



Banafsajeel unveils *Reinventing Heritage* installation at Saudi Design Week

Contemporary take on traditional Arabian tent designed by Tahir Sultan showcases the work of 750 artisans

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, May 2015: Banafsajeel, a creative platform supporting art and design across the GCC is pleased to announce its interactive outdoor installation featuring a tent designed by the renowned Tahir Sultan. The installation is part of Banafsajeel's project named *Reinventing Heritage* and will be displayed in Saudi Design Week taking place in Al Faisaliah Hotel Riyadh on May 6-9, 2015. It will feature a traditional Arabian tent reworked in a contemporary fashion along with an Arabic seating area (Jalsa) serving refreshments by the Barbecue Joint. The installation is sponsored by Saudi Icon, the leading boutique construction and fit-out company in Saudi Arabia.

Banafsajeel's *Reinventing Heritage* project showcases contemporary designers who work with artisans to bring a fresh vision to traditional Arab heritage. Designer Tahir Sultan's contribution, *Enticing yet Fractured Utopia*, is a fully handmade traditional Arabian tent or *Beit Sha'ar* that illuminates in the dark. It reflects the detailed craftsmanship of over 750 artisans, of which 500 are women. The designer, a half-Kuwaiti and half-Indian, wanted to support and empower women who keep handicrafts alive. The tent took over 1000 hours of work to create and showcases the skill of artisans based in different villages in India, who contributed to the project's creation.

The tent acts as a metaphor for cities today. Like a sprawling growing urban metropolis, it is filled with vivacious colors and patterns of elaborate stitching and beading that throw the viewer into sensory overload. The Arabic words on the inside are poetic and of different sentiments; some political, some inspirational and some sarcastic, interspersed with Arabic slang and every day jargon. Visitors may write a wish on a talisman and hang it in the tent, which will travel to different cities collecting wishes.

Saudi Design Week's main exhibition includes over 30 exhibitors and is expected to attract 10,000 visitors over the course of the week. Banafsajeel has joined as a strategic not-for-profit partner, unveiling its interactive outdoor installation for the first time in Saudi Arabia.



Notes to editors:

About Banafsajeel

Banafsajeel is a creative platform supporting art and design across the GCC. Founded by Noor Aldabbagh, it facilitates creative collaborative projects with a social twist. The name Banafsajeel comes from the Arabic word for the color violet, and also reads as “in the same generation”. Banafsajeel’s current project *#ReinventingHeritage* engages creatives from the GCC who put a unique contemporary twist on our traditional heritage.

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