

# brownbook

Number 008 - MARCH / APRIL 2008

## Developing Trends

*A focus on new cultures & talents*

ISSN 1994-9642



9 771994 964005

ALWAYS USE DIVINE DESIGN  
THE ART OF CLOTHING DESIGN  
www.divinedesign.com

الدين الحضري للشرق الاوسط  
*an urban guide to the middle east*

**House 001**  
**Dubai, UAE**

*writer . Linah Tan*  
*photographer . DND LAB*







Whilst the location and owner of House 001 prefer to remain illusive, its stark, contemporary design is something that is on show for all to see. This is a house that stands out amidst its surroundings – a sleek, singular subject with clean lines and bold shapes.

Although the house projects an overall striking appearance, the house is a creation that has been formed from a simple series of shapes. Many people who view the house will be surprised to discover that there aren't any noticeable external features or gimmicks attached to the house – the entire house paints an image of uncluttered continuity. What really sets the house apart is the way the different sections of the building relate to each other.

House 001 was designed by the award-winning architect Khalid Alnajjar. Alnajjar is a well-known figure on the Middle East design circuit and is also the founder of dxb.lab, an architecture practice that is based out of Dubai.

After completing his architecture degrees at Columbia University and the Southern California Institute of Architecture, Alnajjar returned to Dubai and commandeered the detail-planning unit at Dubai Municipality until 2006. It was during this time that Alnajjar worked extensively on shaping the urban landscape of Dubai.

Due to the rapid growth of development in Dubai, the city's relationship with design has increased rapidly within the last 10 years. As the urban landscape of the city has developed, so has the style and appearance of many personal dwellings across Dubai. Houses such as House 001 are slowly becoming a regular feature on the local landscape and have proven to be quite unique developments for the Dubai housing scene. Currently, Najjar is working on a series of apartment buildings as well as a new sales gallery for the Dubai World Trade Center.

Nonetheless, Najjar remarks that House 001 started as a mere alteration. "This project had an interesting beginning – an architect friend of mine had referred the client to me and when I met him, he already had a design done by another architect, but he wasn't satisfied with the design. After a couple of hours we decided to start completely from scratch, and two years later the client had a completely new house!"

Najjar's design took 15 months to complete. When

asked what his inspirations were for the house, he states "The use of traditional elements and translating them into contemporary condition."

Claiming 'budget' as "an interesting and positive challenge", the final design outcome was a strong visual result and Najjar claims his favorite feature to be "the protruding element with a standalone wash basin." House 001 has also been described at the dxb-lab as an 'Animated Domestic stage set.'

Taking a closer look, the house begins with open layout that greets the guests as soon as they step through the door and onto the ground floor. The ground floor appears to be incorporated with the rest of the house and

eventually turns into a number of different living spaces. This specific effect was created by using different framing devices around the house.

There is a prevalent use of windows throughout the house, giving the house the appearance of an 'exhibition case'. These features can be seen from the main entrance of the house, where the doorway and exhibition vitrine are housed within the window frame.

After this vitrine, you are led into the main lounge room of the house. This major space is followed by the courtyard. Here, Najjar has applied a modern twist on a traditional idea. In place of a standard courtyard, lies a

transparent connector that joins all the spaces together into one visual effect.

House 001 projects an imposing image when viewed with its local environment. Najjar describes the house as one that "basically shields itself from its "natural" surroundings."

[www.dxb-lab.com](http://www.dxb-lab.com)



*Houses such as House 001 are slowly becoming a regular feature on the local landscape and have proven to be quite unique developments for the Dubai housing scene.*

