

# Design

Middle East

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Levant and beyond

## DOUBLE REWARDS

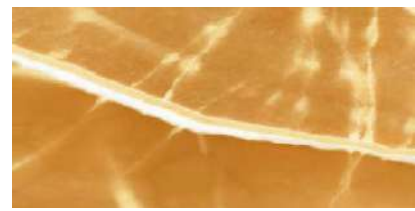
**Mathew Joseph, Chief Executive Officer of Chicago Maintenance & Construction** and his team were on a winning streak at the Architecture Leaders Awards 2022. Their award-winning project, Al Khaleej International School in Dubai, was named Education Project of the Year as well as Highly Commended in the Design and Build Project of the Year category.



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OF THE YEAR  
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## TAKE A BOW

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**THE ARCHITECTURE LEADERS AWARDS 2022** SALUTED AND CELEBRATED THESE TRUE GEMS OF THE REGION. THE AWARDS NIGHT BROUGHT THE INDUSTRY TOGETHER UNDER ONE ROOF - ARCHITECTS WERE APPLAUDED, TEAMS CELEBRATED THEIR WINS FOR LANDMARK PROJECTS, AND LEADERS WERE RECOGNISED FOR THEIR ROLES AND BUSINESSES.

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What a busy and thrilling last month was, with back-to-back events and the greatest part was seeing so many of you after such a long time, it was all worth it. We presented the second edition of the Architecture Leaders Awards, and I must admit that I was surprised to see both new and familiar people cheering and applauding for one another. It was a lovely evening, one of those when you just know everything is going to be great, and it was. I've long pondered what the world would be like if there were no new and old structures, traditional and modern styles, sustainable and innovative resources.

I'm delighted we have real gems like you who are both creating and preserving. At the #ALA, architects were applauded, teams celebrated their wins for landmark projects, and leaders were recognised for their roles and businesses. These trophies always make me think of the legendary ABBA song "The Winner Takes It All." Clearly, nothing beats victory, and our April issue is dedicated to everyone who lifted the trophy that memorable evening.

Don't forget to check out our Ramadan Wishlist, which is dedicated to all the decor



lovers who enjoy decking out their homes during Ramadan.

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Middle East

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## AG Café debuts its first exquisite Tim Hortons Coffee House at Dubai Hills Mall

**A**G Café, the master franchisee of the Tim Hortons brand in the Middle East, opened its first-ever Coffee House in the UAE and its second in the Middle East at Dubai Hills Mall, which comes as part of the trademark's expansion strategy in the country where it has around 190 restaurants so far, to achieve its vision to offer innovative services and a unique experience for all coffee lovers in the emirates.

The opening event was attended by Thiago Santelmo, Regional President of EMEA at RBI, executives from AG Café, partners from the private and government sectors, and the media, as the new coffee house introduced the distinctive and innovative experience it offers to Tim Hortons lovers, starting with its design that is inspired by nature, its elegant yet comfy interior, pleasant lightning suitable for everyone, and carefully selected selection of furniture that offers guests the option of enjoying a home-brewed cup of coffee or

some delicious foods.

The coffee house offers a number of unique features such as specialised coffee, new machines for brewing a wide variety of coffee beans, in-house coffee grinding and freshly baked donuts, in addition to a new food menu.

The opening of this new Tim Hortons coffee house along with two other locations at the same mall reinforces AG Café's mission to provide an unforgettable experience to its guests, and sustains its concept of always offering freshly brewed coffee and bakeries to maintain its tagline "Always Fresh, Always Delicious".

Thiago Santelmo, Regional President of EMEA at RBI, Tim Hortons principal, said: "We are thrilled to open our first Coffee House in UAE. We trust that the elevated Coffee House concept will be well received by our guests. Inspired by our Canadian heritage, this concept focuses on creating an atmosphere that makes you feel authentically welcomed and at ease from the moment you walk in. A place to come back to again

and again to disconnect, while enjoying a moment of delicious indulgence or just re-energise for the day ahead."

Hesham Almekawi, CEO of AG Café, the master franchisee of Tim Hortons brand in the Middle East, stated that: "Dubai's advanced infrastructure, government facilities, and easy investment policies have encouraged us to believe in the success of our expansion, and we were motivated to open this new coffee house at Dubai Hills Mall. We seek to further expand throughout the whole UAE, and expect this new café to attract guests who are looking for a nice and quiet place to relax or meet others while enjoying the most delicious foods and beverages."

Almekkawi pointed out that they are delighted to reinforce this successful partnership with Emaar Properties, the development and managing company of Dubai Hills Mall, and added that Dubai Hills Mall is a vibrant centre that greatly contributes to the development of Dubai Hills Estate, providing services to the local community and visitors from around the UAE. We are pleased to be part of this exclusive venture in Dubai, and look forward to welcoming our guests to the new coffee house that offers them a unique and exceptional experience that makes Tim Hortons "everyone's café of choice".

The iconic Canadian brand Tim Hortons is renowned for its unique premium coffee, variety of inspired donuts, high-quality fresh products, and the personal experience it offers to its guests and communities. With over 50 years of experience, Tim Hortons has managed to capture the hearts and taste buds of Canadians and guests from all over the world.

## Inspired by the UAE's mountain landscape; design boutique Caia by K.art Group opens in Boxpark



**C**aia, a new boutique café by K.art Group, has opened in trendy Boxpark Dubai. In the UAE, the boutique is well-known for providing innovative interior concepts and imaginative design solutions.

The firm works with various entities across the country and further into the Middle East. They take pride in knowing that they seamlessly translate their client's briefs into spectacular and unique environments. Caia means pure or beautiful lady in ancient Greek. K.art's minimalistic design approach juxtaposes the jagged mountain detailing in the accent wall and full-height rock corner. Throughout the café, designers have used an earthy, mountainous palette that gives a natural, bright and inviting

tone. The muted decorative paint finish matches the stone flooring throughout the bright space.

At the centre of the space lies an impressive five-metre stone counter which forms the hub of the café. They have used the same stone throughout as the tabletops, accent decoration, and an impressive floating planter. Various Maldivian palms form the

greenery throughout, completing the natural theme. One of the most critical aspects of the design was the stone wall and oversized counter. The design team made silicon moulds of the Hatta mountains and poured glass fibre reinforced concrete into these moulds to create the rock wall panels. A local artist carried out comprehensive post-processing to ensure realistic appeal. As with any of K.art Group's designs, they have focussed on exquisite attention to detail. Interior design is a practical and philosophical discipline that supports the pleasure and overall well-being of the occupants by providing a safe yet fun environment in which to play.

The founder of Caia, explained: "The design team at K.art Group had a clear vision for Caia. They were committed to excellence in all aspects of service and luxury design; we've cultivated an open and long-lasting relationship. They recognise the importance of the environment and the necessity to merge organic principles into the culture and attitude of the organisation. Boxpark perfectly showcases smaller brands striving to be different. This well-visited destination has an eclectic mix of homeware, boutique fashion, and dining alternatives."



Guests will enjoy visiting Caia and its peaceful mountain vibe. Healthy juices and farm-to-table food accentuates outdoor living in this fashionable neighbourhood.

## BEEAH Group's new HQ by Zaha Hadid Architects opens in Sharjah

**B**EEAH Group's new headquarters in Sharjah, UAE, was opened last week by His Highness Dr. Sheikh Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi, Ruler of

Sharjah.

Powered by its solar array and equipped with next-generation technologies for operations at LEED Platinum standards, the new headquarters has been designed by Zaha Hadid Architects (ZHA) to achieve net-zero emissions and will be the group's management and administrative centre that sets a new benchmark for future workplaces.

With their twin-pillared strategy of sustainability and digitalisation, BEEAH Group works across six key industries that include waste management and recycling, clean energy, environmental consulting, education, and green mobility.

The headquarters is the latest milestone for BEEAH Group as it continues to pioneer innovations for Sharjah and across the globe, establishing a base of operations



for the group to diversify into new, future-critical industries. With their new headquarters, BEEAH demonstrates how technology can scale sustainable impact and ultimately serve as a blueprint for tomorrow's smart, sustainable cities.

Embodying these principles, the headquarters' design responds to its environment as a series of interconnecting 'dunes' orientated and shaped to optimise local climatic conditions. Embedded within its

context of Sharjah's Al Sajaa desert, the design echoes the surrounding landscape shaped by prevailing winds into concave sand dunes and ridges that become convex when they intersect.

Ensuring all internal spaces are provided with ample daylight and views while limiting the quantity of glazing exposed to the harsh sun, the headquarters' two primary 'dunes' house the public and management departments together with the administrative zone that interconnect via a central courtyard, defining an oasis within the building which is integral to its natural ventilation strategy.

Visitors enter beneath the 15m high dome which further enhances natural ventilation and allows passive daylight to enter the building. In addition to the central courtyard and open-plan office, the headquarters incorporates smart meeting rooms, an immersive visitors centre and an auditorium.

The 9,000sqm BEEAH Headquarters has sustainability at its core with a high percentage of locally procured materials and is equipped with future-ready technologies to enable operations at LEED Platinum standards with net-zero emissions and minimal energy consumption.



Manifesting BEEAH's twin pillars of sustainability and digitalisation, the new HQ by ZHA is an important achievement for BEEAH Group, signalling its growth from a company founded to proactively tackle environmental issues in Sharjah.

## Design by Mahsa's latest restaurant project exudes modern and chic vibes

**I**nterior boutique firm - Design by Mahsa has completed and successfully handed over its latest project to Bulldozer Group, the owners and operators of Sand Restaurant.

The newly opened contemporary restaurant, Sand, specialises in refined dining and serves cuisine from the Middle East region.

Tradition, flavour, climate, and landscape; in addition to the art and culture of the region was considered to depict the outcome of the interior design concept of the restaurant.

The natural sites and lifestyle of some countries such as Kazakhstan's Charyn Canyon and the silk road yurt camps inspired the colour schemes, artwork, shapes, textures and materials used in the design.

The interior design makes use of neutral colour schemes which bring out the beauty of the natural landscape-like aura in the space. This is also conspicuous in the choice of materials. For instance, the ceiling feature at the restaurant is representative of the shape of the rocks at Charyn Canyon.

In terms of artwork, the entryway is shaped in the form of sand dunes in the desert; while the entrance signage at the back panel is also designed to reflect the mountains. The choice of decoration reflects unique handicrafts. The use of dried flowers, which has over the centuries been used for décor and even medicinal purposes is also expressive of the climate in many of the countries whose dishes are served on the menu of the restaurant.

The dining areas are interspersed with lush greenery improving the aesthetics and feel of the natural ambience - a typical characteristic of all Design by Mahsa projects, geared at improving well-being, and sustainability.

Speaking after the handing over of the project, founder and design director - Mahsa Gholizadeh said: "It has been exciting working on the Sand Restaurant project, and I am particularly thrilled that we delivered on time and exceeded the quality and value expectations of the client. The restaurant operates within a particular niche, and so we had to make sure that we paid attention to every detail, as we incorporated tradition with flavour into a sustainable masterpiece design."

Sand Restaurant is a contemporary restaurant with oriental inspiration from Emirati, Moroccan, Uzbek, Georgian, and other Middle Eastern culinary delights and dishes in a chic and modern setting.





# PUTTING SUSTAINABILITY AT THE CENTRE

**Jens Otterstedt,**  
**GENERAL MANAGER, AL MASAOOD BERGUM,**  
SPEAKS TO JOCHEBED MENON ABOUT  
THE DIVISION'S CARBON-NEGATIVE SOLUTION  
FOR THE REGION'S BUILDING INDUSTRY.

**J**ens Otterstedt has been fascinated by wood for as long as he can remember. He is a construction industry veteran with a Master's degree in carpentry and over 35 years of experience in construction, design, and factory management. Otterstedt is also passionate about the environment, and it is this zeal that is pushing transformation at Al Masaood Bergum. (AMB). The division is one of the UAE's leading modular and prefabricated building solutions providers.

**Jens Otterstedt** is in charge of Al Masaood Bergum's 800-strong employees and its expanding Abu Dhabi and Dubai operations.



**F**ounded in 1978, under the Al Masaood Group of Companies, AMB manufacture and deliver high-quality modular and panellised building systems for numerous industries from oil, gas and energy to defence and military, leisure, and hospitality.

Under Otterstedt's leadership, AMB is transitioning towards innovative and smart building solutions that are not just efficient which results in lower costs and faster occupancy but are sustainable and environmentally friendly as well. A succession of key investments in cross-laminated timber solutions has been launched in the region.

#### **Environment-friendly construction**

"Sustainable construction solutions are the need of the hour. Concrete is one of the biggest contributors to carbon emissions on the planet," says Otterstedt. "We need to move to a sustainable option, and cross laminated timber (CLT) is the perfect solution."

He adds: "I come from Germany and have worked with CLT most of my life, including a stint in Canada where I set up a large CLT prefabrication factory. I am passionate about wood and wood construction and am introducing the concept here. The team and I are implementing CLT in modular construction and prefabrication using modern technology at AMB."

Otterstedt is sure that environmentally friendly constructions are the way to go, and CLT panels are the appropriate solution. AMB is in the process of obtaining government approvals and regulating this innovative construction method.

Cross-laminated timber is commonly used in Europe, the US and Australia as a primary construction material. In fact, many of these countries have high-rises made from CLT as it is extremely environmentally friendly.

He says: "Wood is a carbon binder – which means CLTs absorb carbon from its surrounding. So instead of being a carbon positive structure, that for example emits 2,000 tonnes of carbon, a CLT building absorbs

the same amount of carbon and traps it in the panels. If everyone shifts to wood constructions tomorrow, we can possibly stop global warming on this planet."

#### **Zero waste**

Furthermore, CLTs produce close to zero waste and the entire structure is pre-made at the factory and then assembled at the site. Otterstedt reveals that CLTs are perfectly suitable for this climate. It has been used in extreme climate conditions from -50 to 50 °C in northern Russia and the west coast of Australia.

"We are not reinventing the wheel; we're just bringing the same concept to the Middle East. Of course, we'll need to work on the supply chain and replanting of trees and forests management and take it from there," he adds.

He believes that localisation is crucial, especially with the prices of timber soaring and supply chain issues plaguing the industry. "Maybe the ghaf tree which we have here can be a solution. >>>

Mobile modular containers are easy to configure and are highly scalable. Modular and prefabrication can be optimised using a standard system to assure best material usage and highest cost optimisation and quality whilst minimising the on-site duration and supporting sustainability.





**"Sustainable construction solutions are the need of the hour. Concrete is one of the biggest contributors to carbon emissions on the planet. We need to move to a sustainable option, and cross laminated timber (CLT) is the perfect solution."**

**Al Masood Bergum (AMB)** is one of Abu Dhabi's leading modular and prefabricated building solutions providers.



If it can be harvested under the right circumstances, we can have a flourishing business here that not only solves the supply issue but also reduce carbon in the region. We can create acres of ghaf tree forests and sustainably harvest them. It is possible," he says.

**Finding a breakthrough**

It's been a little over eight months since Otterstedt has taken over the reins at AMB and has met with slight resistance from the industry. "There's a big concrete lobby in the country and with 99% of the buildings made from concrete due to the lack of other options in the market, we're faced with certain setbacks. We're trying to change that mindset and educate the industry of this sustainable option."



Otterstedt and his team have visited regional government entities and developers to educate them on the benefits of CLT, which includes sustainability and time-saving solutions.

"The key benefit, for especially for developers, with CLT is that it is massively time-saving. Compared to a concrete building, a CLT structure takes less than half of the time to complete construction. Other advantages include close to zero waste and energy-efficient," he reveals.

To ensure CLT meets local regulations and fire safety standards, AMB is doing a burning test with Thomas Bell-Wright International Consultants. What makes CLT a success in the construction industry is its low flammability. Otterstedt explains: "Each CLT panel is made up of multiple layers of timber that are glued together. Depending on the requirement, the thickness of each panel can go from 90mm to 160mm – which are four to seven layers of timber glued together. Let's say there's a fire, when the first layer burns, the ash along with the glue works as a fire retardant to stop the fire. Most of the structure remains untouched. This has been tested multiple times in Europe and the US."

Otterstedt and his team are eager to get started on their journey toward sustainable construction practices. He is certain that the country's developers will use sustainable materials for their projects following the UAE's Sustainable Development Goals. •





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An in depth interview with

# Alan Orchard

**You're known to have worked in different locations around the world, tell us something about your extensive global experience in leading teams and brands?**

I have an enquiring mind and I'm curious about different cultures, places and outdoor adventures into the unknown; for example swimming in deep angry seas, discovering forests alone in the dark and scuba-diving. I've been fortunate to have explored some of the world's most remote and unspoiled dive destinations such as Bunaken, North Sulawesi and Komodo in the Flores Sea. My work has taken me to amazing locations across South East Asia, Middle East and Sub Saharan Africa for which I am truly grateful. During leadership roles, I have been blessed to lead dynamic teams and brands, both market-leading and challenger by nature from a strategic and operational point of view. Essentially, I'm a doer, strongly focused on people and results, in that order. My definition of success is etched in leaving people and brands in better shape than I found them, fueled by an insatiable hunger for change and table spoons of energy!!

**Health and well-being have risen to the top of the priority list in the last few years. Tell us about the latest technology for kitchen and bathroom fittings.**

Kohler recognizes that well-being is personal, subjective and fluid. As such, spaces that can adapt to their occupants' personal interpretation of well-being inherently provide a more fulfilling experience. Kohler introduced a new perspective to product design – "Dimensions of Well-being" last year that seeks to empower architects and designers to create spaces that resonate with their clients. The idea is to help designers to create a specific mood or experience through the combination of form, function and finish. Therefore, we believe that both smart design and technology have a role to play in enabling well-being around us.

From the personalized cleanliness and comfort of an intelligent toilet to the transformative micro-environment of a freestanding bath, Kohler products and technologies contribute to well-being in multifaceted ways.

As a lifestyle brand, we like to think in terms of the moments and make those moments either convenient or memorable. For example, KOHLER smart kitchen and bath products use light, sound, music and water to enrich your routine; filling the day with memorable moments.

"Our mantra is to reimagine routines for smart environs correlates to physical and mental well-being."



**Alan Orchard**

Commercial Director  
Middle East & SSA at Kohler Co.

**Kohler coined the phrase "un-bathrooming the bathroom".  
What can you tell us about this concept?**

We looked at the design and finishes of the product on a micro level so that the Architects and Designers can extend living spaces to our bathrooms more easily.

Our newest collection, **Statement & Anthem** redefines the minimalist modernism of the past decade. From cold, ultrasharp angles to a warm, approachable minimalism, our designers observed objects outside of the bathroom such as lighting elements and furniture. To blur the lines between rooms, connecting design intentions that flow and feel complete, we designed the showering collection with voluminous proportions and soft, approachable designs. This brings the form and finish to the forefront without overwhelming the space.



“The bathroom is actually the hub for well-being. It's where you take care of yourself and sometimes it's the only space in which you can disconnect completely. The bathroom is evolving from just a task-oriented space to a centerpiece in the living space.”

**How is the company setting itself apart from competitors within the industry?**

“The Middle East is a unique tapestry of geographies; cosmopolitan rooted with deep heritage. We aim to cater to the region's unique nuances using multiple design languages in our portfolio.”

Kohler appreciates the diverse cultures and their perspective towards art and architecture. With this belief, Kohler aims at creating designs that are compatible with the region's culture systems. As an example, our newest collection - OCCASION - blends classic beauty with modern style. The signature pentagon shape and inspired design elements influence every aspect of the collection - from faucets and showering components to accessories.

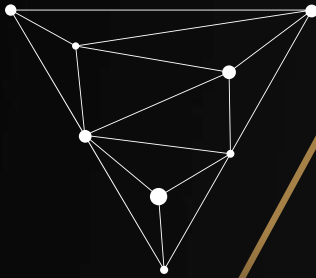
“With this collection, we have taken bolder steps by not only marrying the heritage and modernism but also heightening the glamor of the room with two-tone finishes such as Kohler's iconic Brass and Matte Black finish.”

**What excites you the most about the industry right now, and can you tell us about your future plans?**

The future is very exciting for us; we have new designs celebrating the ethos of this region and most exciting is our first Signature Showroom of the Middle East, set to launch in Dubai imminently. The Signature Store will help you tap into your imagination and promote creativity. It is designed to celebrate architecture, innovation and diversity of the region along with the 148-year-old heritage and global presence of Kohler. The overall layout is inspired from “Summoning the rain to the desert” so to say.

“We invite the Architectural and Design communities to use this inspirational space as an extension of their own offices. Infact, this would be the best way for designers and developers to experience our product portfolio from all around the world.”

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# TAKE A BOW

WITH EACH STRUCTURE YOU BUILD,  
YOU ARE WEAVING A SUCCESS STORY.

The Architecture Leaders Awards 2022, saluted and celebrated these true gems of the region. The awards night brought the industry together under one roof - architects were applauded, teams celebrated their wins for landmark projects, and leaders were recognised for their roles and businesses.

**A special thanks to Kohler Middle East, our wellness sponsor, and congratulations to everyone who raised the trophy that memorable evening.**

BY ROMA ARORA | PHOTOGRAPHY BY FAROOQ SALIK



Design  
Middle East



ARCHITECTURE  
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COMPANY AWARDS //

## Architecture Firm of the Year //

# KILLA DESIGN

HIGHLY COMMENDED //  
SANTIAGO CALATRAVA

Killa Design lifted the prestigious Architecture Firm of the Year trophy at the second edition of Architecture Leaders Awards 2022.

The beginning of 2022 marked Killa Designs' seventh year of practice and they have been able to design and construct a significant number of projects that have had a big impact on the Middle East and the wider region's architectural landscape. The firm known for its iconic Museum of the Future project was recently appointed to design the overwater and inland villas on Sheybarah Island, part of The

Red Sea Development in KSA. This hyper luxury eco-resort is 25km offshore on an untouched coral archipelago. This resort needed to be completely reliant on solar energy for electricity, water, and all other needs and this type of development encapsulates the brand's core values in creating sustainable built typologies for the future as well as harnessing our hospitality expertise. In the last year, Killa Design also participated in several competitions for opera houses, art galleries, art installations and science centres within the region //



COMPANY AWARDS //

## Emerging Architecture Firm of the Year //

### BG VILLAS

**B**G VILLAS won Emerging Architecture Firm of the Year at Architecture Leaders Awards 2022. Bruno Guélauff and Khalid Kaluti's professional paths crossed in Dubai, UAE some years ago, and BG Villas was born. Guélauff and Kaluti quickly realised after becoming one other's clients that merging their award-winning specialisations may result in something truly unique.

The aim was to establish a transparent and honest Design + Build construction company that could provide not only the highest quality construction services for residential villas, including pools and landscaping, but also award-winning design services, giving its clients an unparalleled experience

and end product.

A complete full turnkey system built in-house that covers all parts of a single residential project, including architecture, interior design, pools and landscaping, lighting, and furnishings, BG Villas is the culmination of the partners' over 35 years of combined experience, providing a truly one-of-a-kind service and experience. The award-winning team consists of designers, architects, engineers, site team leaders, and craftsmen. As a result, the BG VILLAS team can provide fluid communication and services, allowing a project to be streamlined from start to finish while regulating all areas of quality and attention to detail. //



## COMPANY AWARDS //

# Best Workplace of the Year //

## JT+PARTNERS

JT+Partners won Best Workplace of the Year award. JT+Partners is an international multi-disciplinary consultant which offers a unique portfolio of architecture, planning, engineering, project management, infrastructure, and cost consultancy services. Their vision is to design a better world for people to live and work in, a world with exceptional, high-quality, iconic, environmental and socially sustainable developments that will overcome the challenges of the constantly developing global high technology advancement of the future.

The team consists of 44 brilliant individuals from 16 different nationalities that have a common goal of providing the finest service

possible. JT+Partners is known for going above and beyond the call of duty as part of their design approach to explore, investigate, and create. They are continuously looking for new markets, territories, diversities, advancements, and potentials for opportunities, improvements, and innovations to our business and practice, as well as the services and clients' demands. The firm invests in multi-media technology and equipment, as well as keeping up with cutting-edge trade tools. They maintain a close eye on the regional and worldwide construction community and industry to stay up-to-date on current and emerging industry trends. //





COMPANY AWARDS //

## Innovative Firm of the Year //

# PIXEL5

Pixel5 is a young studio of talented designers who believe in the profound impact of designed places in our lives and the importance of creative problem-solving in bringing this impact to fruition. As designers, they try to apply cutting-edge technologies to a wide range of projects while providing a distinct perspective on design, process, and construction. Pixel5's work ranges from retail, F&B and residential typologies to the metaverse and digital places.

Pixel5 is dedicated to translating the client's brief into high-quality creative design output and allowing users to experience the

same through virtual reality, 3D renders, digital twins, and ensuring on-site execution, thus providing a holistic one-stop solution for design, drawings, branding, lighting, and visualisation.

The company views AI's capacity to use data to make decisions and recommendations to be critical to their design technique, particularly in quantifying components of their design process and successfully mapping the existing with their response.

Pixel5's future collaborations with top-tier retail companies and property developers look promising, and the team is looking forward to it. //



PROJECTS AWARDS //

# Commercial Project of the Year //

## SPORTS SOCIETY, DLR GROUP

HIGHLY COMMENDED //  
THE LEGATUM PLAZA, GENSLER

DESIGN MIDDLE EAST | APRIL 2022



**D**LR Group's Sports Society was named Commercial Project of the Year. Sports Society is just a sprinting distance from the airport, so Dubai's 15 million+ annual tourists can get there within minutes. Connecting up to 1 million residents within a short 15-minute drive, Sports Society is also right next to an established community, Mirdif, with easy access from its arterial roads. Sports Society is divided into three floors of shops, recreation, and F&B, with a fourth rooftop level dedicated to outdoor activities. Basement parking is divided into two levels, with valet and car washing services available on-site. All levels have been meticulously constructed to provide guests with a friendlier

and better experience by providing excellent visibility and easy navigation.

Sports Society features a variety of leisure and entertainment tenants centred around the theme of Sports. This includes state of an art fitness centre, bowling centre, trampoline park, climbing and bouldering centre, snooker and billiard hall, digital golf and cricket screens, and many more. All retail in the project will be strictly sports focussed.

The primary goal of Sports Society is to provide the city of Dubai with the platform to facilitate a one-stop-shop for a well-balanced healthy, active and fun lifestyle currently unavailable in the market. //

PROJECT AWARDS //

## Residential Project of the Year //

# VILLA AMALFI, U+A

HIGHLY COMMENDED //

LOCI RESIDENCES,

LOOTAH REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT



Villa Malfi by U+A won the Residential Project of the Year. Meeras' Villa Amalfi townhomes is a limited residential development comprising 68 luxury townhomes in the heart of Jumeirah Bay Island. The villas are strategically placed around the perimeter of the site to internal space, resulting in a green community within the development. Materiality and detailing distinguish the villa's contemporary interior and external design.

Inspired by the tropical islands in literature and film, the concept envisions the development as an island- with a strong treelined ridge that runs across the spine of the site. The land then falls across the planted foreshore, to the palm-fringed beach and coral reefs. Based on this, the landscape is split into 3 zones: The Ridge, The Foreshore, and The Beach.

The Ridge is defined by the access road that forms the spine of the development and rises 3.6m above the rest of the development. The Foreshore is reminiscent of the dappled shade of mangrove forests in and around the clubhouse area. And then as the guests move from the foreshore to The Beach the shade trees give way to islands of coconut palms that fringe the pool. //

PROJECTS AWARDS //

## Education Project of the Year //

# AL KHALEEJ INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, CHICAGO MAINTENANCE & CONSTRUCTION

**A**l khaleej International School by Chicago Maintenance & Construction was declared Education Project of the Year. The design offers a new innovative school for the GEMS Education group in Al Warqa, Dubai. The design proposal was a response to the context, portraying exciting spaces and forms, and attracting the surrounding community for having a superior school compound.

The master plan addresses the outward-looking frontage which serves as a landmark showcasing a strong identity. The main entrance's symmetrical frontage with the opportunity for a modern classical approach gives an institutional building typology appearance.

A hierarchy of spaces with clear zoning between academic, and sports areas ensures proper passive security and safety of students. Clear circulation routes will guide users around



the school. For human safety, pedestrian and vehicular routes around the site are separated with designated routes to open play areas. The design of academic blocks is derived from the idea to expand a circulation corridor for collaborative space. The collaborative space facilitates a communal space that blends with the surrounding classrooms. The design gives diverse and lively learning spaces with linear green courtyards and playgrounds as well as decking within the school overlooking those spaces.

The primary material for the building is an insulated precast panel with a paint finish, creating a strong, continuous datum line along the length of the building. The recessed indentations between a precast panel with white paint finish and accent paint finish between glazing bands provide an opportunity to introduce more contemporary materials. //



PROJECTS AWARDS //

## Sustainable Project of the Year //

UAE PAVILION  
AT EXPO 2020,  
SANTIAGO  
CALATRAVA



HIGHLY COMMENDED //

ARCADIA HIGH SCHOOL, GODWIN AUSTEN JOHNSON



UAE pavilion at Expo 2020 by Santiago Calatrava was awarded Sustainable Project of the Year. Spanning across an area of approximately 15,000sqm and as a symbol of the UAE's vision and ambition, the principal design concept draws inspiration from the Falcon - the national bird of the UAE. By channelling the powers of mobility and synchronized flow; the UAE Pavilion, with its 28 movable wings, powered by hydraulic actuators and housing a surface grid of photovoltaic panels within them is an architectural beacon that advocates for and harnesses human potential and innovation while representing a commitment to sustainability.

Seeking to also pay homage to the UAE's heritage, further inspiration was drawn upon the historic desert dweller and the Bedouin tent's sheltering form - translated into the building's elevation in honour and recognition of life in the desert and the local sustainable solutions associated to it. Simultaneously embracing the idea of connectivity, are the numerous radial pathways surrounding the pavilion allowing visitors to experience it from 360 degrees in the same way the UAE has welcomed citizens and people from all corners of the world and transformed the UAE from a small desert community to a global hub. In response to the UAE climate and line with the UAE's commitment to sustainable development, the architectural design of the Pavilion meets the highest standards of sustainability and was awarded LEED Platinum Certification. //

PROJECTS AWARDS //

## Hospitality Project Design (Hotels) //

# W HOTEL EXTENSION TOWER, AEDAS



Aedas lifted the Hospitality Project Design (Hotels) award for their W Hotel Extension Tower project.

The W Hotel Extension Tower at Mina Seyahi is an additional component to Plot 3925304 in the Marsa Dubai area of Emirate of Dubai. This hotel tower project is planned as a Resort Hotel. Although the proposed tower is an extension of the current hotel, it is a stand-alone development with its independent access and drop-off area. There is no vehicular connection between the proposed tower and other components of the plot.

The development has one entry and exit point connection to the external road network. All guests and visitors are dropped off at the independent designated drop-off area of the tower where valet service will take their cars to the parking structure within the same plot using an exclusive driveway connection. The Hotel is overlooking the world-famous Barasti Beach Bar, one of the city's most vibrant bars.

The project is inspired by the city's love of the sea, with residents and locals enjoying getting out on the water in dhows, yachts, kayaks, speedboats, and other impressive modern vessels. A natural-inspired way of production could redefine the notion of making in a tourist area that includes the heritage and luxury future in an architectural manifestation. //

PROJECTS AWARDS //

## Best Future Project //

### FIVE LUXE JBR, AE7

HIGHLY COMMENDED //  
JUBAIL ISLAND, DLR GROUP

**F**ive Luxe JBR by AE7 won the Best Future Project. AE7 was established in 2009, by seven internationally renowned-American design professionals. Together, they have over 40 years of experience designing and creating destinations in the USA, Asia and the Middle East with almost 25 years of experience working collectively. With experience in various market sectors, AE7 has grown into a full-service architectural firm providing mechanical, electrical, plumbing, structural, civil, master planning, interior design, landscape,

graphics, branding, and a variety of specialty expertise. Throughout their eight offices worldwide, AE7 provides an unparalleled commitment to design excellence on all projects, small or large.

Majestically fronting the JBR beach is the new 55-storey Five Luxe Hotel, which globally is famous for bespoke entertainment and culinary offerings. The lobby is a portal of luxury and exuberance that frames a view towards the sea from the moment of entry, with grand vistas of the 120m long cascading pools lined with canopied

loungers. The spectacular pool with lush landscape extends out to the only dedicated private beach on JBR. The dramatic series of terraces on the podium with expansive balconies on the tower captures breathtaking views at every moment.

Luxury, elegance, and sophistication await guests in all the 227 well-appointed suites. The hotel also includes 102 luxury residential apartments with exciting nightlife venues and seven restaurants, becoming the premier destination in JBR. //

PROJECTS AWARDS //

## Healthcare Project of the Year //

SAUDI  
GERMAN  
HOSPITAL,  
RAK,  
JT+PARTNERS



Saudi German Hospital, RAK by JT+PARTNERS was named Healthcare Project of the Year at Architecture Leaders Awards 2022. The project site is located on island 2 of the Al Marjan Islands and is surrounded by water on two sides. It is easily accessible from the mainland as well as islands 3 and 4. The public coastal promenade that goes around two sides of the property before connecting back to the main road

is a notable feature. In the public space between the hospital and the shoreline, the large promenade creates a beach-like feel. When approaching Al Marjan Island from the mainland, the hospital will be visible from a long distance due to its unique location on the island and its distinct and recognisable design.

The hospital is planned to become a landmark and reference point on the islands. The building envelope

has been designed with the artistic interpretation of a solid body floating above the ground with the building's façade changing shades throughout the day as the sun slowly moves around. The internal organisation of the building is defined by the purposeful variability with the changing floor plate sizes on each floor and carefully arranged terraced decks ascending towards the sky. //





PROJECTS AWARDS //

## Landscape Project of the Year //

UAE PAVILION  
AT EXPO  
2020, WAHO  
LANDSCAPE  
ARCHITECTS



UAE Pavilion At Expo 2020 by Waho Landscape Architects won Landscape Project of the Year. The idea for the UAE Pavilion at EXPO 2020 (conceptualised by Spanish firm Santiago Calatrava and completed in October 2021) was inspired by the grace and force of a falcon in flight whilst landscape architectural practice, WAHO, ensured its landscape captured this symbolic interpretation, culminating in a fluid and contemporary design of the Pavilion's open space.

Notwithstanding its importance as a national icon, the falcon is a symbol of pride and honour and represents values of courage, determination, mobility and patience, all of which enabled the nation's Bedouin ancestors to flourish.

Whilst the streamlined shape of the falcon's wings and feathers inform the landscape narrative, the design of blade-shaped paving encased with regionally-sourced stone, grounds the design into its surroundings. The wider desertscape with an abundance of endemic plants, as well as trees anchored in undulating dunes, is evocative of the country's natural landscape whilst providing unobstructed views of the pavilion. The notion of flow and movement is highlighted through concentric planters and these strong radial bands extending from the pavilion, guiding visitors to the entrance.

The use of locally sourced stone and fine mineral gravel from the Al Hajar Mountain ranges together with an endemic planting palette comprising 5500 plants- more than half native to the UAE - create the basis for a strong local sense of place. WAHO purposely ensured the falaj water had a stillness quality as it reticulated. This stillness ensures a clear view of the carved topography of the stone encasement as well as capturing the reflection of surrounding trees and the pavilion. //

PROJECTS AWARDS //

## Hospitality Project Design (Restaurants, bars, & clubs) //

## TOPGOLF, GENSLER



Gensler was awarded the Hospitality Project Design (Includes restaurants, bars, & clubs) trophy for their Topgolf project in Dubai.

Topgolf Dubai at Emirates Golf Club is a three-level venue of 60,000sqft and situated on approximately 12 acres of land. Through the premium experience of play, food and music, Topgolf inspires people of all ages and skill levels – even non-golfers – to come together for playful competition.

Topgolf venues feature a chef-driven menu, top-shelf drinks, big-screen TVs, and music in climate-controlled hitting bays for all-seasons comfort. Year-round programming includes events for kids and families, social leagues, groups, golf tournaments and instruction. The layout of the building centres around a dramatic entrance lobby with a feature spiral staircase that links three levels and an expansive view out into the golfing fields through openings.

The overall design concept is to establish a strong corporate identity for Topgolf with a design that is modular, allowing for flexibility whilst retaining the overall identity architecturally. The design allows opportunities to add bays at the ends of the building or floors on top to adapt the size as required. The architectural elements used for the façade make references to the sporting equipment used for golf such as the simple and elegant form of the golf club and the subdued colour palettes. The louvres are used continuously across the facade to create a dramatic visual effect with very simple architectural elements. //

PROJECTS AWARDS //

## Design & Build Project of the Year //

# NATIONAL SPACE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE (NSSTC)-BAINONA ENGINEERING CONSULTANCY

HIGHLY COMMENDED //

AL KHALEEJ INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL,  
CHICAGO MAINTENANCE & CONSTRUCTION

**D**esign & Build Project of the Year award was given to National Space Science And Technology Centre by Bainona Engineering Consultancy. The National Space Science and Technology Centre (NSSTC) at UAE University is a new space district located in Al Ain and is considered its first and only building that houses satellite assembly, integration, and testing facilities. In addition to being one of only two in the country, the other being in Dubai.



The project aims to manufacture components, assemble, integrate, and test small-to-medium satellites to use them for communication purposes, navigation, and spectroscopy in cooperation with foreign agencies. It has a significant positive effect on promoting space science in the country by building and operating satellites based on international standards, contributing to the building of competencies and skills for national cadres, and allowing UAEU's students to participate in scientific research related to satellites.

It offers engineers, students, and researchers the ideal environment and resources to design, develop, and test satellites of up to 250kg.

The Satellite Assembly, Integration, and Testing (AIT) facility contained within the project provides engineers with the tools they need to build small-to-medium-sized satellites.

The building has a 320sqm clean room where assembly can take place in a satellite-friendly environment to protect the spacecraft's sensitive components. //



PROJECTS AWARDS //

## Innovation in Architecture Award //

# MIVIDA, WHITESPACE ARCHITECTS



Whitespace Architects' Mivida project won Innovation in Architecture Award. In Spanish, Mivida means My Life, and the community is located in New Cairo's Mivida development, a high-end community developed by Emaar Misr and consisting of 12 buildings, the project is a mixed-use office and retail project that offers all the conveniences and luxury one could ever expect. Designed to embrace rather than impose a naturalistic essence, Mivida celebrates its eco-friendly characteristics with luscious native plants.

With an innovative architectural design that blends business with pleasure, efficiency and flexibility, it offers

everything you need. Sleek open office and clinic spaces with a common core containing all services complement efficiently the tenants and the visitors. While providing ample natural light and energy efficiency, the workspace layouts are tailored to offer functional and stylish solutions.

This design is based on modularity as the buildings are broken down into two modules, the larger of which is 1150 square metres, and the smaller of which is 400 square metres. Together, they can create six different configurations as they are interconnected by a unique substructure.

This strong modularity can be seen

throughout the entire development (structure, interiors, and glazing), giving it a timeless, versatile quality while the use of the natural materials makes the development more sophisticated.

Through playing with those configurations, we created a dynamic open space that connects four main plazas, where cafes and restaurants are located by the use of landscape and artwork which provides an extra layer to guide and direct people through spaces and create a journey by inviting people through the different plazas experiences starting from the business plaza to the eat and chill up to the family and children plaza. //





INDIVIDUAL AWARDS //

## Architect of the Year //

IGNACIO  
GOMEZ,  
AEDAS

HIGHLY COMMENDED //  
MUHAMMAD HABSAH, U+A

Ignacio Gomez from Aedas was awarded the Architect of the Year trophy. As a global design principal, and for more than 14 years in Dubai, Gomez has been leading projects that have transformed the places and people where implemented, believing that virtual and fictional narratives have and will always be incredibly powerful sources of inspiration, and with the economy and world heading into unknown territory, architects can and should play a part in the role of imaginary landscapes and stories.

Projects that deal with the past and tradition of the place, like Al Seef development for Meraas, Al Bait hotel in Sharjah and Fisherman's Wharf in Abu Dhabi. Or projects that create the future public image of Dubai, like the new RTA Metro stations and Enoc Expo 2020 station.

Before moving to the Middle East, he collaborated with B720 & David Chipperfield. For over two years he worked on the New City of Justice, awarded with the prestigious 2010 RIBA Award. Working a very diverse portfolio that included Torre Agbar commercial tower, designed by Pritzker Prize-winner Jean Nouvel and America's Cup Foredeck Building designed by David Chipperfield. //



INDIVIDUAL AWARDS //

## Young Talent of the Year //

### SHWETA GANDHI, AECOM

HIGHLY COMMENDED //  
DREW GILBERT, OBMI

Aecom's Shweta Gandhi was declared Young Talent of the year. At just 26 years old, Gandhi's aptitude and career growth have not gone unnoticed. Throughout her studies, internships, research and professional work, Gandhi's passion for architecture is thriving.

Her specialist architectural knowledge, gained from the Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Dubai (B.Arch), has allowed her to apply the same principal ideas used in architectural projects to all her work as an urban practitioner. This includes the importance of human-centric design, functionality and resilience. She believes that implementing this three-tiered approach to solving built-environment challenges can result in an improved response to deliver a better quality of life.

Her urban planning knowledge is grounded by an MSc in Sustainable Urban Development from the University of Oxford, as well as a deep interest in urban analytics, generative design and sustainability, altogether

this is what gives Gandhi her USP.

Gandhi has a broad scope of work in her portfolio already. Supporting the Riyadh Strategy Vision project, Shweta assists with strategic visioning, defining initiatives, preparing initiative cards, outlining critical regulatory changes and the future activation projects for the Riyadh City of the Future program. She is also currently using her advanced capabilities to contribute to the Riyadh Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) project. AECOM is creating a planning framework to support the implementation of transit-oriented development to improve the standard of living. More specifically, Shweta is involved in analysing and communicating existing planning processes, frameworks and systems, as well as developing a planning review process. She also contributed to the development of the Governance Strategy and TOD Design Checklist. //





#### INDIVIDUAL AWARDS //

## CEO of the Year //

# DONNA SULTAN, KEO INTERNATIONAL CONSULTANTS

Donna Sultan from Keo International Consultants was named CEO of the Year. Sultan has held the title of CEO at KEO International Consultants for more than 30 years (1991-till date) and was appointed as president in 2016. With her excellent business leadership, the firm has grown over the past 50 plus years, from a handful of employees in 1991, to more than 2,000 professional and technical staff, drawn from more than 60 different nations.

She has more than 45 years of experience in the Middle East. Born in France, and raised in the United States, she primarily identifies herself with the Gulf region.

Leading the business to great success and further growth, Sultan has succeeded in pursuing her passion, leading a remarkable career and changing the face of the construction industry, which for long years has been a male dominant one. She has fostered and developed the firm's renowned blend of design innovation, technical aptitude, sustainability principles, local knowledge and global insights. This has resulted in the highest levels of client confidence and industry respect. Under her guidance, the firm's core offerings have expanded within all specialist areas of architecture, engineering, planning, landscape design, project and construction management and sustainability specialities. She oversaw the development of the allied practices, as subsidiaries, bringing in new revenue streams from new business streams: InSite, C-Quest, and Black Mule. //

\*Donna Sultan could not attend the ceremony and the award was accepted by KEO's representative.

## INDIVIDUAL AWARDS //

## Lifetime Achievement Award //

## JAMAL SALEM, DLR GROUP

Lifetime Achievement Award was given to JAMAL SALEM from DLR GROUP. Salem is DLR Group's Middle East region leader. He is responsible for design and client services throughout the Middle East, leading operations from the DLR Group Dubai office. Salem has practiced extensively in the Middle East, leading the successful delivery of high-profile projects in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. He has experience collaborating with developers in the region to exceed client and user-group expectations. A firm believer in the benefits of integrated design, he is adept at leading multi-disciplinary design teams to deliver design solutions that achieve the client's vision and business objectives.

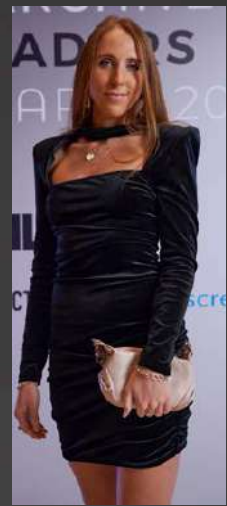
Salem has spent the last 14 years of his 22+ year career in the Middle East where he participated, managed and oversaw the successful delivery of high-profile projects in UAE, Qatar, KSA, Egypt, and Lebanon. Jamal has worked closely with the leading developers in the region to achieve project objectives and exceed client and user group expectations. He enjoys working with multi-disciplinary design teams in a collaborative environment to foster creative problem solving that enhances clients' business objectives. //

\*Jamal Salem could not attend the ceremony and the award was accepted by DLR Group's representative.





GALLERY //



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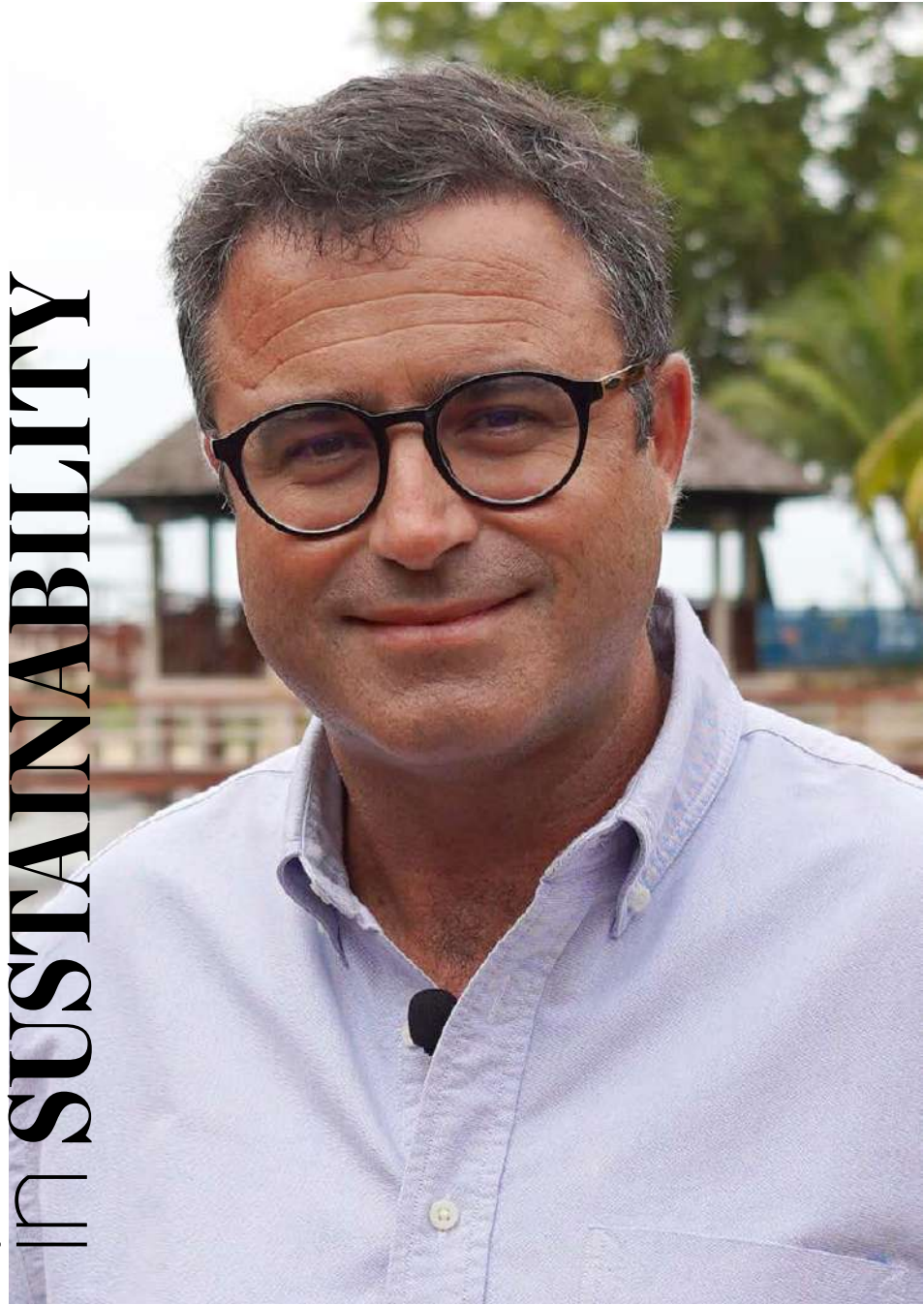
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ANDRE BORG, who has worked for Hilton for over 13 years at properties across the UAE, Romania and Turkey, and since 2016 has served as General Manager at Hilton Seychelles Labriz Resort & Spa, has been appointed as the Country Manager for Hilton Seychelles.

# Rooted IN SUSTAINABILITY



**ANDRE BORG**, Hilton's area general manager, Seychelles at Hilton, discusses the inspiration behind **Mango House Seychelles**, its distinctive design features, and how sustainability is critical for brand success.

**What was the inspiration behind Mango House Seychelles, and how did it get started?**

This intimate and exclusive resort was originally built as a family dwelling by celebrated Italian photographer Gian Paolo Barbieri. His curiosity and a shoot for Vogue Paris is what led him to Seychelles in 1975, where he instantly fell in love with the lands in the

South of Mahé and rekindled his connection with nature again.

The house was surrounded by some wonderful trees, and most significantly, a mango plant behind the kitchen produced juicy white mangoes as he has never eaten before. For this reason, Gian named his third and final home in Seychelles, "Mango House".

**ABOUT MANGO HOUSE SEYCHELLES**  
 ORIGINALLY BUILT AS A FAMILY DWELLING BY CELEBRATED ITALIAN PHOTOGRAPHER GIAN PAOLO BARBIERI, THIS HIDEAWAY IS NESTLED AMONGST THE REVITALIZING FRAGRANCE OF SURROUNDING MANGO FRUIT TREES. ALL 41 GUEST ROOMS, SUITES, AND VILLAS PROVIDE SERENE OCEAN VIEWS BOUND BY LUSH GREENERY AND ARE ADORNED WITH NATURAL DÉCOR ECHOING THE RUGGED BEAUTY OF SEYCHELLES.

**TOP**  
 Fixtures have been custom-designed using natural handmade materials to weave the natural surroundings throughout the guest experience.



With this inspiration in mind, lead architects at JT+Partners approached the property with the aim of maintaining the original essence of the home, while still reflecting the rich island culture, preserving the island's natural surroundings, and reflecting the rich Seychellois culture across all pillars of the resort's intricate design details.

**Tell us about the property's distinctive design features.**

The resort's design features are the perfect blend of the history of the property and the exceptional natural

surroundings, along with the rich local culture. The historic mango tree has been preserved and remains a prominent feature in the centre of the main house, which opens out onto the deep blue of Anse Aux Poules Blues Bay, whereby the structure of the resort mirrors the curvature of the coast and offers all 41 rooms at the property an expansive view of the ocean. Preserved handmade furniture with sleek wooden finishing from the original home coupled with muted beige tones creates a contemporary but comfortable feel that is deeply connected to the local culture and colours of Seychelles.

**BOTTOM**  
 The spacious manor house has been meticulously and sustainably transformed since, by LXR Hotels and Resorts into a convivial retreat that celebrates Seychellois style and culture.



**How important is sustainability for the hotel?**

Staying true to the LXR Hotels & Resorts brand, every element of Mango House is connected to its surroundings and rooted in sustainability and heritage. The resort's architectural and design elements highlight the local textures and have created a multi-sensory environment in which guests can experience Seychelles from within the resort. The materials used throughout the property have primarily been sourced in Seychelles, from the local granite cladding to the Nalau wood used for structural elements, to the off-white stucco wall texture finish on the façade and grano wash used for pathways. The interiors have been also been designed to provide guests with a >>>

The resort also implements certain year-round sustainable initiatives, demonstrating its love for the environment through a multitude of sustainable practices, including using more locally grown ingredients in F&B operations, reducing waste, and decreasing the use of plastic to almost zero.



sense of home using tactile, natural, and earthy materials. The resort also implements certain year-round sustainable initiatives, demonstrating its love for the environment through a multitude of sustainable practices, including using more locally grown ingredients in F&B operations, reducing waste, and decreasing the use of plastic to almost zero.

borders and lifted quarantine regulations, which has rekindled the idea of travel and tourism. Some travellers, however, are still taking precautionary measures, which is why we've seen an increase in GCC travellers from neighbouring nations.

### Do you kind of have any key predictions for changes you expect in the hotel industry?

Following two years of uncertainty and ongoing global travel restrictions, we are finally beginning to see a return to normality, and this has resulted in a significant uptick in travellers looking for their next adventure. We see a rise in luxury multigenerational bookings with a bespoke, one-of-a-kind experiences-led itinerary for the whole family to enjoy, and from another angle, we do anticipate increased interest in the wellness-led itinerary.

### What is your vision for the hotel's future?

Following the successful opening of the property this past year, and staying true to the LXR brand, we are keen on continuing to enhance our wide offering as a luxury escape in the heart of nature. We are eager to further grow our culinary offering at Mango House, in line with the island's rich culture and commitment to sustainability.

### How do you see Seychelles' hospitality industry evolving in the midst of these unusual pandemic times?

Several countries have opened their

TOP  
Mango House features five culinary venues that have been designed to reflect the diverse flavours of the island cuisine.

BOTTOM  
The interiors have been designed to provide guests a sense of home using tactile, natural, and earthy materials.





# SOBHA HARTLAND

MBR CITY, DUBAI



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REERA | 1544, 1949, 1907, 1951, 1798, 1837, 2046, 2166, 2176, 2305

# Art Galore

DESIGN MIDDLE EAST | APRIL 2022

**MOHAMMAD AL SHEHHI, CEO of A.R.M. Holding**, talks about the company's collaboration with Art Dubai and his future ambition to promote Dubai as a centre for art appreciation.

**Tell us more about A.R.M. Holding's partnership with Art Dubai. What draws A.R.M. Holding to engage in Dubai's art scene?**

We are delighted to be the lead partner of the leading international art fair in the Middle East. For both A.R.M. Holding and Art Dubai, the underlying goal is of empowering our respective communities. Our values are closely aligned, and that makes it so easy to collaborate.

**Could you give us a brief overview of this year's workshops and their goals?**

I'm delighted that we could build on the success of the first-ever A.R.M. Holding Children's Programme, connecting with even more young people across the Emirates. Thousands of UAE school children have had a unique opportunity to grow and develop their interest and understanding of the arts. We had the privilege

to provide access to an impressive roster of international artists, with one artist, in particular, I must name. We are so glad to have chosen Cyrus Kabiru to produce the programme, theme and activities – and even design the workshop. His gift of repurposing everyday objects, to create art, is being used to inspire young minds and alter our perspectives. For 2022, the programme will expand through in-classroom workshops taking place after the fair. UAE schools are invited to provide opportunities for children to grow and develop their interest and understanding of the arts. The activities will be available to over 5,000 children across 80 schools – more than doubling the number of kids involved in 2021.

**Can you tell us more about A.R.M. Holding's Art Collection?**

The A.R.M. Holding Art Collection is a unique and singular collection and we hope



will be a model in the landscape of corporate art collecting in the UAE. Last year, a number of works from the A.R.M. Holding Art Collection were lent into the Dubai Collection, making A.R.M. Holding the first corporate Patron of the initiative. Featuring some of the most prominent names in Middle Eastern and international contemporary art, the collection highlights >>>





As the art world continues to adapt and evolve in the digital and NFT realms, new communities are emerging to support these worlds, involving new creators and stakeholders.

the company's ethos of building communities as well as being an enabler of multicultural dialogue and innovation. It is a key element within the company's wider commitment to supporting art and culture in the UAE. It was created to document the history of the city and narrate its cultural identity. We are fully committed to seeing Dubai become an unrivalled destination for art and culture – and the

We are so glad to have chosen Cyrus Kabiru to produce the programme, theme and activities – and even design the workshop. His gift of repurposing everyday objects, to create art, is being used to inspire young minds and alter our perspectives.

vibrancy of our Art Collection is an integral piece of that steady evolution.

**What kind of response have you received for this year's art fair?**

The 2022 edition of Art Dubai has been captivating and engaging. Just a short time after being heavily impacted by the global pandemic, it truly felt like we were back – but even more vibrant than before. I think the past few years have given people a deeper appreciation for art and creativity. We all see things differently now, with a more mindful approach to colour, texture and nuance.

Then there's the brand-new digital element to the fair. Despite digital art existing since the 1980s, the NFT component is still very nascent, and people are incredibly curious about how it will impact the so-called 'traditional' art scene. I suppose only time will tell!

**What new features can visitors expect to see in this edition?**

Well, let's start with Art Dubai Digital, which I have already mentioned. It's a completely new gallery section that will highlight a number of international platforms that work in the digital space. These are somewhat contemporary galleries with projects linked to

new media and digital art. We also welcomed e-commerce sites and organisations that are turning existing physical art into NFTs.

**How important is it to support new talent from the region and beyond? Could you name some rising stars in this field and their strengths?**

It is very difficult to highlight anyone when there is so much talent on display. Art, as you know, is very subjective! With that said, our "Speculative Links" exhibition presented select works from Warehouse 421 and the Salama Bint Hamdan Emerging Artist Fellowship (SEAF). Through painting, textile, video, and photography, the selection reflects a collective questioning of memory to place, time, and a sense of rhythm and repetition.

**What is your vision for the future?**

Well, we do not wish to grow for the sake of growth. We will be somewhat responsive to trends and discoveries in the art world in the coming years, and continue to champion Dubai as a hub for art appreciation. We are also thrilled at the prospect of seeing the A.R.M. Holding Children's Programme reach even more school kids across the UAE – showing them what is truly possible with art. •



LEFT| **JACQUELINE VISSER**, Business Owner & Partner  
MIDDLE| **CINDY LIEBENBERG**, Business Owner & Partner  
RIGHT| **JUMARIE DU TOIT**, Artist

# MADE WITH *Heart*

**JUMARIE FROM THE HEART** is distinctive for a number of reasons, including its designs, which are one-of-a-kind and artistic.

All these printed cushions use dye sublimation technology, assuring exceptional quality, unfading colours, and a home that is truly a piece of art.



**C**ertain things you do from the heart and everyone around you adores them. When artist Jumarie du Toit, business owners and partners Cindy Liebenberg, and Jackie Visser joined forces to launch Jumarie From The Heart, they knew they had struck the right chord with art-inspired home décor enthusiasts. In the midst of the tremendous challenges of 2020, these three amazing ladies started on a journey that gave birth to Jumarie From The Heart. Their goal is to offer exceptionally beautiful art to all corners of the globe, and they want to share Jumarie's artworks with >>>

**They combine the unique hand-painted art from Namibia's heartland, with its hefty dose of Kalahari influence, with fine Indian textiles and excellent craftsmanship to produce luxury objects meant to be treasured for a lifetime.**

The brand's gorgeous packaging is made from re-cycled, eco-friendly materials, and the finished fabric products are 100% lead-free.



a bigger audience in a new way. Jumarie du Toit is a South African fine artist based in Namibia who paints the energy and beauty of her remarkable native country. She makes living spaces and special occasions even more special with her remarkable skills, inspired by her memories of fields of wildflowers in South Africa and times of tea around her grandmother's table. The artist's passion and exuberance is reflected in the brand name, which she incorporates into each piece of work.

The brilliant trio aspires to be a market leader in terms of interior design inspiration, purpose, and influence. The firm is well aware that while style evolves over time, exclusivity and quality remain constant. They combine the unique hand-painted art from Namibia's heartland, with its hefty dose of Kalahari influence, with fine Indian textiles and excellent craftsmanship to produce luxury objects meant to be treasured for a lifetime. They take pride in dealing with the finest materials sourced from India. These textiles are expertly knitted to exact requirements in order to be as long-lasting and gentle on the skin as possible.

The brand offers items such as table runners, aprons, pillow covers, art canvases, and printed fabrics. The brand utilises recycled, repurposed, and eco-friendly materials for the gorgeous tube packaging.

Giving back to communities is one of the company's most important missions. They help in whatever way — they train, teach, coach, and mentor the impoverished and/or younger generation to achieve financial independence; one soul at a time. They want to help each individual develop, grow, and manage their own successful online businesses.

Clearly, their hearts are in the right place, and their items are lovingly created. .



Their work is manufactured to the greatest of standards, with meticulous attention to detail. The products are ideal for revitalising a variety of areas in your home, including the living room, lounge, bedroom, kitchen, patio, and beyond.



# ECO design

**RR DECOR** is a brand of high-quality and eco-friendly architectural decor with official representatives in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East. The RR DECOR trademark product line includes the following ranges: wainscoting, skirtings, LED skirtings, moldings and architraves suitable for various interior designs - from Classic to Contemporary, Neoclassical, Provence, Art Deco, American and Scandinavian interior designs.

**Renata Khassanova, RR Decor Middle East's** co-founder, marketing and sales director, discusses the company's ongoing commitment to developing environmentally responsible products, as well as expansion plans with partners and collaboration with other creative businesses in the region.

**RR Decor began in Kazakhstan, and the brand is now spreading throughout the Middle East. What can you tell us about this expansion?**

The RR Decor brand has established itself as a maker of high-quality and environmentally friendly architectural designs made of MDF-engineered wood products in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. We have spent the last seven years developing and designing architectural décor pieces that combine high-quality, premium designs, and we've been active in the Middle East market since 2019. By establishing a service and distribution centre in the UAE, we have set several ambitions and targets for ourselves. There is an established and well-coordinated team that works with partners to develop the brand in the UAE.

**What is the secret of our success?**

We believe that development is the key to any success. We have been committed to finding new design and technological solutions since our inception. As a result, RR Decor is the first firm in Central Asia to introduce interior decor items made of a durable material like MDF.



**What was your inspiration behind RR Decor? How does your background in hotel and spa management assist you in running the company?**

The luxury hotels and boutique hotels where I worked while living and studying in Europe served as a source of inspiration. Many hotels used high skirting boards, ornamental panels, and mouldings on the walls to create an attractive and luxurious look. Later, while my brother and I were restoring our family home in Kazakhstan, we were faced with the task of selecting decorative pieces for our project. Except for polyurethane and gypsum materials, there was a little option on the market for finishing materials at the time. We wanted to use wood-based materials, so I had to purchase them from Europe and wait a few months for them to arrive. Then we had the bright idea of making such decorative materials ourselves and making them available to residents of our country. My brother is still leading our firm in Eastern Europe and Central Asia and is the head of the RR Decor production range.

RR Decor used wainscoting for this project. The wainscoting is made of high quality medium density fibreboard (MDF).

RR Decor creates and manufactures customised solutions for developers and design firms working on huge projects.



**What are the various services (products) you provide to your clients?**

The RR Decor trademark product line includes wainscoting, skirting, LED skirting, mouldings, and architraves appropriate for a variety of interior designs ranging from classic to contemporary, neoclassical, Provence, art deco, American, and Scandinavian.

**How has COVID-19 influenced both company offerings and customer preferences?**

The COVID-19 pandemic has influenced many people's business practices, including ours. During the lockdown, we followed the UAE government's safety standards and relocated 90% of our administrative

staff to work remotely. Because of new technologies, it is still an efficient method. Our people's health and safety are our top priority. While we have put in place a variety of steps to protect our employees, we have also put in place business security plans to strengthen the company's ability to provide our products to our consumers and partners.

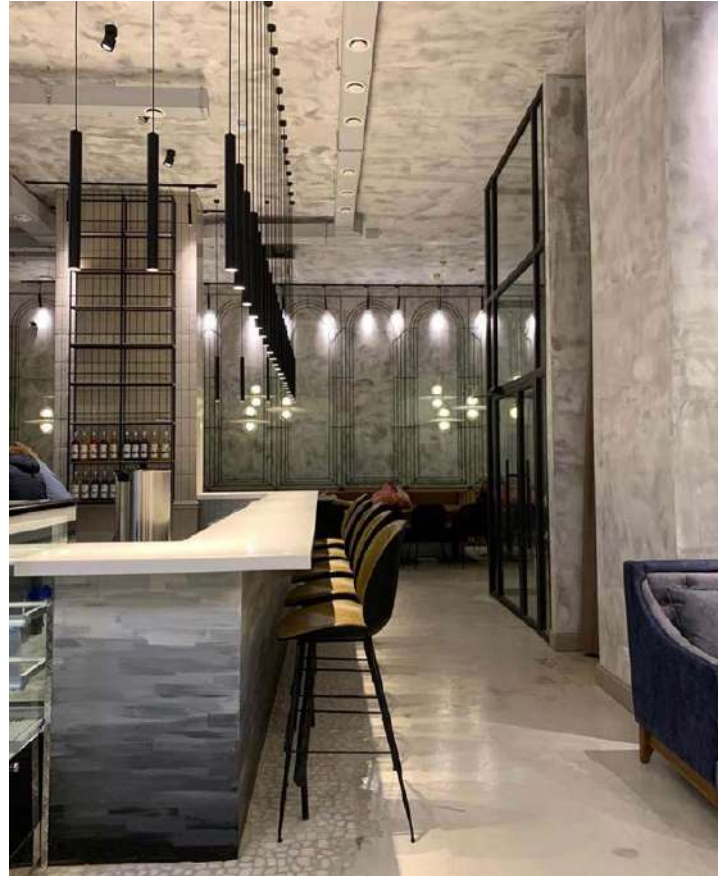
**Could you tell us about the projects you're working on right now in the region?**

We are currently completing our part of work for amazing luxury villa projects in Dubai Hills and Al Barari and apartments on Blue Waters. There are other exciting projects across Sharjah and Ras Al Khaimah as well. >>>





The skirting is made of high-quality MDF. Products with the proper geometric shape are primed at the factory and supplied ready for the final coat of any paint.



This is an interesting project by RR Decor in Central Asia's Hyde Park.

**How does working in the Middle East vary from other projects you've worked on around the world?**

While working in the UAE market, we discovered that consumers are very interested in interior design but have limited knowledge of materials, alternatives to gypsum or foam, and installation and painting technology - something we have not encountered in other areas of the world. Our goal is to broaden that expertise by providing one-of-a-kind décor options with our products, and we are delighted to inform you that Middle Eastern customers are open to new ideas.

**There's a lot of focus on sustainability now. How has that evolved?**

Each of us is responsible for the planet's future. We believe it is critical to plan the entire manufacturing process of our MDF decorative pieces in such a way that forests are preserved rather than torn down.

We use only environmentally friendly technologies in the production of RR DECOR MDF products.

Our materials and installation method have a high-quality rating and last for decades, do not wear out or require regular replacement, and do not pollute cities. All of the decorative pieces are made in Central Asia and Eastern Europe. We make every effort to use raw resources that are replenishable, such as pine timber from replenishable plantations.



LED skirting can instantly change the decor of any room and can be matched with any style, whether modern or traditional.

**What opportunities or growth plans do you see in 2022?**

In 2022, we hope to witness the development of our partnership program and the collaboration of people who share our values in terms of quality standards, aesthetic vision, and business ethics.

**Where do you see your future taking you, particularly in terms of general design and the direction of your company?**


We are working to increase brand awareness among all private clients as well as the B2B segment. One of the aims is to open new showrooms with our partners all across the UAE and to make our partnership program more accessible to more creative businesses around the Middle East.

# TOPS ON TOP

Cindy Crawford on Silestone Seaport



On Top

Find inspiration at [cosentino.com](https://www.cosentino.com) | Follow Us  [CosentinoMiddleEast](https://www.facebook.com/CosentinoMiddleEast)

COSENTINO CITY DUBAI | Dubai Design District (D3) Building 4-A, Unit 401  
042428131 - [infomiddleeast@cosentino.com](mailto:infomiddleeast@cosentino.com)

The Silestone® LOFT series designs have been registered by Cosentino S.A.U.



The sustainability strategies will be carried into construction through project specifications specifically addressing construction waste management, indoor air quality the sourcing of green materials, and building level energy metering. The new facility is set for completion in May 2022.



DESIGN MIDDLE EAST | APRIL 2022

# Effective Classroom DESIGN

In conversation with **AVINASH KUMAR**, Associate Partner at **Godwin Austen Johnson**, on their latest project, **Ladybird Nursery** and the sustainable elements it incorporates.

**What are some of the most important elements of effective classroom design?**

Design today is about better quality and healthier spaces within all internal environments. Sustainable buildings and healthy buildings are often seen as separate entities, but we believe a sustainable building is a healthy building and, vice versa, a healthy building is a sustainable building. To date we have been able to achieve a lot of this by just being clever with the design. It doesn't need to involve complicated or use overly expensive systems and technology, it is more about understanding and working with the local vernacular architecture air infiltration and by utilising natural lighting where possible.

**What did you do to create a child-scaled environment?**

The scale of the classrooms is governed by the age groups and the age group defines the placement and of sizes of various elements in the teaching rooms. Walls and adjoining facilities are kept to a minimum to encourage flow and avoid inhibitory barriers and we have created additional innovative learning and social spaces within the nooks and corners of the building. Small, coloured pods in the shape of small houses, have been added as storage spaces. From the initial point of entry fixtures >>>



and fittings are appropriately scaled to children's height and appeal to their interests – a low counter in the reception area to child-sized sinks and toilets and low shelving in the classrooms were all designed in keeping with the behaviour and user experience of the children,

### **How do you design an innovative and sustainable building that offers the latest technology, but remains flexible enough to stand the test of time?**

We employ a number of both active and passive measures which is about understanding and working with the basics of architecture design and MEP services. We always focus on getting as many passive measures as possible which then gets added to the active measures.

Passive design strategies are easy to adopt and, in reality, are the core strategies of any architecture design. In the Ladybird Nursery we have taken advantage of natural energy opportunities and architectural features such as roof overhangs, deeper windows, and the overall orientation of the building. Active design strategies are part of the design process when mechanical and electrical systems are integrated into the building design. Some of the measures are the use of high performance VRF units which is highly energy efficient and provides the zoned comfort with precise temperature control. All our electrical lights are LED light fittings connected to light sensors and PIR sensors.

### **How does the design support safety and security?**

Education designers must balance the need to develop a child's own self-reliance and risk taking, with health and safety. The "L" shaped plan of the building provides a protective layer to screen the activity spaces from the outside allowing the children to feel safe and secure. The building is a low-rise structure and there are no steps inside which reduces the tripping hazard normally associated with level differences.

### **What is the building project status? What are the most crucial steps to do next?**

The work is progressing well and the building is at a fairly advanced stage with the MEP and second fixes being implemented and the walls and partitions taking shape. As with all projects the coordination of all internal services is an ongoing task and crucial for the overall project.

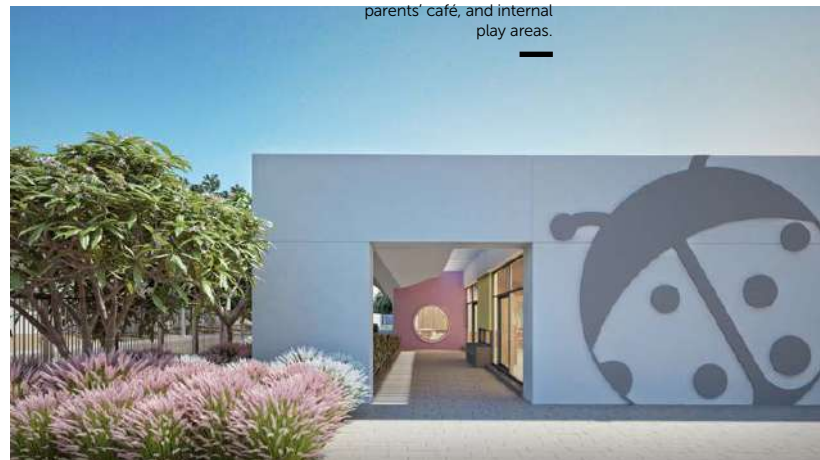
### **What challenges did you encounter during design and how did your team address those challenges?**

Early learning settings today are characterised by entirely new concepts of learning and usage and can be inherently difficult to reconcile. From the outset we wanted to create an open space with open-plan classrooms which are screened to an extent but still give an unrestricted feel. Achieving this was a challenge as we wanted to achieve an overall open feel but with spaces clearly defined. The use of high rated acoustics ceiling and wall absorption panels is helping us to mitigate the noise levels which is a requirement in all schools. The team did some sound simulations to arrive at different figures which helped in designing the ceiling and wall panels.

### **What's next for you in terms of the design principles that promote healthy activity and wellness for young students?**

While we cannot predict what changes might be required in the future we do try to future-proof as much as we can to ensure the spaces are as flexible as possible to allow for possible adaptations. Alongside that is the need to maintain healthy indoor spaces. Air quality has been at the forefront of our design as research shows this affects the learning environment and wellbeing of students. Similarly, ventilation, lighting and acoustics are also the key. For this project all our finishes are VOC free and we are exploring materials such as improved wall finishes, paints and ceiling materials that aid in improving the air quality.

The new building will comprise two primary wings radiating from a central heart and containing the reception, parents' café, and internal play areas.





**BOOMBOX**  
centIdn has created the first-of-its-kind Boombox Candle, imitating the legendary JVC RC M90 boombox which was used on 16-year-old LL Cool J's first album cover released in 1985.

Availability  
Across all Dwell stores

**BOWLED IT!**

The Khatt calligraphy satin gold tri-bowl in steel is ideal for little servings during the holiday season.

Availability  
Across all the Home Centre stores



# FESTIVE FINDS

DESIGN MIDDLE EAST | APRIL 2022

FOR THE **RAMADAN SEASON**, HERE ARE SOME HOME DECOR AND STYLE IDEAS THAT YOU WILL LOVE TO THE MOON AND BACK.

**MAGICAL MIRROR**

Agadir arched mirror is a modern spin on classic Moroccan style, with a slim stainless steel frame finished in brushed gold.

Availability  
Across all the Interiors showroom



**RAMADAN VIBES**

Crate and Barrel is encouraging a modern take on tradition with its stunning collection of home décor and furniture. This stunning calligraphiti espresso cup by homegrown brand Kashida is a must-have for the festive season.

Availability  
crateandbarrel.me

**MODERN HOMES**

This Ramadan, create a fun and frolic ambience with a mixson accent chair and eccentric design accessories like colourful cushions and calligraphy artwork.

Availability

Across all the PAN Emirates stores



**CRESCENT CALLING**

Ramadan is the month of giving, and Kibsons has a stunning selection of gifting options, delicious treats, and decorative items like this crescent tree, table décor, and centrepieces.

Availability  
[kibsons.com](http://kibsons.com)



**LUXURY AT ITS BEST**

You can create a luxurious atmosphere at home with decor that includes precious details, sinuous, graceful, and simple lines, and materials that are rich in metals, stones, and fabrics.

Availability  
Across all Elie Saab stores in Dubai, Beirut, and Qatar

**ECO-FRIENDLY**

Party supply specialist, BoxFetti, has launched an exclusive new Ramadan and Eid party collection, designed by highly revered Emirati artist Mariam Abbas.

Availability  
[www.boxfetti.ae](http://www.boxfetti.ae)





# INDEX

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# Little Things

The Ramadan 2022 capsule collection by aura is inspired by the essence of the Holy Month and the core values connected with the season. The stunning tableware ranges, intricate decorative accessories, and thoughtful gifting items in the new collection combine breathtakingly authentic Middle Eastern styles with a sleek, modern spin on design.

The collection includes adaptable candle holders, Medkhana (Arabic for incense burner), traditional lanterns with a modern twist, and gorgeous hanging ornaments with little crescents and Arabesque geometric forms for that much-needed Ramadan aesthetic.

**Availability**  
Across all the aura stores in KSA and Dubai.

RAMADAN SALE  
25-75% OFF



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WAS 15,714 AED

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**KOHLER**®

# Occasion™ COLLECTION

Fashioned to be  
the Center of Attention

The Occasion™ faucet and accessory collection was inspired by the high fashion and effortless glamour of the Golden Age of Hollywood. The flawless lines of each piece—from faucets to lighting and accessories—catch the eye and draw it across the entire design. Just like the era that inspired it, the Occasion collection is always graceful, ever refined, and fashioned to be the center of attention.

[me.kohler.com](http://me.kohler.com)