

STATION APPROACH

A CONVERTED WOOD FACTORY IS BEIRUT'S
NEW ONE-STOP SHOP FOR THE MORE
PROGRESSIVE END OF THE CITY'S ART SCENE

Self Portraits,
Maripol,
Polaroid



One of the joys of an international art fair is the focus it brings to the host city's wider creative community. To coincide with the glitz and glamour of the main attraction, a new, edgier space opens this week on the outskirts of town. Station is an alternative arts venue that, according to owner Nabil Canaan, "Is not an art gallery but a multi-purpose venue aimed at generating progressive content in an open-minded spirit".

Situated near two of Beirut's most irreverent and prestigious art institutions, Beirut Art Centre and Ashkal

Alwan, set in the post-industrial Jisr El Wati creative hub, Station will limit itself to one signature event per month in order to leave space for collaborations with other performers, artists and workshops.

Its first exhibition, which opens on 20th September, aptly brings the hedonistic pulse of Eighties New York to a city renowned in the region for its bohemian party spirit. The Maripolarama show uses the impulsively shot catalogue of Polaroids that was taken by the French-born, New York-based photographer of Lebanese descent, Maripol. This fresh exhibition charts

the heady days and nights she spent with mega-stars including Grace Jones, Jean Michel Basquiat and Madonna, among many others.

After garnering fame for styling Madonna's iconic Like a Virgin look, Maripol began to exhibit intimate snaps showing her carousel of artist-friends, and even produced and directed films about them. The urban fairy tale movie Downtown 81, starring Basquiat, and the profile film Keith Haring: The Message were each given a dose of the Maripol magic potion. Both will be screened as part of Station's inaugural show this week. ●