

# Icons of design

## A new forum for global brands set to make its Dubai debut



**Gervasoni:** Response to the show has been positive

The team behind Art Dubai and Design Days Dubai, two of the Middle East's most successful art, furniture and objects fair, is set to launch its first international design trade fair, Downtown Design. The show will be held from October 29 to November 1, 2013 at the custom-built location, The Venue, Downtown Dubai.

Downtown Design will, for the first time, bring together a selection of international design brands renowned for their quality products and manufacturing craftsmanship. The event, set to become one of the region's premier design events, is geared specifically towards industry professionals including architects, real estate developers, interior designers and specifiers, from across the Middle East and North Africa.

*MEI* spoke to the fair director Cristina Romelli Gervasoni.

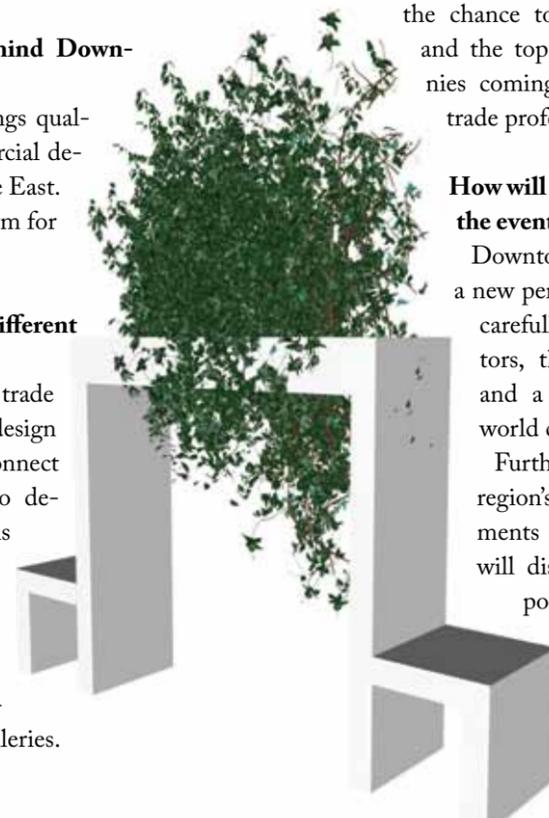
### What is the vision behind Downtown Design?

Downtown Design brings quality driven, global commercial design brands to the Middle East. We aim to act as a platform for business networking.

### How will the show be different from Design Days?

Downtown Design is a trade fair aimed at global design brands who want to connect with and sell product to design industry professionals across the region.

Design Days Dubai is a fair aimed at those interested in collecting one off design pieces, showcasing through design galleries.



### Who are your target audience?

Downtown Design is mainly for the trade professionals, however consumers play a very important role. Internationally, design fairs such as Salone del Mobile and London Design Festival combine the business and consumer elements together which is something we're aiming to do.

### What can the visitors expect from the show?

Visitors will see international design brands renowned for their quality, craftsmanship and attention to detail exhibiting for the first time all together in Dubai.

Those passionate about design will have the opportunity to discover new brands who are debuting in the Middle East for the first time at Downtown Design.

Moreover the trade professionals will have the chance to liaise with the owners and the top management of companies coming to Dubai to meet the trade professionals.

### How will they benefit by attending the event?

Downtown Design will introduce a new perspective on design with a carefully selected list of exhibitors, three special installations and a four-day programme of world class content.

Furthermore, CEOs of the region's top real estate developments and distribution agencies will discuss GCC business opportunities and the future of the local market.

### How is the exhibitor response to the show?



The Middle East is a very appealing market for the brands we have selected therefore we had a very positive response.

### How many exhibitors will be participating?

We will have 40 brands exhibiting including some of the most iconic names in the design industry such as Cassina, Vitra, Poltrona Frau, Preciosa, Emeco and many more.

### Can you tell us about the products to be displayed at the event?

We have selected companies belonging to the furniture, lighting, flooring, textile, accessories segments.

### What will be the highlight of the show?

Downtown Design will introduce a new perspective on design placing a strong emphasis on quality. The exhibition and the programme will enhance that producing and showcasing a truly original piece of design coming from a sense of knowledge of the materials, a dedicated focus on craftsmanship and research and a true sense of understanding of



what the piece will be used for. We want our visitors to appreciate design and have a better understanding of the process of manufacturing.

**Focus on quality:** Show has attracted some of the world's iconic brands

### Are there any seminars taking place alongside the show?

Downtown Design has a packed programme with more than 30 talks and seminars that will take place on site, designed for trade professionals and visitors. Daily series of talks from the exhibiting brands will reveal the stories behind the products, bringing them to life and underlining their importance on a global stage. World-famous designers such as Ora Ito, Ludovica+Roberto Palomba and Pauline Deltour, Giulio Cappellini, will talk about their vision and the latest trends in world design.

