



Visitors look at artworks during the 'Contemporary Perspective in Middle East Crafts' at Katara Art Centre yesterday. (SHAIVAL DALAL)

Creative designers and artisans present Arab-inspired works at Katara exhibition

BY RAYNALD C RIVERA

DOHA: The creative minds of international designers meet with the expert hands of Middle Eastern artisans unleashing a unique set of Arab-inspired objects now on display at the 'Contemporary Perspectives in Middle Eastern Crafts' exhibition which opened yesterday at the Katara Art Centre.

"We strongly believe the Middle East has a great potential to bring original design into the world," said Pascale Wakim, co-founder of Beirut-based Carwan Gallery, which is behind the project.

A chandelier made of a gal headband used by Arab men, a sideboard resembling mashrafiyas (delicate wooden window screens found in Middle Eastern architecture) and extrusion bowls, stool, high tray and table inspired by intarsia and lathe crafts which

date back to 1800 BC Middle East are some of the more interesting objects displayed at the exhibition.

Featured designers at the month-long expo are Karen Chekerdjian (Lebanon), Khalid Shafar (UAE), Lindsey Adelman (US), Marc Baroud (Lebanon), Mischer Traxler (Austria), Nada Debs (Lebanon), Oeuffice (Canada), Paul Loebach (US), Philippe Malouin (Canada) and Tamer Nakisci (Turkey).

The project was undertaken to show the compatibility of traditional craft with modern design and encourage collaboration between the designers and the artisans.

"This shows traditional objects can be used to create other objects," said Carwan Gallery co-founder Nicolas Bellavance-Lecompte, explaining the 'Arabi Chandelier' by Emirate designer Khalid Shafar who will present a live demonstration using pearls at the upcoming Design Days

Dubai 2013 fair.

Carwan Gallery is one of the nine galleries from the Middle East out of 29 galleries which will feature at the second edition of Design Days Dubai to be held from March 18 to 21.

Presenting an exclusive preview of the fair, Design Days Dubai Fair Director Cyril Zammit said a total of 683 unique pieces would be showcased at the event which would feature installations, performances and educational programme.

'Contemporary Perspectives in Middle Eastern Crafts' runs until April 2 at the Concept Space at the Katara Art Centre, which aims to explore with Doha-based audience the ideas behind design and encourage experimentation, to inspire local designers and connect them to the work and the concepts of designers in the wider region and around the world.

THE PENINSULA