

## HYPED COLLECTIVE: CYRIL ZAMMIT

Complexity in Simplicity

Urban landscapes are changing with the help of a new wave of architects and designers. They translate their passion into purity, and simplicity. Along the coast of Ajman, there are two neighboring buildings that are part of this new wave: Anna Bint Ahmed Al Ghurair Mosque (designed by Dubai-based H&H Design Mark), and Al Zorah Pavilion (designed by Beirut-based Annabel Karim Kasser).

Al Zorah Pavilion overlooks the mangroves of Ajman, and covers a total of 4500 square metres. The escalating slopes of the structure are reminiscent of sand dunes, and appear to ascend into the clouds. Zinc shingles cover the south side of the building, protecting it from strong sunlight. The remainder of the building is walled with glass panels, providing panoramic views of the mangroves, inviting the surroundings inside. The pavilion is one part of a larger landscape restructure in the area, and it pleases me that they didn't opt for more familiar architects. There is no sense of déjà vu at Al Zorah. It is striking for all the right reasons.

I've visited the Anna Bint Ahmed Al Ghurair Mosque twice. Despite not understanding the writing on the walls, I couldn't help but feel a sense of ease in this place of solitude. There are mosques in every neighborhood, and they tend to take the same shape: the minaret, the dome, the large chandelier. Hala Al Madfai, designer at H&H Design Mark, has elevated this architectural design template. The air vents are smartly disguised with Quranic verses, written in contemporary typography. Shades envelope the chandelier. Natural light transcends throughout the mosque, creating a sense of harmony that leaves the soul clear. Whether or not you believe in a higher power, a clear and open state of mind is what you leave with.

Architecture and design reflect the time we live in. In a bustling country, in a mutant form, one tries to find ways to block out the noise. By synchronising our environment with design, we allow our minds to focus on what matters. ■

