

HOME & DESIGN

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TRENDS

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PRODUCT
DESIGN
SPECIAL

ADAPTING
A CLASSIC
Alessandro
Mendini's
Poltrona
di Proust
armchair

INTO THE LIGHT
NIKHIL
PAUL

Products for
the Future

Benjamin
Hubert



R.N.I. MAHENG/2013/50949



MW88190801

ARCHITECTURE

COMMERCIAL

Spaces that portray diverse approaches to commercial design

PROJECT: ART CENTRE ▼ ARCHITECTS: SERIE ARCHITECTS

TEXT: TASNEEM MERCHANT

IMAGES: JEROEN-MUSCH, MOHAMED SOMJI
RORY GARDINER, SERIE ARCHITECTS



Additional Info

- AREA: 1,07,639 SQFT
- LOCATION: DUBAI, UAE



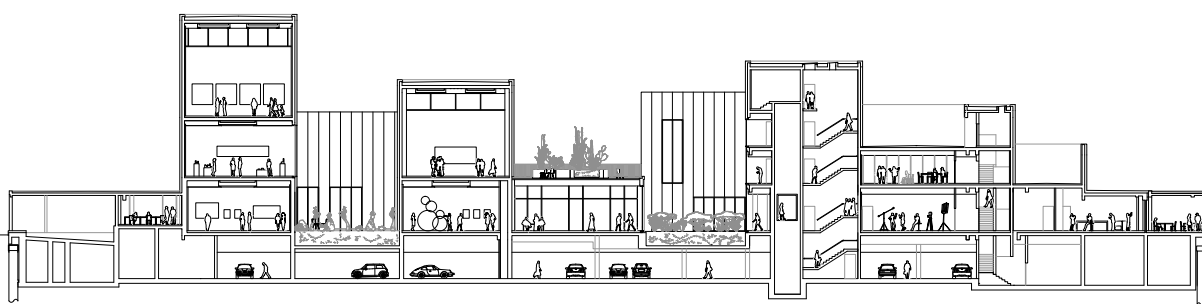
Located on the Jaddaf Waterfront, Jameel Arts Centre exemplifies site specific construction, with a focus on desert inspired landscapes.

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Positioning galleries around courtyard gardens and framed views of the waterfront serve to create moments of rest and connection, while providing potential spaces for commissioned installations.

— Christopher Lee, Principal Architect, Serie Architects





The three storey buildings open out to the Jaddaf Waterfront Sculpture Park, extending the combination of gardens and art. This first open-to-air art park was designed by UAE based architecture studio, ibda design.

FYI
Among the several display plants picked by Anouk Vogel is a Sesame Bush that is over 220-300 years old.



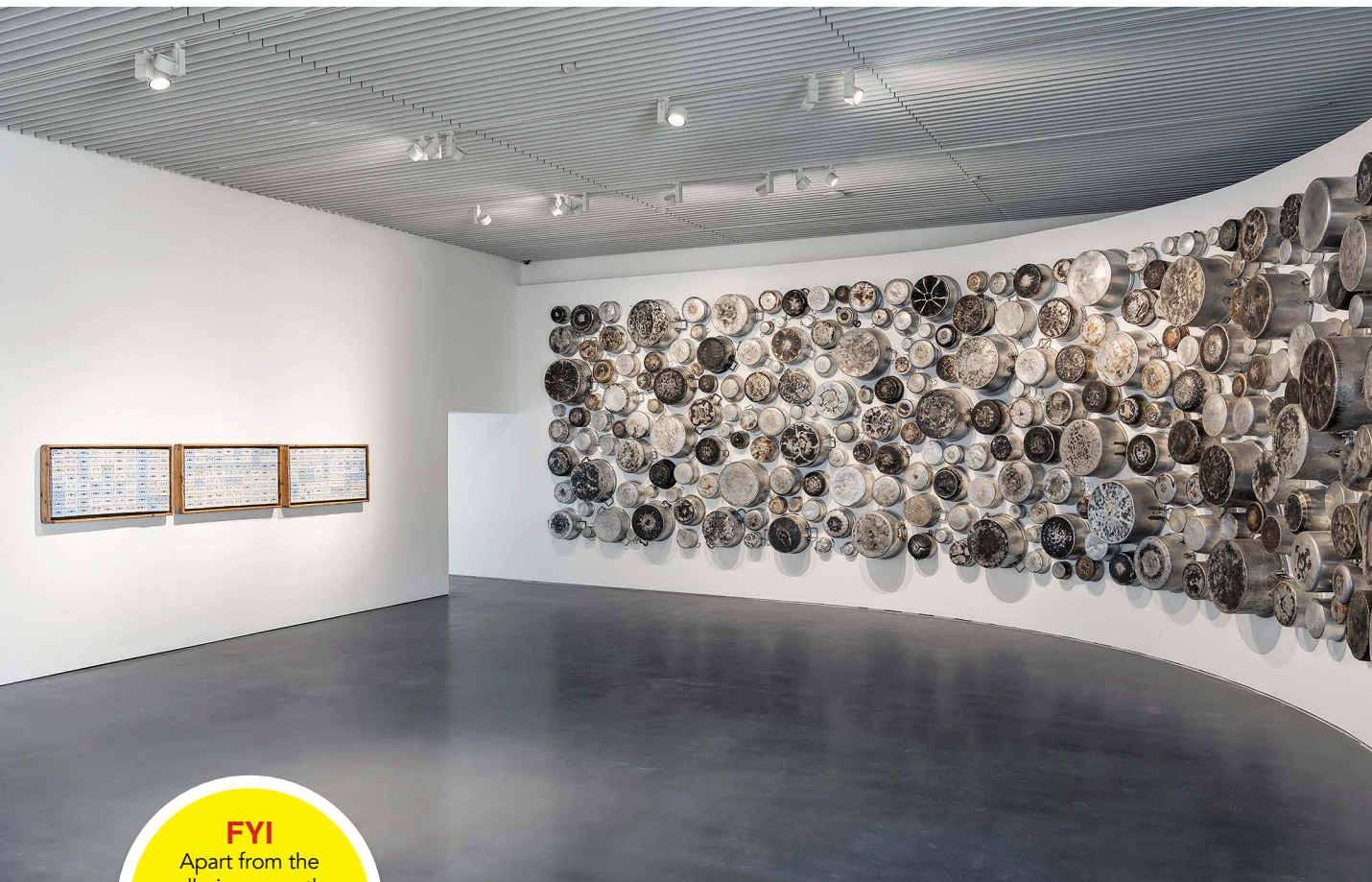
Adjoining the Jaddaf Waterfront sits a series of low-riding blocks seemingly shimmering in the desert sun. This pristine white building is UAE's newest cultural hub – Jameel Arts Centre. UK based architecture firm Serie Architects led by Christopher Lee was awarded the project after their design won an international invitational competition in 2014.

The 1,07,639 sqft structure houses 10 gallery spaces, besides interaction areas like UAE's first open access research centre, events and screening spaces, a roof terrace, a restaurant as well as a book and design shop.

Inspired by German kunsthalle complexes – typical spaces that host art exhibitions – the centre also takes its

design direction from local architectural traditions on two levels – personal and community. Emirati Sha'abi houses had rooms centred around a central courtyard while the Madinat style of construction focused on an accumulation of courtyard-centric houses.

"We worked very closely with Art Jameel, listening to their needs, responding with architectural ideas, and discursively refining them. The architecture that emerged is one that can accommodate a wide range of uses and continues to evolve with the city it serves," explains Christopher. His firm worked closely with Art Jameel, an independent organisation working towards the interests of art, education and heritage in the Middle East.



FYI

Apart from the galleries, even the landscaped gardens have been utilised to showcase artist installations.





One of the artist's rooms features
the installation, *Departure* by
Chiharu Shiota.

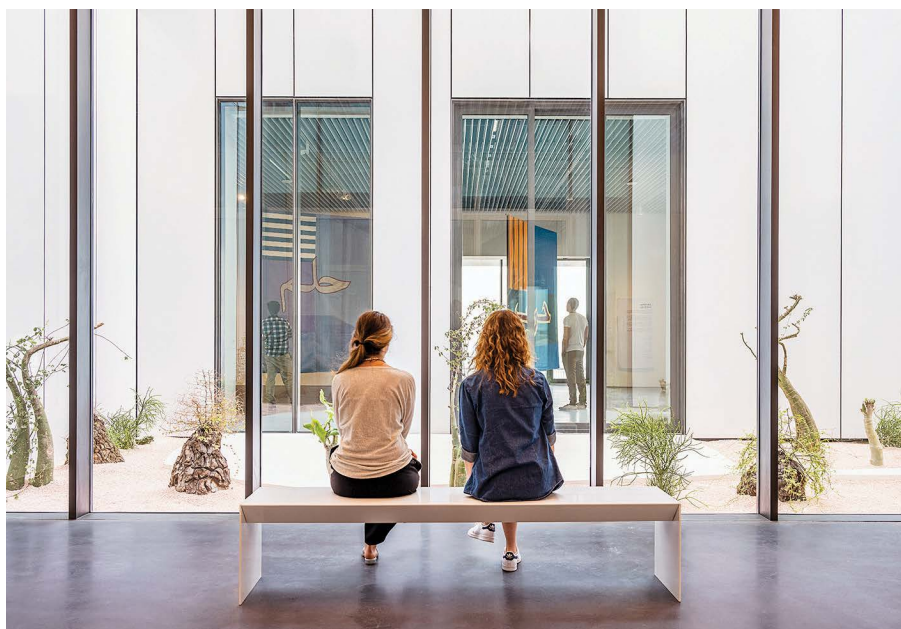
The entrance colonnade to the centre is flanked by desert gardens on both sides. The view of the gardens from various galleries allows visitors to take a break from viewing installations and artworks to soak in a bit of nature.

The large gallery spaces are broken down into a variety of sizes, thus each can be used to hold individual showcases. These also provide adequate flexibility for a range of exhibition styles, site-specific installations and specimens. The geometric display spaces juxtaposed with the undulating courtyards create an interesting dialogue between the indoors and outdoors; nature and art.

Winding colonnades along the periphery of the complex create a merging point for the indoor gallery spaces and the public waterfront areas, almost extending an invitation for the people to come visit. The overlaid galleries also secure a vantage point for observation, ensuring that one can see the gardens and other viewing areas.

Even the landscaped courtyard gardens have been curated with care. Under the purview of Swiss landscape architect Anouk Vogel, the verdant greens come alive even in harsh desert conditions. Each of the seven garden installations feature local and global desert biomes represented by over 33 species of plants and shrubs. "Plants grow according to geological and climatological borders, not political ones. The individual gardens are inspired by the world's major deserts: Arabian, Australian, Chihuahuan, Namibian, Socotran and Sonoran deserts, as well as the Spiny Forest of Madagascar. The juxtaposition of their strong and radically different expressions enhances each space's features, echoing the centre's focus on confluence and diverse communities," says Vogel, elaborating on this selection.

The striking exteriors of the building are composed of semi-reflective aluminium cladding and raw concrete. On war days when the sun is beating down, one can almost see the river shimmering and dazzling on the vast metal canvas – creating something of a natural artwork in its own right.



THE SPECS

Client: Abdul Latif Jameel Community Initiatives

Engineering: Buro Happold

Landscape: Anouk Vogel

Cost Analysis: Gardiner & Theobald

