

Tarek El Kassouf

Tarek ElKassouf is a Lebanese designer based between Beirut and Sydney who creates in three disciplines: architecture, urban planning and product/furniture design. His work is inspired by Middle Eastern geometric patterns and is often spliced with futuristic parametric design. He began refining his third passion, furniture design, in 2014 with the launch of 'The Edge' series of furniture and lighting. His inaugural designs take a cue from the city of Beirut – a city always on the edge of instability, chaos and creativity. 'The Edge' is inspired by the designer's home-city, Beirut. It is an interpretation of a city that is vulnerable yet resilient and adaptable. This series tries to capture the essence of a city living on the edge through the contradiction of solid yet malleable steel designs. The designer's Middle Eastern upbringing and architectural background are woven into the series with the use of repetition of forms and geometric patterns often found in Arabic architecture. At the heart of this series is the cube. Each design takes the pure form of a cube, distorts, bends and twists it with such precision that if unbent and untwisted it would return to its original cube form. Three of the designs from 'The Edge' use the principle of repetition of forms with each unit able to fit together with other units into various shapes and forms to suit different tastes and layouts. The designer also researched the essence of the oriental light often seen in traditional Middle Eastern Souks, and implemented its principles in contemporary shapes for this series. These unique steel designs are handmade in Lebanon by highly skilled artisans. Only 20 pieces of each are being produced.

In 2015, Tarek was awarded the Silver A' Design Award in the Young Design Category for The Edge – Beirut in 2015. The Silver A' Design Award is a prestigious international award given to the top 5% of designs that exhibit an exemplary level of quality in design. Two of his works from the series, The Twisted Diamond Lamp and The Dark Edge Table were also awarded a Bronze A' Design Award and an A' Design Award respectively.

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