

DESIGN & ARCHITECTURE

In The Studio: Chapter Studio



Shima Samaei's world of design straddles minimalism, functionality and artisanal tradition

Words by Laura Cherrie Beaney in [Design & Architecture](#) · Jun 13th, 2023

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Shima Samaei first specialised in furniture design before extending Chapter Studio towards interior design and architecture. Her approach to design connects seemingly disparate aesthetic influences that come together in symphony.

Through her gaze, the functional simplicity of the Bauhaus movement meets the intricacy associated with the MENA region. Shima's Golestan console charts minimalist and contemporary design codes while paying tribute to Iran's Golestan Palace while her Persepolis table retains simple architectural expression with a nod towards the pillars that one might encounter in the ancient city of Persepolis. Her studio's name suggests that for Shima, design should tell a story; so we sit down with her to discover hers.

Shima: I'm a multi-cultural powerhouse, blending my Iranian (Kurdish) and French heritage with my love for the vibrant city of Dubai. I followed my true passion for design,



When I'm not cultivating beautiful interiors, I'm a proud mom to my adorable one-year-old and a loving wife to my supportive husband. Balancing my passions, family life and career is challenging but it's a challenge that fuels me and keeps me inspired.

My design aesthetic is heavily influenced by my background and my exposure to different cultures and experiences. I often fuse traditional Iranian design elements and pair them with modern and contemporary styles to create a unique aesthetic.

I find inspiration in everything around me. A fusion between cultures is central to everything that I create - this eclectic blend is what makes my work truly unique.



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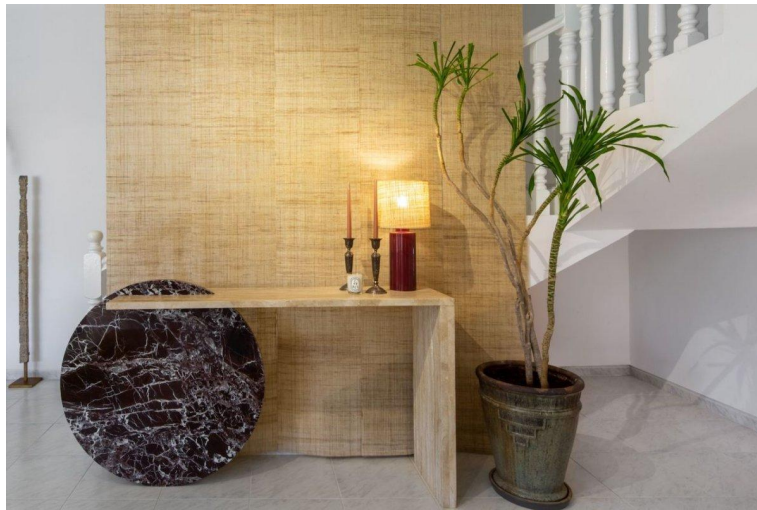
Chapter Studio began while I was working full-time. It has blossomed into a successful design practice that I'm incredibly proud of. I approach design in a fluid and dynamic



I recently expanded Chapter Studio's offerings to include interior design services. It's an exciting new chapter for me to explore. This shift has afforded me the opportunity to not only create beautiful spaces but to also incorporate Chapter's bespoke designs and other pieces in a way that elevates the overall aesthetic.

When I first started I was drawn to using stones as the primary materials in my designs. I love the raw, natural quality of stone - each piece is truly unique. As my practice has grown, I've experimented with materials that span wood, metal, and fabric. Each new project is an opportunity for me to study new materials and their boundaries.

My audience is diverse, with a strong presence in the European and American markets. I work with incredible galleries such as Galerie Philia, StudioTwentySeven and platforms such as Rose Crosby, and 1stdibs. I'm constantly meeting new people who share my passion for design. One of the things I love most about my job is the variety of people that I get to work with and learn from, from individual collectors to large interior architecture firms.



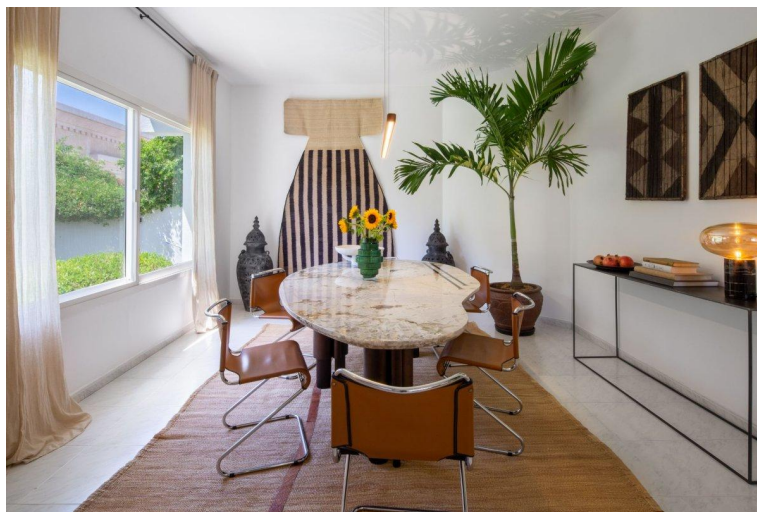
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way, which has greatly impacted my approach to design. Axel Vervoordt's work is known for its simplicity, natural materials, and the use of light and shadow, which inspires me to create minimalist designs that are grounded in nature.

I'm also influenced by the work of Jeff Koons and Iranian artist, Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian. Jeff Koons' sculptures are playful, colourful, and a great example of how art and design can co-exist. Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian's use of geometric shapes and mirrors to create intricate designs is fascinating and inspiring. I also find the work of Iranian sculptor, Behdad Lahooti, interesting particularly his unique application of materials and the storytelling behind his creations.

When it comes to contemporary design I admire the work of Jean Nouvel, especially his design for the Abu Dhabi Louvre. His designs are bold and innovative, Gaetano Pesce's iconic UP5 Chair for B&B Italia is another favourite of mine - I adore its playful and unconventional design. Charlotte Kingsnorth's Squishy Thonet II is another contemporary design that speaks to me, it embodies simplicity and functionality while remaining visually stunning.



For me a design must be both beautiful and functional, serving a purpose and fulfilling a need.

