

Autumn fairs

identity looks ahead to the key shows taking place over the next couple of months. TEXT: RUBY ROGERS



DOWNTOWN DESIGN
29 October – 1 November 2013

Dubai is not the first city that springs to mind when the words 'design destination' are uttered – Milan, Paris, London and New York, certainly, but Dubai?

Watch this space, say the organisers of Downtown Design, which is making its debut from 19 October to 1 November and is on a mission to establish Dubai's reputation as a global destination for design and provide commercial design brands with a platform to enter the Middle East & North Africa markets.

So what can visitors to Downtown Design expect? Describing itself as a "high end" event, it is set to showcase a selection of interior design products and concepts. And when organisers say selection, they mean it. A small but exclusive number of internationally renowned brands have been cherry-picked, together with a handful of emerging brands, according to the strength of their philosophy and commitment to quality manufacturing processes.

A series of big names have signed on the dotted line, including Cappellini, Cassina, Cykno, Poltrona Frau and Seletti. Superstudio Group from Salone del Mobile will also be there, bringing together a selection of brands curated by Giulio Cappellini and Gisella Borioli.

And what of guest speakers? The impressive line-up includes Spanish architect and designer Patricia Urquiola, French designer Ora-Itto and the senior curator of the Department of Architecture and Design at the New York Museum of Modern Art, Paola Antonelli.

Downtown Dubai is in safe hands. Its organiser, Art Dubai Fair LLC, is the driving force behind Art Dubai and Design Days Dubai. Principally targeting industry professionals, though open to the general public in the evenings, the event will be held at The Venue, a custom-built marquee. Access to the exhibition is free for trade visitors and industry professionals; the admission for the general public is Dhs50.

www.downtowndesign.com



MAISON & OBJET
6-10 September 2013

If you want to keep up with home fashion trends, drop by Maison & Objet in Paris, which ends a few days prior to the start of London Design Festival, thus making it possible to take in both events.

From 6 to 10 September, Maison & Objet takes up its usual residency at the Paris Nord Villepinte Exhibition Centre. Not a show to rest on its laurels, the organisers have once again refined its layout and honed its selection to ensure it responds to changing trends and harnesses established and emerging creativity.

The success of Maison & Objet is reflected in the stats. September's edition will be spread across 135,000 square metres of exhibition space, is set to include 3,100 exhibitors and looks to welcome around 76,000 visitors, with almost half that number expected to make the journey from outside France.

Having established a luxury hub around Halls 7 and 8 with Scènes d'Intérieur, Now! Design à Vivre and Maison & Objet/Projects, organisers have consolidated its contemporary offering with the development of Actuel in Hall 5B. Traditional fare can be found in Halls 4 and 5A, while purveyors of global furniture and furnishings will be gathered together under the banner Ethnic Chic in Hall 1.

The beauty of Maison & Objet is it is very easy to navigate. Specialist Halls are its particular strength. Head to Hall 6 for home accessories or Hall 3 for all things tableware, dining and cooking related. Meanwhile, Hall 5A – Craft, l'Espace Metiers d'Art – is home to rare and one-off pieces.

Further highlights include three inspiration forums designed by Elizabeth Leriche, Vincent Grégoire from the Nelly Rodi agency and François Bernard from the Croisements agency, and a retrospective from Maison & Objet's Designer of the Year 2013, Odile Decq. As always, the show will do its bit for up-and-coming talent and will show the results of the Talents à la Carte project, highlighting the work of seven emerging designers.

www.maison-objet.com

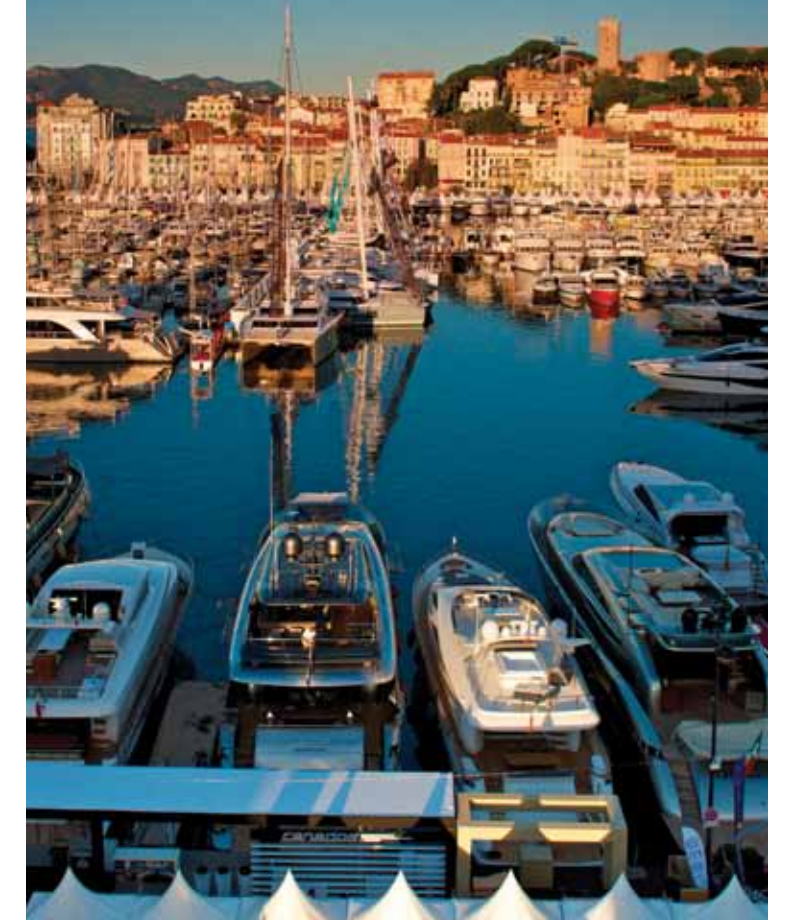
FESTIVAL DE LA PLAISANCE DE CANNES
10-15 September 2013

It is never a chore to visit the French Riviera, particularly during the Festival de la Plaisance de Cannes, the International Cannes Boat Show, which is taking place from 10 to 15 September. Now in its 36th year, it is a supremely glamorous event, showcasing almost 500 boats built by the world's leading luxury boatyards. It is also reliably innovative, having garnered a reputation for worldwide premieres - 100 new models are promised this year.

Aside from its glitzy location and line-up of new launches, there is much to whet the appetite at what is arguably the most prestigious event on the international yachting calendar. Le Vieux Port is the venue for the new Equipment Village, conceived to give key providers of yachting equipment a more prominent place within the Festival, and the Tender area, a long-term fixture of the Cannes Boat Show that has been expanded this year to reflect owners' and buyers' increasing interest in the design and performance of this equipment.

Le Vieux Port will also host the SuperYacht Area, dedicated to boats ranging from 25 metres to 45 metres, plus three areas for boats from 10 metres to 25 metres. These include traditional yachts, sail boats, motorboats, open boats, sport fishing and fly-drive crafts.

Visitors need to know that both the VIP Club and restaurant have relocated to the first floor of the Espace Riviera in Port Pierre Canto. It's a first-class location offering guests panoramic views of the Cannes Boat Show. For more information: www.salonnavautiquecannes.com



LONDON DESIGN FESTIVAL

14-22 September 2013

Like its host city, London Design Festival (or LDF as it is commonly known) is deliciously varied. Running from 14 to 22 September, it comprises a series of exhibitions, each offering an eclectic mix of designers, products, talks, installations, restaurants, bars and innovations, all housed under one roof.

So what's new? Now in its 19th year, 100% Design promises 2013 will be its biggest year yet, with 3,000 square metres of additional floor space and features including Sustainable Materials, Co-Design, 3D Printing and Urban Agriculture. Meanwhile, Decorex is moving to its new location at Kensington Palace where more than 300 companies will come together to exhibit new products ranging from contemporary, traditional and bespoke furniture to lighting, floor coverings, fabrics and wall coverings, as well as accessories and bespoke services.

From Kensington Palace to a disused Sixties postal sorting office in Holborn, central London, Designjunction returns to LDF for the third time, presenting an edited selection of global brands and emerging companies. This year, organisers are placing greater emphasis on illumination with the launch of an area dedicated to high-end decorative lighting, suitably called Lightjunction. However, Designjunction isn't just about furniture, lighting and accessories; part of the ground floor is home to a series of interactive Flash Factories, where the process of industrial production is brought to life through live demonstrations.

Now in its seventh year, Tent London returns to the Old Truman Brewery in east London, with its showcase of both homegrown and overseas talent. This year, the show organisers have sought out undiscovered European designers from the continent to show alongside British-based established independents. Sister show Super Brands London runs in unison with Tent, giving international brands the opportunity to broaden their exposure in the British market. The line-up includes the likes of Edra, Ligne Roset and Jacuzzi. For more information about LDF: www.londondesignfestival.com



ITALIAN LUXURY INTERIORS
11-14 November 2013

Luxury is an overused term, but it has real meaning when it comes to Italian Luxury Interiors (11-14 November), now in its third year and returning to the Madinat Jumeirah hotel in Dubai. Targeting interior designers, architects, furniture importers and art galleries, as well as anyone with a penchant for Italian design, exhibitors will be showing everything from furniture and decorative household items to lighting and textiles.

"This exhibition takes us back to the true meaning of luxury – the rare and the precious, made with skill, passion and, most importantly in this era of high-speed everything, time," the show's organisers explain.

"It is these qualities, not famous labels and inflated price tags, that place the objects on the right side of the line, separating beauty from kitsch, uniqueness from banality, elegance from vulgarity, and a sense of style from mere ostentation. While all of the pieces raise furniture and domestic objects well above the level of everyday convenience, some are more obviously functional and others blur the distinction between a work of art and a piece of superior craftsmanship, between the master craftsman and the artist."

By their very nature, these products cannot be manufactured in large numbers and, as a result, the companies that make them range from very small artisan workshops to more structured, yet still moderately sized, companies. The raison d'être of Italian Luxury Interiors, therefore, is to bring to light brands and products that, in many cases, are not well known at present.

www.italianluxuryinteriors.com 