

The story thus far

DIRECTOR OF DESIGN DAYS DUBAI, **CYRIL ZAMMIT** GIVES US A RECAP OF THIS YEAR'S FEST, WITH THE PROMISE OF AN EXCITING EDITION NEXT YEAR.

Design Days Dubai 2016 was a thrilling chapter of the fair and its most successful edition yet – it represented the world's most diverse international design fair featuring more than 750 pieces of collectable design by 185 designers from 37 countries, including a record number from the Emirates and ME-NASA region.

The fair was opened by HH Sheikh Mansoor bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum with a weekend visit from HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Dubai, and many other local and regional dignitaries amongst its highest visitor numbers.

What really struck me was the mood within the fair across exhibitors and visitors alike which was electric in its positivity. Exhibiting galleries and solo designers reported strong interest and sales over the course of the fair.

The public programme in partnership with the Dubai Design District (d3) was well-attended with participants engaging and interacting with design on many diverse levels: from discussing design processes, theory and trends with designers from the world over, to getting hands-on in workshops, to sitting down with designers one-on-one in Design Days Dubai's one-of-a-kind mentorship sessions. In addition to the events open to the public, the fair's unique outreach programme welcomed as many as 32 school and university groups from the UAE, Iran, Lebanon and Oman, further opening the doors of design to the younger generation.

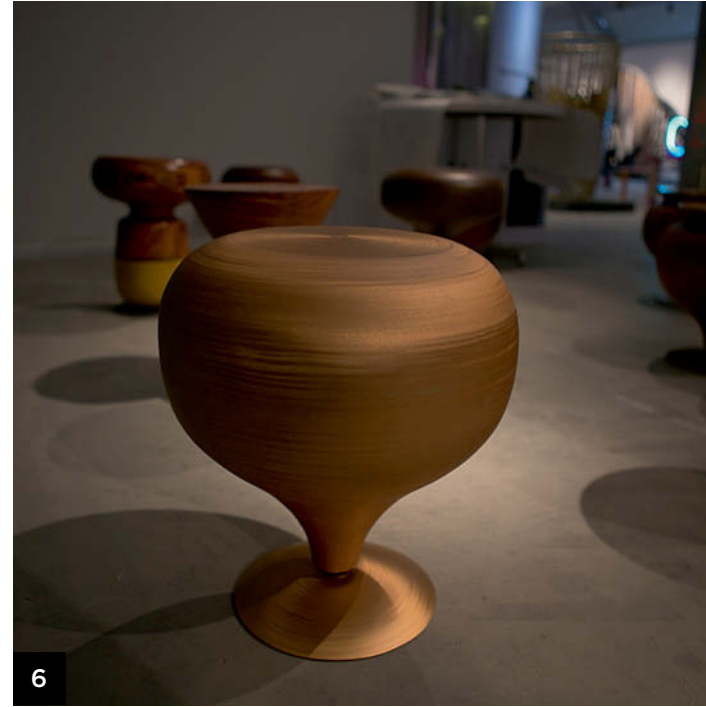
It has been a fantastic five-year journey to reach this point. Back in 2011, Design Days Dubai was the first design event in Dubai, the first collectable design fair in the Middle East and South Asia and the world's most diverse design event. We are fortunate we have the extraordinary support of first and foremost, Dubai Culture and Arts Authority, as well as our faithful sponsors, Van Cleef & Arpels, Emaar and Audi, who have remained with us since our first edition.

What I cherish most is witnessing the incredible energy Design Days Dubai has created for the local design scene,





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Here's a look at some of the design objects that set collectors' tails in a spin:

1. Marcel Wanders (The Netherlands), Personal Editions collection. The Dutch rebel designer's regional design debut.

2. Galerie Gendras Regnier (France), Nigredo by Nadia Pasquer. Leading ceramic design gallery exhibited exceptionally rare work by internationally-renowned French artist Pasquer.

3. JCT Haute Couture Interiors (France), Aurelia flower table. This was the Middle Eastern debut of this historical Parisian interior design practice's collectable design.

4. Loulwa Al-Radwan (Kuwait), Peacock shelf. First time solo exhibitor whose marble pieces inspired by the peacock were a huge success. She said: "It's a great platform for someone like me and has given me great exposure. It's the first time that I have exhibited as an independent designer and I feel that I have really benefited. I've made contacts, sold some pieces, have met many new galleries and I'm now also looking at some possible future collaborations."

5. Art Factum Gallery (Lebanon), Pulley Light by Marc Dibeh. A world premiere for Beirut-based designer's Pulley Lights exhibited by world-leading design gallery, Art Factum Gallery.

6. Coalesce (Pakistan), spinning 'lattoo' stool. The stools inspired by the traditional wooden spinning top really got visitors young and old into a spin and sold out on the first day.

7. Aisha Al Sowaidi (Qatar), Medkhans. Another regional solo exhibitor making her debut whose coloured glass contemporary medkhans caught the eye of visitors.

8. Coletivo Amor de Madre (Brazil), Cocar swing by PaxArq. Hailing from Sao Paulo, popular and founding Design Days Dubai design gallery Coletivo Amor de Madre delighted fans with the Cocar swing.

9. Fadi Sareddine Design Studio (UAE), Swaddle Chair. Visitors flocked to Dubai Design District-based Fadi Sareddine's booth for a 'hug' from the Swaddle Chair.

10. Tanween by Tashkeel, Coral shelf by Zuleika Pen-niman. A stand-out work of beauty by Dubai-based designer Zuleika, made from repurposed coral.

generating initiatives, ideas, talent and recently seeing the launch of the d3.

Design Days Dubai's format is unique with a strong focus on contemporary design combined with the prevalent wish to showcase fresh and emerging talents alongside the best of the world-renowned design galleries. It's a compelling line-up that attracts an increasingly wide audience including international talent hunters: the show now firmly established in the international calendar as a fair of discovery and fresh talent.

With a record 50 per cent of design on display from the UAE and MENASA region, Dubai has again reinforced its position as a regional centre, with design an integral part of its DNA - it is with even more excitement that I am looking ahead. Design Days Dubai is now shaping up for its sixth edition in 2017 in a new home. It will have a new format which will strengthen its leading role in contemporary design with the most diverse line-up and strong world representation. ✨