

AD |

AAU

ANASTAS

• ABBOUD MALAK

• ABDALLA ALMULLA

• ABEER SEIKALY • AGATA

KURZELA • AGI ARCHITECTS • AHMAD

ABOUZANAT • AHMADREZA SCHRICKER

• AHMED BUKHASH • AISHA AL SOWAIDI

• ALJOUD LOOTAH • ALTIN • AMMAR BASHEIR • AMMAR

KALO • ANARCHITECT • ANNABEL KARIM KASSAR • ANNE

HOLTROP • ARE • ARNAUD BEHZADI • ASIF KHAN • ASTET • AZAZ

ARCHITECTS • AZIZA CHAOUNI • BAHRAINI—DANISH • BERGMAN DESIGN

HOUSE • BONE • BOUCHRA BOUDOUA • CARL GERGES • CARLA BAZ • DAVID/

NICOLAS • DIMA SROUJI • DINA NUR SATTI • DON TANANI • EAST ARCHITECTURE

STUDIO • EBUR • ELIE ABS • ETIENNE BASTORMAGI • FAHAD HARIRI • FAYSAL TABBARAH

• FOSTER + PARTNERS • FRANCIS KÉRÉ • GABRIEL HENDIFAR • GREGORY GATSERELIA •

HRH ANOUD KHALID MISHAAL BIN SAUD • JASSIM ALSADDAH • KAMEH • KARIM NADER • KHALED

ALAWADHI • KIM MUPANGILAI • KUNLÉ ADEYEMI • LAURENCE LEENAERT • LIMBO ACCRA • LINA

GHOTMEH • MA STUDIO • MARC DIBEH • MARIA GROUP • MARIAM ISSOUFOU KAMARA • MARYAM

AL-HOMAID • MESHARY ALNASSAR • MIMINAT SHODEINDE • MYLES IGWEBUIKE • NADA DEBS

• NAQSH COLLECTIVE • NAREG KRİKORIAN • NIFEMI MARCUS-BELLO • OMAR AL GURG •

OMAR CHAKIL • OMAR NAKKASH • PALLAVI DEAN • PAOLA SAKR • PETER MABEO

• RABAH SAEID • RABIH GEHA • RANIA HAMED • RICHARD YASMINE • SAHEL

ALHIYARI • SAMER SAADEH • SAYAR & GARIBEH • SHAD ASKARI •

SHAHIRA FAHMY • SHAIKHA AL SULAITI • SIZAR ALEXIS • STUDIO

BAAB • STUDIO KO • SUMAYA DABBAGH • SUMAYYA VALLY

• T SAKHI • TAREK SHAMMA • TARIK AL ZAHARNA

• TARIQ KHAYYAT • THOMAS TRAD • TOSIN

OSHINOWO • TRISTAN DU PLESSIS •

VERHAAL • WAIWAI • WISSAM

YAFAWI • X ARCHITECTS •

YASMINA MAKRAM •

YSG STUDIO • ZAV

ARCHITECTS

Supported by

Words AIDAN IMANOVA, PRATYUSH SARUP, MONA BASHARAT and AMY BRADFORD

For 2024, we present 100 visionaries – established icons, changemakers and emerging voices – from the Middle East and Africa who are setting new benchmarks in architecture and design

Don Tanani's
C chair from the
Moruna collection
in solid teak

1

DON TANANI

EGYPT dontanani.com

Cairo-based design gallery Don Tanani is forming a contemporary design language that is inherently Egyptian by focusing on storytelling and craft. Since 2020, founders Alia and Tamara El Tanani have been working with Egyptian designer Lina Alorabi to create mostly wood collections that blur boundaries between art and design. The latest collection, Moruna, includes sinuous seating designed for indoor and outdoor use, while new projects are underway to engage a roster of young design talent in Egypt.



GABRIEL HENDIFARIRAN, UNITED STATES *apparatusstudio.uk*

As co-founder of Apparatus, Iranian-American creative Gabriel Hendifar is responsible for some of the most desirable lighting designs around today. The brand's latest collection, Act Four, is a celebration of 1960s style and, like the rest of its designs, is crafted in its own factory in Brooklyn. Hendifar has also just opened a moodily elegant new showroom on London's Mount Street, which is adorned with portraits of the women in his family as "protagonists of a historical fantasy".



The Apparatus
showroom in
New York

2

SUMAYA DABBAGHUNITED ARAB EMIRATES
dabbagharchitects.com

The founder of Dubai-based studio Dabbagh Architects, Sumaya Dabbagh was one of the first female architects in the UAE to design a mosque – the Mosque of the Late Mohamed Abdulkhaliq Gargash in Dubai, which features a distinctive white stone façade perforated with a geometric pattern and embellished with calligraphic details. Unlike traditional mosque designs, which often express grandeur and opulence, here the focus was simplicity, reflecting Dabbagh's clean, contemporary aesthetic.

After Ago side
tables by
Richard Yasmine

RICHARD YASMINELEBANON *richardyasmine.com*

Richard Yasmine's designs are inspired by his beloved city, Beirut. "I seek to harmonise Middle Eastern culture and craftsmanship with cutting-edge technology," he says. His After Ago striped sculptures are an ode to the architectural arch, while his new Jasmine Ephemère cabinet is a collaboration with a jeweller and a carpenter, made of gilded wood and adorned with handmade flowers. "Its sale at Sotheby's will fund scholarships for Lebanese students," says Yasmine, whose next collaboration is with Kolkata-based brand Scarlet Splendour.

3



4





5

YASMINA MAKRAMEGYPT yasminamakram.com

A rising star of Cairo's design scene, Yasmina Makram is currently in the spotlight thanks to her interior for the Nakhla jewellery store at the new Grand Egyptian Museum. The evocatively lit space, adorned with monumental stone slabs, reflects Makram's key inspiration: Egyptian heritage, filtered through a contemporary lens. Coming up, Makram is working on a beach home in Egypt's Almazra Bay influenced by 1960s Palm Springs residences, and a Red Sea villa inspired by traditional Nubian architecture.

Left: Palmette residence, Egypt by Yasmina Makram.
Below: UK duo Bergman Design House

6

BERGMAN DESIGN HOUSEUNITED KINGDOM bergmandesignhouse.com

"Skip the Instagram moment, avoid trends and nurture a sense of fearlessness," say Marie Soliman and Albin Berglund, co-founders of Bergman Design House, on their recipe for success. The award-winning London studio has delivered upscale residences across Europe, the US and the Middle East. The Egyptian-Swedish duo's most recent project, a 131-metre-long superyacht (masterminded by Njord, the studio's yachting arm) pushes the creative envelope for maritime luxury with its slick, inventive interiors. The studio is currently working on a new One & Only resort in the Middle East and a boutique hotel in South Kensington.



TARIK AL ZAHARNAUNITED ARAB EMIRATES *tzed-architects.com*Below: Canvas
Events Pavilion by
T.ZED Architects

7

With his practice T.ZED Architects, Tarik Al Zaharna aims to promote “a new language in the region that reflects the birth of a contemporary architecture movement”. He prioritises craftsmanship and attention to detail, particularly in terms of masonry and joinery. This can be seen in his Cure Restaurant in Shuwaikh, with its mix of textures (think patterned marble, tiles, timber and wicker) and the Canvas Events Pavilion, a circular, clay-covered performance space in Al Barari.

**FRANCIS KÉRÉ**BURKINA FASO, GERMANY
kerearchitecture.com

Burkinabe-German architect Francis Kéré's work balances design and social commitment. In 2022, he became the first African architect to win the Pritzker Prize for Architecture, thanks to buildings that showcase innovative ways of using local resources and vernacular techniques. They are often hailed for their sustainable and collaborative approach. His designs for the Benin National Assembly and the Goethe-Institut in Dakar are under construction. Also in the pipeline is an agriculture campus in AIUla, and the mausoleum for Burkinabe revolutionary Thomas Sankara.

8

Left: Startup Lions
campus, Kenya, by
Kéré Architecture.
Below: handcrafted
Ozo chair by
Myles Igwebuike



Gonbad Science Foundation in Iran designed by ZAV Architects

10

PAOLA SAKR

LEBANON,
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
paolasakr.design



“Everything I do is driven by a need for self-expression,” says Paola Sakr, a multi-disciplinary product designer known for her whimsical creations. “My pieces often stem from a feeling, a story or a spark of inspiration from the natural world.” From a pastel-hued resin lamp developed for a charity auction to Bye Bye Evil Eye, a set of mirrors that create distorted reflections, Sakr’s commitment to material experimentation continues to yield eye-catching results. Up next is a furniture collection in collaboration with the Irthi Contemporary Crafts Council, a Sharjah-based initiative empowering women practising local crafts.

ZAV ARCHITECTS

IRAN *zavarchitects.com*

9

There’s a joyous spontaneity to this practice’s buildings, thanks to founder Mohamadreza Ghodousi’s willingness to involve communities in shaping his projects, making them “resilient and adaptable”.

His Majara Residence on Hormuz Island, off the Iranian coast, is based on traditional water reservoirs, which form the basis of a new neighbourhood painted in vibrant local colours. Similarly, Type-less, or the Center for Handy Skills, is an education centre on Hormuz built from discarded materials – concrete, cement blocks and scaffolding.

11

MYLES IGWEBUIKE

NIGERIA *ntejestudios.com*

Myles Igwebuiké believes in the power of community and its role in the future of design. His Ozo chair uses locally sourced materials and is crafted by Nigerian artisans, with whom he often collaborates. His Igbo heritage informs his work, and he hopes to forge a universal design language that channels a “fresh vision for African design”. Igwebuiké has served on the curatorial board for the Sharjah Architecture Triennial and is currently working on a public art project in eastern Nigeria.



Left: Nada Debs' Mandala cabinet in cane embroidery, mother-of-pearl inlay and wood veneers



Left: Maryam Al-Homaid with her handwoven Doha Highway II scroll

13

NADA DEBS

LEBANON,
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
nadadebs.com

"I want to keep doing work that gives a voice to those who are keeping our culture alive," says Nada Debs. The Lebanese product designer works with a raft of artisan communities – from weavers to marquetry specialists – to create contemporary objects that illuminate her cross-cultural vision. Debs' latest project is particularly close to her heart: a collaboration with Pakistani marble inlay atelier Studio Lél, which focuses on empowering marginalised craftspeople. "It is an opportunity to show the beauty of craftsmanship in different cultures and what can be achieved when we come together," she adds.

12

MARYAM AL-HOMAID

QATAR maryamalthomaid.com

Describing herself as an "interdisciplinary artist", Maryam Al-Homaid uses textile design to express her vision, which "revolves around the idea of embracing change and transformation". Inspired by her experiences as a millennial in rapidly evolving Qatar, her bold designs are a visual snapshot of the nation's culture, exploring changing dialects, technologies and styles, including typography. She's also nurturing the next generation of creatives via her role as assistant professor in the graphic design department at VCUarts Qatar.



Dandaji Daily Market
in Niger, designed by
Atelier Masōmī



15

SHAHIRA FAHMY

EGYPT sfahmy.com

In 2015, Shahira Fahmy made history when she became the first Arab architect to win the prestigious Loeb Fellowship at the Harvard Graduate School of Design in Massachusetts. Now she is busy masterminding the restoration of the old town in AlUla, Saudi Arabia, and is responsible for transforming old private residences into boutique hotels. “Being born, educated and based in Cairo – and within the larger context of the Middle East – gives me a profound understanding of the complex dynamics of specific territories,” she says. “I’m always looking for solutions that not only address immediate social drivers, but also go beyond them to connect with a global audience.”

14

MARIAM ISSOUFOU KAMARA

NIGER ateliermasomi.com

“Architecture has been complicit in so many atrocities around the world, including our industry’s contribution to the climate emergency, and it is my belief that we have a duty towards building with sustainability in mind,” says Nigerien architect Mariam Issoufou Kamara. Since founding Atelier Masōmī, she has set out to design culturally sensitive projects that harness a better quality of life for communities in Niger. Issoufou Kamara’s most recent projects include a housing development in Sharjah – the studio’s first endeavour in the Middle East.

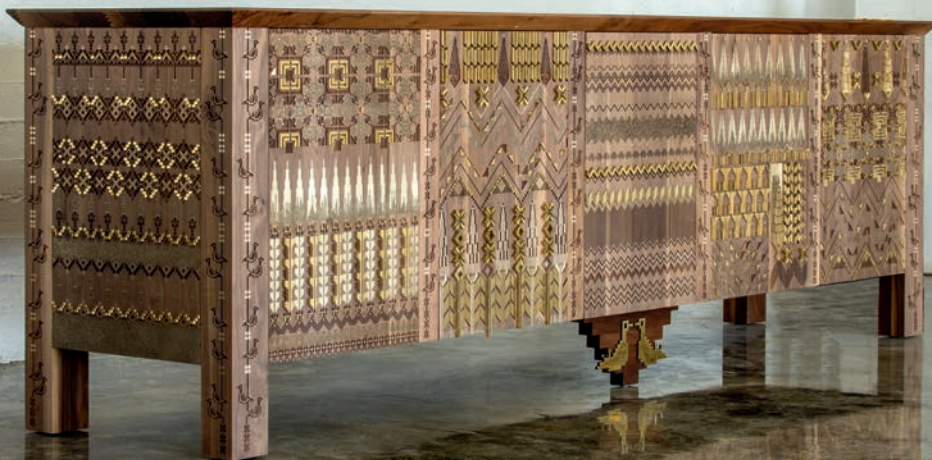
16

A handcrafted
chest from Naqsh
Collective’s Jhazek
Ya Shams series

NAQSH COLLECTIVE

JORDAN naqshcollective.com

Two things distinguish the work of Naqsh Collective: first, its reinterpretation of traditional culture in a modern way; and second, its foregrounding of women’s role in design. Formed by Jordanian sisters Nisreen and Nermeen Abudail, the Amman-based studio works in diverse fields, from architecture to graphic design, art and furniture. Its new creations include a stone artwork inspired by Palestinian thobe (traditional dress), and an ornate bridal chest in engraved marble and brass.





17

Above: On the Rocks house, Lebanon, by Karim Nader

KARIM NADER
LEBANON karimnader.com

“We believe that architecture moves through nature,” says Karim Nader of his poignantly beautiful buildings. Each is designed with a unique language and materiality “that vibes with its environment”: his On the Rocks house, in the Lebanese mountains, brings its harsh, cold environment to life with “intense contrasts of open and closed spaces”. Nader is currently restoring a Beirut landmark, the 1952 Immeuble de l’Union. “The future of design is about returning to its roots.”

Photo: Dia Mrad (Karim Nader) Natalee Cocks (Shad Askari)



18

SHAD ASKARI
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES,
SWEDEN [@chadaskari](https://www.instagram.com/chadaskari)

Designing everything from interiors to bespoke furniture, Shad Askari is the principal of SA | Design Studio, whose philosophy is informed by its Scandinavian roots. “We believe that simplicity is the key to creating beautiful, functional spaces,” he says. One example is Wayout, a new showroom for a Swedish water technology company. “We used recycled materials and there’s a ‘water bar’ with fresh drinking water,” explains Askari. “It shows how design can be used to promote sustainability and education.”

Right: Lochness coffee table by Sayar & Garibeh



SAMER SAADEH

LEBANON *fabracastudios.com*

Located in Beirut’s industrial district, Samer Saadeh’s brand Fabraca Studios specialises in bespoke lighting projects that not only illuminate a space, but “blend in effortlessly as an essential component of its atmosphere”. Saadeh collaborates with local craftsmen, fusing their traditional skills with his contemporary aesthetic. He has recently finished Terra restaurant in Abu Dhabi, whose vertical pillars are discreetly lit with pared-down spotlights, and is currently working on a new restaurant in a historical building in Beirut.

19



AZAZ ARCHITECTS

SAUDI ARABIA *azazarchitects.com*

Founded in 2017, this architecture practice creates thoughtful spaces that prioritise human needs, says founder Shahad Alazzaz. “Our philosophy is governed by principles of sustainability, materiality and storytelling,” she adds. New projects include Chunk, a striking monochrome bakery in Riyadh, and Love of Brick, an Andalusian-style home. “The brick elements function as a visual buffer to glazed elevations, while casting moving shadows that bring intrigue to the interiors,” says Alazzaz.

20



Above: Azaz Architects’ Bofia restaurant, Riyadh

SAYAR & GARIBEH

LEBANON *sayargaribeh.com*

Lebanese duo Stephanie Sayar and Charbel Garibeh’s furniture designs have a joyfully naive aesthetic – think broomstick-inspired lamps and a side table that resembles a giant slug (but is still totally lustworthy). “We look to infuse our work with the essence of happiness and playfulness,” says Sayar. This January, the duo will stage its first international solo show at New York design gallery R & Company. “It’s an exciting journey,” adds Garibeh. “We’re looking forward to sharing our passion for design with a global audience.”

21



Omar Al Gurg with
his Shelly shelf and
Coco rocking lounger

OMAR AL GURG

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES modumethod.com

A master of the multifunctional, Dubai designer Omar Al Gurg's studio, Modu, is short for "modular": its furniture and objects are inspired by heirloom pieces, but are also practical and intended to enhance the everyday. Al Gurg says that he wants to use interactive designs to "create a fun way of living". His new Coco rocking lounger, for example, is a curved fibreglass shell reminiscent of child car seats. Next up is a furniture collaboration with materials brand Cosentino.

22

ATLAS OF
1,740
2,853
551 71
937
546
565

EAST ARCHITECTURE STUDIO

LEBANON eastarchitecture.net

Led by Nicolas Fayad and Charles Kettaneh, this Beirut-based studio borrows from traditional, local building methods to create its pared-down, linear designs, which recently have included a home-meets-gallery for an art collector in concrete and local stone. Coming next is a mixed-use tower in Kuwait. “The Middle East’s character is rooted in the past, while its mind is set towards the future – it’s a truly exciting time for architects and makers,” they say.

23

Capsule Retreat
residence by East
Architecture Studio

Beirut hotel Kintsugi
by Marc Dibeh

24

MARC DIBEH

LEBANON marcdibeh.com

Beirut interior designer Marc Dibeh believes in “keeping it real, simple and timeless” in his work – qualities which are on show in his new Achrafieh jewellery store for Maria Mouawad, featuring a textural play on two materials, limestone and aluminium. He’s also created a colourful, seven-room Beirut hotel called Kintsugi for restaurateur Olivier Gasnier-Duparc. Named after the Japanese technique for repairing broken objects using gold, it’s a celebration of an elegant building’s rebirth.

KAMEH

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
kameh.space

“I’m making my pieces 100% locally in Dubai and I proudly tell people that we are a UAE-born and produced brand,” says the anonymous talent behind collectable design atelier Kameh. Perfectly imperfect, its raw, hand-sculpted aesthetic transforms functional objects into works of art. Remaining behind the scenes, the designer wants their work to be judged on its own merit, and if recent outings – including a collaboration with Level Shoes in Dubai Mall and a showcase at Art Basel in Paris – are any indication, they are onto a winning formula.

25

Left: Chair 0.3
by Kameh



26

EBURFRANCE, LEBANON,
IVORY COAST *studioebur.com*

Founded by childhood friends Racha Gutierrez and Dahlia Hojeij Deleuze, Ebur is a creative studio working across interior and furniture design. Its craft-focused approach is a tribute to the pair's upbringing in Ivory Coast, while its Mediterranean-inspired design language gives a nod to their Lebanese roots. "Craftsmanship is at the heart of our creative approach; it was by seeing Ivorian artisans working in public spaces that we wanted to start drawing things," Gutierrez explains. The duo recently launched its first furniture collection and is now working on two residences in Paris.

ARESYRIA *a--re.com*

The lines between traditional and modern fuse as Dubai-based Syrian studio ARE pushes design boundaries. "Our work encapsulates the coexistence of our heritage and the avant-garde," they say. "We aim to create living artworks that transcend time." The upshot? Mirrors and chairs which channel late-19th-century Syrian mahogany and mother-of-pearl designs, remixed with acid colours and epoxy resin. During Art Basel, ARE unveiled a collaboration with the UAE's Irthi Contemporary Crafts Council, featuring boxes that merge Damascene and Emirati cultures. "Our objective was to show the beauty of juxtaposing opposites."

27

AGATA KURZELAUNITED ARAB EMIRATES *kurzela.com*

From masterminding a futuristic office in one of Abu Dhabi's most iconic buildings to creating objects for the collectable design fair Nomad, Agata Kurzela has fashioned a diverse and unexpected body of work in the past year. "Good design should guide, assist, inspire and sometimes entertain," she says. "Whatever we do, we try to be conscious of the opportunities that we can also create for others." As a result, her latest rug collection supports underprivileged Afghani women with employment in the traditional carpet-making industry.



Clockwise from top: Coco lamp and Otto table by Ebur; government office, Abu Dhabi, by Agata Kurzela; Zuha I inlaid box by ARE





29

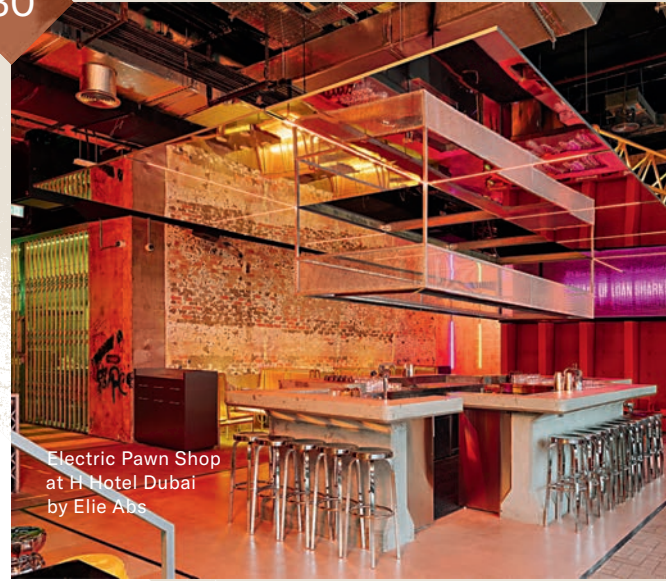
AMMAR KALOUNITED ARAB EMIRATES ammarkalo.com

Bridging the gap between craft and digital technology, Canadian designer Ammar Kalo's furniture has a distinctly smart character: his new Escape aluminium wall sculptures use robotics to shape sheet metal, while a wooden bench reinvents the idea of flat-packed furniture. He's also on the faculty of the American University of Sharjah, where he researches sustainability and the potential of robotic fabrication. "My goal is to show how waste materials can be transformed and educate people about their value," he says.

ELIE ABSLEBANON accentdg.com

"Whether it be a bar or a villa, our projects leave negligible environmental footprints, paving the way for a more sustainable future," says Elie Abs, co-founder of Beirut practice Accent DG. His recent projects prove the point. The Terraces is a villa in the village of Brih, constructed using local stone; it features terraced gardens that regenerate the landscape. At H Hotel Dubai, the Electric Pawn Shop is a neon-lit bar inspired by 1970s Chinatown, designed using local materials.

30



Electric Pawn Shop
at H Hotel Dubai
by Elie Abs

31

Lebanese House at
the V&A by Annabel
Karim Kassir

**ANNABEL KARIM KASSAR**LEBANON annabelkassar.com

Having designed projects that range from factories in Chengdu to a golf club in Ajman, Annabel Karim Kassir's creative process hints at the cultural influences of the many countries she's resided and worked in. With her multifaceted approach, this architect is not afraid of taking risks by transforming tradition and memory into contemporary design. "Quality impresses me," she says. "I aim to strike the perfect balance between bold minimalism and traditional craftsmanship, to which I am extremely attached."



PALLAVI DEAN

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES *designbyroar.com*

32

Above: Roar's Abu Dhabi office for the UAE's Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood

Pallavi Dean has a rare talent for melding form and function in a way that makes for a seamless user experience, and is also ideally suited to the Instagram age. Embracing innovation (think generative AI) while prioritising local production, Dean's design firm, Roar, recently completed the Ajman Executive Council Building, a landmark project scheduled to open in the first quarter of next year. "It's a design that is particularly close to my heart due to my upbringing in the Emirate," explains the designer.

33



BONE

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
bone.studio

Coffee-shop culture is thriving in the region (cafés have become so much more than just a place to acquire a caffeine hit), and Dubai-based studio Bone has been instrumental in leading the transformational charge. Its aesthetic – rich in earthy materials, with spare yet sophisticated detailing – has been much copied, but seldom bettered. Why? Partners Achraf Mzily and Natalie Mahakian ensure that their architectural interventions heighten experiences, using slubby textures and a soothing, nature-inspired palette to bold effect. And it's not just the hospitality sphere that they are winning in: they're working on several ground-breaking residences for local clients, too.





Meat the Fish
restaurant, London,
by Maria Group

34

MARIA GROUP

LEBANON, UNITED KINGDOM mariagroup.com

Founded by the brother-and-sister duo Georges and Michèle Maria, with Claudia Skaff as their London-based partner, Maria Group's projects span myriad genres: from product design and interiors to urban planning. "Our work stems from a desire to translate need into built form," say the designers, "and craft the story of everyday life from poetic and unexpected gestures." Known for its ability to marry seemingly divergent textures, materials and influences, the studio recently delivered Meat the Fish, a Scandi-inspired seafood restaurant in London; it is now working on a heritage hotel in Lebanon.

Photo: Michael Sinclair (Maria Group) Robin Hill (Peter Mabeo)



35

PETER MABEO

BURKINA FASO mabeofurniture.com

Merging Modernism and traditional craft, Peter Mabeo's desire for collaboration and knowledge-sharing has seen his pieces appear in homes and hotels from Milan to Stockholm, Hong Kong and New York. Based in Botswana, Mabeo's eponymous brand works with local craftspeople to create rhythmic furniture, and was tapped by Fendi to create pieces for Design Miami in 2021. The Kompa collection featured designs in clay, metal and panga panga wood that pushed the boundaries of traditional techniques.



Above: Shiya seat in
panga panga wood
by Peter Mabeo

36

Right: The Serai Wing at the Chedi Al Bait hotel, Sharjah, by Anarchitect

37

ANARCHITECT

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
anarchitect.com

Founded by British architect Jonathan Ashmore, this studio's philosophy is "globally influenced, locally rooted". Its newest design, The Serai Wing at the Chedi Al Bait hotel in Sharjah, is a reworking of two 1950s homes as guest rooms and suites, echoing Ashmore's commitment to adapting existing buildings. "The layered visual narrative celebrates the building's rebirth," says the architect, who's also working on a home in Kampala, the restoration of a 1926 Belgrade property and several wellness projects.



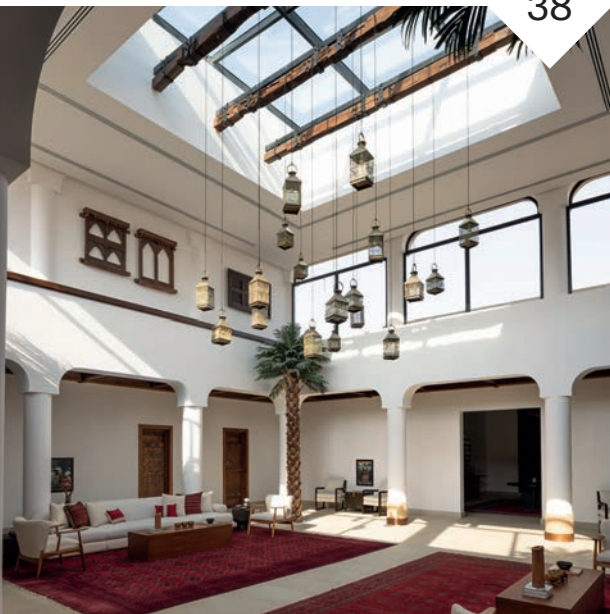
38

HRH ANOUD KHALID MISHAAL BIN SAUD

SAUDI ARABIA *ainteriors.com*

The creative force behind A Interiors, a Riyadh-based turnkey design studio, Princess Anoud combines her passion for art and travel to craft spaces that present Saudi Arabia's rich heritage in a new light. Known for her contemporary take on Arabic homes, she recently completed a farmhouse in Al'Ammariyah, KSA, where a modern, minimal scheme was elevated using traditional textiles. "Working with Saudi artists, we combine the old with the new," she says. "I want to create future heirlooms – be it an object or a space – that are proudly passed down from generation to generation."

Left: Al'Ammariyah farmhouse by A Interiors. Right: Fayy Health, Dubai, by Rabah Saeid

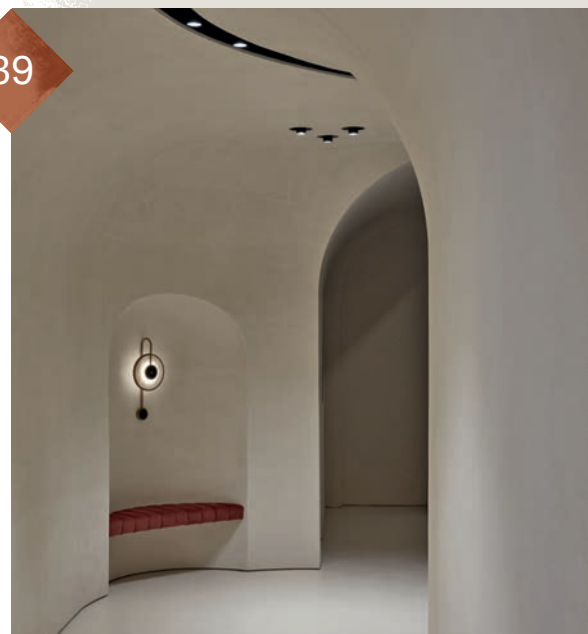


39

RABAH SAEID

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES *styledhabitat.com*

Dubai-based American-Sudanese designer Rabah Saeid is the founder of Styled Habitat, known for its expressive, sensual interiors. "We're artisans of ambience, blending old-world romanticism with modern elegance, layering light, textures and fragrances to captivate the senses," she says. Saeid's newest openings are the earth-toned Bayn Coffee, set in the grounds of Qasr Al Mujaiwi fort, a UNESCO World Heritage site in Al Ain; and Fayy Health in Dubai, which reinvents the cosmetic surgery centre as "a tranquil refuge with a retreat feel".





40

AISHA AL SOWAIDI

QATAR *aishaalsowaidi.com*

Multidisciplinary Qatari designer Aisha Al Sowaidi uses her home city of Doha as inspiration, blending traditional and modern influences. Her latest collection, for example, explores the transformation of floor-level majlis seating into a sofa. Besides her design work, Al Sowaidi is also the director of Liwan – a creative hub under Qatar Museums – through which she is developing the city’s arts and design sectors. “It’s such an exciting time to be working in this field in Doha, and I am looking to contribute in many ways,” she says.

ALTIN

TUNISIA *@altinstudio*

Tunis design duo Yasmine Sfar and Mehdi Kebaier create sculptural furniture and lighting inspired by their homeland, Tunisia, and its native materials. “We work with four elemental materials – sea rush, clay, palmwood and metal – each of which has its own unique place in Altin’s universe,” they say. Their debut collection, *Orbite*, suggests they’re destined for great things: crafted entirely by local artisans, it “speaks the language of organic minimalism”.

Above: Culture Pass Club, Doha, by Aisha Al Sowaidi. Left: Ganymède cabinet by Altin



42

MIMINAT SHODEINDE

LONDON, NIGERIA *miminat.com*

In a very short time, British-Nigerian Miminat Shodeinde has made quite a name for herself in the international design arena, thanks to meticulously crafted objects and rich interiors that often play on duality. With influences varying from African sculpture to Brutalist forms, her work encompasses many things at once. Shodeinde is now creating a capsule furniture collection inspired by a residence she designed in Kuwait, and renovating a 5-star hotel in Antigua.



41

Photo: Ieva Saudargaitė (Anarchitect) Francois Halard, courtesy of Culture Pass Club (Aisha Al Sowaidi) Edvinas Bruzas (Miminat Shodeinde)

43

Right: Zitya Ibiza restaurant by Fahad Hariri and Pinto

SHAIKHA AL SULAITI

QATAR shaikhaalsulaiti.com

Keeping Qatari heritage alive, Shaikha Al Sulaiti's work focuses on two main themes: "creating a more sustainable, ethical luxury movement, and celebrating culture and tradition through design". While playing a key role in the establishment of the Doha Design District, she is also developing her product design portfolio: a modular bench/table concept will be showcased at Salone del Mobile 2024. "The intention is to use recycled materials as much as possible," Al Sulaiti adds. "I believe that designers have a huge responsibility to create beauty while not being wasteful."



Left: Ousia chair and footstool by Sizar Alexis



Bold and decidedly Brutalist, Swedish-Iraqi designer Sizar Alexis's sculptural furniture is not for the faint of heart. Distilling the stories of his homeland and his experience as an immigrant – his family moved from Ebril in Iraq to Sweden in 1997 – his work strikes a delicate balance between calmness and power. Whether it's a coffee table that embodies the safety of a war bunker or a throne-like chair inspired by his Chaldean roots, Alexis weaves personal stories and cultural narratives into collectable design. A furniture collection inspired by the extraordinary Mudhif reed houses of southern Iraq is in the pipeline.

SIZAR ALEXIS

SWEDEN, IRAQ sizaralexis.se



44

FAHAD HARIRI

FRANCE pinto.fr

Having fallen in love with the sumptuous spaces designed by the famous French designer Alberto Pinto, Fahad Hariri didn't miss a heartbeat when the opportunity to acquire the late creative's Parisian design company arose. Now, as the proprietor and co-artistic director of Pinto, he is masterminding a range of top-tier projects: mega-yachts for the rich and famous, a villa by Lake Geneva in Switzerland, and palaces across the Middle East. "Alberto's legacy is built on utterly bespoke, high-end and luxurious projects," says Hariri. "I am committed to his vision as we chart a bold new direction."

45



Christian Louboutin's
La Folie in Portugal,
by Tarek Shamma

TAREK SHAMMA

EGYPT, UNITED KINGDOM

tarekshamma.com

Egyptian-born designer Tarek Shamma's layered interiors are a sight to behold, where materials, objects and textures intertwine to tell the story of a place – or a personality. Take the Portuguese home of shoe designer Christian Louboutin, for example, which experiments boldly with material, form and light, referencing different movements and epochs in art and design. Integral to Shamma's work is the art of conversation and learning from clients, which in Louboutin's case, he says, "extended far beyond clienthood to mentorship".

47

NIFEMI MARCUS-BELLONIGERIA nmbello.com

“When borders were shut in 2020, designers had to look inwards to create using contextual design solutions. This approach allows us to build and connect with our communities, while considering both material and human sustainability,” says Lagos-based Nifemi Marcus-Bello, whose work explores local materials and manufacturing techniques. 2023 saw his first solo show in Los Angeles, featuring a cast-bronze bench made in Benin City, Nigeria, with a second exhibition planned for Design Miami that explores the potential of new materials in Lagos.

Above: bamboo kiosk designed by Nifemi Marcus-Bello for skater brand Wafflesncream. Right: Monarch table lamp by Carla Baz

CARLA BAZUNITED ARAB EMIRATES, LEBANON carlabaz.com

Carla Baz delivers distinctive products – sculptural lighting, seating and objects – by contemporising age-old techniques. “My work is dedicated to ushering in a brighter future by combining artistic innovation with sustainable practices,” says the Dubai-based Lebanese designer, who won AD Middle East’s Best Product Design award in 2022. Since then, Baz has demonstrated her ability to fashion entire environments, too, transforming her former family home in Lebanon into the idyllic guesthouse Indira.

48

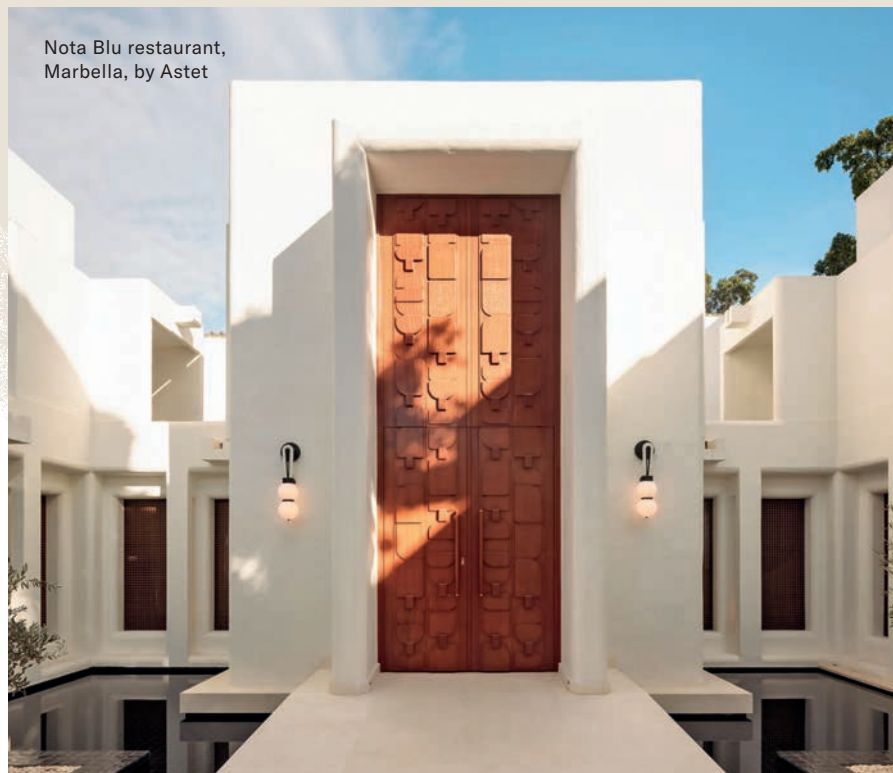


50

ASTETSPAIN astetstudio.com

Founded in 2018 by architects Ala Zreigat and Oscar Engroba, Astet has made a mark with its glamorous, impeccably layered hotels and restaurants. This year, the duo raised the bar higher with two exceptional concepts: Leña, a swish steakhouse in Dubai, and the La Cabane beach club in Marbella, designed in collaboration with Dolce & Gabbana. “Our mission is to create new ways of experiencing hospitality venues,” says Zreigat, who is of Jordanian heritage. “Every detail, from the lights to the furniture and stemware, is an opportunity to create a lasting memory.”

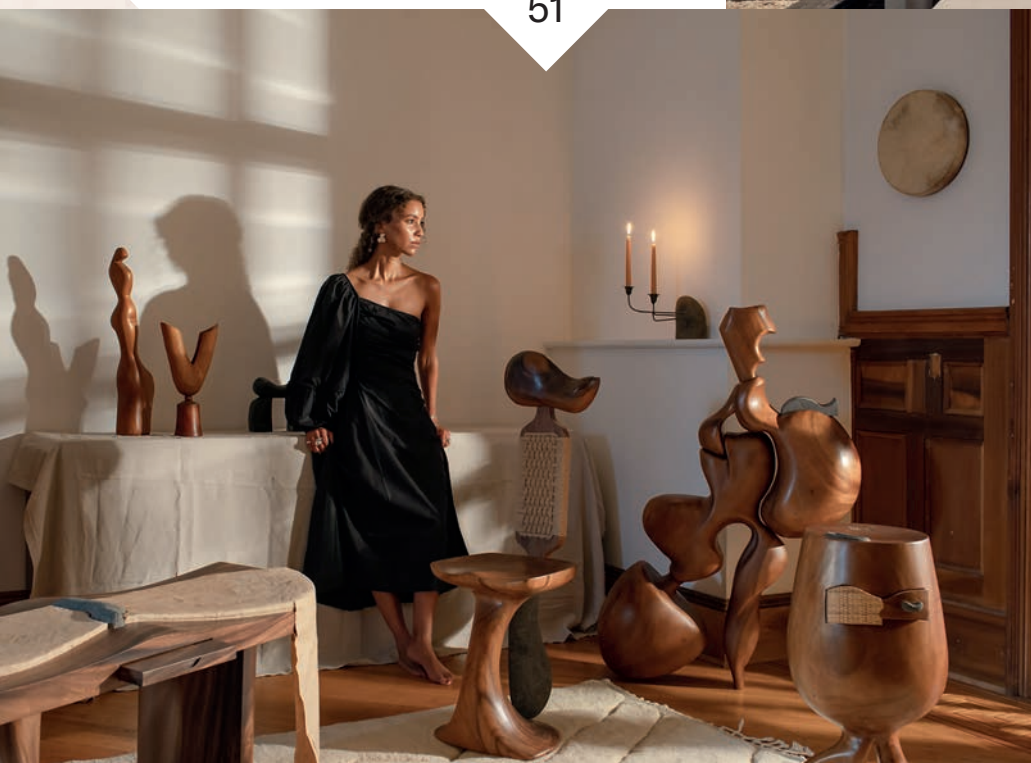
Nota Blu restaurant,
Marbella, by Astet

**BOUCHRA BOUDOUA**MOROCCO bouchraboudoua.com

49

Vintage carpets, traditional pottery and even paint marks discovered on a mud wall are just some of the inspirations for Moroccan ceramicist Bouchra Boudoua's joyful vessels and Cubist-style artworks. Based in Marrakech, she learnt her craft from local potters, with whom she continues to collaborate. While most of her designs so far have been on a small scale, she's beginning to create larger, sculptural pieces too.

51

**KIM MUPANGILAI**BELGIUM, CONGO [@pangilai](https://www.instagram.com/pangilai)

Debuting her first furniture collection in 2022 with New York gallery Superhouse at Design Miami, Belgian-Congolese designer Kim Mupangilai's work is both functional and sculptural, but also acts as a prompt for much-needed discourse on appropriation, extraction and colonisation. Her objects – made using natural materials such as wood, raffia, stone and banana-leaf fibre – are a meditation on her cross-cultural heritage and ancestral storytelling. “I believe it's imperative to be mindful of the cultural landscape when designing,” she says.

52

**VERHAAL**UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, SOUTH AFRICA *verhaal.studio*

Named after the Afrikaans word for storytelling, Verhaal's richly layered interiors often feature bespoke commissions from artisans in its native South Africa. Since 2016, work and life partners Neydine Bak and Dewald Struwig have also become attuned to collaborating with craftspeople in the UAE, delivering a clutch of chic private residences and restaurants, including Bungalow 34 in Dubai and Riyadh's Somewhere Bujairi. Fans of their elegant yet comfortable style will soon find it easier to recreate the look: a homeware range called Huis (Afrikaans for Home) is in the works.

Right: Mallory Gabsi restaurant in Paris by Arnaud Behzadi

53

**ARNAUD BEHZADI**FRANCE, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES *arnaudbehzadi.com*

"Having been born in Iran but growing up as a Parisian, my work has always been influenced by a fusion of cultures," says Arnaud Behzadi, who describes his work as "poetic architectural shelters for the soul". His new interiors for the Relais Bernard Loiseau hotel in Burgundy, where he created cocoon-like beds enclosed with wicker screens, reflect this philosophy, as does his Mallory Gabsi restaurant in Paris, with its sensual wood-and-stone palette.

54

T SAKHILEBANON *tsakhi.com*

Lebanese-Polish sisters Tessa and Tara Sakhi are eco-conscious visionaries. "A driving force of our creative process is the recuperation of discarded materials, which we recycle to achieve ingenious textures and forms," they say. One example is their new, hand-crafted Sand Pearls hybrid seat/table, inspired by traditional prayer beads. It's made from Lebanese sand, crushed waste resin and silk cords. Next, the Sakhis are transforming Dubai arts enclave Alserkal Avenue to create a "multi-sensory urban sanctuary".

Lagoon Green coffee table by T Sakhi, made from waste resin and marble offcuts





55

Syn Architects' display at Islamic Art Biennale, curated by Summaya Vally

SUMAYYA VALLY

SOUTH AFRICA *counterspace-studio.com*

“Everything I look at is seen through the lens of a fundamental interest in territory, identity, belonging and trying to understand architecture beyond that which is built,” says Sumayya Vally, whose practice Counterspace explores the field from a non-traditional viewpoint. “Our current projects are focused on expressions for African and Islamic hybrid identities,” she says of her Johannesburg-based studio. Having recently curated the inaugural Islamic Art Biennale in Jeddah, Vally is now working on a bridge in Belgium, inspired by the Congolese activist and horticulturist Paul Panda Farnana.

Photo: Alana Landsbury (Verhaal) Thierry Depagne, courtesy Galerie Gosserez (T Sakhi) Laurian Ghinitoiu (Sumayya Vally) Luke Hayes (Tariq Khayyat)



56

X ARCHITECTS

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
x-architects.com

Dubai duo Ahmed Al-Ali and Farid Esmail translate Arab culture into sustainable contemporary architecture using innovations such as 3D printing, virtual reality and AI. “We follow an adaptive approach, merging high tech with low tech to bridge the gap between tradition and the future,” they say. Recently, they have restored several historical buildings, including Bait Mohammed Bin Khalifa House in Al Ain, the home of Sheikh Mohammed Bin Khalifa, which is now a cultural venue.

57

TARIQ KHAYYAT

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES *tkdp.one*

The long-standing former head of region at Zaha Hadid Architects, Tariq Khayyat established his boutique architecture firm tkdp in 2018, in partnership with Xiaosheng Li. Its focus is on “enhancing community experience by developing a synergy between buildings and their surrounding communities”. The recently unveiled The Fold for Huna, in Dubai’s Jumeirah neighbourhood, is a case in point: the 28 townhouses overlook a pedestrianised central “spine”, designed to foster street life in a city where cars are usually prioritised. Khayyat also has several mega-projects lined up, including a mixed-use masterplan in Abu Dhabi.

The Fold for Huna, a Dubai housing development by tkdp



GREGORY GATSERELIALEBANON *gregorygatserelia.com*

This studio's projects boast refined materiality and a strong focus on art, a field in which Gregory Gatserelia is an expert curator. A recent apartment atop a Beirut tower is as much art gallery as residence, while another bold space in Paris has panoramic views of the Eiffel Tower. Gatserelia is also co-founder of The Great Design Disaster, which crafts bespoke furniture. Future projects are a global affair, happening everywhere from Dubai to Switzerland.



58

Above: a Paris home designed by Gregory Gatserelia



59

Left: Argo Contemporary Art Museum and Cultural Centre, Tehran, by ASA North.
Right: Fortytwelve's HQ in Kuwait

AHMADREZA SCHRICKERIRAN, UNITED STATES *asanorth.com*

A veteran of the Herzog & de Meuron and OMA studios, Ahmadreza Schricker is the founder of experimental architecture practice ASA North, which won the Aga Khan Award for its Argo Contemporary Art Museum & Cultural Centre in Tehran. Working on everything from private homes to urban planning, his radical vision embraces a broad spectrum of cultural and digital innovation. With his second practice ASA South, he's just completed the world's first virtual museum for contemporary art collector Mohammed Afkhami.

60

KHALED ALAWADHIKUWAIT *fortytwelve.com*

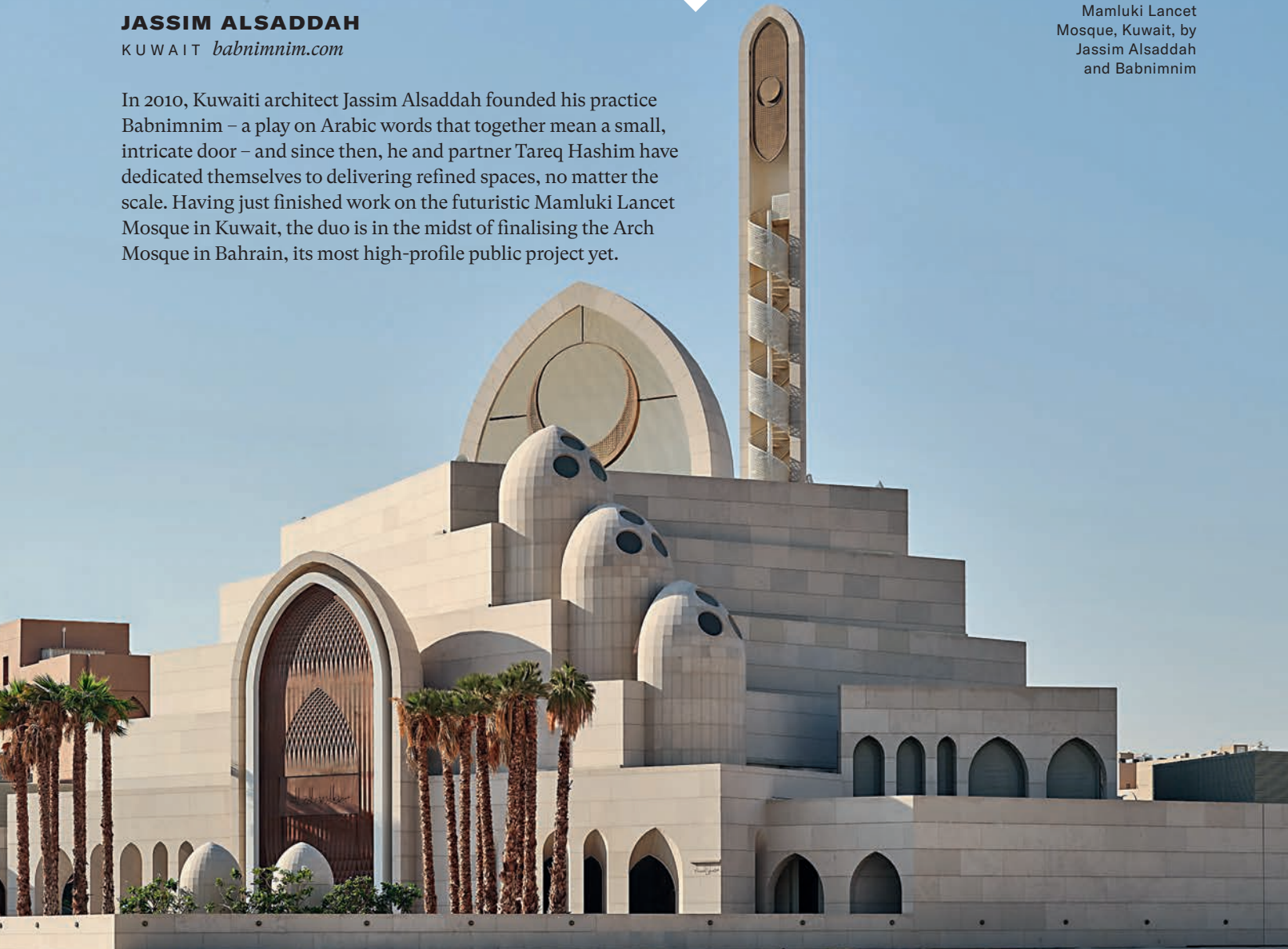
One of Kuwait's most exciting talents, Khaled Alawadhi creates refined yet simple interiors with his studio Fortytwelve. There's a translucent beauty to his Ode Eatery in Althuraya Mall, Kuwait, with its fluted glass panelling, micro-cement finishes and wood veneers; Doha's Earth coffee bar exudes calm with its palette of silver travertine, stainless steel and oak. "Design can easily be undermined as shallow, but we create spaces that help small businesses grow and put cities on the map," Alawadhi says.



JASSIM ALSADDAHKUWAIT *babnimnim.com*

In 2010, Kuwaiti architect Jassim Alsaddah founded his practice Babnimnim – a play on Arabic words that together mean a small, intricate door – and since then, he and partner Tareq Hashim have dedicated themselves to delivering refined spaces, no matter the scale. Having just finished work on the futuristic Mamluki Lancet Mosque in Kuwait, the duo is in the midst of finalising the Arch Mosque in Bahrain, its most high-profile public project yet.

Mamluki Lancet Mosque, Kuwait, by Jassim Alsaddah and Babnimnim



Below: Mother & Child two-piece bench by Omar Chakil

62

OMAR CHAKILEGYPT *@omarchakil*

Omar Chakil's furniture and objects, crafted from Egyptian alabaster and onyx, have an otherworldly beauty – take the pendant light he created with Yasmina Makram for the Nakhla store at the new Grand Egyptian Museum, which is half Saturn, half sun. Native materials and local crafts are key for Chakil, who prioritises “quality over quantity, slow over fast”. He's currently working on new commissions for the Qatar Museum, to be unveiled in 2024, and a solo show in Paris.



WAIWAIUNITED ARAB EMIRATES, JAPAN waiwaidesign.com

63

When WaiWai co-founders Wael Al Awar and Kazuma Yamao aren't busy redeveloping Mina Zayed, the port of Abu Dhabi, into a design district, or transforming the historic core of Bukhara, Uzbekistan, into a cultural hub, they are exploring new ways to tackle climate change. "We've been researching an alternative cement material that uses salt as a binding agent," says Al Awar. "Rather than allowing the brine to harm the country's coastal wetland environments, it can be used to reduce the carbon footprint of the construction industry."

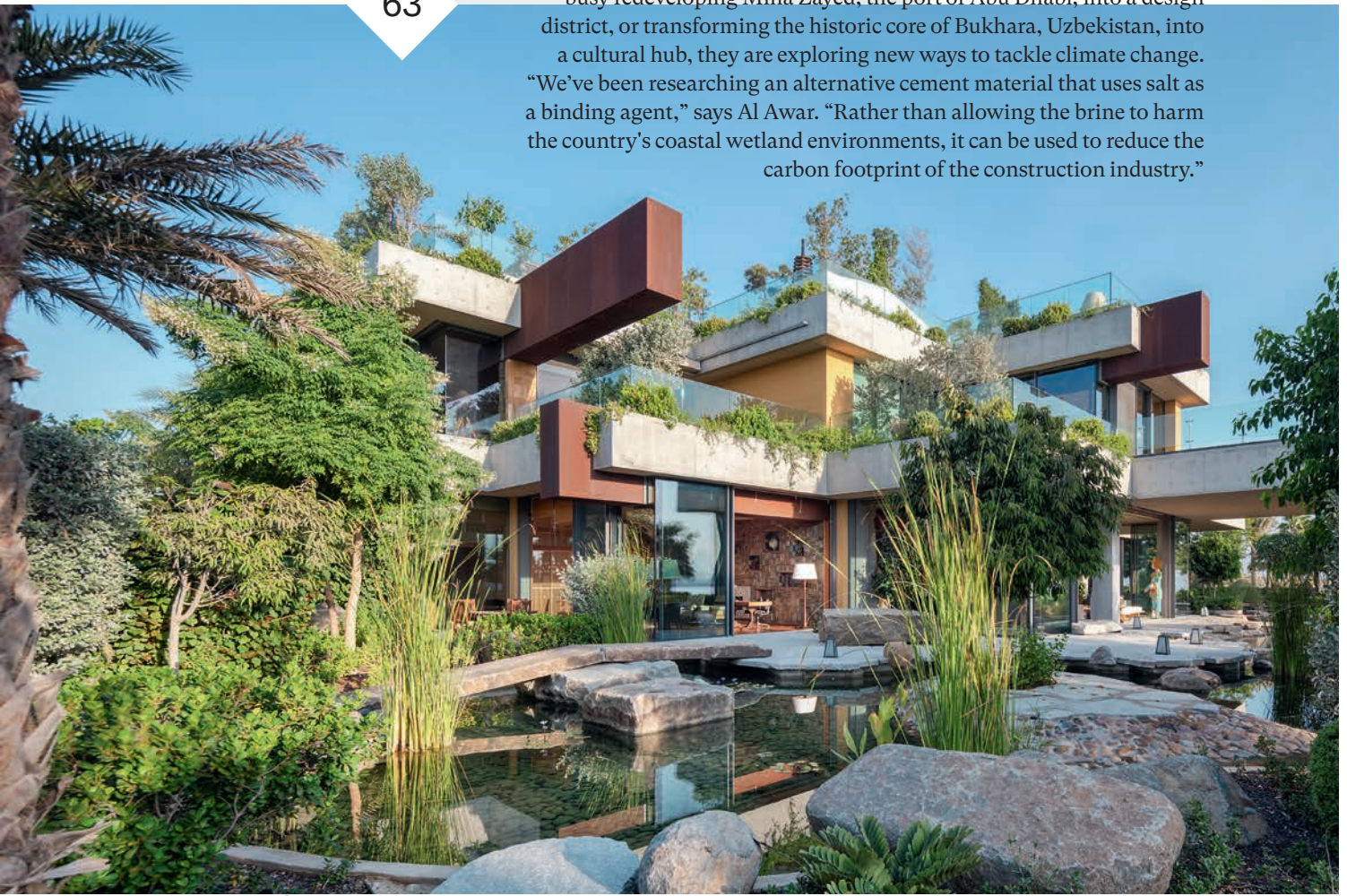


Photo: Darren Bradley (WaiWai) Ofoe Amegavie (Limbo Accra) Pino Musi (Sahel AHIYari)

Above: Jumeirah villa by Waiwai.
Right: installation by Patrick Tagoe-Turkson, part of Limbo Accra's Adjiringanor Activation exhibition

LIMBO ACCRAGHANA, UNITED STATES
limboaccra.online

"Rather than prescribing a grand vision for a better future, I prefer to contribute by amplifying what already exists and forging new connections that enrich the world around us," says Dominique Petit-Frère, who co-founded architecture practice Limbo Accra alongside her partner Emil Grip. Unconventionally, the pair work with abandoned spaces, exploring ways these structures can be reactivated and given an alternative life. Their latest undertaking in Sharjah connects West African contemporary architecture with the UAE.

64





65

Bargouti House,
Amman, by
Sahel AlHiyari

SAHEL ALHIYARI

JORDAN sahelalhiyari.com

Jordanian architect Sahel AlHiyari's work is characterised by monumental simplicity and clean lines. "It evokes an archetypal presence that permeates its apparent abstraction, giving rise to transcendent qualities that surpass temporal trends," he says. One new residence in Jordan is inspired by traditional agricultural techniques, and conceived as a sequence of landscaped terraces; future projects include a community centre in the remains of an Ottoman village in southern Jordan, which deals with "landscape, archaeology and restoration".

TRISTAN DU PLESSIS

SOUTH AFRICA tristanduplessis.com

"In hospitality, we create spaces where life moments happen, so it's important that our design makes them memorable," says Du Plessis. They certainly are at San Beach Dubai, his new beach club created with South African artisans. "It was inspired by the ancient Khoisan people, whose culture celebrated nature, food and dance." Ristorante Loren on Palm Jumeirah, meanwhile, is a tribute to the Italian coast. Du Plessis is also designing much-anticipated Mondrian Hotels in Riyadh and Abu Dhabi.

66



Left: brushed-
aluminium High
Table 01 by
Bahraini-Danish

67

BAHRAINI-DANISH

BAHRAIN, DENMARK bahrainidanish.com

As its name suggests, design collective Bahraini-Danish – comprising architects Batool Alshaikh, Maitham Almubarak and Christian Vennerstrøm Jensen – explores the historical encounters between the two countries through architecture, archaeology and design. Armed with a curious, spontaneous approach, they have done everything from designing a table to creating textiles for Kvadrat. The trio is now attending the Royal Commission of AlUla design residency as well as creating for the Diriyah Biennale and an exhibition in Doha.





AAU ANASTAS

PALESTINE
aauanastas.com

This practice, run by brothers Elias and Yousef Anastas, has won plaudits this year for The Wonder Cabinet, a renovation of a Brutalist building in Bethlehem that's now a cultural hub with artists' studios, shops, a restaurant and a radio station. The brothers excel at making old buildings anew: they have also been commissioned to create a new masterplan and art school for the MMAG Foundation in Amman, Jordan – another multi-use venue where they will work their magic.

68

The Wonder Cabinet,
 a new Bethlehem
 cultural hub by
 AAU Anastas



69

DIMA SROUJIPALESTINE dimasrouji.com

Palestinian artist and designer Dima Srouji's work is a "relentless search for moments of liberation". Her glass objects, for example, shed light on the history of glass-blowing in Palestine. Many of her projects are created in collaboration with craftspeople in places like Jaba' or Bethlehem. "The most important role of design today is its potential for imagining alternative futures, especially in communities of struggle," says Srouji, who is preparing for her first solo show at Dubai's Lawrie Shabibi gallery in April.

ABBOUD MALAKUNITED ARAB EMIRATES studiom.co

Dubai designer Abboud Malak's practice, Studio M, embraces architecture, interior design and furniture design, creating "original, innovative and enduring spaces". Malak focuses on immersive design that enhances wellbeing: his 1960s-inspired interior for the new Uchi Japanese restaurant in Dubai is a case in point, with its sensual rosewood and walnut veneers, emerald quartzite panelling and whisky-inspired colour palette. Another recent design is a group of Brazilian Modernist-inspired penthouses for the One Palm at Jumeirah development by Omniyat.

70



71

ETIENNE BASTORMAGILEBANON etiennebas.com

Playful yet functional, Bastormagi's interiors and objects are rooted in a love of forms, light and space. His new Astrid tableware is subtitled the Happy Table collection, and is inspired by traditional elements of Lebanese dining. Showcasing the studio's signature geometric forms in clean white ceramic, it consists of a range of interactive vessels that can be combined in endless ways. Bastormagi's next project is a Beirut bakery boasting an innovative light display.

Above: penthouse at One Palm at Jumeirah by Abboud Malak. Left: Etienne Bastormagi's 660.3 Degrees, Cast Poems collection





72

OMAR NAKKASH

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
nakkashdesignstudio.com

Meaningful design that contributes positively to the urban landscape – that’s the mission of Nakkash Design Studio. “We take a human-centric approach, putting people’s needs above everything to create spaces that foster connections,” says founder Omar Nakkash. His recent projects include a Dubai villa that “draws on the client’s Emirati heritage and love of travel”, and a Dubai Mall pop-up shop for Californian chocolatier Compartés, with an Art Deco-meets-futuristic concept. Next up? A new outlet for coffee house PDL.

Right: Upside, a co-living complex in Dubai by Rania Hamed and VSHD

RANIA HAMED

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, CANADA *vshd.net*

There’s a Zen-like simplicity to Rania Hamed’s architecture and interiors, created with her Dubai and Montreal-based studio VSHD. Skilfully fusing traditional and modern, her work often draws inspiration from Japanese design. Recent projects include Upside, a Dubai co-living complex. “The concept of sharing dominates the design,” says Hamed. “Rooms occupy a limited space, but with everything a regular apartment would include.” A serene pool house, meanwhile, evokes a “faraway beach retreat” amid calming natural greenery.

73



Black Diamond, a Sydney home by Yasmine Ghoniem



74

YSG STUDIO

AUSTRALIA, EGYPT ysg.studio

Interior designer Yasmine Ghoniem, who is of Egyptian-Australian heritage, is known for her charismatic style. A recent Sydney project fuses elements from Spanish Mission architecture and Moroccan riads with dramatic carpets and lighting; she's currently working on an "otherworldly resort for creatives in Ubud" and a furniture range "that celebrates the maker's touch". "My interiors transport you back in time and propel you into the future, but never feel 'of the moment'," she says.

76



Above: Orient modular sofa system by David/Nicolas



75

RABIH GEHA

LEBANON rabihgeha.com

"Beirut, with its mix of cultures and layers of history, has always been by my creative north star," says Rabih Geha, the Lebanon-based architect who has recently delivered a slew of hospitality projects across the Middle East, from Doha to Dubai. Now, the studio is developing high-end residential projects in Lebanon and is set to expand into the UK and Nigeria with two dynamic restaurants. In each country, Geha is looking to harness the positive power of design: "While we are in the business of creating beauty, our real role is to bring optimism."



DAVID/NICOLAS

LEBANON, FRANCE davidandnicolas.com

Following their most ambitious work to date – a contemporary reimagining of La Casa di Fantasia, the iconic Italian designer Gio Ponti's famed Milan apartment – Beirut-based creatives David Raffoul and Nicolas Moussallem are working on a new furniture collection for Carpenters Workshop Gallery, a Miami apartment, and a luxury boutique interior in Dubai. "You have to keep creating," says Raffoul, who refers to their style as "future vintage". "We use our projects as a means of communicating our vision of beauty to the world and reintegrating our history into the now."

STUDIO BAABUNITED ARAB EMIRATES studiobaab.com

Taking its name from the word “baab”, which means “door” in Arabic, Ghida Chehab’s Dubai studio balances craftsmanship and modernity. “Our name symbolises an entry into a fresh, novel experience, where we focus on natural materials, forms and light,” she explains. Earlier this year Chehab unveiled Ganache, a chocolatier in Dubai’s Alserkal Avenue, whose interior is inspired by the textures and tones of chocolate; following soon are a gym in Abu Dhabi and an interactive workspace in Dubai.

77



Ganache chocolatier,
Dubai, designed by
Ghida Chehab and
Studio Baab



78

LAURENCE LEENAERTMOROCCO lrnce.com

A decade after founding LRNCE, a Morocco-based lifestyle brand that works with local craftspeople to create ceramics, soft furnishings and clothing, Belgian artist and designer Laurence Leenaert has turned her hand to a much larger canvas: along with her entrepreneur husband, Ayoub Boualam, she has transformed a historic riad in Marrakech into Rosemary, a boutique hotel brimming with the designer’s painterly touches. “Everything was created in partnership with our trusted artisan communities,” explains Leenaert. “This is a manifestation of our intent to preserve and protect the heritage and skills of the local people.”

Photo: Iwan Baan, courtesy: Serpentine (Lina Ghotmeh), Marina Denisova (LRNCE)

79

LINA GHOTMEHLEBANON, FRANCE linaghotmeh.com

Lina Ghotmeh views architecture as a tool for shaping an equitable future for all. “My practice takes an in-depth, historical and materially sensitive approach,” she explains. “All our projects are designed to bring together people and cultures.” Thus, sustainable resources and craft take centre stage, as is evident in Ateliers Hermès, the French label’s new workshop in Normandy. It features a wooden-framed building clad in over 500,000 bricks produced by local brickmakers. Next up for Ghotmeh is a contemporary art museum in AlUla, Saudi Arabia.

Serpentine Pavilion
2023, London,
designed by
Lina Ghotmeh





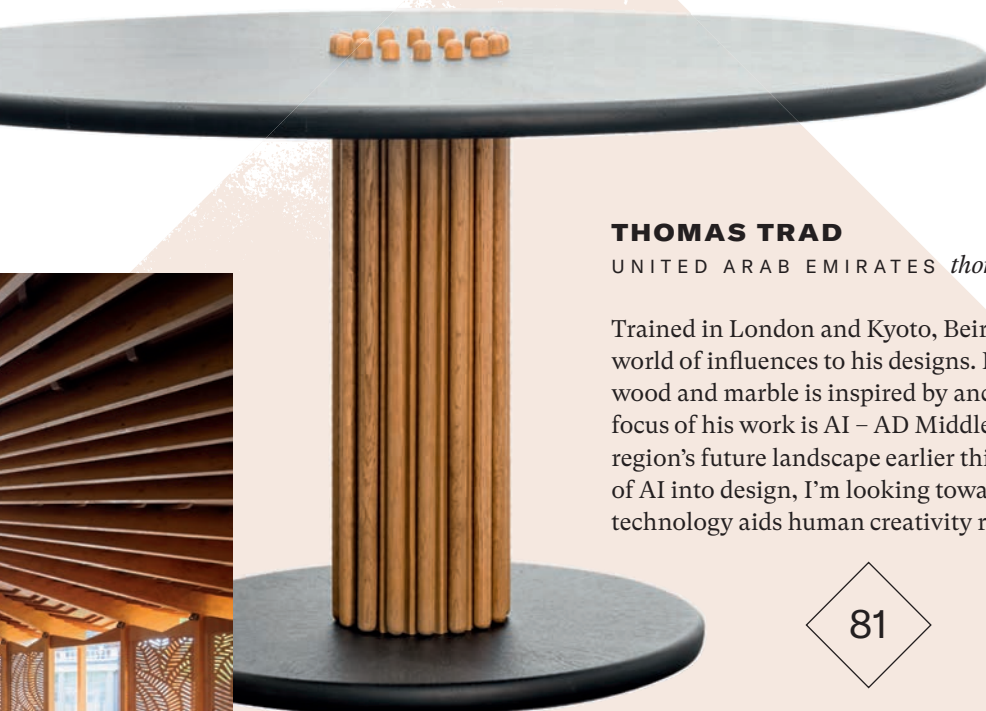
80

KUNLÉ ADEYEMI

NIGERIA, THE NETHERLANDS
nleworks.com

Having worked with Rem Koolhaas for nine years on some of OMA’s most notable projects, Nigerian architect Kunlé Adeyemi founded NLÉ in Amsterdam in 2010, and has become known for his Makoko Floating System – a series of prefabricated structures set on water, part of his research project African Water Cities. It can now be found in five countries across three continents, the latest being a floating music hub in Cabo Verde. Adeyemi is currently working on a multipurpose urban development in Kigali, Rwanda.

Above: Minjiang Floating System, China, by NLÉ



THOMAS TRAD

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES *thomastrad.com*

Trained in London and Kyoto, Beirut designer Thomas Trad brings a world of influences to his designs. His new Alia furniture collection in wood and marble is inspired by ancient Roman columns. Another key focus of his work is AI – AD Middle East published his vision of the region’s future landscape earlier this year. “By exploring the integration of AI into design, I’m looking towards an innovative future where technology aids human creativity rather than replacing it,” he says.

81

Left: Alia oak dining table by Thomas Trad



82

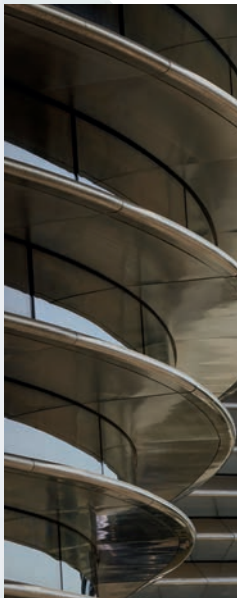
ANNE HOLTROPBAHRAIN, THE NETHERLANDS
anneholtrop.nl

Anne Holtrop is the go-to architect for Europe's coolest brands. His recent projects include a Paris boutique for jewellery designer Charlotte Chesnais, which features water-like screens made from sheets of rippled acrylic, and Martin Margiela's minimalist, all-white London store. Fascinated by materials in their fluid state, Holtrop often creates buildings with striking material effects, such as the 35 Green Corner Building, an art archive in Muharraq. Its structure features unique relief patterns created by a sand-casting process.

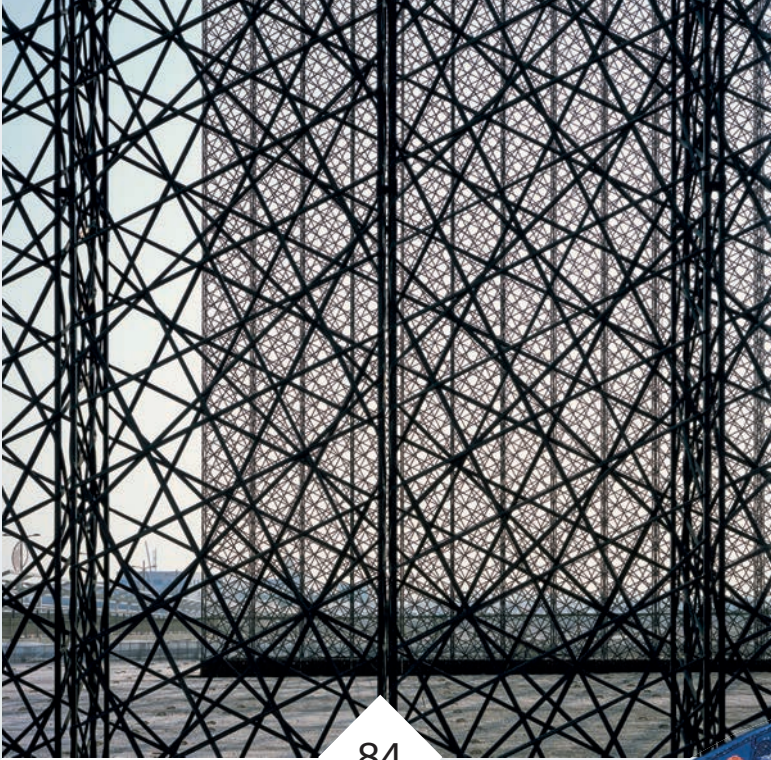
**MESHARY ALNASSAR**UNITED ARAB EMIRATES,
KUWAIT *mesharyalnassar.com*

Multi-talented creative Meshary AlNassar designs buildings, interiors, landscapes and products alongside associate Mishari AlAwadhi. His timeless aesthetic, awash with understated hues and refined materials, is inspired by his environment and traditional design elements, as well as midcentury Scandinavian style and the sculptures of Brancusi. As well as renovating a Spanish colonial villa in Jumeirah, he's also studying local construction techniques, with the aim of "redefining standards of social housing" in the region.

Above: Souq Al Qaysariya, Bahrain, by Anne Holtrop.
Right: Expo City Dubai's Alif Pavilion by Foster + Partners



83



84

ASIF KHANUNITED KINGDOM asif-khan.com

“Fear and contempt for the ‘other’ will destroy the Earth,” says London-based architect Asif Khan, whose feather-light carbon portals welcomed the world to Dubai during Expo 2020. “Working together feels like the only path forward for human beings, and as creative people, we have the power to place-make for those shared experiences.” It is little surprise, then, that a majority of Khan’s upcoming projects are in the cultural realm: the Tselinnyi Centre for Contemporary Culture in Almaty, Kazakhstan, the new Museum of London, and a museum exploring the impact of the incense trade in AlUla.

ALJOUD LOOTAHUNITED ARAB EMIRATES
aljoudlootah.com

“My work often revolves around reflecting Emirati traditions through minimalistic forms,” says Aljoud Lootah, whose pieces are crafted from refined materials such as porcelain and camel leather. Recently, she has produced 60 of her Takya sofas, influenced by the low cushions used in traditional majlis, for the Presidential Palace in Abu Dhabi; she has also created a hand-embroidered wall installation for the new Vacheron Constantin watch showroom in Dubai Mall, and is working on her tenth anniversary collection.

85



Above: Expo 2020 Dubai entrance by Asif Khan. Right: wallhanging by Aljoud Lootah for the Vacheron Constantin Dubai Mall boutique



86

FOSTER + PARTNERSUNITED KINGDOM fosterandpartners.com

Global architecture and urban design firm Foster + Partners' practice is rooted in an optimistic view of the future. “It is about focusing on the fundamental principles of performance, doing more with less, the pursuit of sustainability and beauty, a continuous tradition of questioning and challenging, and – when possible – innovating or reinventing building types,” says Gerard Evenden, Head of Studio. Having delivered several high-profile buildings in the region (Lusail Stadium in Qatar, House of Wisdom in Sharjah, and National Bank of Kuwait HQ in Kuwait City to name a few), the firm will soon be adding two more monumental projects to the list: the world’s first “fully immersive” marine life centre on Saudi’s Red Sea coastline (welcoming visitors in 2024) and Zayed National Museum in Abu Dhabi (set to open in 2025).

MA STUDIO

KUWAIT, LEBANON, UNITED KINGDOM, UNITED STATES
selmaakkari.com; rawanmuqaddas.com

Design duo Selma Akkari and Rawan Muqaddas share a warm, minimal style and a love of refined materials. “Our goal is to kindle curiosity through design, and we prioritise women-led and local businesses on our projects,” they say. Recently, they’ve designed Juno restaurant in Doha, whose retro design is inspired by Italian cafes and American diners. It combines textured plaster walls with warm wood panelling and glass-block partitions. On the floor, oversized terrazzo chips add a playful touch.



87



WISSAM YAFAWI
 LEBANON *yafawidesign.com*

88

Contemporary comfort is the hallmark of interior designer Wissam Yafawi's work; he believes that “every project should be as unique as the people it serves” and creates spaces that “bridge the gap between tradition and modernity”. Recent projects have focused on reinventing historical buildings – an apartment in Paris, for instance, and a London townhouse. By integrating sustainability into his designs, he aims to contribute to a brighter future. Next, he’s creating a villa in Jeddah and a Swiss chalet.

Left: Juno restaurant,
 Doha, by MA Studio.
 Above: Beirut
 Solidere residential
 project by
 Wissam Yafawi

TOSIN OSHINOWO

NIGERIA *oshinowostudio.com*

Whether designing an Adidas flagship in Lagos or curating an architecture festival in Sharjah, Tosin Oshinowo combines smart thinking with a passion for history and economics to deliver projects that positively impact communities. “The future of design is local,” says the architect. “As we become conscious of our environment, there will be a greater need to find solutions in the immediacy of locality and context.” Next up is the refurbishment of a 75-year-old retail centre in the heart of the old city of Lagos: “We’re taking the building’s rich history and heritage into the future.”

89





90

STUDIO KO

MOROCCO, FRANCE studioko.fr

“For us, the future doesn’t lie in new technical materials, but in new ways to use noble and timeless materials: that’s what we have been doing for over 20 years,” duo Olivier Marty and Karl Fournier explain. Studio KO has become known for its rustic minimalism and contextual approach to design, qualities which are present in its recent projects, including a resort in Portugal and two brick homes in Morocco. The studio is also working on a clay house in Dubai, championing short-circuit materials and local know-how.

DINA NUR SATTI

UNITED STATES, SUDAN,
SOMALIA nurceramics.com

Ceramic artist and designer Dina Nur Satti – who has Sudanese and Somali heritage – creates pieces that uphold ancient methods of craft. Inspired by Nubian ritual objects, her latest project includes five-foot-tall entrance pillars that explore incense traditions in Sudanese culture. “Growing up, I didn’t know of any women in design from Sudan or Somalia. I like to think that I’m part of a movement of designers who are adding a new point of view, and pulling from cultural histories that have previously been underrepresented.”

91



Left: Gaar leather
lounge chair by
Nareg Krikorian

92



NAREG KRİKORIAN

LEBANON naregkrikorian.com

Lebanese-Armenian designer Nareg Krikorian is inspired by childhood memories of his father’s atelier in Beirut. Reshaping preconceptions of leather – a material deeply rooted in his family’s heritage – the designer reimagines the craft with a contemporary sensibility, adding subtle but bold nuances. His latest collection launched at Dubai Design Week 2023; the Gaar lounge chair and side table feature exaggerated forms and stitching details. Krikorian’s plan is to extend Gaar’s bold visual cues – which embody a distinct visual language – into future collections.

93

FAYSAL TABBARAHUNITED ARAB EMIRATES
architecture-otherthings.com

Faysal Tabbarah heads up Sharjah practice Architecture + Other Things, which designs “culturally conscious” buildings and objects. He has recently completed Recovery Island, a Sharjah wellness space with a close connection to nature, finished in sandy clay and filled with greenery. He’s currently expanding on ideas raised by his UAE pavilion at the Venice Architecture Biennale. “Entitled Aridly Abundant, it asked what architecture becomes possible when we reimagine arid landscapes as spaces of abundance,” Tabbarah explains.

**AGI ARCHITECTS**KUWAIT, SPAIN *agi-architects.com*

Led by Harvard-educated architects Joaquín Pérez-Goicoechea and Nasser B. Abulhasan, AGi reinterprets Mediterranean architecture from a modern perspective, “in search of an understanding between Islamic culture and Western lifestyles”. Standout new designs include Pixel House in Kuwait, whose “pixelated” ceramic-and-aluminium lattice façade filters light while enhancing privacy; and Archipelago Villa in Madrid, conceived as a series of islands with a “ribbon” roof. Coming next? A new hospital and a retail complex, both in Kuwait.

Below: Pixel House in Kuwait designed by AGi Architects

Above: Aridly Abundant UAE pavilion, Venice Architecture Biennale, by Faysal Tabbarah

94



ABEER SEIKALYJORDAN *abeerseikaly.com*

A graduate of Rhode Island School of Design, Jordanian-Palestinian creative Abeer Seikaly describes herself as “an interdisciplinary thinker and maker, who works across architecture, design, fine art and cultural production”. Her recent work celebrates indigenous Bedouin weaving: Terroir, for instance, is a cultural space concept based on the traditional ground loom. Seikaly is also the founder of *ālmamar*, an Amman-based residency programme that stages weaving-related performances and events.

Below: handcrafted
Constellations 2.0
chandelier by
Abeer Seikaly

95

**AZIZA CHAOUNI**MOROCCO *azizachaouniprojects.com*

For Moroccan architect Aziza Chaouni, architecture is akin to activism. “I always strive to design for maximum social and environmental impact,” she explains. “It is only by doing so that architects can influence the social sphere of our cities and shape responses to issues such as climate change.” Chaouni is currently rehabilitating Modernist landmarks across Africa, including a thermal bath complex in Morocco, an international fairground in Senegal, and The House of the People in Burkina Faso.

96



97

AHMED BUKHASHUNITED ARAB EMIRATES
archidentity.ae

Translating the vernacular of the Arabian Gulf into modern, minimal architecture, Ahmed Bukhash leads Dubai practice Archidentity, whose recent residential projects are characterised by their clean lines and low-emission design. New builds include AB House, a Modernist villa whose striking angular planes are intersected by a contemporary pool and rows of trees. In the works is a home for a car collector, combining extensive parking with big balconies.

Above: Ifrane Craft
Exhibition Hall,
Morocco, by Aziza
Chaouni. Left: AB
House, Dubai, by
Ahmed Bukhash



AHMAD ABOUZANATUNITED STATES *projectaz.design*

Of Palestinian descent but based in New York, Ahmad AbouZanat designs homes that are “functional, comfortable and joyful”. His work is ethical as well as chic: he often creates sustainable, bespoke pieces for projects and champions up-and-coming designers, and recently designed a bathroom for a children’s charity. “The philanthropic impact of interior design isn’t always highlighted, so this was an honour,” he says. He’s currently working on residential projects in Manhattan, Rhode Island and Dubai.



98

99

CARL GERGESLEBANON, FRANCE *carlgerges.com*

Former musician Carl Gerges established his eponymous studio in 2020 and has fast developed a timeless creative signature. His recent projects – be it a boutique hotel in Batroun, Lebanon, or an open-air interpretation of traditional majlis in marble – feel rooted to the earth, a quality the architect attributes to his desire for creating spaces that “age beautifully”. Two noteworthy projects will be unveiled in 2024: the Paris home of an Arab supermodel, and “the Middle East’s biggest nightclub”.



Heaf coffee shop, Dubai, by Abdalla Almulla

100

ABDALLA ALMULLAUNITED ARAB EMIRATES *mula.ae*

Venturing into the unknown by means of digital exploration and experimental prototyping, Dubai designer Abdalla Almulla’s studio, Mula, has one eye on the future. At this year’s London Design Biennale, his And Beyond pavilion conjured a landscape halfway between desert dunes and Martian terrain. He’s also created a modern souk for Hermès in Dubai Mall, and intriguing explorations of café culture in Al Ain’s Esproses café-florist and Heaf, a nature-filled coffee shop in Dubai.



Echoed open-air majlis/conversation space by Carl Gerges