

Making Art in a Material World



LISA DELONG

Diana Al-Hadid, BA '03, BFA '03, Brooklyn, NY, internationally known multimedia artist, was on the cover of *Vogue Italia*, as one of the "100 covers, 100 people, 100 stories" highlighted in the September 2020 issue (image 1). The issue featured 100 models, actresses and artists, showing a diverse range of people with unique stories to tell.

In early March 2020, she and her husband, Jon Lott, architect and assistant professor of architecture and director of the Master in Architecture I Program at Harvard University, won The Trailblazer Award at The Bronx Museum of the Arts Visionary Duos Gala. (See video at <http://bit.ly/Al-HadidTrailblazer> to learn more about their art and architecture.)

A native of Aleppo, Syria, who grew up in Canton, Ohio, Al-Hadid typically uses a mix of materials—both traditional (bronze, steel, wood, plaster, charcoal) and non-traditional (wax, resin, polymer, fiberglass)—to produce large-scale sculptures, panels and works on paper. She wields power tools and uses techniques such as welding, drilling, pouring and controlled dripping to bring into physical form concepts of the past, present and imagined future—often inspired by her study of art history.

As of 2019, her piece "A Way with Words," measuring close to three stories, is featured in the atrium of the new patient tower on Summa Health's Akron City Hospital campus (image 2). The large, mixed-media 3D panel—made of steel, fiberglass, polymer gypsum and paints using a technique she describes as "a mix between fresco and tapestry"—is based on a photo she took in Lock 3, a section of the Ohio and Erie Canalway located in the heart of Akron's downtown.

Al-Hadid's works of art have been featured in both group and solo exhibitions nationally and internationally for more than a decade. In 2016, her major solo exhibition at the NYUAD Art Gallery (at New York University Abu Dhabi) was titled *Phantom Limb*, which is also the name of the exhibit's central work, a towering sculpture of a female bust atop a cascade of stacked dripping pedestals evoking a mountainscape—and referencing a 15th-century painting, "Allegory of Chastity," by Hans Memling (images 3 and 4).

Kent State awarded her the Outstanding Young Professional Alumni Award in 2019 and the Distinguished Honors Alumni Award in 2014.

<http://www.dianaalhadid.com>



1. *Vogue Italia* cover featuring Diana Al-Hadid, September 2020. Credit: Courtesy Vogue Italia



2. Diana Al-Hadid, "A Way with Words," 2019, polymer gypsum, fiberglass, steel, plaster, gold leaf, aluminum leaf, copper leaf, pigment, 160.5 X 96 X 5.5 inches, Credit: Courtesy Summa Health



4. Diana Al-Hadid, "Phantom Limb", 2014, polymer gypsum, fiberglass, polystyrene, steel, wood, plaster, metal mesh, aluminum foil, pigment, 104 1/2 X 165 X 140 inches, Credit: Markus Woergoetter



3. Hans Memling, "Allegory of Chastity," c. 1475, oil on oak panel, 38.3 X 31.9 cm, Credit: Courtesy www.hansmemling.org