviving art and sculpture,

where sculptors and art lovers from all over the world could meet," Basbous explains. The tradition looks set to continue down the generations, with Basbous's son and nephews also following in their fathers' footsteps. "It's not really surprising," muses the sculptor. "After all, they were born to the sound of the chisel."