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BDW X ADORNO

Adorno presents the best of Lebanese design at Beirut Design Week's opening show

'The Lebanese design scene isn't definable: there's a powerful creative energy flowing in the country – designers are bold and free.'

– Youmna Geday, BDW X Adorno designer



Impermanence vase series by Paola Sakr.

Next month, **Beirut Design Week** presents an opening show unlike any other in its seven-year history. Working with **Adorno, the global platform for collectible contemporary design**, BDW will commence on **22 June** with a special exhibition dedicated to the best independent and **emerging talent in Lebanon**.

In April, Adorno and BDW issued an open call to find the independent and emerging designers whose work best expresses the design character, broad scope and **creative energy of the region** – with a particular emphasis on submissions that represent a positive and life-enhancing contribution to city life.

The call has now closed, submissions have passed through the judging panel, and the final line-up has been decided. The 15 participating designers will each present their work at BDW's opening-show – historically, the most widely attended of the **seven-day festival's 150+ events**. Announced on the final day of the festival, a selection of the exhibiting designers will also have their work featured in, and available to buy from, Adorno's inaugural Beirut collection at **adorno.design**, making the Lebanese capital the 12th global city to have its design scene represented on the site.

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(Left) Unearthly Ceramic, by Marianne Sargi and Zeina Aboiulhosn and (Right) Computational Couture by Stephanie Bashir.

As well as presenting their work to the festival's international audience of more than 25,000 people and benefiting from the global online showcase provided by Adorno, the featured designers also receive technical and manufacturing support from **Fabraca Studios**, a collaborative, architect-led initiative, which draws on the vision and skill of designers and craftspeople to create bespoke lighting and furniture.

The exhibition opens on 22 June in the atmospheric setting of the **Beit Museum** – the new museum of the city's history, housed in the recently restored 'Yellow House', an architectural landmark that was all but destroyed in the Lebanese Civil War.

'Launching the collaboration in Beirut is a big step for Adorno as we aim to create a multidirectional design dialogue, to give space for diversity on the platform. I'm excited to see people's reaction to the playfulness and beauty that lies within this creative culture.'

– **Martin Clausen**, Co-Founder & Creative Director, Adorno

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Core 3 table lamps, by Christian Zahr.

DESIGNER SELECTION

The open-call judges comprised a global panel of leading designers, critics and curators, including: BDW creative director **Ghassan Salameh**; Adorno co-founder **Kristian Snorre Andersen**, **Joy Mardini**, founder of Joy Mardini Design gallery; **Ana Dominguez Siemens**, the design writer and curator behind Adorno's Madrid and Barcelona collections; and furniture designer and author **Suzanne Trocmé**.

The panel has selected a broad range of design talent – spanning furniture, lighting, ceramics, artwork, and architectural installation – to offer a broad and bold snapshot of Lebanon's creative variety, guided by this year's festival theme, '**Design and the City**', and BDW's emphasis on collaboration and exchange.

Featuring:

• Zeina About Hosn x Marainne Sargi • Stephanie Bashir • Coco Exotico • Gray Garden Studio • Youmna Geday • Maria Kassab • Rita Kettaneh • Ahmad Khouja • Amer Madhoun • Toofic Matta • Adrian Muller • Wyssem Nochi • Tessa & Tara Sakhi • Paola Sakr • Thomas Trad • Christian Zahr

...with more to be announced in the coming weeks.

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Unborn creatures of light, by Youmna Geday.

Highlights include:

- **Thomas Trad**'s family of furniture in wood and marble. Having previously worked with the likes of Fredrikson Stallard and Michael Anastassiades, Trad launched his own business in 2016. New from the studio, this collection of two low tables, a dining table and bench combines curving organic forms with a precise, finely crafted aesthetic.
 - **Youmna Geday**'s 'Unborn Creatures of Light' – an illuminated art installation created from LED lamps and 60 hollowed and reinforced eggshells, drawing on the fragility, symbolism and pattern of the egg to create a constellation of light and a reminder of the universe's mythological origins.
 - **Marianne Sargi** and **Zeina Aboul Hosn**'s 'Unearthly' series of ceramics – a collaboratively created collection of hand-crafted and glazed clay objects, each of which has a unique identity, structure and colour pattern. The pieces can stand alone or be combined to create a fluid and ethereal ceramic landscape.
 - **Toofic Mattah**'s 'Rock'n Jug' – a Zen-like vessel in upcycled aluminium that takes formal inspiration from pebbles and porous rocks, and is rooted in the Lebanese hospitality tradition of offering travellers refreshment at the door of the home.
 - **Christian Zahr**'s 'Core 3' lamps – a companion set of two table lamps connected with a single wire, activated by a single switch and formed from a single concrete block (a circular core is cut from the block, creating the second lamp). The lamps take their material and formal inspiration from the electrical wires criss-crossing Beirut's streets and the concrete construction aesthetic of modern Lebanon, creating an interplay of darkness and light, the hidden and the revealed.
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Selected for the excellence of their craft and the originality of their work, the designers present a striking insight into the character of Beirut today; their **boldness, variety** and **offbeat approaches** reflecting the rapidly changing story of an ancient city reborn from decades of unrest, and rapidly establishing itself as a wellspring of optimism and creativity in the Middle East region.

'Lebanese designers have a seamless way of merging foreign influences with the local identity and traditional methods of making, as well as personal experiences and style. The design scene in Lebanon is steadily growing and absorbing advancements in technology and making techniques.'

– **Stephanie Bashir**, BDW X Adorno designer

Notes to editors

About Adorno

Adorno was set up in 2017 by Copenhagen-based design lovers and tech entrepreneurs Kristian Snorre Andersen and Martin Clausen in order to give designers around the world a unique opportunity to present their work to the global market, and to provide design enthusiasts with a chance to discover and acquire unique and limited-edition work. By establishing a network of expert curators in key design destinations around the world, Adorno has been able to not only maintain rigorously controlled quality, but also to provide its community with a unique insight into the distinctive and evolving design cultures around the world.

In addition to the new Beirut collection, eleven design communities are represented in Adorno's galleries: Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Brussels, Copenhagen, Istanbul, London, Mexico City, Madrid, Milan and São Paulo. Adorno plans to expand its collection to 17 cities by the end of 2018, encompassing Asia, Europe, the Americas and Australasia.

adorno.design

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For more details about the collaboration between **Adorno** and **Beirut Design Week**, please contact Dorothy Bourne at dorothy@zetteler.co.uk or on +44 (0)7939 200519.
