

**The Middle East's leading design platform, Dubai Design Week, returns  
7 – 12 November with a focus on designers from region**

Held under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikhha Latifa bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Chairperson of Dubai Culture & Arts Authority (Dubai Culture) and member of the Dubai Council

- The Middle East's design platform brings together established and emerging designers from the region to exchange ideas, inspire audiences and present the possibilities of what can be achieved through design
- With more than 500 designers, architects and creative practitioners participating, Dubai Design Week will feature thought-provoking installations, commissioned projects, exhibitions, talks and workshops exploring topics from sustainability and emerging technologies to design-led impact solutions
- Downtown Design, the region's leading fair for contemporary and quality design, marks its 10<sup>th</sup> edition and will hold a fundraising initiative for Emirates Red Crescent for Gaza Relief efforts.
- Dubai Design Week, taking place 7-12 November in strategic partnership with Dubai Design District; a member of TECOM Group PJSC, is free and open to the public

**United Arab Emirates, Dubai, 31<sup>st</sup> October, 2023:** Held under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikhha Latifa bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Chairperson of Dubai Culture & Arts Authority (Dubai Culture) and member of the Dubai Council, in strategic partnership with Dubai Design District (d3), a member of TECOM Group PJSC, and supported by Dubai Culture, Dubai Design Week has announced its full programme taking place in d3 between 7-12 November. Dubai Design Week fosters Dubai's role as the Middle East's epicentre for design and culture, and a nurturing hub for creative talents from around the world. The event will bring to the design community and general public an immersive experience featuring exhibitions, pop-ups, panel discussions, hands-on workshops and large-scale outdoor installations. Downtown Design, Dubai Design Week's anchor event and the leading fair for contemporary and high-quality design, will mark its 10<sup>th</sup> edition.

Each year, Dubai Design Week provides a unique opportunity for designers from across the region to showcase their work to an international audience and is a platform for critical discourse, promoting responsible and impactful design and encouraging designers to consider the broader implications of their work; from traditional practices and emerging technologies to environmental sustainability and design-led social impact solutions.

This year in response to the devastating events occurring in Gaza, Downtown Design will be raising funds for humanitarian aid to support the many innocent civilians who are affected by the ongoing tragedy. Visitors to the fair will be asked to pay an entrance fee of AED 25 at the door of which the full amount will be donated to **Emirates Red Crescent** for Gaza relief efforts. The Art Dubai Group, who owns and manages Downtown Design, will match the total funds raised.

## 2023 DUBAI DESIGN WEEK PROGRAMME

### Downtown Design

Marking a decade of contemporary design, Downtown Design will showcase more than 300 international and regional brands and designers from over 40 countries, reflecting Dubai's influence on the regions burgeoning design industry. In its 10<sup>th</sup> edition this year, the fair will welcome some of the most sought-after brands globally, presenting their latest collections and innovative products, such as **Cassina**, showcasing its stand-out, inimitable Italian designs, **Cosentino**, unveiling a Roman bath concept in collaboration with **Kristina Zanic Consultants**; **Dedar** featuring a creative collaboration titled 'Reverie' in collaboration with Popus Editions and 1.6.0 Editions; **Flexform**, presented by **Obegi Home**, making their debut with a large outdoor showcase at the heart of the fair; world-renowned industry design brand **Kartell**, returning to Downtown Design after 10 years; and **Poltrona Frau**, a leader in 'made-in-Italy' design which fosters an exquisite blend of tradition and innovation.

In the fair's section dedicated to limited-edition design and bespoke design, Downtown Editions, visitors can explore works by independent designers, studios and galleries from all corners of the world, with a spotlight on the region. Highlights include Dubai-based **Fadi Saridienne** Studio launch his new pieces; Apparatus presented by Dubai-based **Collectional Gallery**; **Arkivio** from South Africa alongside coveted new brand **Don Tanani** from Egypt and the unveiling of four projects by the designer cohort of the annual **Tanween** programme by **Tashkeel**.

### ABWAB: Of Palm by Abdalla Almulla

The 2023 Abwab headline commission has been awarded to Emirati architect **Abdalla Almulla** for his project **Of Palm**". The indigenous palm tree is the source of his inspiration with the entire pavilion – its structure, the interiors and design objects – being derived from the palm tree and brought to life with talks and workshops inspired by this organic material.

### Urban Commissions: Designest by Ahmad Alkattan

**Urban Commissions**, Dubai Design Week's annual design competition, that invites designers and architects to propose innovative outdoor furniture in the public domain, returns this year under a jury panel consisting of experts in the design field: **Ahmad Bukhash**, **Robert Shakespeare** and **Cyril Zammit**.

The year's winner is Syrian concept designer and architect **Ahmad Alkattan** with his project **Designest**, a work inspired by the cultural significance of pigeon towers in the Arabian Peninsula, conceived as a series of intimate bio-inclusive spaces.

### Installations

Established and up-and-coming designers, architects and collectives representing the region and beyond will present the potential of design, creativity through large-scale installations. Over 25 large-scale installations will be staged throughout d3, demonstrating how design, science and technology can converge to reclaim materials of our past, including:

- Architects **Wael Al Awar and Kazuma Yamao** of the Dubai- and Tokyo-based studio **waiwai** present 'Urban Hadeera', one of the most recognisable structures from UAE vernacular architecture, formed using sustainable, salt-based materials as a cement alternative.
- Palestinian textile designer **Areen Hassan's** expands her practice through 'Flowing Threads', drawing on the unravelled threads to symbolize the interconnectedness of humanity, the layers of one's own identity and the significance of transparency and adaptability.
- 'Naseej' by Emirati architect **AlZaina Lootah** & Indian architect **Sahil Rattha Singh**, and supported by Dubai Culture, is a wooden pavilion designed specifically as a contemplation space. Crafted to provide a sanctuary for introspection and peace, this unique structure draws inspiration from Emirati traditional weaving patterns and the elegant geometry of palm tree leaves.
- **Made in Earth Collective's** 'The Future Will Be Sown' is an immersive sensorial landscape made entirely from loofah—a seemingly ordinary agricultural by-product from Southern India.
- 'Peaceful Perspectives' by Lebanese-Palestinian interior architect **Aya Charife** invites audiences to peer through tunnelled focal points, made from biodegradable soundproof material to create a visual moment of pause.
- Dubai-based architecture and interior design atelier **TEE VEE EFF** repurposes discarded cardboard and paper waste from the UAE to form 'Pulp Fractions' a modular installation using paper pulp as a primary material.
- After showcasing at this year's Venice Architectural Biennale, Tokyo-based **Mitsubishi Jisho Design** will present 'Arabi-An', the UAE iteration of their sustainable tea house made from food-waste-based materials, including tea grains and grapes, and construed using the Miura method of Origami.
- Bahraini designer **Sara Al Rayyes** harnesses the innate beauty and strength of mother of pearl oysters, a typically discarded material in the pearling industry in her installation 'Blessings of Iridescence'.
- 'Altostrata - Therme Pavilion' is a large-scale architectural pavilion designed by Award-winning French architect **Arthur Mamou Mani** and crafted entirely from fermented sugar using cutting-edge technology by **Fab.Pub**.
- Saudi architects **Meaad Hanafi** and **Rahaf Al-Muzaini** of **Sibyl Design Studio** invite audiences to build an evolving visual dialogue through their interactive installation 'CYCLE', a spinning sandboard inspired by Saudi Arabia's transformative journey in recent years.
- In a world increasingly entangled with virtual realms, Indian artist **Kapil Bhimekar**, encourages audiences to experience the joy of human connection with 'Reality Check', a large-scale inflatable installation made from Recycled PVC.
- **Iris Ceramica's** 'THE BIG CHALLENGE' is a deliberately oversized table tennis installation that allows multiple players to engage simultaneously in a game. Made from porcelain stoneware manufactured by Iris Ceramica, the installation features architect **Niko Kapa's** geometric designs utilizing Design Your Slabs (DYS) technology.
- **UAE-based Edge Architects** offer an immersive spatial experience with 'EDGE MORPH'; made from Desert Board, an engineered board crafted from upcycled palm fronds, audiences will navigate a world of organic curves and contours.
- **Eco-Sustainable Voronoi Wall** by students from the **University of Sharjah** is crafted from PLA (Polylactic acid), slashing waste and minimizing the carbon footprint linked to conventional construction.

- **'The Sustainability Dome'** by **3Distica** is built from repurposed HDPE materials and 3d printed biodegradable components, held together with recycled fabric ropes, demonstrating a blend of environmental consciousness and engineering innovation.
- **Moey Studio** will present **'Circles of Trust'** where discarded tires are infused with renewed purpose and significance.
- **Vertical Design** will present **'Prismatic Dreamscape'**, an installation that invites audiences into a mesmerising world of duality and harmony utilizing neon lights and sustainable concrete tiles.
- **nngg Studio** will present **'Shaking Sanctuary Urban Shade'**, an immersive experience realised with flexible rods and canopies that create a responsive environment reminiscent of a forest.
- **House of Piranesi, represented by VHC**, will present **'Floating Teka'** which introduces modular, reconfigurable seating made from terrazzo consisting of salvaged construction waste.
- **'Lurking Questions'** by **Incubis Consultants & Team Nori** is a physical representation of the climate crisis composed of interlocked packaging waste.
- **Shabir Mir's 'Ring of Life'** is a sculptural installation constructed from waste *gargoor*, traditional fishing nets resembling the movement of water that breathes life into space, casting captivating interplays of light and shadow.

### Exhibitions

Over the course of the week, Dubai Design Week will host a number of curated exhibitions, including:

- **UAE Designer Exhibition** is an annual platform for the local creative community, showcasing emerging talents and young practitioners. Hosted at Downtown Design, this year's exhibition is curated by Fatma Al Mahmoud under the theme 'For Future Living Spaces', with a focus on designers committed to crafting living spaces that embrace social impact and eco-consciousness. Featured designers and studios include **Alya Alghfeli, Munira Almulla, Majid Al Bastaki, Areen Hassan, Ammar Kalo, Alia Mazrooei, Nuhayr Zein** and **Dachah Studio**.
- **Colab**, Dubai's first purpose-built material library will present **'RETHINK'**, showcasing ground-breaking materials that inspire new ways of thinking about sustainability, design and production processes. Housed in a modular, zero-waste exhibit, **'RETHINK'** will feature **UAE-made materials** alongside a host of other innovative materials from around the world.
- **Royal College of Art**, one of the world's leading universities of art in design based in London, will showcase over 20 projects which explore sustainability, design and emerging technologies, such as AI, linked to various themes, including fashion and textiles, healthcare, cities and infrastructure as well as environmental rehabilitation.
- **'Round 4: 100/100 Best Hundred Arabic Posters'**, supported by **421**, is a visual account of the region's under-documented discourse around contemporary design aesthetics. Presenting 100 design-focused posters, the exhibition celebrates diverse cultural aesthetics and the rich creative landscape of the region and acts as a critical archive of Arab-born design and type.
- Titled **'Sustainability - Past, Present and Future'**, the **d3 Architecture Exhibition**; organized by **Dubai Design District** in partnership with **RIBA Gulf Chapter** on the

sidelines of **Dubai Design Week activities**, will present a compelling narrative through time and the ever-evolving ethos of sustainable architecture in the Gulf region, whilst underscoring the critical role of architects in this journey. The exhibition will feature works by students and emerging architects alongside leading architectural firms including **Foster + Partners**, **Zaha Hadid Architects** and **UN Studio**. A series of talks and workshops will run as part of the exhibition.

- Design platform **Isola** will present their travelling curatorial exhibition '**Nothing Happens if Nothing Happens**', featuring circular design pieces that highlight the principles of craftsmanship and regenerative design; with the set up of the space made entirely made from recycled plastic.

### **Activations & Pop-Ups**

Dubai Design Week will also welcome a series of initiatives realized in collaboration with the festival's partners.

- **BMW & Nathalie Harb – Urban Hives:** Urban Hives by Lebanese multidisciplinary artist and designer **Nathalie Harb** represents an innovative, multifaceted initiative focused on transforming public hard-surface areas, such as parking lots, into thriving urban green spaces. With a vision to enhance green spaces in light of urban development in the cities. This commitment is a driving force behind her choice to repurpose parking spaces, effectively providing different layers of nature into the urban landscape. As part of Dubai Design Week, the initiative has been adapted to serve as a hub for discussions, workshops and labs, all centered around the theme of sustainability and mobility. This is partnership with BMW, offering a platform to showcase their innovative electric vehicles. BMW actively work to pioneer the future of sustainable luxury by pursuing a holistic approach at every step. 'Urban Hives' is a focal point for the BMW vision for a sustainable future—one that's rooted in circularity and eco-consciousness, and one that rethinks and transforms its environment.
- **Editions de Parfums Frédéric Malle unveils 'Portrait of a Lady'**, a commissioned exhibition of three Middle Eastern female photographers as they interpret one of Frédéric Malle's most iconic fragrances, building on his ethos of collaborating closely with creatives. A series of portraits by photographers **Malak Kabbani**, **Amina Zaher** and **Hayat Osamah** .provides a nuanced ode to women of the region; from immortalizing strong multifaceted Arab women to documenting muses from the heart of Saray.
- The **Art Jameel Shop** will offer a curated selection of works ranging from exclusive commissioned products by local and regional designers, limited edition artworks and ceramics, children's products and publications. This year, the space will also host public talks and workshops, including seminars run by **Tashkeel** to support local designers, artists and creative entrepreneurs; alongside food and drinks by specialty café **FRAME**.
- **Made51** is a global brand of artisanal home décor and accessories created by **UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency**, in an effort to bring refugee craftsmanship to the world. In each product, refugees showcase their cultural heritage, share their stories as well as have the opportunity to earn a living, be self-reliant and rebuild their lives



with dignity. Made51 products will be available for sale at the **Art Jameel Shop** in d3, during Dubai Design Week.

- In an example of how design can be used as a tool for humanitarian aid, a collaboration between **UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, and IKEA Foundation** presents **Hope Starts with a Home: Redesigning Relief Housing Units** showcases an innovative flatpack shelter solution. With over 85,000 units delivered worldwide, these shelters can be rapidly deployed after disasters to provide immediate protection for displaced families; and recognizing that displacements often last far longer than anticipated, can be customized with local materials to create a sense of home.
- **Saporiti Italia** will launch the '**Saporiti Design Experience**', a research laboratory in collaboration with **Dubai Institute of Design and Innovation (DIDI)** that will challenge DIDI students to re-design their classic Miamina Chair designed in 1984 by renowned architectural firm Salvati & Tresoldi.
- The **Dubai Institute of Design and Innovation (DIDI)** based in d3, will present a series of engaging design workshops, student and designer exhibits and campus tours designed for visitors to get a glimpse of what it would be like to study at DIDI.
- **in5**, an enabling platform for entrepreneurs and startups part of TECOM Group, presents **The North Star**, the regions largest 3D printed exhibition. Developed and built by **Nyxo Studios**, an in5 start up, the North Star signifies the principle of guiding individuals in their goals.

### Maker Space

Maker Space is Dubai Design Week's dedicated workshops' programme that facilitates the process of pursuing, practising and polishing a range of skills across design disciplines.

Throughout the week, there will be over 50+ workshops catering to visitors of all ages and levels, and are hosted by a range of professionals from across the region. Highlights include **Glass Fusing** by **Hadia Roushdy**, **Sustainable Packaging Design** from **Ithra (King Abdulaziz Centre for World Culture)**, **Recycling + Reforming** by **Precious Plastic Dubai**, **Palestinian Motifs** by **Areen Hassan** as well as sessions hosted by **AUS** and **AUD**.

### Talks

Dubai Design Week's programme includes a series of over 20 talks, panel discussions and masterclasses, bringing together a diverse array of regional and international creatives and thought leaders, to share industry insights, exchange ideas and encourage debate.

Hosted at Downtown Design, on the d3 Waterfront Terrace, The Forum is Dubai Design Week's main platform to promote interaction, connectivity and dialogue. This year's roster of speakers includes: global trend forecaster **Lidewij Edelkoort**, acclaimed fashion designer **Ozward Boateng OBE** and renowned designers **Ross Lovegrove**, **Nina Magon** and **Sebastian Herkner**.

Joining panel discussions on pressing topics in the Middle East's fast-evolving creative industries are names including architects **Wael Awar** and **Sumaya Dabbagh**, as well as sought-after designer duo **David Raffoul** and **Nicolas Moussalem** (David/Nicolas).

### **The Marketplace**

**The Marketplace at Dubai Design Week, a weekend-long, outdoor retail experience, returns to Dubai Design District (d3) from 11 - 12 November.** This year, the Marketplace presents an even more varied experience, with 80 brands participating for the first time. Bringing together some of the best homegrown small businesses, the market is a place of discovery for the whole family to shop, eat and connect.

Since its establishment in 2015, Dubai Design Week has earned international recognition, emerging as a prominent stage for emerging and established designers to exhibit their creations, engage with industry experts and gain visibility in the Middle East and abroad. Thanks to its programming, international presence, dedication to innovation, and promotion of local talent, it has helped shape Dubai's identity as a vibrant hub for design and creativity in the Middle East.

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### **Note to Editors:**

For all upcoming announcements and updates, visit [dubaidesignweek.ae](https://dubaidesignweek.ae) and follow @dubaidesignweek | #DXBDW2023.

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### **About Dubai Design District (d3)**

Dubai Design District (d3), a member of TECOM Group PJSC, is a global creative ecosystem dedicated to design, fashion, architecture and art. In line with Dubai's position as the leading business destination for the region and beyond, d3 is an industry-pioneering concept that enables people and businesses to grow and co-create, whilst simultaneously providing a strong platform for creativity. Strategically located in the heart of Dubai, d3 is the city's lifestyle and business district that challenges thousands of people to rethink the regular.

With state-of-the-art infrastructure designed to meet the needs of the industry and a business-friendly framework, the community offers creative talent the tools for collaboration and growth, further reinforcing Dubai's status as a UNESCO Creative City of Design. d3 is a cutting-edge retail district offering a variety of multi-brand boutiques, fashion brands, art galleries and showrooms. In addition, d3 is home to leading companies and talent including architects, interior designers, photography studios, product and fashion designers. Some of the region's most popular events take place in d3 and attract international artists and audiences to cultural and fashion exhibitions and gatherings such as Dubai Design Week, Dubai Fashion Week and Sole DXB. The district also regularly hosts a roster of industry talks, workshops and educational programming, accessible to people of all ages.

d3 is home to TECOM Group PJSC's business incubator – in5 – that aims to support the fashion and design industries by offering students and entrepreneurs the opportunity to transform their ideas into successful commercial ventures. This ecosystem is further supported by the Dubai Institute of Design and Innovation (DIDI), the region's only university exclusively dedicated to design and innovation, which offers a curriculum crafted with the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and The New School's Parsons School of Design.

The district also features the city's first canal side recreational development, The Block. The open-air destination offers a range of different outdoor and leisure areas including a basketball and volleyball court, a skate park, outdoor gym and climbing wall.

For more information, please visit: [www.dubaidesigndistrict.com/](http://www.dubaidesigndistrict.com/)

### About Dubai Culture & Arts Authority

On 8th March 2008, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, launched Dubai Culture & Arts Authority to be the custodian of Dubai's cultural and creative sector and help define it at the local and global levels, enabling and developing these sectors to consolidate the emirate's position as an active global centre for creativity.

Under the leadership of Her Highness Sheikha Latifa bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Chairperson of Dubai Culture, the Authority is committed to enriching Dubai's cultural scene based on the UAE's heritage, and is building bridges of constructive dialogue between various cultures to enhance Dubai's position as a global centre for culture, an incubator for creativity, and a thriving hub for talent.

The Authority is committed to preserving and celebrating Dubai's history and highlighting its contemporary cultural and creative fabric through practicing its role as a cultural and creative sector Regulator, Planner, Enabler and Operator through a series of mega cultural initiatives, events and projects, and the various cultural and heritage assets under its remit, including the management of 6 historical destinations, 6 museums, Al Jalila Cultural Centre for Children and 8 Dubai Public Libraries.

Dubai Culture is developing regulatory frameworks for Dubai's cultural and creative sectors based on the priorities of its strategic roadmap 2020 – 2025 and the enablers that seek to support talents and stimulate active participation from society members. The aim is to create an ecosystem that stimulates creative industries and reinforces Dubai's position as a global cultural destination, and its cultural responsibility of safeguarding Dubai's tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

For more information, please visit: [www.dubaiculture.gov.ae](http://www.dubaiculture.gov.ae)