

COMMERCIAL

Interior design

The essential guide for Middle East interior design professionals

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Seoul ART

KOREA'S CROFT GALLERY COMES TO DESIGN DAYS DUBAI



Souk sense

LWD REFURBISH MOSAIC
AT THE PHOENICIA BEIRUT

Egypt post-2011

COST OF RAW MATERIALS
SOAR AS IMPORTS FELL

A journey of self discovery

UNDERLINING DUBAI'S STRATEGIC POSITION AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN EUROPE AND ASIA, DESIGN DAYS DUBAI SAW 22 GALLERIES FROM COUNTRIES SUCH AS KOREA, BRAZIL, LEBANON AND THE UAE, DISPLAY COLLECTIBLE AND LIMITED-EDITION FURNITURE AND OBJECTS OF EXCEPTIONAL QUALITY, RANGING FROM PROTOTYPES TO 20TH CENTURY CLASSICS

Design Days Dubai highlights:

- Arabic Lettering & Arabesque in Product Design by Huda Smitshuijzen AbiFarès & Lara Assouad Khoury (Khatt Foundation)
- Styrofoam Carving by artist Kwangho Lee
- ‘What Design can do for the Future?’ by Li Edelkoort world renowned trend forecaster, who writes trend books two years ahead, to be used as design tools by strategists, designers and marketers of international brands
- Camel Leather Weaving in cooperation with Al Khaznah Tannery by Kwangho Lee
- Mentorship Programme by Lebanese interior designer/ architect, Nada Debs, founder of ‘East and East’, in Beirut
- Seminar: The Design Market: Discovering, Collecting & Investing by architect and interior designer Rabih Hage; an insight into the trend of rising prices in the 20th century design market and the limited edition phenomenon
- Furniture-making using Emarati Talli & street materials by: Brazilian designers Leo Capote & Amaury
- Discussion Panel: “Teaching Design” by Peter di Sabatino (AUS), Constantin Boym (VCU Qatar), Alexis Georgeacopoulos (ECAL) & Nabil Chenaf (AUD)
- “Sit in Shade” UAE Student Competition 2012 by tasmena, Design Days Dubai Education team & Brazilian designers; Leo Capote, Amaury, Pedro Bernardes & Hugo França from Coletivo Amor de Madre Gallery
- Live performances mischer*traxler (Gradient Mashrabiya): Mashrabiya are delicate wooden screens found in Middle Eastern architecture. Carwan Gallery (Beirut), Studio mischer*traxler (Austria) teamed up with a Lebanese woodworker to redefine the constructive system of the Mashrabiya
- Studio Drift’s Shylight: The Shylight is a lamp hung from the ceiling and hidden in a cocoon; It shows people how flowers attract bees. For example; when the lamp is switched on, ‘the flower’ falls out of its ‘cocoon’, opens its petals and floats downwards, it then closes again and goes back into its cocoon when the lamp is switched off.



Design Days Dubai is the first fair in the Middle East and South Asia region dedicated to collectible and limited-edition design. It featured more than 400 rare design masterpieces and was a huge hit with interior designers and architects alike.

From Dominic Harris’s Ice Angel, an interactive work that gives visitors electronic wings to artist Najla El Zein’s ‘6302 spoons’ at smogallery (Beirut) and a chandelier using Dandelion seed heads by Lonneke Gordijn & Ralph Nauta at Carpenters Workshop (UK/France) there was enough to entice everyone.

Other highlights included; The Fragmented Clock by Nada Debs for Carwan Gallery (Beirut) and Return to Nature, a chair made from pine cones by artist Jaehyo Lee for Croft in Korea.

“The open format of Design Days Dubai helped make design accessible and more understandable, even to those who are completely new to design,” said Salem Al-Qassimi, founder Fikra Design Studio. “By offering direct access to designers, collectors, and gallerists it encouraged people to have conversations and ask questions, allowing for a discussion and debate. Thanks to this event, it taught people about the future of design in the UAE as well as the wider Middle East.”

The event was organised in partnership with Dubai Culture & Arts Authority (Dubai Culture), The Address Hotels + Resorts, and design patrons Audi and Van Cleef & Arpels. It also coincided with the contemporary art fair Art Dubai, and was an integral part of Art Week.

- Lidewij Edelkoort is a trend forecaster who owns her own company called Trend Union. She travels the world studying socio-cultural trends sharing this information with her clients. She creates trend books two years ahead that are design tools used by strategists, designers and marketers at international brands including Armani and Prada.
- She advised Coca-Cola how Sprite should communicate with emerging youth archetypes; defining how western perceptions of Japanese culture can benefit Nissan to improve sales and build their identity abroad; explaining how technology, design and services will be affected by newly formed social networks among consumers under 20 years of age for Time Warner Cable; forecasting new consumer archetypes for Esprit as far as 2068; and proposing business development ideas for Lacoste's expansion into new fields of interest outside of fashion.
- TIME magazine has named her as one of the world's 25 Most Influential People in Fashion and Icon Magazine named her as one of the 30 Most Influential People in Design. In 2011, she launched an interactive online trend forum called Trend Tablet.



Local by Design represents a group of people in the UAE who are committed to sustainable design that reflects the long standing traditions and practices of the region. It is made up of four business partners; marketing consultant Rebecca McIlwraith, designer Mira Ghanem of Empire Interior Design, Sougha, a social enterprise initiated and owned by Khalifa Fund for Enterprise Development and Jean-Marie Gigante, GM, Al Khaznah Tannery. Its first project was to design the hospitality lounge at Design Days Dubai, using a modern interpretation of the Emirati majlis concept, and locally sourced materials taken from Sougha and Al Khaznah Tannery.

Designer Ghanem took the recognisable patterns, colours and functionality of the Emirati majlis, and imagined them in a new light using shades of white, black, gold and beige, camel leather and camel hair; courtesy of Al Khaznah Tannery owned by the General Holding Corporation, Abu Dhabi.

The space also had traditional Sadou and palm leave weaves supplied by Sougha, which markets and sells products on behalf of over 100 Emirati artisans across the UAE to preserve Emirati heritage and improve the livelihood of local crafts.

Other items in the room were inspired by Emirati culture, and included a table made of repurposed dhow wood, Sougha lampshades and light fixtures inspired by the gargour, traditional Emirati fishing nets and a curtain made from Telli – a form of embroidery using coloured twisted threads.



Each day of the fair were workshops that gave local designers an opportunity to integrate with some of the world's designers such as The Khatt Foundation in its Arabic lettering and product design and Korean designer, Kwangho Lee, who demonstrated camel leather weaving.


Other features included a creative weather station by French designer Mathieu Lehanneur named "Tomorrow is another Day" and Dutch design studio, Drift, with its exhibition Shylight based on lamps that open and close like a flower to attract bees.

Mark Marin of Mark Marin Design said the overall standard at Design Days Dubai was surprisingly high with a lot of interesting work which broke new ground for Dubai.

"The highlights were seeing original classic pieces of design by the great architects Mies van der Rohe and Oscar Neimeyer - both chaises," he said.

"The 70s marble 'Eros' table series by Italian architect Angelo Mangiarotti and pieces by Ron Arad. Gallery Nilufar also stood out with some beautifully crafted pieces including a sinuous bed and tables in timber by Irish craftsman Joseph Walsh."

"We wanted to spark the curiosity of our visitors and support emerging designers through a rich programme that covered the fundamentals of visual art, with mentoring and the transmission of on-the-job skills from leading names in the business," said Cyril Zammit, fair director, Design Days Dubai.

The fair was held at an Emaar pavilion, Downtown Dubai (March 18-21). 



**PALLAVI DEAN, DESIGN DIRECTOR
PALLAVI DEAN INTERIORS**

Design Days Dubai is a superb addition to the burgeoning art scene in the region. I think the lines between furniture and art are blurred – investing in a bespoke piece of furniture, is on par with buying a sought-after painting.

As an interior designer, I spend a lot of time scouring through furniture websites, design blogs and exhibitions - to have something of this caliber on your doorstep where you get a real feel for the product, is simply brilliant. For me, the highlight of the show was watching creativity in motion. The Gradient Mashrabiya workshop by Mischer'traxler was fascinating – as it put the process of design on display. I also loved the quirky furniture by +Coletivo Amor De Madre – the pieces are definitely making their way into my next project.

I think the show had something for everyone – collectors, artists, designers and basically anyone who is interested in design. Looking forward to next year already – I hope they scale it up.

SUSANNE HERBECK , SENIOR INTERIOR DESIGNER, INTERIOR MOTIVES UAE

Design Days Dubai is a great concept which has been missing in Dubai up until now. In Europe there are many exhibitions similar to this where people come together and meet the design community. It is an exciting hub to bring not just the local community together but artists, interior designers and architects to hold discussions and find out what is new on the market.

As an interior designer I found the event inspiring and I bumped into many professionals from the industry, such as Mark Marin Design, and chatted to them there. It was a great social networking event. My favourite pieces were 'Swarm' and the Dandelion seed chandelier at Carpenters Workshop and Return to Nature by Croft Gallery.

The event supports the idea of what Dubai wants to be, a place of inspiration and innovation, something for the future and it was a good idea to hold it next to the Burj Khalifa, which in itself shows what is possible in Dubai.

I also liked to see the exhibition from various students. It gives them a great platform to meet and chat to other designers who they would otherwise never get the chance to meet in person.

