

Our favourite finds at Dubai Design Week

It felt (for the first time, perhaps) like a real design festival. There were people milling about on the "streets" of D3; music blaring from invisible speakers; a suitably wide assortment of public installations to explore; pop-up shops for design aficionados; a glimpse into the future courtesy of graduates from around the world; and a polished trade show to anchor it all. Dubai Design Week 2017 drew to a close on Saturday and was, we can happily report, a resounding success. There was plenty of great design on show, but here are the five creations that we're coveting.

When old becomes new

The Culture Cross dining chair, by Kuwait's Jassim Al Nashmi, was part of this year's Abwab exhibition, a dedicated showcase of regional talent. It's not the first time that a design claims to "merge East and West", but there is something utterly charming about this high-backed seat, nonetheless. Manufactured in the United States, with design references that extend from China to the Middle East, the chair pays homage to the Silk Road, but would not look out of place in a contemporary space.



Berber arts

The Skoura collection is pure Berber, but somehow manages to simultaneously exude a Scandinavian feel. The tableware range by designer Bouchra Boudoua was created in collaboration with traditional Moroccan potters and made from locally sourced clay from the Ourika Valley. Taking their cue from old mud houses found in the Berber villages of the Atlas Mountains, the unglazed terracotta surfaces are combined with natural materials such as rattan, in a tribute to the simple and authentic lifestyles of the Berber people.



Design in bloom

Nadine Kassem Khoury, the founder of Dubai's O'de Rose concept store, has long had a penchant for beautiful blooms. So to mark this year's Dubai Design Week, she joined forces with two designers who specialise in floral motifs. We are particularly taken by the work of Lebanese designer Tamara Barrage, who uses real dried flowers and leaves, mixed with resin, to create furniture and design objects. She designed an exclusive collection of decorative items for O'de Rose, including this stunning vase, which is still available in-store.

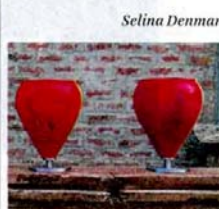
Mirror, mirror

Two of the region's best known creatives, jewellery designer and artist Nadine Kanso, and architect and product designer Fadi Sarieedine, have joined forces to create Khawatir, a limited-edition design collection that explores identity. It consists of a stand-alone mirror, titled Ana (which translates from Arabic to mean "I"), a multipurpose stool called Hobb (meaning "love") and a hand-held mirror named Ana 02. The materials used for this project include wood, brass, mirror and neon paint. "This collection is a great example of what we can achieve with a bit of soul-searching. Two totally different creative fields came together in an organic manner," says Sarieedine.



A place to perch

Studio Coalesce's jaunty Lattoo stools offered a much-needed resting spot for D3's design-savvy visitors, as well as a welcome pop of colour. An exercise in contrast, the stools' bulbous bodies (below) have been juxtaposed against a skeletal framework, and artfully combine wood and steel.



Selina Denman