

GREENSPEAK : A KUNDOO

ANAGRAM UNCOVERED

MELBOURNE : A DESIGN DESTINATION

HOME REVIEW

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PALINDA KANNANGARA
AN URBAN OASIS

NURU KARIM
MY SPACE

THE RABBIT HOLE

ARCHITECT BART LENS' BRILLIANCE IN BRICK



I AM KHALID SHAFAR

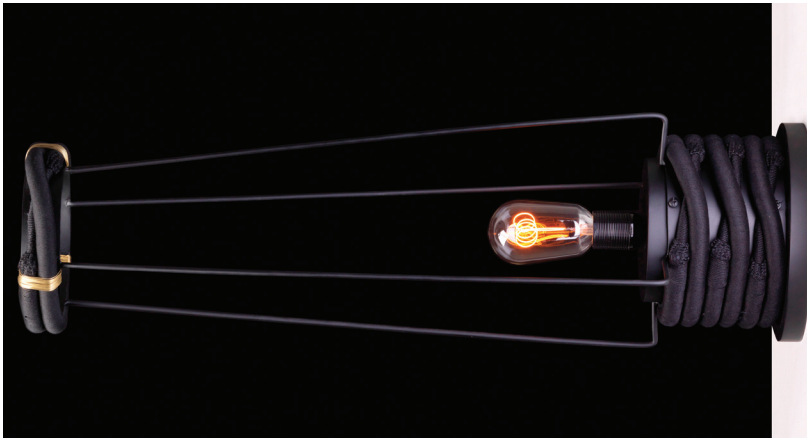
Khalid Shafar

I grew up in Dubai and over the last 30 years I have seen many changes in all aspects of daily life in the Emirates, from people trends, architecture, services and much more.

Jumeirah, the suburb where I spent my childhood and early adulthood, has changed considerably over the years - from the look of the streets; the landscaping; the design of the lamp posts and traffic lights; the houses; shops have opened and others have closed; small strip malls have sprung up everywhere.

In 2008, at the height of my marketing career, I took a huge leap of faith and said goodbye to the corporate world and followed my life-long passion for design. I took a course at Central Saint Martins College in London, UK followed by one year at the Centre for Fine Woodworking in Nelson, New Zealand where I designed and produced my first piece of furniture.

I started my design journey earlier in life when I did an Interior Design degree at the American University in Dubai in 2005 after graduating with my business degree from the same university in 2002. It was back then when I decided that design will be my future and my life-long career. Leaving Dubai to study and live was not an easy decision, and adapting to a new lifestyle and culture certainly had its challenges.



Arabi Table Lamp - On

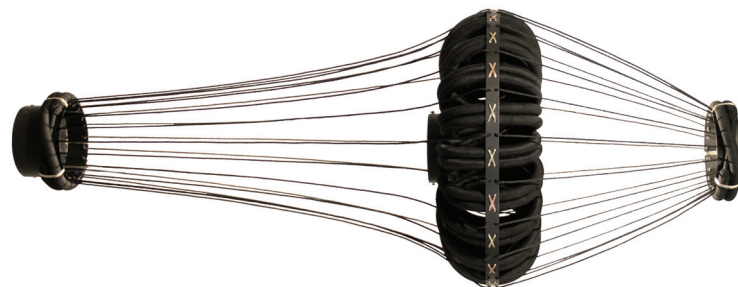


Illusion Arm

However being in the creative arts capital of New Zealand, which is home to over 350 arts and crafts studios and galleries, made my transition easier. I was surrounded by a vibrant design and arts community in Nelson; it fuelled my passion to design and it motivated me to create.

I left behind a vibrant fast-paced city lifestyle and embraced a slower-paced country lifestyle. I soon enjoyed the simple life, and appreciated the rich history and culture that I was surrounded by. In Nelson, I started to draw inspiration from the past.

I enjoyed Nelson's rich history and culture and soon realised that I had left a city behind that had a past - and a rich one - but that it simply was not as exposed, shared and celebrated. Dubai was (is) more than glitz and glamour, and I soon found myself forming parallels between my two worlds. I travelled between Nelson and Dubai several times a year and soon my design philosophy developed.



Arabi Chandelier

I became more and more curious about my heritage, culture and traditions of the bygone era - and it became my mission to bring it all together in design form. I drew inspiration from old and new, traditional and modern, past and present.

Living in two very different worlds and cultures, drove my curiosity to design objects that reflect my experiences, objects that tell stories. I was exposed to a new culture and I believe this influenced my designs - my motivation was how to draw on the best of both my worlds and reflect it in my designs. In Dubai, I drew inspiration from the city's energy. In Nelson, I drew inspiration from nature. My designs are a fusion of my experiences in both cities.



Illusion Dine

Nelson is a small town, simple, urban, hub of design and art, home to theatres, galleries, arts and crafts markets – this environment made me appreciate my heritage and drove me to seek a way to do more to expose it ... the best way I knew was to create design objects ... my ultimate goal is to put Dubai on the design global map one day.



The Palm Coat Stand



The Palm Coffee Tables

I consider myself a combination of two generations - similar to old Dubai and new Dubai - I see myself as a self-proclaimed-historian that likes to tell stories about my culture through my designs.

I am Khalid Shafar. I am a dreamer, a designer, a craftsman, and a storyteller. Each one of my designs is part of a story, a telltale of my experiences - a treasure trove of my life memories. Each object has its own journey and tale to tell. My pieces are an extension of my personality and reflect my lifestyle and journey to date.

✉ www.khalidshafar.co.nz

Coming from a place where there is a lack of design history drove my hunger to research and acted as a starting point for designing. Ironically, I had to travel half way around the world to truly appreciate what I have right here on my doorstep, in the Emirates, and that was the beginning of my quest to bring the UAE's rich past to life – it became my source of inspiration for the 2012 collection.