

Dubai Design Week evolves and expands its programme for its ninth edition

- The region's largest design festival will take place at Dubai Design District (d3) between 7-12 November, with more than 500 participants taking part from over 40 countries.
- Downtown Design, the Middle East's leading design fair and Dubai Design Week's anchor event, will celebrate its 10th anniversary with largest edition to date.

United Arab Emirates, Dubai, 3 October 2023: Held under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Latifa bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Chairperson of Dubai Culture & Arts Authority (Dubai Culture) and member of the Dubai Council, in strategic partnership with Dubai Design District, a member of TECOM Group PJSC, and supported by Dubai Culture, Dubai Design Week returns to its home in Dubai Design District (d3) from 7-12 November with more events, exhibitors and visitors anticipated than ever before.

The free-to-attend event will host its most diverse programme of events and activities, including exhibitions, new commissions, pop-ups, talks, workshops, as well as other innovative design projects and experiences.

A key feature of this year's programme will be large-scale outdoor installations with a focus on how design, science and technology can converge to reclaim materials of our past, as well as reimagine new forms that foster sustainable practices with immersive public interventions made from materials such as palm leaves, loofah, sugar and paper pulp, with 3-D printed architecture at the forefront.

The event aims to attract more than 150,000 visitors to d3's global creative hub, including architects, designers, thought leaders, influencers and public audiences from the region and around the world, further cementing Dubai's position as the design and creative capital of the Middle East and a UNESCO City of Design.

Khadija Al Bastaki, Senior Vice President of d3, part of TECOM Group, said: "Creative industries are not solely engines of economic growth – they shape societies and identities. By focusing on this intersection, Dubai has forged a formidable platform fueling creative innovation, collaboration and opportunities. Through Dubai Design Week, we look forward to providing a platform for extraordinary talent hailing from d3 and the UAE, the broader region, and beyond, to exhibit their work and influences globally. This year, as always, talent will embrace our call to Rethink the Regular and springboard brilliant ideas, creations and perspectives that show us where the creative compass points. Dubai Design Week is an integral part of d3's lively autumn calendar which reflects our vision to secure a sustainable, resilient creative economy."

Natasha Carella, Programming Director for Dubai Design Week, commented: "Building on the UAE's Year of Sustainability, this year's Dubai Design Week has evolved into the

most innovative edition of the festival to date. Our programme has been developed in partnership with d3 for both the design community and the general public alike. We aim to foster a dialogue around sustainability through engaging and thought provoking initiatives and focus attention on how different practices can converge to look at sustainability, which we see as pivotal for the future of the design industry.”

Dr Saeed Mubarak bin Kharbash, CEO of the Arts and Literature Sector at Dubai Culture, said: “Design plays a pivotal role in expanding the horizons of design and innovation locally, regionally and globally and is a key pillar of our strategic roadmap, and we are dedicated to providing ongoing support to nurture creativity and the inspiring individuals driving it forward. This all falls in line with our responsibility towards the cultural and creative industries in the emirate as we aim to foster the growth of the creative economy and cement Dubai’s position as a global centre for culture, an incubator for creativity, and a thriving hub for talent. Dubai Design Week serves as our annual tribute to the world of design and the designers who shape it, and we are proud to be continuously supporting such an inspiring initiative.”

2023 Programme Highlights

Downtown Design

The highlight event of Dubai Design Week, **Downtown Design**, is gearing up for a memorable tenth edition at d3 Waterfront Terrace (8-11 November 2023). Acclaimed as the Middle East’s leading fair for contemporary and high-quality design, Downtown Design showcases the latest collections, innovative products, and design solutions, complemented by a line-up of creative concepts and installations, experiences, and industry events. It’s the ultimate destination for those seeking the latest trends in interior design, furniture, lighting and home accessories.

ABWAB

Returning to this year’s programme, **Abwab** is an annually remodelled feature acting as a platform for regional design talent from across the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia. The festival’s 2023 headline commission has been awarded to Emirati architect and founder of **MULA** design studio, **Abdalla Almulla**. Almulla will create an architectural pavilion centred around sustainability and materiality, which will include a roster of interventions and performances.

Urban Commissions

Dubai Design Week’s design competition, **Urban Commissions**, also returns this year inviting designers and architects to propose innovative outdoor furniture in the public domain, adhering to a responsible design approach. The winning design, which will be unveiled at the festival in d3, has been selected by a jury panel consisting of experts in the design field: **Ahmad Bukhash, Robert Shakespeare** and **Cyril Zammit**.

Installations

Staged throughout d3, a destination enabling the global creative community, Dubai Design Week will feature over 20 outdoor installations and projects, with a focus on how design, science and technology can converge to reclaim traditional materials, as well as reimagine new forms that foster sustainable practices. **FabPub**, a joint venture between **Mamou-Mani Architects** and **Therme Group** will showcase **The Altostrata**, a 3-D-printed architectural pavilion made from biodegradable sugar-based PLA; and eco-cooling walls made entirely from loofah and a paper pulp modular system, as well as other interactive interventions. Architects **Wael Al Awar** and **Kazuma Yamao**, of **waiwai**, will present **Urban Hadeera**, a prototype of a traditional structural shelter, using sustainable cement alternatives developed through their award-winning research project **Wetland Lab**.

Exhibitions & Pop Ups

Throughout the week, a series of exhibitions will showcase the latest in design from the region and beyond, including: the annual **UAE Designer Exhibition**, curated by **Fatma Al Mahmoud** and supported by Dubai Culture, which will once again highlight work from new and emerging UAE-based designers; **100/100 Best Arabic Poster**, supported by **421**, will present posters from the region that aim to document the Arab world's visual culture; **The Royal College of Art** from London, will feature projects that explore sustainability, design and emerging technologies linked to themes including textiles, healthcare, infrastructure and the rehabilitation of environments; as well as other presentations that showcase innovative student projects, a materials library and works by emerging and established architectural firms.

Talks, Workshops and Masterclasses

A line-up of **talks, workshops and masterclasses** throughout the week will provide visitors of all ages a level of design know-how with a series of hands-on activities. This will be an opportunity to experience and learn from a range of practitioners – from professors of world-renowned institutions to expert facilitators and craftsmen. There will be a stellar roster of guests and speakers, including the opening keynote this year by **Lidewijk Edelkoort** at The Forum in Downtown Design.

Marketplace

For those looking to take a piece of Dubai Design Week home, **The Marketplace (11-12 November)**, is a consciously curated outdoor shopping experience enabling visitors to discover the very best of the city's creatives, artisans and small businesses, from handcrafted unique goods and sustainably sourced products to a wide range of delicious food and children's activities. Located in the heart of Dubai Design District (d3), The Marketplace is a must-visit destination for all the family.

Dubai Design Week has evolved from its inception in 2015 into a major international design event. Its success can be attributed to its diverse programming, global reach, commitment to

innovation and supporting local talent, and its role in shaping Dubai's identity as a thriving centre for design and creativity in the Middle East. Over the years, Dubai Design Week has gained recognition on the global stage. It has become a platform for both emerging, pioneering and established designers to showcase their work, connect with industry professionals, and gain exposure in the Middle East and beyond.

Dubai Design District (d3) is part of TECOM Group's business district portfolio, including Dubai Internet City, Dubai Media City, Dubai Studio City, Dubai Production City, Dubai Knowledge Park, Dubai International Academic City, Dubai Science Park and Dubai Industrial City.

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Note to Editors:

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About Dubai Design District (d3)

Dubai Design District (d3), a member of TECOM Group PJSC, is a global creative ecosystem dedicated to design, fashion, architecture and art. In line with Dubai's position as the leading business destination for the region and beyond, d3 is an industry-pioneering concept that enables people and businesses to grow and co-create, whilst simultaneously providing a strong platform for creativity. Strategically located in the heart of Dubai, d3 is one of the city's lifestyle and business district that challenges thousands of people to rethink the regular.

With state-of-the-art infrastructure designed to meet the needs of the industry and a business-friendly framework, the community offers creative talent the tools for collaboration and growth, further reinforcing Dubai's status as a UNESCO Creative City of Design.

d3 is a cutting-edge retail district offering a variety of multi-brand boutiques, fashion brands, art galleries and showrooms. In addition, d3 is home to leading companies and talent including architects, interior designers, photography studios, product and fashion designers.

Some of the region's most popular events take place in d3 and attract international artists and audiences to cultural and fashion exhibitions and gatherings such as Dubai Design Week, Arab Fashion Week and Sole DXB. The district also regularly hosts a roster of industry talks, workshops and educational programming, accessible to people of all ages.

d3 is home to TECOM Group PJSC's business incubator – in5 – that aims to support the fashion and design industries by offering students and entrepreneurs the opportunity to transform their ideas into successful commercial ventures. This ecosystem is further supported by the Dubai Institute of Design and Innovation (DIDI), the region's only university exclusively dedicated to design and innovation, which offers a curriculum crafted with the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and The New School's Parsons School of Design.

The district also features the city's first canal side recreational development, The Block. The open-air destination offers a range of different outdoor and leisure areas including a basketball and volleyball court, a skate park, outdoor gym and climbing wall.

For more information, please visit: www.dubaidesigndistrict.com/

About Dubai Culture & Arts Authority

On 8th March 2008, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, launched Dubai Culture & Arts Authority to be the custodian of Dubai's cultural and creative sector and help define it at the local and global levels, enabling and developing these sectors to consolidate the emirate's position as an active global centre for creativity.

Under the leadership of Her Highness Sheikhha Latifa bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Chairperson of Dubai Culture, the Authority is committed to enriching Dubai's cultural scene based on the UAE's heritage, and is building bridges of constructive dialogue between various cultures to enhance Dubai's position as a global centre for culture, an incubator for creativity, and a thriving hub for talent.

The Authority is committed to preserving and celebrating Dubai's history and highlighting its contemporary cultural and creative fabric through practicing its role as a cultural and creative sector Regulator, Planner, Enabler and Operator through a series of mega cultural initiatives, events and projects, and the various cultural and heritage assets under its remit, including the management of 6 historical destinations, 6 museums, Al Jalila Cultural Centre for Children and 8 Dubai Public Libraries.

Dubai Culture is developing regulatory frameworks for Dubai's cultural and creative sectors based on the priorities of its strategic roadmap 2020 – 2025 and the enablers that seek to support talents and stimulate active participation from society members. The aim is to create an ecosystem that stimulates creative industries and reinforces Dubai's position as a global cultural destination, and its cultural responsibility of safeguarding Dubai's tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

For more information, please visit: www.dubaiculture.gov.ae