

The winners of the 2022 identity Design Awards were announced on 17 November at the Address Montgomerie, Emirates Hills in Dubai, honouring projects in the Middle East across 13 categories, from regionally based design and architecture practices as well as international names working in the region.

The winners were selected by a diverse panel of international judges spanning both architectural and design disciplines, including: New York City-based interior designer Ahmad AbouZanat; Paris-based Lebanese architect Annabel Karim Kassar; London-based British-Nigerian designer Mimi Shodeinde; curator and artistic director of Het Nieuwe Instituut in the Netherlands, Aric Chen; as well as Lagos-based designer Nifemi Marcus-Bello.

This year saw the introduction of the Product Design category, a sector in the design discipline that is making huge strides in the region, with designers responding to various challenges such as the preservation of heritage and craft as well as the environment, in addition to forming its own contemporary language.

Year on year, the identity Design Awards continues to shine a spotlight on some of the most impactful, innovative and environmentally conscious projects across the Middle East, from residences and hotels to cultural projects and spaces created for the public. The shortlisted projects together represent a built environment that is diverse in its language and application – spanning projects in the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, Oman, Kuwait, Lebanon, Iraq and Turkey.

From large-scale iconic buildings that continue to put Dubai on the map, to smaller projects that directly respond to context and the environment, this year's winners reflect – and celebrate – the wide-ranging design and architectural thinking that can be observed across the region today.



Ahmad AbouZanat is the founder of PROJECT AZ, a New York City-based design and build firm with global roots. Prior to setting up his design practice, AbouZanat had worked with some of the most respected architecture and design firms in Lebanon and the Middle East, with projects spanning Dubai, London and Antwerp. AbouZanat's work includes residential design projects that are dedicated to crafting modern and functional spaces. A rich mixture of influences guides his design process, such as aesthetic influences from the Middle East and France, juxtaposed with nods to the contemporary architecture of cities such as Beirut, Dubai and Doha.



Annabel Karim Kassar is a French-Lebanese architect and designer, and founder of AKK Architects with offices in Beirut, Dubai and London. The firm works across masterplans and commercial, cultural and historical residential buildings, as well as interiors. Her high-profile hospitality projects include the Momo and Almaz restaurants in London and the Middle East, as well as the nightclub Strange Fruit and two Balima restaurants in Beirut. AKK's architecture combines a modernist vocabulary with the detailed craftsmanship and aesthetics of traditional Arab, Berber and Ottoman cultures.



Aric Chen is the general and artistic director of Het Nieuwe Instituut, the Netherlands' national museum and institute for architecture, design and digital culture, situated in Rotterdam. Chen previously served as professor and founding director of the Curatorial Lab at the College of Design & Innovation at Tongji University in Shanghai; curatorial director of the Design Miami fairs in Miami Beach and Basel; creative director of Beijing Design Week; and lead curator for Design and Architecture at M+ in Hong Kong, where he oversaw the formation of that new museum's design and architecture collection and programme.

THE JURY



Miminat Shodeinde is a British-Nigerian artist and designer, born and raised in London, and founder of design studio Miminat Designs. Dovetailing an artistic aesthetic with architectural discipline, Shodeinde seeks to align the prosaic with the poetic. By blending the complementary and contradictory, whilst embracing the integration of old and new, she creates timeless, immersive experiences, where art and architecture meet. Her sculptural design pieces break down the relationship between form and function, allowing art and design to intersect, while her diverse influences and background inform her use of space through both form and placement.



Nifemi Marcus-Bello is an industrial and furniture designer known for his community-led, ethnographic-conscious design approach. Based in Lagos, Nigeria, his strengths lie in the exploitation of materials to pursue new forms and typologies, allowing him to create truly distinct products, forms and experiences. In 2017, he founded his eponymous design studio, nmbello Studio, focusing on furniture, product and installation design.

ARCHITECTURE RESIDENTIAL



WINNER

The Terraces by Accent Design Group

The Terraces is a single-family villa located in Brih, a small village in the Chouf mountains of Lebanon which had witnessed colossal destruction and desolation during the Lebanese civil war. The minimalistic approach of the architecture is derived from its typology of traditional Lebanese architecture, using local yellow stone as well as a sequence of passages and patios that are reminiscent of old 'bourgeois' homes, reinterpreted

in a contemporary language. The villa is integrated into its landscape, following the natural topography with minimal intervention. As such, the project does not impose itself onto the terrain; rather, it delicately follows and opens up to it. In short, the house focuses on the landscape, the context and its history, steering clear of the rampant contemporary fascination with 'glamorous' forms.

SHORTLISTED
AB House by Archidentity
Bakrajo House by ZAKAA Architecture
Bay Retreat by XBD Collective
Curvature House by OFFICE 313
House in Faiha by Studio Toggle
Allegria Mansion by Hany Saad Innovations

HIGHLY COMMENDED
HIVE Coliv by Fadi Sarieddine Design Studio

SHORTLISTED

Blended Wellness by Bishop Design
Boost Studio by Arch Home Interiors
Y12 by XO Atelier

HIGHLY COMMENDED

Enhance by Mediclinic by LEISURE DIRECT

INTERIOR DESIGN HEALTH & WELLNESS



WINNER

Izil Spa by Brand Creative

The well-established Izil retail experience at The Dubai Mall has now been transformed into a calming spa and hammam oasis, aiming to transport visitors into an exclusive Moroccan escape. With the core purpose of the design being to disqualify clichés of Moroccan cultures and traditions, the aesthetic takes on a complete contrast to the Moroccan pastiche

that we've come to know. Designed as a soulful celebration of the nomadic underground bathhouses used by Berber tribes in ancient times, the concept is inspired by the deconstruction of the Amazigh alphabet embedded into the Tadelakt plaster used throughout, allowing for an earthy, textural quality that celebrates a simpler side of the kingdom.

THE WINNERS

