

FEATURE: MARION EELE. PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY OF THE ARTISTS

For its 2nd edition, *Saudi Design Week 2015* brought together some of the Kingdom's most promising design talent along with big names from across the region.

April 6 to 12 marked the second annual *Saudi Design Week*, organised by *Oasis Magazine* in partnership with the King Faisal Foundation for Research and Islamic Studies. Sisters Basma and Noura Bouzo established the event last year and are also the co-founders of *Oasis Magazine*. More than just a design fair, *Saudi Design Week* has come to be a celebration of Saudi art, culture and design with events spread across galleries and art spaces throughout Riyadh and Jeddah.

The main fair ran from April 6 to 9 and was held at the Faisaliah Resort, a luxury location just outside of Riyadh, which is yet to open to the public. The rich and varied programme was complemented with talks by some of Saudi Arabia's top talents and workshops on everything from card-making to sustainable design.

Here, *Trendesign* offers you a selection from the inspiring output on exhibit...

BANA FSAJEEL

Banafsajeel, a "creative platform supporting art and design across the GCC", certainly had the fair's most attention-grabbing exhibit.

Enticing yet Fractured Utopia by Kuwaiti-Indian designer Tahir Sultan is a modern reimagining of the traditional Bedouin tent, or Beit Sha'ar, but updated into a sensory overload replete with multicoloured beading, stitching and lights. Visitors could sit, enjoy refreshments and even hang a talisman with their own wish upon the tent walls.

The installation is part of Banafsajeel's ongoing project *Reinventing Heritage*, which encourages contemporary designers to approach traditional Arabian culture with fresh vision. It is the culmination of some thousand hours of work from 750 artisans; the designer was keen to highlight traditional skills and provide a viable income for marginalised communities in his native India.

Banafsajeel founder and curator Noor Aldabbagh explains that the tent is a metaphor for modern cities: overwhelming but retaining aspects of its heritage. "I knew I had to bring this beautiful installation to Saudi Arabia, where cities are transforming with the energy of a young, creative generation that doesn't shy away from putting its wishes out into the universe."



Folded Edge Lamp

TAREK ELKASSOUF

Lebanese designer Tarek ElKassouf presented pieces from his latest collection, *The Edge - Beirut Collection*. Of these, only 20 limited-editions have been produced of each design.

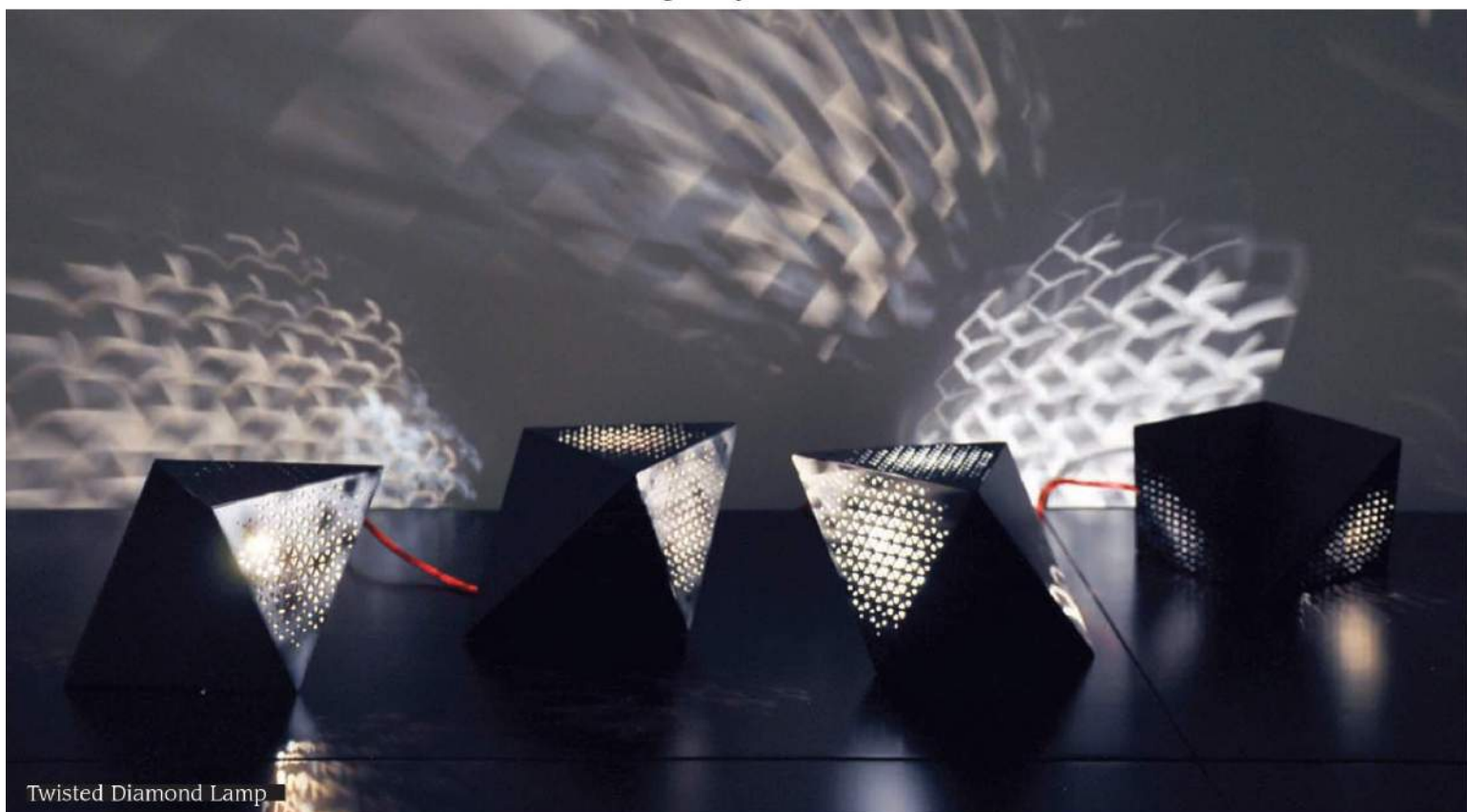
The Edge is intrinsically linked to its eponymous city; ElKassouf describes Beirut as a place "always on the edge of instability, chaos and creativity." He has reflected this contradictory state of being in his choice of material: steel, a substance that is rigidly solid yet can be bent easily to the designer's will.

He is influenced by aspects of the traditional Middle Eastern aesthetic but has interspersed them with futuristic parametric design principles, where changing an individual aspect can influence the whole outcome. His striking lamps each began with the "pure" form of a cube, then was distorted and manipulated into something new. The *Diamond Edge Lamp* takes on the appearance of a mashrabiyya, or traditional window lattice, while the *Folded Edge Lamp*'s golden interior emits a glow so soft it is almost celestial.

“ALWAYS
ON THE EDGE
OF INSTABILITY,
CHAOS AND
CREATIVITY”



Diamond Edge Lamp



Twisted Diamond Lamp