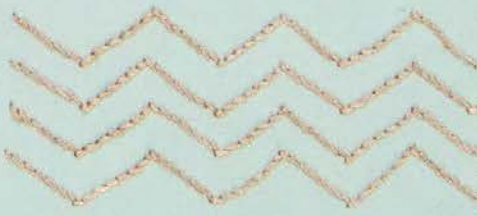




Oasis Magazine



SAUDI DESIGN WEEK



The Design Issue



The Saudi Design Week Issue, Ola Dajani Stitches the cover, Arabic Typography, Mr Brandman: Badeeh Abia, Designers of the region: Khalid Shafar, Younes Duret, Carwn Gallery in Beirut, *The Pocket Musuem of Arabic Calligraphy*, Onqoud, Hawas, Arab Fashion Designers: Milia M, Rami Al Ali; Travel to Luxurious Oman, & more

Khalid Shafar Design & Contemporary Contour

BY MARIAM NIHAL



OCTA DRESS



Khalid Shafar

Since the inception of the brand 'Khalid Shafar' in 2011, KASA became the showcase platform and the home for the brand. The first space was opened in November 2012 in Dubai.

Oasis magazine spoke to the man behind the brand. Shafar said he believed the journey started with the need for an organic growth of an industry and what the masses were looking for. "With the design movement starting to grow in the region, with the establishment of new design curated exhibitions, the emerging young talents and professional in the creative industry, the need of such a district was evident." He said laying the foundation for such an initiative started with research. "A great amount of input and info comes from the industry itself."

Shafar spoke about the segment of the art market that interests him and about his personal move from marketing to craftsmanship.

"I belong to the design industry not the art industry (both are different in my personal perspective). I do focus on the limited editions and conceptual work more than the mass produced objects."

Shafar specialized in Furniture & Objects design, at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design in London, and at the Centre for Fine Woodworking in Nelson, New Zealand.

When asked how plans to increase and enhance contemporary art and culture production and awareness, he said: "This can't be achieved by one local designer only." He said this is part of a whole eco system of Design and Culture. "I believe the



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emergence of more local designers with the completion of some specific projects like Dubai Design District along with the missions of the newly Dubai Design & Fashion Council will enhance the scene and awareness locally and regionally," he added.

Shafar has been a jury member for DXB Store at Art Dubai 2013 in Dubai, a guest panelist at Abu Dhabi Art 2012 and a guest speaker at NUQAT Design Conference 2012 in Kuwait City among many others.

Currently Shafar is a provider for design consultancy for a couple of commercial spaces. "I am working on developing some onboard products for an Airline company. In addition, I am working on my new concept for 2015 collection."

He further discussed the role he plays in encouraging the younger Emirati artists. "For some emerging young designers, leading by example is

important for them to get started and release their potential. So I play the example role here. Also, I do support students in their studies in different ways, either by motivational speeches, or help them with their research projects by providing them with the necessary information. I also, receive students in KASA and take them into my journey of design and answer their questions about the future of design in the region.

Shafar shared his dreams for the community and arts in the region. "To have a full educational program/degree for Industrial & Product Design. To have specific Design Academies here in the country and region. To be joined by more full time professional local designers. To have dedicated Design Museums and more design galleries in the region."

His works have been featured in many international design publications such as GQ Japan, Urbis, ELLE Décor Japan, ELITE Russia, Modern Weekly China, The New Zealand Herald and Design Milk among others.

He said his biggest international collaborations have been with established designers and brands such as: The Campana brothers in 2010, MOIS-

SONNIER and Tai Ping Carpets in 2013. His pieces are usually with rich details. "Simple yet avant-garde – a revival of the 50's, 60's, and 70's sleek styling, re-interpreted with today's furnishing trends." In 2011, 'S*uce' a popular concept store in Dubai, invited Khalid Shafar to interpret and customize "pop-up" benches for display at Art Dubai. Shafar described how art changed during the course of the past decade within the Middle East and how he plans to facilitate the process.

He said: "My personal view on Art as a designer is that I believe Art in the Middle East has matured well and the quality of Art production from the area has improved a lot. We have seen a sharp increase in the value of art from the Middle East and very prestigious International Auction houses have auctioned many artworks by Middle Eastern artists." He said many Middle Eastern art galleries have successfully exported art from the region to various international markets.

www.khalidshafar.com

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