



## **Noor Riyadh: Annual festival of light and art ready to illuminate Saudi Arabia's capital city, with 190 artworks by more than 130 local and international artists**

- *Noor Riyadh runs from November 3 - 19, 2022, with an accompanying exhibition 'From Spark to Spirit' from November 3, 2022 - February 4, 2023*
- *Diverse public program of 500 activities, including talks, creative workshops, art trails and more, are available for the local community and international visitors*

**Riyadh, November 2, 2022** – Noor Riyadh, one of the world's most exciting light and art festivals, opens on Thursday, November 3 with over 190 artworks by more than 130 artists from Saudi Arabia and around the world.

Running until November 19, the festival will illuminate Riyadh with immersive site-specific installations, monumental public artworks, ephemeral sculptures, art trails, virtual reality, building projections and drone shows taking place across 40 locations and five hubs in the city.

Noor Riyadh 2022 brings together renowned names in light art, who will present their works alongside a roster of emerging and established local artists, for many of whom light is new to their artistic mediums. Themed '**We Dream of New Horizons**', which centers on hopefulness for the future, the festival is co-curated by **Hervé Mikaeloff**, **Dorothy Di Stefano** and **Jumana Ghouth**.

In addition, Noor Riyadh 2022 features a public program with more than 500 activities, including talks, workshops, creative experiences, guided tours, live music concerts, an online charity auction, and more. Expansive and welcoming to all, the program appeals to local communities, from families to artists, to students and professionals, as well as international audiences from across the globe.

Developed with the aim of nurturing local talent and amplifying Saudi Arabia's cultural economy, Noor Riyadh is part of Riyadh Art, a wider initiative by the Royal Commission for Riyadh City. It is an initiative that seeks to transform the Saudi capital into a "gallery without walls", with more than 1,000 public art installations to be spread out across the city through its 10 programs and two annual events.

Speaking at a press briefing ahead of the opening, **Nouf AlMoneef, the Noor Riyadh Project Manager**, said: "Noor Riyadh is a shining example of how art and culture can be a force for connection and expression. This edition is bigger and more ambitious than its predecessor, showcasing fascinating pieces of light art from around the world. To see everyone come together to marvel at unique artworks and engage with the festival's message of hope reflects Saudi Arabia's aspirations towards transformation and openness."

## MONUMENTAL AND SITE-SPECIFIC ARTWORKS EXHIBITION

The festival features at least 90 new commissions, including new, never-before-seen works by Saudi artists **Rashed AlShashai, Daniah AlSaleh, Ayman Zedani, Sarah Brahim, and Basmah Felemban**. AlShashai's monumental piece reflects on climate change, while AlSaleh's AI-driven video projection draws from popular love songs in the Middle East.

Noor Riyadh will show the breadth of Saudi talent, both emerging and established. Social media star **Warchieff**, real name **Mohammed AlHamdan**, ventures into art with his interactive piece *Walking Lights*, which will add vibrancy to pedestrian movement in Riyadh's Olaya Street. Meanwhile, **Muhannad Shono**, one of the Kingdom's most prominent artists, will take over an entire building in Riyadh Malaz, filling it with light, thread and sound to create an immersive experience.

From the international sphere, artists such as **Yann Kersalé, Marc Brickman, and artist duo Quiet Ensemble** are bringing awe-inspiring artworks that fuse light, technology, sound, and choreography on a massive scale, incorporating interactive elements into their presentations.

Other artworks will inject new creative life into the city's corporate spaces, exploring how the medium of glass influences visitors' experience of light-based, immersive and interactive artworks. These include monumental pieces by artists **Sabine Marcelis, Daniel Buren** and **Douglas Gordon**.

## 'FROM SPARK TO SPIRIT' EXHIBITION

The festival's accompanying exhibition entitled *'From Spark to Spirit'* takes place from November 3, 2022 to February 4, 2023 at JAX 03 (JAX District), Riyadh, and is curated by **Neville Wakefield** (lead curator) and **Gaida AlMogren** (associate curator). The exhibition traces the role of light as a signal for change, exploring themes such as the 'Technologies of Light', 'Architectonics of Light' and 'Consciousness of Light'.

Among the highlights of the exhibition is anonymous artist **Norma Jeane's** *Self*, a disco-inspired interactive sculpture that responds to the audience's movement. The work features a musical collaboration with Saudi-based DJ Viva.

Also included are **Refik Anadol's** *Machine Dreams*, a multi-channel installation filled with fantastical visions from generative networks, and **Larry Bell's** *The Blue Gate*, that allows visitors to experience the interplay of shadow and light within two cubic structures.

## LIVE MUSIC, TALKS, WORKSHOPS AND MORE

Noor Riyadh's comprehensive public program includes an incredible array of live musical acts, with the concerts helping to celebrate the long-standing connection between music and art. Performances are scheduled from the likes of Lebanese singer



**Dana Hourani**, who begins the live music series on November 3, Saudi Arabia's rising R&B star **Tamtam**, and **DesertFish**, an audio-visual artist who represents his Najdi roots and life on the Red Sea coast.

Discover the festival artworks in-depth through engaging guided tours of the five hubs – King Abdullah Park, Salam Park, Diplomatic Quarter, JAX District, and KAFD. Each tour will delve into the stories behind impressive artworks, including *Amplexus* by **Grimanesa Amoros** and **Flightgraf's** immersive *An Imaginative World*.

Workshops are key components of Noor Riyadh, with architecture, illumination, and calligraphy opportunities all on offer. Participants can venture into performance art, experiment with photographic and video techniques, and learn how to make their own camera obscura.

Meanwhile, creative experiences such as artist-led tours, an artistic hunt, and even a four-day collaborative installation activity are also available.

Talks and panel discussions in both Arabic and English will take place throughout the festival, with topics ranging from technology in art, lucid dreaming, meditative practices, and Noor Riyadh's curatorial themes.

With learning and development for everyone a key cornerstone for Noor Riyadh, a multitude of family activities – such as Rainbows, Magnetic Marvels and We Light Riyadh – encourage creativity and imaginative thinking for children.

### **ART FOR A CAUSE: ONLINE CHARITY AUCTION**

This year, Noor Riyadh's charity auction brings together four major Saudi artists – **Ahmed Mater**, **Moath AIOfi**, **Rashed AlShashai**, and **Saad AlHowede**, with four Riyadh-based charities, Aleradah Org, Saudi Alzheimer's Disease Association, AlNahda, and International Rehabilitation Team. All are working together to produce pieces that will be displayed and eventually put up for auction to benefit the charities' art programs. The artworks will go on sale through the Saudi-based art market platform Atrum from November 14 – 15.

More information on Noor Riyadh 2022 is available on [riyadhart.sa](http://riyadhart.sa) and on the Noor Riyadh app.

**ENDS**

**For more information regarding Riyadh Art and Noor Riyadh, please contact:**

Riyadh Art Media Center  
[info@riyadhart.sa](mailto:info@riyadhart.sa)



## **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, AlNada 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.

Website: [www.riyadhart.sa](http://www.riyadhart.sa)

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