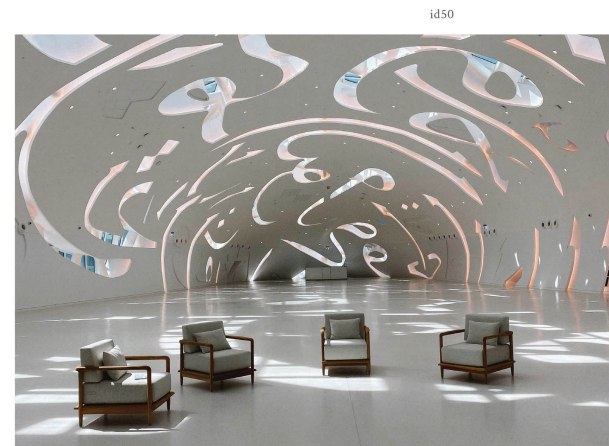




#### Killa Design

Killa Design – led by architect Shaun Killa – has finally revealed perhaps the most iconic architectural landmark to open in the region this year: the Museum of the Future in Dubai, with an avant-garde façade of stainless-steel and glass created using robotics and algorithms. The firm has also completed the dynamic The Address Beach Resort hotel tower in Dubai and is currently working on the Namaste 'W' Hotel and a project for the Red Sea Development.



#### Karim Nader

One of the key figures in contemporary Lebanese architecture, Karim Nader produces work that engages the natural surroundings of its sites with silent yet impactful interventions. The architect has recently completed a concrete and glass retreat that is immersed into the rocky landscape in Faqra, Lebanon. He has also recently published a cine-novel compiling 20 years of architectural practice and research, alongside a number of private residences in Beirut.



#### H2R Design

Brothers Hasan and Husain Roomi of boutique practice H2R Design are conscious of creating projects that are future-facing by adopting a sustainable approach through their choice of materiality and the ageing of the spaces they design. With a focus on hospitality, F&B and retail, the brothers have carved a niche for themselves within the regional design scene. Their recent projects include a funky coffee shop and Nette in Dubai, as well as the VIDA Beach Resort in Umm Al Quwain.









The TV room features the *Sengu* couch by Patricia Urquiola and the *Rio* coffee table by Charlotte Perriand - both for Cassina.

interiors



The home features a selection of contemporary furniture as seen here, including the *Rod* couch by Piero Lissoni for Living Divani and the *Drifting Lands* table, designed by Karim Nader for Dunovis.

The devastating explosion of 4 August 2020, which transformed the skyline of Beirut, has revealed a spirit of determination in many Lebanese people. Some have committed to working on sites affected by the destruction in order to continue looking forward and build the future. Lebanese architect Karim Nader – who leads his eponymous studio – is one of them. He has taken care of redesigning a one-storey apartment, which is nestled on the 14th floor of Les Domes de Sursock contemporary tower in a high-end residential and cultural area close to the Sursock Museum, which is currently under restoration.

The ample views of the Port of Beirut, Achrafieh hill, the city beyond and the northern area toward Mount Sannine were among the starting points for Nader. However, the collection of antiques that the homeowners – a couple in their 50s with a daughter – wanted to highlight in a highly contem-

porary interior was just as important for the creative concept.

"The clients' previous apartment in a nearby district was heavily damaged and they were eager to engage in an experimental process of design and object selection that would renew their whole lifestyle," Nader recounts.

A Chinese buffet, Salvador Dali serigraphs, a Lalique vase and six Utamaro prints – to name only a few of the pieces in the collection – reflect the eclectic taste of the homeowners, which the architect chose to soften by selecting pieces in old golden hues with black, bronze and earthy tones to create visual coherence. "We also curated a very limited number of paintings by Lebanese and European masters, mostly reframed in simple white, black or grey frames," Nader adds. "As for the contemporary furniture items, they were all selected to be in shades of white, off-white and light greys, in order to sharply complement the vintage items." »





This page, top: Nader combines Lebanese designer items, minimal contemporary European furniture pieces and muted artworks. Bottom: The bedroom features the LC4 lounge chair by Le Corbusier for Cassina, a painting by Reyes and the *Topography* shelving system by the designer himself





Left page: *Mark 01* dining table by Karina Sukar for Pamco Stone, *Cab* dining chairs by Mario Bellini for Cassina, *Grid* buffet by L'Inconnu, *Phoenician Pattern* bowl by Ounovis, *Jackie O* chandelier by Enzo Catellani for Catellani & Smith, painting by Kanaan, Paul Guiragossian and Sfeir, *Vpsilon* couch by Natuzzi. Right: *Rod* couch by Piero Lissoni for Living Divani, restored vintage Aubusson tapestries and *Drifting Londs* table by Karim Nader

Throughout the seven months it took to finalise the project, the idea of the complementarity and harmony created by merging highly ornate and complex pieces with simple and pure contemporary furniture and spaces guided every decision. The walls and ceilings were kept in pure white while the floor was adorned either in a slightly glossy white tile or in light wood, such as the parquet platform by the port side with the French oak bar by Thomas Trad.

This decor became the perfect backdrop for the *Ming's Heart* armchairs by Shi-Chieh Lu for Poltrona Frau, the *Rod* sofa by Piero Lissoni for Living Divani, the *Cab* dining chairs by Mario

Bellini for Cassina and the *Jackie O* chandelier by Enzo Catellani for Catellani & Smith, among others. Artworks by Paul Guiragossian, Jean Janssem, Sfeir, Kanaan and Abboud also adorn the different spaces, which comprise a generous reception area with a fireplace, a bar area/library, an ample dining room, kitchen and servicing areas, the parents' bedroom, a yoga/massage room, the daughter's bedroom, a guest bedroom and a family TV room. "The idea was to find the right balance between complexity and simplicity, order and disorder, texture and seamlessness, without overdoing any of them," explains Nader.

The spirit of the place and of the objects gathered by the homeowners – from their families and their travels, and gifts from their friends – clearly inspired the narrative. "The role of the architect is to bring coherence to those fragments by reassembling the puzzle in a renewed and joyful balance," Nader says. "A temple or a museum, an empty white room or an antique shop; it is at the middle-way between those polar contradictions (isn't Beirut the mother of all contradictions?) that one finds the empty present moment to enjoy, breathe and be grateful of a new chance for life to express itself." ■

