



ART & CULTURE

An expert guide to Editions Dubai

Ahead of the Middle East's first regional art fair, we speak to Art Dubai's artistic director about the artists to watch and the pieces to invest in.

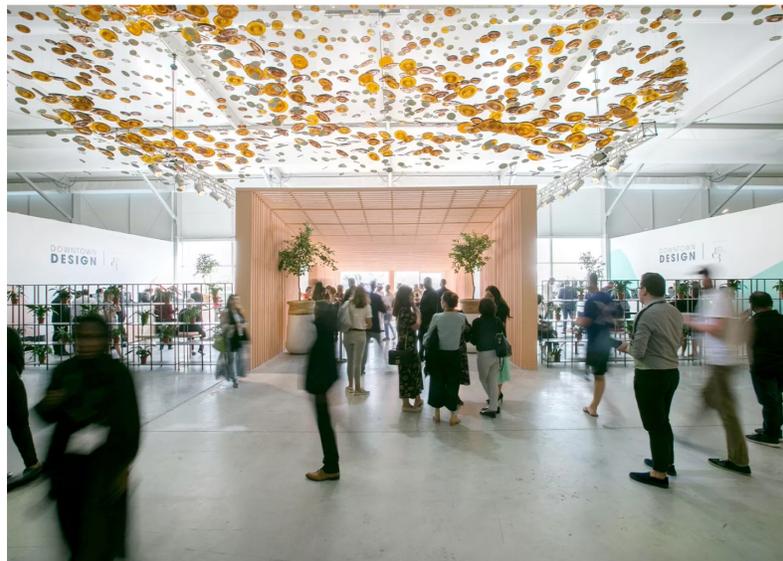
Words by **Isabella Craddock**
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Credit: Photography by Michael Clifford

Despite [Art Dubai](#) and Dubai Design Week being regular fixtures in the region's cultural calendar, Dubai is not always considered one of the Middle East's leading art hubs. But that's all about to change with the debut of Editions from 6th–9th November. Seemingly in response to an [influx of culture-hungry Dubaians](#) (and the decade-long push by Dubai Design Week to transform Dubai into a global design hub), Editions is the region's first-ever limited-edition art and design fair, showcasing 50 galleries, design studios, and collectives in contemporary design, photography, prints, ceramics, and works on paper.

As well as being the first fair in the region to focus on editioned artworks, it's also one of the most anticipated events at Dubai Design Week – which, given that the programme is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, is no mean feat. But Pablo del Val, Artistic Director at Art Dubai, thinks the arrival of Editions also reflects a greater, Dubai-wide interest in art and design.

'The city is at a cultural crossroads,' he says. 'With an influx of high-net-worth residents fuelling both the real estate market and a growing appetite for art and design, Dubai is a place of opportunity – and this surge has played a key role in shaping the city's cultural fabric. People are seeking meaningful, curated experiences, and that's exactly where Editions steps in.'



Dubai Design Week

What type of art will be shown at Editions?

Editions offers an intimate showcase of diverse, meticulously curated mediums, ranging from prints and contemporary design to photography and ceramics. Selected artists cover both the emerging and established and the affordable and the premium, with the aim to appeal to existing investors and collectors, thus bolstering the regional art scene – as well as capturing the attention of the region's growing cultural crowd.

'We look beyond surface-level trends, focusing on galleries that are rediscovering the richness of the region whilst also pushing boundaries through their exploration of diverse techniques and mediums,' explains del Val. 'We especially seek out galleries and artists that bring a unique perspective, those with the ability to blend tradition with innovation, and the capacity to challenge expectations.'



Linda Nieuwstad at Downtown Design 2024 (L) | India Mahdavi by Antoine Doyen (R)

What's in it for investors?

If you're someone who is drawn to bold, boundary-pushing art, you'll likely find the latest addition to your collection at Editions. There's as much a focus on connecting with the physical pieces as there is on seeing them as investments in your knowledge, lifestyle, and appreciation of creativity. Still, the fair isn't just aimed at veteran collectors; those just starting are also encouraged to discover works that genuinely resonate with them in today's ever-changing art world.



Credit: Augustine Paredes

'Look for pieces that resonate with your personal tastes and that speak to who you are as an individual rather than focusing solely on investment'

– Pablo del Val, Artistic Director at Art Dubai

'Editions stands out for its focus on enriching the collector's journey,' says del Val. 'Public tours provide insights into building and expanding portfolios, catering to both beginners and seasoned collectors and specialised talks are lined up to guide our audience through the exciting world of limited-edition pieces.'

'The fair offers a carefully curated selection that will inspire and enrich your understanding of art in new and inspiring ways,' he adds. 'The connection you build with each work is just as important as its value.'





Downtown Design 2023

Artists to invest in

Del Val's ones to watch include Aljoud Lootah, a four-time honouree on *Architectural Digest Middle East's* AD50 list who is known for her marriage of contemporary design with traditional Emirati culture and artisanal techniques. Another is Elsa Foulon, coveted by leading interior designers and represented by HESTIA Gallery. She recently made waves for her decoration of Michelin-starred chef Thierry Marx's new restaurant in Paris.

Another flourishing talent is Rosana Escobar, showcased by Ensō Art Gallery. 'She reinvents traditional Colombian fibres into captivating works of art. Her reimagining of fique as *OROBLANCO* showcases a beautiful fusion of craft and innovation, making her a prime pick for collectors looking for fresh, meaningful pieces,' says del Val.

Mark Hachem Gallery will feature, amongst others, the work of French visual artist Yves Hayat, whose work blurs the lines between photography, installation, and Narrative Figuration – an art movement that emerged in 1960s Paris, seemingly in reaction to the popularity of Pop Art.



Rosana Escobar 2024, image by Juan Merchan (R) | Elsa Foulon, courtesy of Hestia Gallery (L)

'Hayat's pieces provoke thought, blending the past with the present, beauty with horror, all through a lens of media and politics,' says del Val. 'For collectors drawn to bold, boundary-pushing art, this is a chance to invest in something truly impactful.'

In the contemporary design sphere, collective design gallery Blooker will showcase a collection by Nian Architects Studio, which reimagines minimalist, industrial components into refined furniture pieces.

'One standout is the *Sunrise Chair*, a sculptural work that captures the serene beauty of dawn,' says del Val. 'As for prints, British abstract artist Nat Bowen, renowned for her vibrant, multi-layered resin paintings, will unveil a limited-edition collection that draws on cutting-edge high rendering technology.'

As for del Val's advice for the avid, or new, collector and investor? Explore with an open mind and heart. 'Look for pieces that resonate with your personal tastes and that speak to who you are as an individual rather than focusing solely on investment', he insists. 'This way, your collection takes on a greater return as a true expression of your creativity.'



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