

AD

THE NEXT
GENERATION

THE MIDDLE
EAST'S RISING
DESIGN STARS

PRIDE OF
A NATION
CELEBRATING
THE UAE'S
CULTURAL
RENAISSANCE



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Guiding Light

At the most recent edition of *Dubai Design Week*, Indian lighting designers, and founders of Klove, Prateek Jain and Gautam Seth unveiled their latest collection, *Shamanic Soul*. It was inspired by the mystic leaders of ancient tribes around the world, and perhaps most heavily influenced by the indigenous peoples of North America, whose shamanic power symbols such as spirit animal eagles, totem poles and dream catchers are realised here in bright polished brass and colourful blown glass. The showstopping display included a contemporary take on a gypsy caravan made entirely of glass. klovestudio.com



CLOCKWISE FROM BELOW: KLOVE FOUNDERS GAUTAM SETH AND PRATEEK JAIN; THE PEACOCK LAMP AND EAGLE WALL SCONCE FROM THE SHAMANIC SOUL COLLECTION, MADE IN KLOVE'S NEW DELHI WORKSHOP

THE MANE EVENT

IN NATURE, GETTING THIS CLOSE TO A LION'S STATELY MANE WOULD BE RISKY BUSINESS, BUT NOT WITH THESE LUSCIOUS LOCKS. THE LION RUG BY STUDIO SHAMSHIRI IS PART OF A SERIES IN COLLABORATION WITH RENOWNED RUG MAKER CHRISTOPHER FARR, AND DESIGNED FOR A FICTITIOUS, WELL-TRAVELLED AND SLIGHTLY ECCENTRIC CHARACTER. ANCIENT PYRAMIDS, THE HISTORICAL TIBETAN TIGER AND THE SYMBOLISM OF THE SNAKE ARE OTHER INSPIRATIONS WOVEN INTO THE ECLECTIC CARPETS. CHRISTOPHERFARR.COM

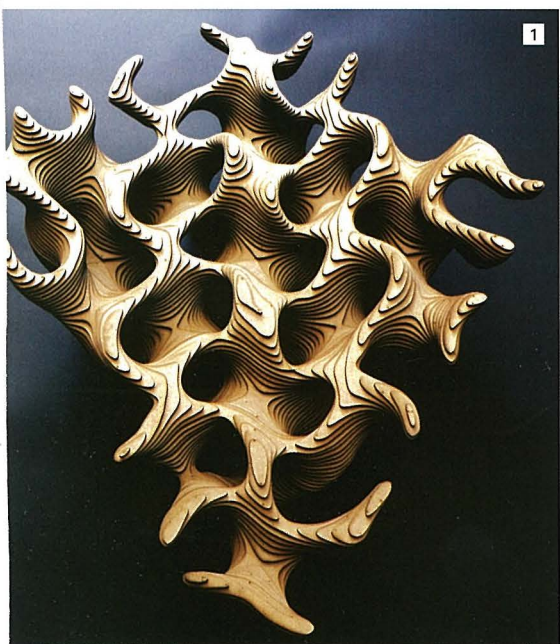


BELOW: THE LION AND TIBETAN TANTRIC RUG BY STUDIO SHAMSHIRI FOR CHRISTOPHER FARR
BOTTOM LEFT: PAMELA SHAMSHIRI IN HER L.A. HOME

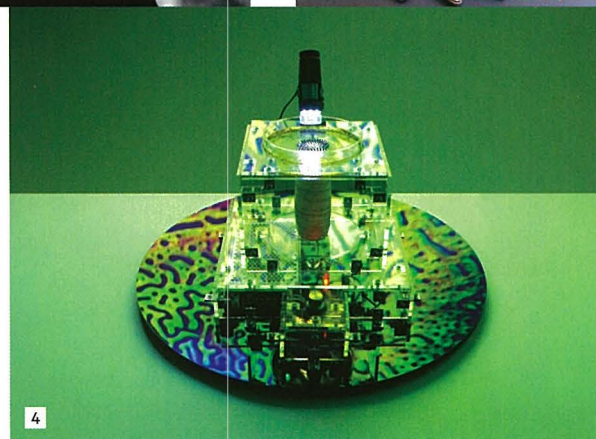
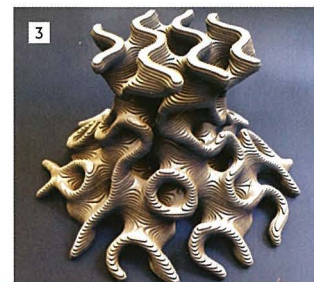
THE NEXT GEN

These three Middle East-based creatives are on the cutting-edge of innovative design in the region





1. PART OF THE LABYRINTH FURNITURE SERIES
2. HASHEM JOUCKA
3. A TABLE STAND FROM THE LABYRINTH COLLECTION
4. FERROMANCY IS AN INTERACTIVE INSTALLATION BASED ON SIMPLE SCIENTIFIC PHENOMENA. THE VIEW FROM THE MICROSCOPE BELOW IS SHOWN ON THE OPPOSITE PAGE



Hashem Joucka

The Amman-based creative fuses art with technology

“What I’m trying to achieve with my work is to reach into untapped territory within the audience’s senses and evoke feelings of wonder,” says Hashem Joucka. “I want them to ask ‘what’s going on there?’ ‘How is that possible?’” The self-described construction technologist has been making a mark on Amman’s design scene for the past few years, and recently brought a thought-provoking interactive installation to **Dubai Design Week**. Displayed in museums, used in kitchens and found in classrooms, he has designed interactive furniture such as touch-sensitive and sound-activated items controlled in real time through WiFi. “I’m interested in awakening static objects, animating the physical world and mimicking natural movements,” he says.

Skilfully incorporating art, technology and science to give his creations a life of their own, Joucka uses digital fabrication, physical programming and smart materials to create functional art. “Technology enabled me to become a more efficient creator,” he says. “It’s allowed me to add a soul, brain, receptors and heart to the artwork I create and hence bring it to life in a sense.”

After gaining a degree from the Institute for Advanced Architecture of Catalonia, Joucka returned to Amman to apply his newly acquired skills. “I worked as a freelancer for

three years and wore different hats, working across multiple disciplines, including construction, architecture and design,” he explains. Joucka now leads TechWorks, a digital fabrication laboratory in Amman, during the day and works on his art at night. He continues to freelance, producing custom-made items while curating installations for major events across the region. At this year’s **Dubai Design Week**, visitors were greeted by a wave of sound and imagery at the fourth edition of Abwab where Joucka collaborated with Jordanian spatial sound designer Basel Nauri to curate *Duwar* (which means “roundabout” in Arabic), one of four installations representing major cities in the Middle East.

Roundabouts are one of Amman’s most recognisable traits and provide a visual metaphor for the installation, portraying a “continuous circular motion of successive events.”

The audio-visual experience allowed visitors to explore the dynamic particularities of Amman through film, digital fabrication and sound design. “The light installations aimed to reinvent the concept of a flip book, with hanging sculptures that are composed of sequential images awakened by light,” Joucka explained. “The sculptures are essentially vignettes that portray the stories of Amman’s diverse residents in order communicate nuances of the city’s urban fabric with the visitor.”

Through this installation and his work as an artist, Joucka has helped create an identity for the city. “My work is most successful when it evokes a sense of wonder, when it seems to be magical.” □

— JUMANA ABDEL-RAZZAQ

Ammar *Khalo*

Recycled materials and supple forms are this designer's signature

At the most recent **Dubai Design Week**, designer and architect Ammar Kalo's installation was one of the most buzzed about. UAE-based environmental management company Be'aah commissioned Kalo to design a unique

communal table, and invited him to their waste site to source the material. Inspired by the aluminium bales – rippling sheets of metal compressed into blocks – Kalo took them to his studio and started experimenting.

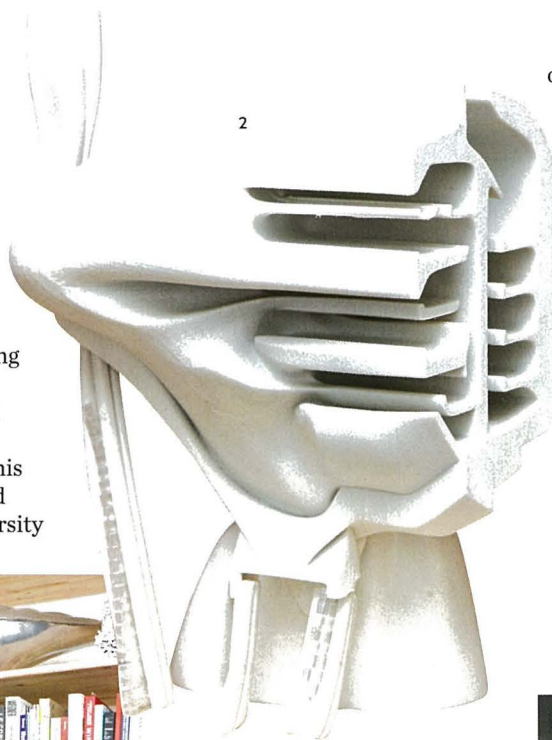
"The bales looked like Lego blocks, but really heavy," he says. "I started cutting them and connecting them. My aim was to create something unique, exciting, striking and unexpected in an extremely heavy material."

After graduating in 2008, Kalo worked as an architect for four years before perusing a Master of Science in Architecture at the University of Michigan, exploring material systems and digital technologies. There he found a passion for furniture making, and his positions as the Director of CAAD Labs and Assistant Professor at the American University

of Sharjah, have enabled him to establish his own design practice where he can undertake the sorts of experimental design projects he's passionate about.

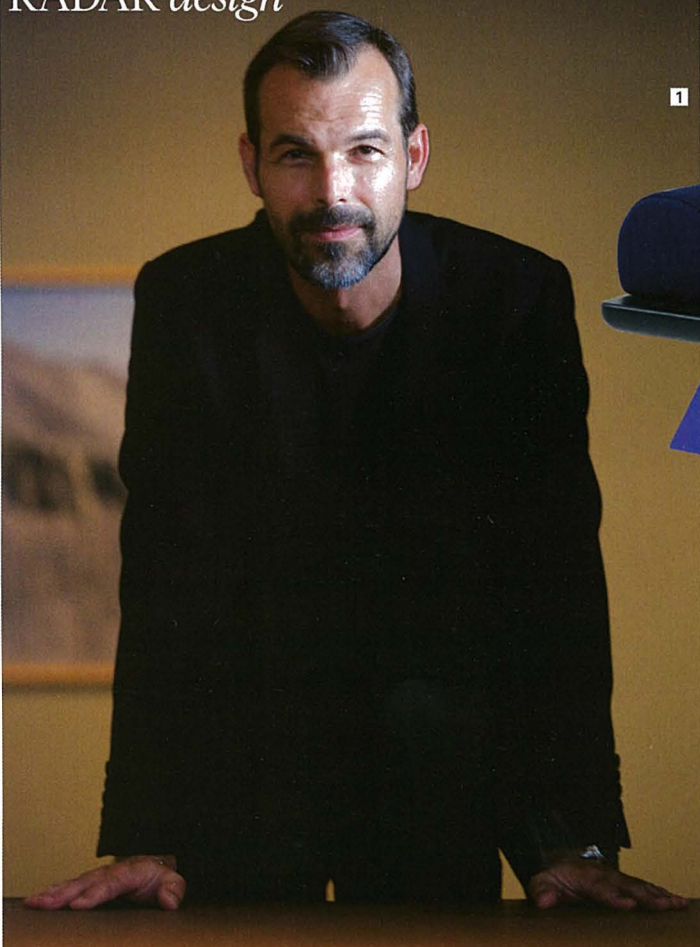
Kalo's work is always born of an interest in materiality, using fabrication tools and form-making to create a range of eclectic objects with intriguing silhouettes. "I usually don't have corners in my work, so you never see any sharp edges at all," he says. "I have something of an aversion to 90 degree angles – I like softness, whether it's through using lax materials or trying to turn rigid textiles into supple forms. There is something organic about my work and I want to keep it that way." □

— JUMANA ABDEL-RAZZAQ



1. THE AFTER PRESSURE TABLE AND STOOLS 2. A PROTOTYPE FROM KALO'S STUDIO 3. THE BIRCH PLYWOOD AND COPPER-PLATED SLICED STOOL COMES FLAT-PACKED 4. B.O.B., A RESEARCH PIECE DESIGNED TO PROTECT PLANTS IN HARSH CONDITIONS 5. AMMAR KALO IN HIS SHARJAH STUDIO





1

1 SVEN MUELLER
2 MEMPHIS STOOL 3 MADE
FOR DUBAI EXHIBITION IN
ALSERKAL AVENUE
4 MEMPHIS OTTOMAN



2

From Memphis **TO MAJLIS**

A new furniture range is brilliantly *blending* post-modern *design* with Middle Eastern *tradition*

Nestled in Dubai's industrial Al Quoz quarter, the warehouse complex Alserkal Avenue is an unexpected centre of creative innovation. Now home to bougie lifestyle establishments like spin studios, acai bowl cafes and bone broth shops, it is the galleries and design practices that are the heart of this corrugated microcosm.

SVENM, founded in 2009 by Sven Mueller and Sonia Brewin, occupies a two-story space that serves as both its offices and a gallery. For this year's **Dubai Design Week**, the firm exhibited their reimagination of the majlis.

"In 2015, the Middle Eastern tradition of seated gatherings of friends or of communities for administration or for social interaction was added to UNESCO's list of intangible human heritage to be preserved," explains

Mueller. "This project was inspired by that preservation - we updated the concept in contemporary shapes and fabrics for the future." The range features chaise-lounges



3

and stools confected in collaboration with luxe fabric company Kvadrat Maharam. "We're inspired by the Bauhaus and the Memphis movements," explains Mueller. "We've imagined how they might design a majlis today." While his firm works across large-scale master plans, hospitality and private residences, for Sven there is a pleasing purity in product design.

"When we design a building, it's so complex - we operate more like a director on a movie set," he adds. "With projects like this, it's pure creative

expression." □

— WILLIAM BUCKLEY




4

RADAR *art*



OVER THE RAINBOW



OUR COLOUR AT THE 2016
BRISTOL BIENNIAL, PART
OF THE YOUR COLOUR
PERCEPTION SERIES

From indoor rainbows to kaleidoscopic outdoor installations, Artist Liz West's immersive works add bursts of colour to unexpected places

WORDS WILLIAM BUCKLEY

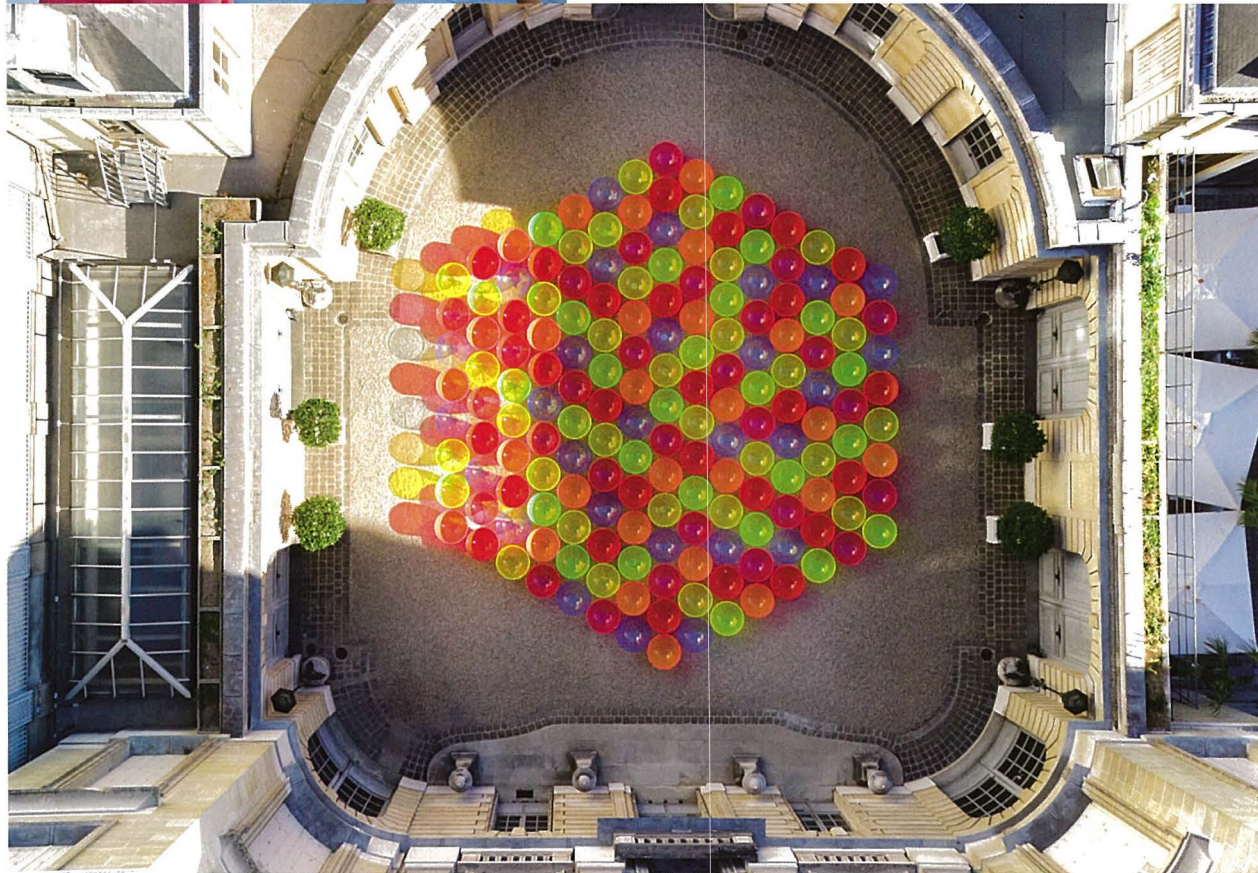
BELOW: LIZ WEST IN NEMOZENA AT HER INSTALLATION IN DUBAI
BOTTOM: AGLOW AT PARIS' MUSÉE NISSIM DE CAMONDO FOR DUBAI-BASED FASHION BRAND NEMOZENA
OPPOSITE: COLOUR TRANSFER, A PERMANENT COMMISSION SPANNING THE UNDERSIDE OF PADDINGTON STATION'S WESTWAY BRIDGE

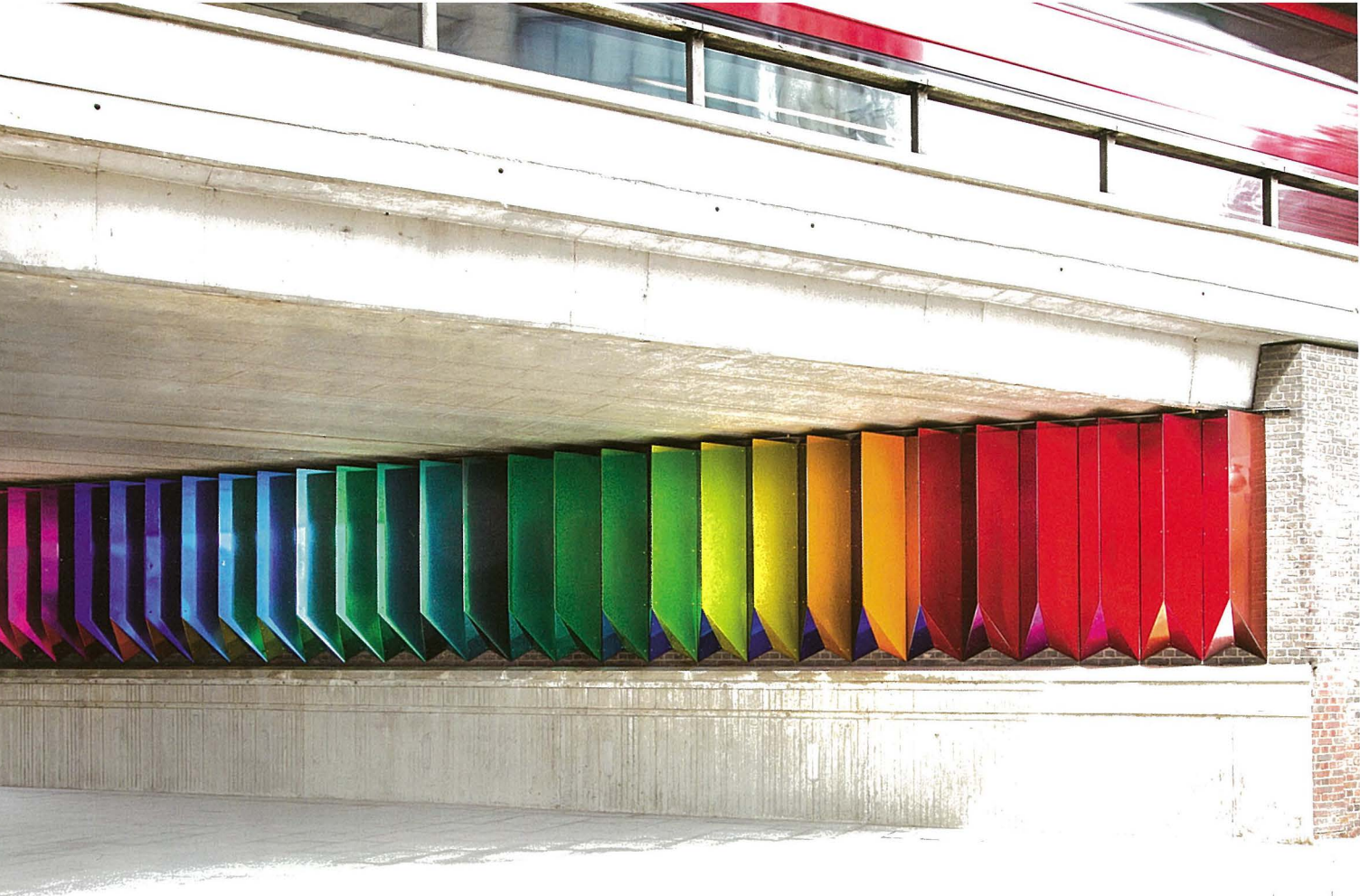
The United Kingdom has a reputation for rainy weather. There are some years when summer seemingly skips those stoic isles altogether, and the further north you go, the gloomier the weather gets. Just ask artist Liz West, who grew up in the small

Yorkshire town of Barnsley and then spent three years at Glasgow School of Art in Scotland. "Think about it," she says. "Barnsley, Northern. Glasgow, really Northern. And then I moved to Manchester. Also Northern. Three gritty, grey places, and out of that, this."

We're at **Dubai Design Week**, and West gestures toward a colourful art installation comprising 169 neon plastic bowls arranged in a sizable hexagonal shape. Fittingly, it rained for hours in Dubai the night before, and water has filled the bowls which glisten in the Arabian sun, adding another dimension to the kaleidoscopic panoply. But this work, commissioned by emerging fashion brand Nemozena, and titled *Aglow* is no anomaly. West's oeuvre is an exploration of colour, from lights illuminating spaces, to tinted mirrors casting polychromatic reflections around rooms.

Until she was approached by Nemozena, her major works were all immersive installations, but what the Dubai-based fashion label needed was an outdoor piece that could travel from Paris Fashion Week, to **Dubai Design Week** and on to Milan Fashion Week. "They sent me their look book and I loved the collection," she explains. "I also loved their ethos of empowering women. Being into Girl Power it was a good match. When you see the clothes with the work, you can immediately see the





*“Sometimes I think we’ve forgotten the art of seeing.
We’ve stopped looking around ourselves. I’m trying
to slow people down and to invite them to see”*

connection in the patterns and the colours.”

Girl Power has been a part of West’s life since she was eleven. When the Spice Girls’ debut music video Wannabe slammed itself into the world’s collective consciousness, the band became an obsession for an entire generation of young girls (and some boys). Unlike most fans though, whose fandom waned when say, Geri Halliwell left or when the group eventually disbanded, West’s remained steadfast. At university, armed with student loans and the newly minted eBay, she quietly amassed the largest collection of Spice Girls memorabilia in the world – she holds the Guinness World Record – and her loaning of the collection to various events and institutions since then has enabled her to pursue her career as an artist full-time.

West is quite careful when she talks about her collection. She explains she’s faced criticism from people in the past, and given interviews to journalists who’ve spun things she’s said in a disparaging manner. To her detractors the Spice Girls represent shiny, asinine pop, and the arbiters of High Art have trouble consolidating the two; pop culture and art have often had a complicated relationship (see: Andy Warhol). Although West’s work isn’t figurative, it is a product of the colourful energy of the ‘90s. Her transportive installations are reminders that despite those overcast skies, life can still be fun.

West’s big break was a self-produced show titled *Our Colour Perception*. She spent five days on her own, up a stepladder, sticking leftover theatre gels to the pre-existing light fixtures inside the building. She opened to the public for one weekend, and through social media and word of mouth, the show was a huge success. She was commissioned by the National Media Museum to create a similar installation, and *An Additive Mix* was the result – coloured neon lights arranged to produced a pure white light. And in her first installation using natural light, West arranged 800 coloured mirrors on the floor of a church so, as the sunlight streamed through the lancet windows, the colours reflected upwards and enveloped the eaves.

As a child, growing up with parents who were both artists, West wanted to go to London’s Goldsmiths School of Art. She’d read books about other young British artists like Damien Hirst who’d been there. She didn’t get into Goldsmith’s, perhaps, she muses, because her work has always been as much about the aesthetic as the concept, and Goldsmiths is heavily conceptually led. But the work we have from West is as evocative. You won’t see a cow in a vat of formaldehyde but when you walk through rooms lit like rainbows you’ll smile widely. “Sometimes I think we’ve forgotten the art of seeing,” she says. “We’ve stopped looking around ourselves. I’m trying to slow people down and to invite them to see.” □

RAY OF LIGHT

Architecture and design power couple Jonathan and Miltiza Ashmore discuss circadian rhythms and their award-winning firm Anarchitect's bright new projects in the UAE and beyond

WORDS WILLIAM BUCKLEY PHOTOGRAPHY EEVA SUUTARI

JONATHAN AND MILITZA
ASHMORE SIT INSIDE
ANARCHITECT'S ENCLOSED
PAVILION, PART OF THEIR
CIRCADIAN LIGHT
SYNTHESIS INSTALLATION AT
DUBAI DESIGN WEEK



"Bright lights and bright screens disrupt our natural rhythms"

massive cylindrical light fixture that imitates the sun and the moon throughout the day and night. "When you look at the fundamentals of architecture," Jonathan explains, "orientating your building to respond to the sun path and to respond to the wind direction is what you call passive design. The vernacular of the traditional architecture that came from this part of the world is rooted in dealing with the impact of high intensity sun and high temperatures, encouraging wind flow to cool you naturally and shading you from the most exposed sides. With this structure we've explored that."

The choice of material is also contextually pertinent. Built using clay in collaboration with Matteo Brioni from

Italy, the natural material has a high thermal mass, is protective, fire retardant and it never fades.

These kind of elements are becoming a signature for Anarchitect. Jonathan adds that more and more, the firm is thinking about lighting and the psychological effects it has on us humans as an integrated part of the firm's design. "You and I spend most days in the office - bright lights are on whether it's 9am or 9pm which disrupts our natural body clocks, our natural circadian rhythm. For centuries as human beings, we've woken up to warm sun, sun rise, blue skies, amber light, and then that sun ascends through the sky to the middle of the day - that's the brightest, whitest light and the most energizing - and towards the end of the day we go back towards that amber light,

the sun's lower in the sky, casting long shadows, and we wind down. But when we're spending all our time inside, under bright lights, looking at bright screens or phone screens, it disrupts those natural rhythms, so increasingly one of our objectives is minimizing that disruption."

THE LIGHT FIXTURE BY DELTALIGHT ROTATES 360 DEGREES IN EXACTLY 24 HOURS **OPPOSITE:** LONG SHADOWS ARE CAST INSIDE THE EXPOSED PAVILION, WHICH INCLUDES CHARGING STATIONS FOR CELL PHONES

If our annual AD50 were a beauty pageant, Anarchitect would win. Husband and wife Johnathan and Militza Ashmore are both so attractive, they would probably evoke feelings of envy in less pretty people, if they weren't also so darned nice. When the couple arrive at *Circadian Light Synthesis*, the firm's latest installation for **Dubai Design Week**, they are both dressed head to toe in flattering black. We walk around the impressive space, and I enquire as to its purpose. "As a structure, it's contextual," says Militza. "It functions as an enjoyable space for people to spend time in and utilize, and it also implements the kind of basic, passive design that's a fundamental principle of architecture." Jonathan looks at Militza, smiling in surprise. "You're always trying to be an architect," he teases and, as our photographer snaps a shot of the two, without missing a beat, Militza retorts, "And you're always trying to be a model." Militza, who studied International Relations at the eminent London School of Economics, and has enjoyed an accomplished career in communications and events, most recently at American luxury powerhouse, Tiffany's, also enjoyed success as a model in her teens. She joined Anarchitect in 2016 and currently serves as Head of Creative Development and Communications. Jonathan spent ten years at prestigious practices before launching his award-winning firm Anarchitect in 2013. Since then, the firm has earned its reputation for sleek residential, leisure and hospitality projects in the Middle East, Asia and Europe. Recent projects include boutique hotels in Sri Lanka and the Al Faya lodge in Sharjah.

Circadian Light Synthesis comprises two pavilions - one with slats that start on the roof and then run around the walls through which the sunlight shines, moving as the sun traverses the sky, and one with no windows, just a



