

Noor Riyadh: Annual festival of light and art launches this year's edition in spectacular fashion

- *Daan Roosegaarde's awe-inspiring 'Waterlicht' laser installation projection – a dream landscape about the power and poetry of water – light up Salam Park on Thursday night*
- *Marc Brickman, resident artist at the Empire State Building, has brought two stunning and thought-provoking aerial light installations, using drones, to King Abdullah Park*
- *Noor Riyadh runs from November 3 - 19, 2022, with an accompanying exhibition 'From Spark to Spirit' from November 3, 2022 - February 4, 2023*

Riyadh, November 3, 2022 – Noor Riyadh, one of the world's most exciting light and art festivals, has launched this year's edition in a blaze of light, color, glory, and stunningly spectacular attractions.

The grand ignition moment took place on Thursday at Salam Park, one of Noor Riyadh's five main hubs, as crowds flocked to see just some of the work illuminating the burgeoning arts and culture scene in Saudi Arabia.

Daan Roosegaarde's awe-inspiring *Waterlicht* laser installation projection at Salam Park – a dream landscape about the power and poetry of water – was a perfect backdrop to light up Noor Riyadh 2022, which runs from November 3 to 19.

Architect Khalid Al-Hazani, Executive Director of Riyadh Art, said: "Held under the theme 'We Dream of New Horizons', this year's edition of the festival reflects the vision of His Royal Highness, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to attract more than 130 artists from 40 countries worldwide. Foremost among them are our national Saudi talents, who represent 34 percent of the total artists participating in the event.

"Noor Riyadh 2022 hosts a larger and more diverse field of artistic and creative works – with over 190 inspirational creative artworks to be set up in 40 locations across the city of Riyadh. More than 500 events will be taking place across the city during the festival, enabling a truly enriching and immersive experience for one of the world's largest celebrations in the field of light arts."

The five main hubs for Noor Riyadh 2022 are: the Diplomatic Quarter, King Abdullah Financial District (KAFFD), Salam Park, JAX – a new creative zone in the capital city – and King Abdullah Park. In addition, the exhibition 'From Spark to Spirit', to be held at the JAX 03, will open on November 3 and run until February 4 next year.

At Salam Park, though the performance of *Waterlicht*, which runs for the duration of the festival, was hugely appreciated by the watching crowds, its thought-provoking message sounded loud and clear: *Waterlicht* speaks to the impact of climate change. As a virtual flood, it

shows how high the water level could reach, and as a collective experience reminds us of the importance of water innovation and the impact of climate change.

Roosegaarde explained: “If we cannot imagine the better sustainable future that we all crave, then we also cannot create it. We have to wonder, to think, to dream and then we can engineer to construct it. We rarely talk about the future anymore. I love Noor Riyadh because it is public and an exception is that it is for everyone, it can inspire change. Art is not about decoration but activation. It should create a moment when you are curious about the future, not scared.”

There were moments to live long in the memory, meanwhile, for those fortunate enough to be at King Abdullah Park on Thursday night, as Marc Brickman’s drone show lit up the night skies.

The globally renowned Brickman, the resident artist at the Empire State Building, and whose work includes productions for Paul McCartney, Bruce Springsteen, Whitney Houston and iconic visuals for Pink Floyd, mesmerized all those watching with his display.

Brickman has brought two aerial light installations, using drones as his medium, to Noor Riyadh – with interaction from members of the public hugely encouraged. *KALEIDOSCOPE* explores the absurdity of human construction through technology and features an interactive element in its choreography.

The order of chaos: chaos in order, features a swarm of 2,000 drones. Guided by the music, the drone swarm will rise into the skies over King Abdullah Park in apparent chaos. But as in nature, the swarm coalesces, ebbs and flows, through a poetically ordered hierarchy. It runs weekends, on November 4,5,10,11,12 and 17,18,19 at King Abdullah Park from 9pm.

Brickman commented: “What I have created is a call and response game, and by clicking on *KALEIDOSCOPE* on the Noor Riyadh app, viewers will be able to push buttons and respond to what the drones are saying to them. Anybody within eyesight of the installation will be able to play. It’s a unique event – this is the first time this has been done”.

“The idea came to me during the pandemic and is a way for people to come together using technology, rather than technology leading people. It is technology bringing human interaction and conversation together. My message to the people of Saudi Arabia experiencing my work at Noor Riyadh is to use their minds and have fun.”

Noor Riyadh, however, is not the first opportunity for which the well-traveled Brickman has visited Saudi Arabia or indeed its capital city. Some 24 years ago, Brickman worked with Sir Norman Foster as a consultant designing Riyadh’s Al Faisaliah Tower (which, ironically, plays a big role in another Noor Riyadh highlight attraction entitled *Pulse of Light*.) Brickman has never managed to see the finished tower in person until now – something he was delighted to do.

Brickman said: “It felt wonderful seeing it. The progress of the country is unbelievable. This is reflected in the length of the Noor Riyadh festival and the number of artists attending – it is very impressive. We are all looking forward to what will be an incredible spectacle. Art is a way to bring international talent to Riyadh and Saudi Arabia, while enabling the world to witness the beautiful art that exists in this country.”



More information on Noor Riyadh 2022 is available on noorriyadh.sa and the Noor Riyadh App.

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Notes to editors

About Noor Riyadh

Noor Riyadh is a citywide annual festival of light and art which launched in March 2021. The 2022 theme, *'We Dream of New Horizons'*, alludes to a reflective hopeful future and refers to the shining light of dreams. The 2022 edition of the festival includes over 190 artworks by more than 130 artists – with 34% from Saudi Arabia – including large scale public installations, projections and interventions across the city of Riyadh, as well as a world-class exhibition entitled *'From Spark to Spirit'*. Artworks will be accompanied by a diverse public and community program, including tours, talks, workshops, family activities and music.

Noor Riyadh combines the highest quality light artworks from leading international and Saudi artists, across the largest city footprint of any light art festival worldwide. Staged under Riyadh Art, the festival aims to nurture local talent and inspire youth to drive Saudi Arabia's creative economy.

Noor Riyadh 2022 will take place in the following locations: King Abdullah Park, Salam Park, Diplomatic Quarter, JAX District, KAFD, Bayt AlMalaz, Al Masmak, Aladel Square, Imam Muhammad bin Saud Square, Riyadh High Court, Wadi Namar, Kindi Square, Oud Square, Yamamah Park, Asheeh Park, Cultural Palace, Wadi Hanifah, The Ritz-Carlton, Riyadh, Olaya Park, King Fahad National Library, Narcissus Riyadh Hotel, Centria Mall, Al Faisaliah Tower, Kingdom Centre, Majdoul Tower, Ghadeer Walking Trail, The Zone, Digital City, U Walk, Al Nakheel Park, Boulevard Riyadh City, JAX District Valley, King Abdulaziz Center for National Dialogue, Nada South Park, Alwaha Park, as well as Prince Abdulaziz bin Muhammad bin Ayyaf Park, Riyadh Front, King Khalid International Airport, Riyadh Exhibition & Convention Center, and Lakes Park

Website: <http://noorriyadh.sa>
Instagram: [@noorriyadhfestival](https://www.instagram.com/noorriyadhfestival)
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Noor Riyadh is presented by Riyadh Art and the Royal Commission for Riyadh City.

About Riyadh Art

Riyadh, the capital city of Saudi Arabia, is on a ten-year mission to become one of the world's most livable and competitive cities, a global city which is open for business and that welcomes the world. With a young and rapidly growing population of 7+ million residents, Riyadh is transforming into a vibrant and cosmopolitan global city.

Art and culture reflect the spirit of a city. That's why the Riyadh Art project has been developed to turn the whole capital into a creative canvas – a gallery without walls – to enrich lives, ignite creative expression and kindle the creative economy. Riyadh Art is a demonstration of the open, accessible and creative transformation of the capital, where the exchange of ideas through creative expression, develops a deeper mutual understanding and respect.

The Riyadh Art project will have a positive impact on people, bringing everyday moments of joy to residents and visitors alike, while instilling a greater sense of civic pride and creating a more beautiful city for everyone to enjoy. It will also spark the development of the new creative economy and have a positive effect in attracting new businesses to invest in the city.

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