

AD

ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST • GENIUS DESIGNS • INSPIRING ART • LUXURIOUS HOMES

H A D I D

Zaha

WORLD EXCLUSIVE

*The Arab global star ruling
the "boys' club" of architecture*

**A glorious
celebration
of the Middle
East's finest
art, style
and design**

FIRST ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

Rand Abdul Jabbar's boat inspired seat



UAE'S STAR MATERIALS
1. CAMEL LEATHER
2. PALM TREE LEAF
3. TERRACOTTA
4. CORAL

W

ith support for the Emirate's creatives on the rise, from a dedicated design district to Dubai's first Design Week, the region has been catapulted onto the global design scene within the last 12 months. One initiative continuing to raise the profile of emerging designers and cultural traditions in the UAE is Tanween, launched three years ago by contemporary art organisation Tashkeel, in Nad Al Sheba. Last year's Design Days Dubai saw Tanween's Talin Hazbar showcase stalactite chandeliers and candle holders carved from the mountains, representing ancient forms of storytelling. Meanwhile, Rand Abdul Jabbar created a wooden seat shaped like the end of a dhow boat, celebrating the UAE's fishing heritage.

Supported by Dubai Design & Fashion Council (DDFC), four Tanween designers have been selected to showcase their work during the fifth edition of Design Days Dubai, held at The Venue, Downtown Dubai, from March 14. Amer Aldour, Zuleika Penniman, and the founders of Studio MUJU, Mentalla Said and Jumana Taha, were encouraged to use local crafts, materials and manufacturers. The results are diverse, yet each raises awareness and discussion on various aspects of culture inherent in the UAE.

Mentalla and Jumana drew upon the ancient Bedouin art of sadu weaving in their furniture and lamp designs. In urgent need of safeguarding, sadu is on UNESCO's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. They collaborated with Emirati weaver Um Ahmed, observing the intricate process as they watched her henna-inked hands hypnotically work the loom. "Seeing her dedication gave us a responsibility as contemporary designers to help preserve sadu,"

PAST PRESENT

Four designers contextualise their debut pieces for Design Days Dubai in UAE culture

Words **ELEANOR JOSLIN**

STUDIO MUJU
DEVELOPED
FURNITURE AND A
LAMP BASED ON THE
BEDOIN ART OF SADU

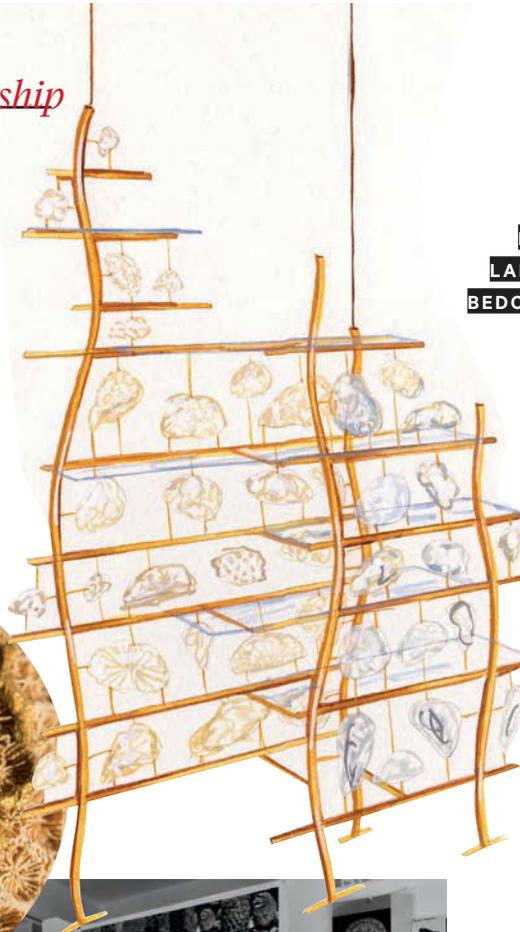


they added. Studio MUJU has redefined the art form within a limited edition chair and lamp, upholstering the chair seat in the weave and creating a shade that acts as a loom with lengths of yarn stitched into traditional patterns.

At Design Days Dubai Amer Aldour celebrates “the art of Imagineering”. His decorative glass and stainless steel tiles approached Tawneen’s brief of cultural representation from a different direction to Zuleika Penniman and Studio MUJU. “Instead of using elements related to our environment or culture, I was inspired by the context of Dubai as a city of the future,” he explains.

The trained architect and engineer, and founder of inter | act architecture in Dubai, has produced a set of glass and steel tiles that explore the interface between technological innovations and architectural space, experimenting with electronic technology and new techniques in production, materials and fabrication. Producing the prototype at Origin Base in Al Quoz, he used 3D printed elements and electronic components to perfect the tile before manufacturing.

Lebanese-American jewellery designer Zuleika Penniman stepped out of her comfort zone of futuristic rings and necklaces to build a partition wall that raises the profile of coral rock in regional construction techniques. Her concept is quite poetic: “Years ago, coral was washed up on the shores of the UAE and collected by men and women to build their homes, hidden for years between mortar and plaster. Now I’m giving it its third life, and celebrating its innate beauty,” she says. Suspending thin slices of coral like gemstones between a light metal frame evokes a walled structure and draws attention to the porosity of the coral material. Zuleika worked with a marble factory that cut and polished the rock and an industrial metalworking factory that made the supportive structure, both based in Al Quoz. Lastly, a jewellery workshop in Deira’s gold souk set the claws that hold the coral. “None of us had ever worked with coral before, and we were all in awe of it,” she says. At the very centre of Zuleika’s design philosophy is a profound respect for materials and the manufacturing process, to build upon traditions that have passed and give them a future.



ZULEIKA
PENNIMAN
BUILT A
PARTITION
USING CORAL
FOUND IN
REGIONAL
CONSTRUCTIONS



“Seeing the dedication of the weaver gave us a responsibility as contemporary designers to help preserve sadu”

AMER ALDOUR
DESIGNED
GLASS AND
TILES INSPIRED
BY A FUTURISTIC
DUBAI

