

DUBAI BY DESIGN

The UAE's creative capital takes on the design world

Writer: Rocky Casale



read
more...

Dubai is quickly becoming a premiere centre for art and design with new museum openings and an international design week drawing talent from all over the world. It's neighbour, Abu Dhabi may have glitzy cultural offerings like the Jean Nouvel designed Louvre museum, but Dubai recently welcomed the Jameel Arts Centre, a contemporary art space that is a much a place of exhibition as it is a community centre for research and dialogue about world affairs. Add to the city's creative roster Dubai Design Week, where the Global Grad Show continues to not only address the problems of daily life, but do so with class and style. Here, DeluxePad takes a look at how this desert metropolis is taking the art and design world by storm.





Innovative exhibition design at the Global Grad Show for Dubai Design Week



Installation view of Artist's Rooms: Maha Malluh, at Jameel Arts Centre, Dubai. Courtesy of Art Jameel
Photography: Mohamed Somji

If you were at Dubai Design week last November, you would have noticed thousands of people milling around the Dubai Design District and visiting design installations scattered across the design campus. Down the road was the ever-growing Downtown Design space, where more than 170 international brands displayed everything from innovative lawn furniture to opulent storage solutions for those who own heaps of clothes and accessories. Perhaps the most fascinating component of the week though was the fourth edition of the Global Grad Show, where 150 novel projects from universities across the world were showcased as chic and stylish instruments of change to improve lives across the globe.

Brendan McGetrick.
Curator of the Global Grad Show

Global Grad Show Director, Brendan McGetrick, waxed poetically about how design is more than luxury or beauty. In his discussions with people attending the event, he spoke extensively about how design can address necessity or confront technology. The projects on display addressed everything from mitigating pollution and the incessant production of plastics to finding solutions for water shortage.

“I would have to say that the Global Grad Show is really about intervening in massive issues that are not necessarily resolvable,” said McGetrick. “What we’re going here is trying to make the issues more human, and in the process creative designs that appeal both in their usefulness and their aesthetic.”



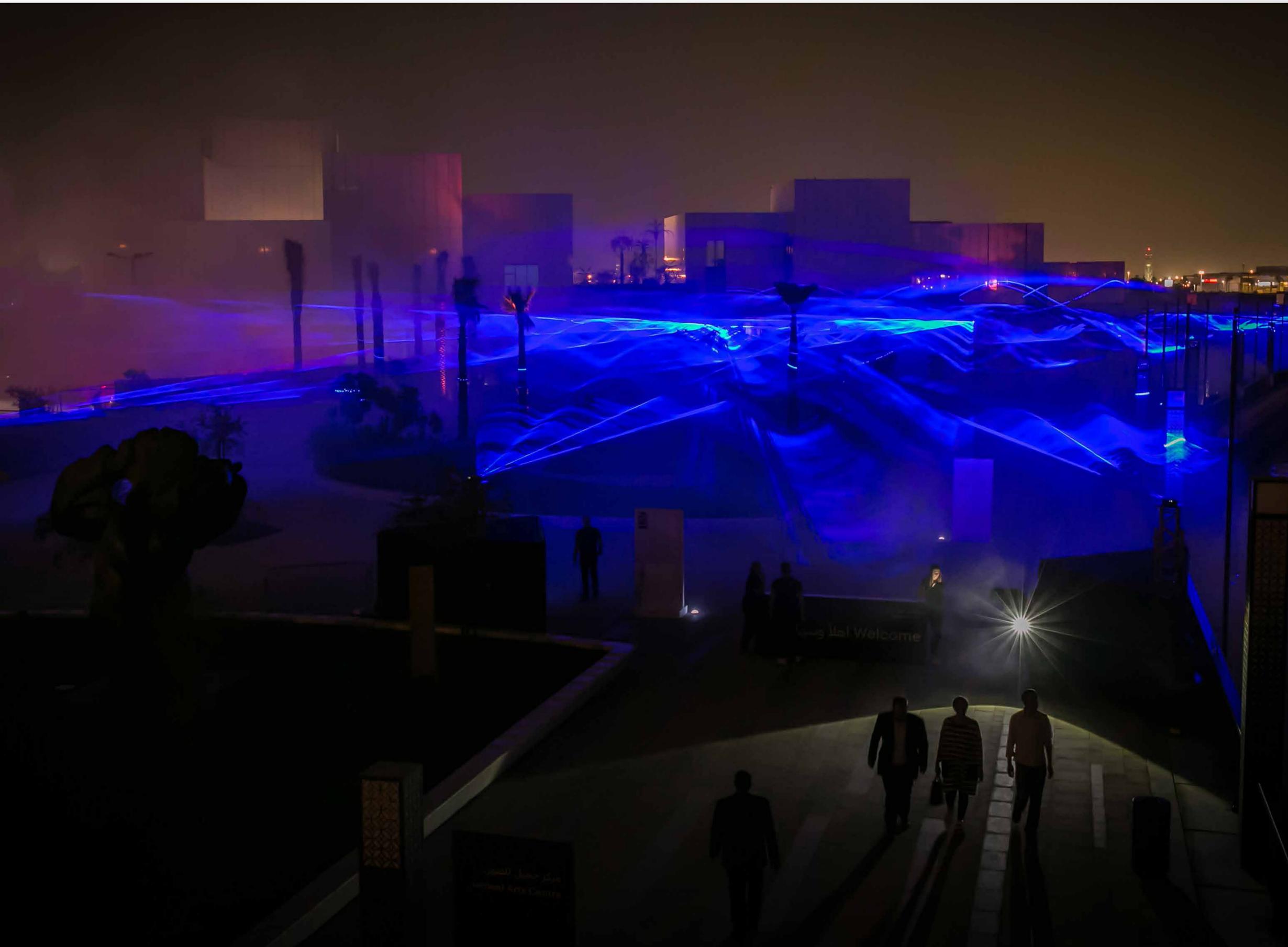


Installation view of *Contrary Life: A Botanical Light Garden Devoted to Trees* (2018), by Ali Farid and Aseel AlYaqoub. Art Jameel Commission for Jameel Arts Centre, Dubai, Courtesy Art Jameel. Photography: Mohamed Somji



Jukka Jokinen from Aalto University in Helsinki showcased Flip, a stripped down, foldable electric scooter with a clean silhouette that is portable and stylish. The Forseti Axe is an innovation by Pak Ho Tony Chui of the National University of Singapore. The student wanted to improve the common axe by increasing its longevity and give it a chic appearance, adding 3D technology to print the titanium body and make it lightweight.

View (Detail) of Jameel Arts Centre,
Dubai, Courtesy Art Jameel
Photography: Mohamed Somji



Waterlicht Dubai

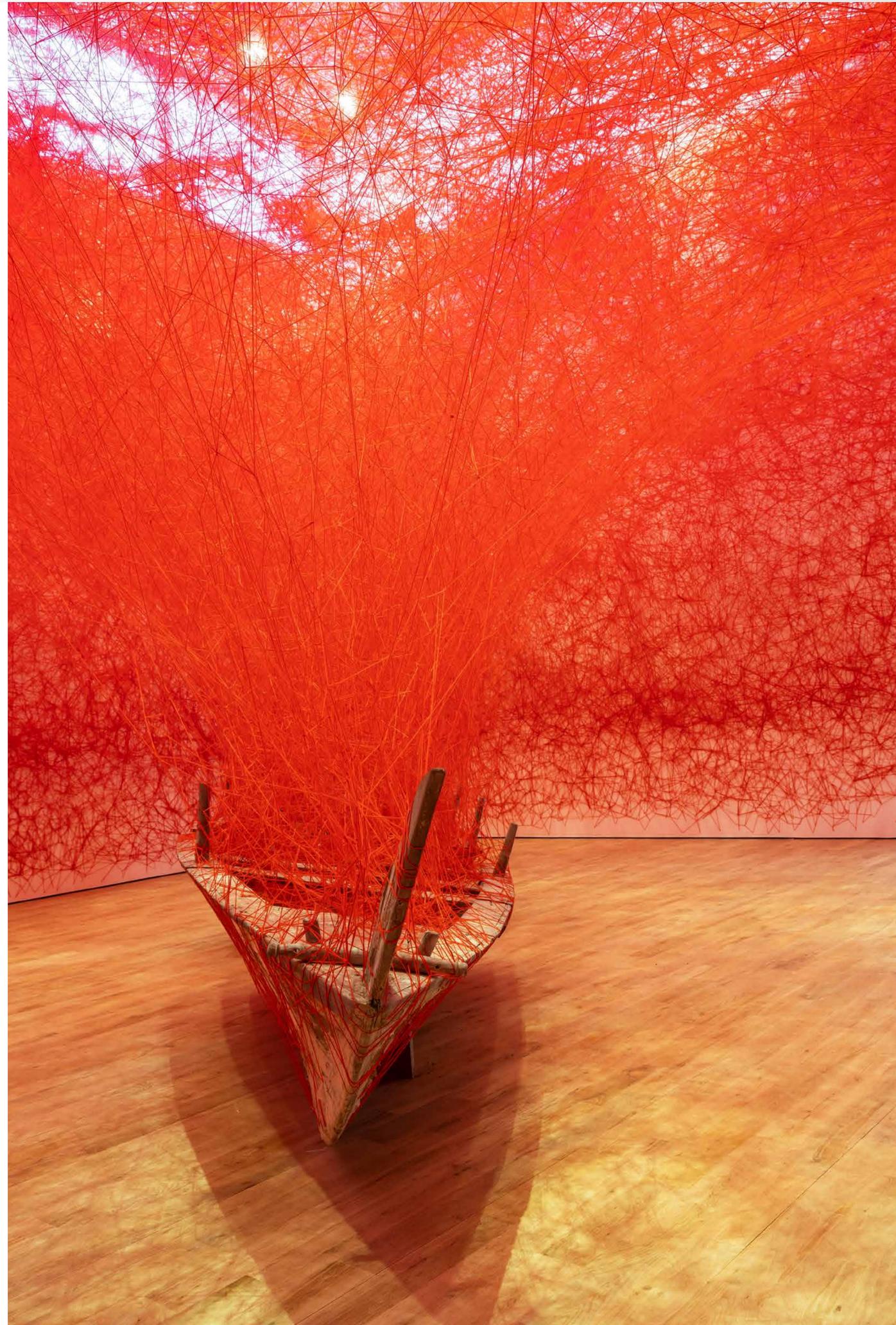


While many design lovers and buyers orbited the Dubai Design Centre or shopped for their industrial projects at Downtown Design, others were drawn to the opening of the Jameel Arts Centre and Jaddaf Waterfront Sculpture Park. Award-winning firm, Serie Architects designed the monastically adorned 10,000-square-metre space which features 10 galleries, an arts library and resource centre, and seven desert gardens.



Installation view of Departure, 2018, in Artist's Rooms: Chiharu Shiota at Jameel Arts Centre, Dubai. Courtesy of Art Jameel. Photography: Mohamed Somji

There is nothing like it in the UAE. The new multi-disciplinary contemporary arts institution is so versatile, lending itself to contemporary exhibitions, but also open to the public as a place of refuge in its gardens, and a place of study and open dialogue about art and current events. The Dubai Design Centre will maintain strong links to the new Jameel Arts Centre and further cement Dubai's position as the strongest art and design capitals in the Middle East.





'From Nowhere with Love' a Global Grad Show entry of stationay that sprouts when watered