

## Design Diary

Live in style as **Pratyush Sarup**, Dubai based interior designer lets us in on the world of interior design through this fortnightly feature



Benjamin Graindorge, *Fallen Tree*, Ymer&Malta — part of the new section called Discover

## A sneak peek at Design Days Dubai 2014

While art of a certain pedigree, considered a safe investment, is meant to be enjoyed, rare objects of design with exceptional craftsmanship are fast commanding similar reverence. In bringing such coveted pieces to the region, Design Days Dubai is paving the way for an evolved, more mature design scene in the Middle East.

In a short span of two years, Design Days Dubai has not only put the city on the map of vintage and rare designs, but has also changed our perception of "design".

Its 2014 edition will feature galleries from all corners of the world, including Algeria, Pakistan, Jordan and Japan. "We wanted to launch an annual modern and contemporary design fair of global standards," said Cyril Zammit, the director of Design Days Dubai. "The fair is now regarded in the same league as the well-established European and North American fairs. This indicates the quality of the investment pieces and the level of designs on display."

Alban Belloir, managing director (Middle East & India) Van Cleef & Arpels, believes "design is the first step of the jewellery-making creative process". "When we decided to support Design Days Dubai in 2012, we acted as pioneers as it was the first contemporary design fair in the Middle East. We immediately felt strong enthusiasm from the audience towards collectible and unique objects of design."

Dubai-based architect and founder of Viktor Udzenija Architecture + Design, Viktor Udzenija feels "Design Days is great for the people of the region to be able to experience such important design pieces in person and be able to watch presentations and workshops during the fair".

"As an architect, it is interesting



Naqsh Design House, Jordan presents Engraved corian and copper in-lay tables



Bloom, John Vogel, American Walnut, Southern Guild

to see the growing awareness of design and designers among people, who are now seriously looking at these beautifully designed and crafted objects as investments for

life," he said.

If the number of new design galleries that have opened in the region since the inaugural fair of 2012 is considered then Udzenija's sentiments are definitely being echoed by the market.

"I could not have asked for a better introduction ground to the international design community," says Aljoud Lootah, the Dubai-based graphic and fashion designer, and founder of the local fashion brand Niftee.

Lootah presented her final project for the Tashkeel Design Roads Professional programme — the Unfolding Unity stool — at the fair last year. "Since then not only has my approach to design changed drastically, I have had many more offers for collaborations, special projects and commissions." She returns to Design Days Dubai with a special workshop — 2D to 3D — on March 17, also marked as the Ladies' Day at the fair.

The fair will also host an extensive public programme with international designers and experts. Van Cleef & Arpels, in addition to their exhibit "In Praise of Hands", based on the book by Franco Cologni, will conduct 30-minute workshop in the craft of mock-up.

Last year, it established "The Middle East Emergent Artist Prize" in partnership with Tashkeel and Design Days Dubai, to support art and design talents in the region. "This year, we will welcome the winner at L'ÉCOLE Van Cleef & Arpels to Paris where he or she will discover the secrets of the virtuoso craftsmanship that gave birth to timeless creations," said Belloir.

Design Days Dubai runs from March 17-21 in Downtown Dubai. For more information log on to [Designdaysdubai.ae](http://Designdaysdubai.ae)

— Pratyush Sarup edits design blog [designcarrot.co](http://designcarrot.co)

### WHY YOU SHOULDN'T MISS DDD 14

**Haute design:** Some of the world's most respected and reliable design galleries will be on show. While Carpenters Workshop Gallery will present Rick Owens's designs, Next Level Galerie will showcase designer Philippe Malouin and Croft from Korea will present Ilhoon Roh.

**Local talent:** Meet three emerging Emirati designers at The Tashkeel stand to discuss the developing design industry in the country.

**Master classes:** In addition to L'ÉCOLE Van Cleef & Arpels, workshops by Francisco Torres, Rolf Bruggink, Simone Carena, Marco Bruno, Silvia Knüppel and Design 226, among others, are sure to give you a glimpse of the developing world of design and creation.



Molenschot, Citylight Chandelier, Carpenters Workshop Gallery