

**WE  
DESIGN  
BEIRUT**

**AT A GLANCE  
23–26.MAY.2024**

# ABOUT

We Design Beirut is a dedicated platform and multidisciplinary event that celebrates and promotes design and creativity in the Arab world and beyond. The four-day immersive is carefully curated based on the three pillars: Preservation, Empowerment and Sustainability, essentially the past, present and future of design. Each theme is allocated to separate physical hubs that are of historical or architectural significance. The rich four-day program offers designer showcases, installations, talks and workshops in the fields of interior design, architecture, furniture, product design, functional art, ceramics, home accessories and rugs. The inaugural event will be staged in Beirut, Lebanon from May 23-26, 2024.

# TEAM

We Design Beirut is founded by Mariana Wehbe, of Mariana Wehbe Public Relations, in partnership with industrial designer Samer Alameen and associate partners Anna Ogden-Smith and Victor Ayache of visual communication studio Bananamoney, and managed by creative strategist and designer Ghady Azar.

**WE DESIGN BEIRUT HUBS**

# PSLab WE EMPOWER



PSLab will serve to showcase and empower master craftsmen and women in an exhibition titled 'Metiers d'Art' in addition to a number of pop-ups and showcases by renowned Lebanese talent. We Mediterranean, a collaborative cultural outpost designed by 5 Italian architect studios in collaboration with We Design Beirut, will land in Beirut in PSLab on its European and Mediterranean tour.

PSLab participants and WDB team, Image Credit: Walid Rashid

# VILLA AUDI WE PRESERVE



Villa Audi is the ideal location to showcase “Past Echoes”, the collective exhibition of over 30 product designers from the region, curated by Babylon -The Agency founded by Joy Mardini and William Wehbe. It celebrates the rich heritage of Middle Eastern design and its harmonious integration within the historic Villa Audi. The Villa will also see a number of pop-ups, installations, and panel talks.

# ABROYAN FACTORY WE SUSTAIN



The factory will house “WeSearch”, a collective exhibition showcasing the best of student designers from 5 Lebanese universities, curated by a group of three internationally renowned design experts, Federica Sala, Anne-France Berthelon, and Francois le Blanc di Cicilia. It will also showcasing a Materials Exhibition by an impressive roster of sustainability experts and designers in the hopes of promoting the use of sustainable materials.

Material Exhibition Participants, Image Credit: Walid Rashid

# CITY EXHIBITIONS

# IWAN MAKTABI



Iwan Maktabi is a family business based on 3 generations of expertise and a rich private collection of collectible carpets, textiles and Islamic art. Iwan Maktabi has deepened people's appreciation for carpets in Lebanon and the Middle East, and is the go to address for rare carpets and textile art in the region.

Image Credit: Iwan Maktabi

# STUDIO NADA DEBS



Studio Nada Debs is presenting SWIRLMANIA, a series of over 20 handcrafted occasional tables, aptly named Swirl. Each piece in the collection is meticulously crafted using various craft techniques, highlighting the Studio's mastery of traditional know-how while incorporating innovative methods, offering a glimpse into the depth of skill and creativity of regional craft.

Image Credit: Studio Nada Debs

# INTERDESIGN



All things must('nt) pass: A subjective recount of Khalil Khouri's life and career as a designer. Curated by his son and grandson Bernard and Teymour Khoury and taking place in the Interdesign building designed by Khalil Khouri in 1973 and completed in 1996 to showcase the furniture he produced for the international markets. Khouri's industrial ambitions waned as postwar financial realities led to the closure of a singular and engaged modern project upon its completion. Displayed on the 24 plateaus of the Interdesign showroom are historical documents, photographs, architectural drawings and models, artworks, furniture pieces and prototypes that were produced over a period of more than half a century.

# ACTIVATIONS

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# OPEN STUDIOS



Open Studios are the local designers, artisans, and shops that will be opening their doors to visitors as part of our 4-day program. This experience offers guests and locals an authentic encounter with the world of design, allowing them to explore the design perspectives of these talented individuals.

# CINEMA ROYAL



Dating back to 1962, this previously abandoned cinema has been transformed to a vibrant cultural center. Reflecting the glory days of the 60s in Lebanon, the cinema reached its peak then, and now serves as a hub for artistic expression and community engagement. WDB will hold the opening ceremony at Cinema Royal.

Image Credit: Charles Hadife

# OSCAR NIEMEYER TOUR



The Oscar Niemeyer International Fair in Tripoli, renowned for its modernist architecture, will host a private tour by Aga Khan award-winning East Architecture Studio. It will be an exclusive opportunity to explore the fair's rich history and stunning design with the experts, as well as their renovation of the guesthouse.

Image Credit: Issam Abdallah, Reuters

# BIOGRAPHIES

# MARIANA WEHBE

Mariana Wehbe is a renowned public relations and creative events executive. Wehbe has been credited with some of the most ambitious contracts the region has seen. Her ability to identify and harness talent; envision and produce world-class projects has earned her a glowing reputation as an authority on brand development, event management and production in the region.

Born in Abu Dhabi and raised in the US, Mariana returned to Lebanon as a young adult and started her illustrious career at DHL, one that would last more than 15 years. She then founded her eponymous firm in 2013. The full-service public relations company boasts a roster of leading brands in diverse fields, from fashion and interior design, to automotives and architecture. The firm has become synonymous with professional excellence and resourcefulness thanks to Wehbe's strength of linking, networking and creating strategic partnerships; and is testament to her vision and dedication.

Drawing on her professional experience, cultural knowledge and global network, it is Wehbe's work with design talent that she finds equally rewarding. Over the years she has worked with a slew of impressive talent in the world of design, and watched their careers burgeon and grow.

Always bespoke, Wehbe's all-encompassing, 360 degree approach has garnered her a well-deserved place amongst the finest public relations personalities of the region and beyond.



Credits: Sebastian Botcher

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# SAMER ALAMEEN

Samer Alameen's work is anchored in a world of story-telling, something that stems from his extensive background in advertising and which has lead him to become a creator himself.

Inspired by history, treasured memories and a sense of tradition, Samer reinvents the objects he creates: his process is witty, concise and refined, adding a new layer of purpose and context where appropriate to traverse both exclusive handmade and one-off pieces alongside those that are industrially produced.

Born in Beirut-Lebanon in 1971, he graduated from the Lebanese American University with a double major in Fine Arts and Advertising in 1992, going on to work for a variety of prestigious agencies.

In 2014 he completed a Masters Degree in industrial design at Scuola Politecnica di Design (SPD) in Milan. In 2016 he opened his studio in Milan.

Since his studio launch, Alameen's work has been featured in solo and collective exhibitions in Milan, Paris, London, Basel, Dubai, Geneva and Beirut.



Credits: Roger Moukarzel

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