

DESIGN DAYS DUBAI

Cyril Zammit, Fair Director of Design Days Dubai, talks to Ohlala to shed light on the region's creative industry and how the fair will continue to shape how design is showcased and valued in the Gulf.



In his role as Fair Director, Cyril coordinates with global design galleries and works with renowned designers and professionals from the design industry to establish Design Days Dubai as the definitive design show appealing to a broad public including design collectors, designers and architects.

What's the biggest design trend you've seen in the region lately?

CYRIL ZAMMIT: With the Fair, what we want to do is bring the entire world to Dubai but our

main target are people from the region. We analysed the market and we saw that the vast majority of people here want contemporary design, much less than vintage or classic pieces of the twentieth century which is the opposite in Europe and in the USA.

Design's future is closely linked with what happens in the art world; how do these two worlds interact?

CZ: There's a very thin line between art and design these days. With the fair, we want to highlight same pillars of creativity, research, concept, and process. I want people to come to Design Days Dubai and understand the process and technique that go behind the



production of a design piece. For two hours at the fair, you can sit down with a designer with 40 other people and learn exactly this.

What can we expect from the upcoming Design Days Dubai fair?

CZ: Hopefully to be surprised, because we are bringing pieces from all over the world, which have never been seen before. For the first time, we have a design studio exhibiting from Pakistan who have never exhibited anywhere else. There's an installation from China that is using called 'Sensitive Design' technique. It's basically wood worked and stitched together and because wood works all the time – if the air is suddenly getting a bit more humid or dry, or there's a lot of light – like a flower, it reacts. So it's not living, but it's called Sensitive Design because it responds to its environment and it's authentic. On top of that,

we have a brand new installation from the Swiss Design School, Ecal, where they put two iPads together on a spine, and the iPads are twirling around very fast. The resulting optical image is absolutely stunning. The installation will be shown for two minutes and then I want them to stop because I want people to see that when it does stop, there are only two iPads creating this illusion. It's really crazy but it's so simple. It's just a question of programming to achieve the effect in front of peoples' eyes. And then we have the great galleries, such as the Carpenters' Workshop Gallery – one of the top three galleries in the world, who come every year to exhibit at the fair, bringing expensive, exclusive pieces – the very best in the world.

Design Days Dubai is on March 17-21, 2014. www.designdaysdubai.ae



"At Design Days Dubai, we want to show pieces that are closer to art more than the retail aspect."



"When people ask me what design I want, I tell them, 'Whatever is the most simple; because technique and complexity lies behind simplicity.'"