

AHEC and Khalid Shafar to collaborate on installation for upcoming Downtown Design

***Respected Emirati designer works with American cherry and soft maple to create
an installation in memory of the 45 brave UAE soldiers who died in Yemen***

October 09, 2015 - The American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC), the leading international trade association for the American hardwood industry and respected Emirati designer Khalid Shafar are collaborating on an installation for Downtown Design 2015, which will take place from October 27 - 30, at Dubai Design District (d3). This is the second collaboration between AHEC and Khalid Shafar and will see the designer taking some of AHEC's key messages to a different emotional level. Exposing two important American hardwood species, Shafar plans to use American cherry and soft maple to craft a memorial installation specifically designed for the event.

"This installation reflects on the recent tragedy the United Arab Emirates experienced for the first time in its military history, where 45 of its brave soldiers lost their lives during their mission in Yemen and commemorates those brave and unforgotten Emirati soldiers. Through this installation, I want to contribute to the documentation of the UAE's generosity of its own lives for the welfare of its nation and its future generations," said Khalid Shafar.

Downtown Design is the only platform in the Middle East for the region's trade professionals to discover original, high quality design from all over the world and a key element of Dubai Design Week. In its third edition, the fair will take place at the Dubai Design District and present a carefully edited roster of established and emerging brands across a range of product categories; including furniture, lighting, bathrooms, kitchens, textiles and accessories. Fostering greater interaction, connectivity and commercial opportunity, Downtown Design is dedicated to providing a dynamic environment for buyers and brands to do business easily and efficiently.

"This is our second collaboration with Khalid Shafar and builds on prior initiatives in the Middle East and internationally, which have aimed at creatively promoting American hardwoods, and have involved the likes of Zaha Hadid, David Adjaye, Matteo Thun, Sou Fujimoto, Norman Foster and Paul Smith amongst others. Building on the experience of having worked with Shafar, this project is very much about the versatility of American hardwoods. AHEC's continued support for creative design events such as Downtown Design and Dubai Design Week demonstrates the performance potential of this sustainable material and provides valuable inspiration," said Roderick Wiles, AHEC Director for Africa, Middle East, South Asia and Oceania.

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About AHEC:

The American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC) is the leading international trade association for the U.S. hardwood industry, representing the committed exporters among U.S. hardwood companies and all the major U.S. hardwood production trade associations. AHEC runs a worldwide programme to promote American hardwoods in over 50 export markets, concentrating on providing architects, specifiers, designers and end-users with technical information on the range of species, products and sources of supply. In addition, AHEC also produces a full range of technical publications. For more information, please visit: www.americanhardwood.org.

About Khalid Shafar

Khalid Shafar is a leading Emirati object and furniture designer. As a business graduate of the American University in Dubai, Khalid worked in marketing and communication for almost seven years. In 2005, he completed a degree in Fine Arts in Interior Design and by the end of 2009 had decided to leave marketing and follow his passion for design. Since then, he has studied and specialized in Furniture & Objects design, first at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design in London, UK, and then at the Centre for Fine Woodworking in Nelson, New Zealand.

In 2011 Khalid opened his own studio in Dubai and in November 2012, he inaugurated his first showcase space 'KASA'. Khalid's approach to design encompasses his personal expression of form, movement, emotion, and in particular, 'the tale' of objects. Simple lines mixed with rich details and fine materials are the hallmarks of a Khalid Shafar object. It is a revival of the 50s, 60s, and 70s avant-garde sleek styling re-interpreted with today's furnishing trends. For more information, please visit: www.khalidshafar.com.

About Downtown Design

Held under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikh Latifa bint Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-Chairman of Dubai Culture & Arts Authority, and in partnership with the Dubai Design District (d3), Downtown Design celebrates its third edition as the commercial centerpiece of the first Dubai Design Week. The trade fair is one of the fastest growing in the world. It has doubled its footprint since 2014 and will this year host over 90 exhibitors from more than 25 different countries across 15 different product categories. It will also introduce to the region for the first time 18 emerging brands, being presented by six international Design Weeks, as part of the Destinations initiative. Positioned as a fair of discovery, Downtown Design has launched a bespoke buyers programme to ensure trade visitors enjoy a productive and efficient experience. For more information, please visit: www.downtowndesign.com