

BEIRUT DESIGN FAIR
20.09.17 / 24.09.17

DESIGN DEBUT

At last, Beirut gets a design fair to call its own – and its first edition is a hotbed of local talent

Words **RANIA HABIB**



You would be forgiven for thinking that Beirut has always had a design fair, given the ubiquitousness of Lebanese designers at regional exhibitions. In reality, the first edition of Beirut Design Fair was held this September, in parallel with the city's Art Fair, and showcased an engaging mix of emerging and established local design talent.

Gallerist Joy Mardini – a staunch 'defender of Lebanese design' – presented the works of Carla Baz, Charles Kalpakian and Beirut-based duo david/nicolas. The latter's 'visual reconstruction of Lebanese grandmothers' furniture' offered a fresh take on traditional household decor; standouts included the *Loulou* rocking chair and *Knefe* table, which playfully combine east and west, old and new.

Founded in 1913, woodwork specialist Boisseliers du Rif – now a third-generation family business – is globally renowned. Its exquisite *Arlequin* humidor gave heritage craft a contemporary spin, beautifully demonstrating the skills of the 50-plus artisans in its Beirut atelier. Lined in Spanish cedar wood on the inside and decorated in a marquetry of tinted diamond-shaped veneers, the humidor can be reconfigured into a jewellery box, a tea or coffee caddy, or customised.



1. A 'defender of Lebanese design', gallerist Joy Mardini showcased Beirut-based duo david/nicolas amongst other local designers 2. Design platform Albi offered a fresh take on a historical Phoenician shape with the Breek, a carafe used to serve the Levantine spirit Arak

