



Press Release

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EXHIBITION OF ZAHA HADID'S FIRST COMPLETED PROJECT OUTSIDE THE UK OPENS AT ZAHA HADID FOUNDATION

Zaha's Moonsoon: An Interior in Japan

20 April – 22 July 2023, Thursdays to Saturdays

The Zaha Hadid Foundation will present the exhibition, *Zaha's Moonsoon: An Interior in Japan*, which explores the design story of the Moonsoon bar and restaurant (1989-90), Zaha Hadid's first completed project outside of the UK, opening on **20 April 2023**. Drawing on the rich archival material from ZHF, the exhibition offers a rare insight into the conception of an early key project by Hadid, from its initial brief to its final built form.

In 1980s Japan, a booming economy presented new opportunities for international architects and designers to create buildings and interiors catering to a new group of style-conscious urbanites. Like much of Hadid's early work, Moonsoon drew inspiration from the early twentieth-century avant-garde movement in Russia, in particular the works of Kazimir Malevich, whose abstract and geometric shapes were translated into a series of twisted, exploded, and layered architectural forms. This project also incorporates design references such as 1950s French Picon liquor commercials, the works of Alexander Calder, and photocopies of orange peel and pasta. Such eclectic sources represent cultural hybridity as well as a sense of playfulness, qualities which were integral to the vibrant design scene in Japan.

Zaha's Moonsoon is a case study of an important early project, whose themes were prevalent in unrealised designs in Japan such as the commercial projects Tomigaya (1986) and Azabu-Jyuban (1987) and influenced later built works such as the Osaka Folly (1990). Central to the exhibition is the painting series of *Interior Concepts* (1989-90) that explores the possibilities of the site and its design concept. Other highlights include an innovative presentation model by artist Daniel Chadwick and *Moonsoon sofa* (1990), an integral part of the interior's gravity-defying scheme. Also on show is a newly commissioned video work based on materials in the archive, by graphic designer Marwan Kaabour. Together, these objects offer an insight into the process, presentation, and perception of Hadid's first completed project outside of the UK.

Professor Paul Greenhalgh, ZHF Inaugural Director, said: “Our latest exhibition showcases the creative processes behind one of Zaha Hadid’s earliest and less well-known projects. Moonsoon was created at the time of the incredible explosion of the Japanese economy, and the design boom that accompanied it. Japan provided opportunities for emerging architects to work on experimental projects. For the Foundation, it is a chance for us to dive deep into the archives, and highlight works rarely seen before.”

This exhibition is produced by the Zaha Hadid Foundation (ZHF) and is accompanied by a public programme that includes talks and events.

Exhibition Information

Dates: Thursday 20 April – Saturday 22 July 2023

Opening hours: Thursday to Saturday, 12-6pm

Free admission

Instagram: @zahahadidfoundation

Facebook: Zaha Hadid Foundation

Press Enquiries

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Public Programme

The Design of Zaha Hadid’s Moonsoon

Thursday 15th June 2023, 6-7.30pm

This talk invites former collaborators from Zaha Hadid’s early years of practice to discuss the beginnings of the firm and its early projects, in particular the creation of the Moonsoon bar and restaurant’s interior.

Symposium: Designing Restaurants and Bars

Friday 16th June 2023, 10.30am-5pm

A day of talks and panel discussions in collaboration with the Modern Interiors Research Centre, Kingston University, exploring the design and cultural history of hospitality spaces including pubs, bars and nightclubs.

LFA Studio late

Friday 16th June 2023, 6-8pm

A chance to view the exhibition as part of the London Festival of Architecture's Studio Late programme in Clerkenwell.

Hybridity and Exchange: Japanese Fashion in Europe in the 1980s and 90s

Thursday 22nd June 2023, 6-7.30pm

This talk by curator and author Claire Wilcox (Professor of Fashion Curation at London College of Fashion) will explore how an increased awareness of Japan's economic power in the 1980s coincided with its fashion becoming an even more desirable commodity in the West.

About the Curator

Johan Deurell is the Exhibitions Officer at Zaha Hadid Foundation. Previously he was the Curator of Contemporary and Modern Design at Röhsska Museum of Design and Craft, Gothenburg, where he curated critically acclaimed exhibitions *Lap-See Lam* (2023), *Migration – the Journeys of Objects* (2022), *Forensic Architecture: Design as Investigation* (2020), *Ocean Plastics* (2019), and *Unmaking Democratic Design* (2019). Prior to this he has worked on exhibitions for Somerset House, Victoria and Albert Museum, New Orleans Museum of Art and Design, and Liljevalchs Konsthall, Stockholm, among others.

About the Exhibition Designer

Marwan Kaabour is an independent graphic designer and visual artist from Beirut, living and working in London. His work with institutions, brands and individuals in the art and cultural sector ranges from creating visual identities, publication, and exhibition design, to marketing campaigns, wayfinding systems and art direction for both print and online projects.

Marwan has a master's degree in graphic design from the London College of Communication and has previously worked for Barnbrook – one of the UK's most formidable and celebrated design agencies – as Designer and later Senior Designer. In 2019, he launched Takweer, a platform that explores queer narratives in Arab history and popular culture. He founded his own studio in 2020.

About Zaha Hadid

Zaha Hadid is globally recognised as one of the most important architects of the modern period, frequently credited with developing a whole new architectural language in her quest for what she described as 'complex, dynamic and fluid spaces.'

Born in Baghdad, Iraq in 1950, Zaha was schooled in Iraq, Switzerland, and England, before studying mathematics at the American University of Beirut, Lebanon. After moving to London from Beirut in 1972, she soon enrolled to study architecture at the Architectural Association and was awarded the prestigious Diploma Prize in 1977. She then went to work for her former professors Rem Koolhaas and Elia Zenghelis at the Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA), Rotterdam.

In 1979, she founded her eponymous practice Zaha Hadid Architects (ZHA) in London, which went on to design works such as the Vitra Fire Station in Weil am Rhein, Austria (1994), London Aquatics Centre in London, England (2004), MAXXI Museum in Rome, Italy (2009), Heydar Aliyev Centre in Baku, Azerbaijan (2012), and Dongdaemun Design Plaza in Seoul, South Korea (2014).

Zaha's outstanding contribution to architecture and the arts was recognised during her life with numerous awards, including the Stirling Prize (2010 and 2011). She was the first female recipient of the Pritzker Prize (2004) and the first woman (in her own right) to receive the Royal Gold Medal in recognition of her lifetime's work (2015). She died, at the age of 65, in 2016.

About the Zaha Hadid Foundation

The Zaha Hadid Foundation (ZHF) is a charitable organisation founded in 2013 by the globally renowned architect, designer, and artist Zaha Hadid. Fully launched in 2022, the founding purpose of ZHF is to preserve and make publicly available the full range of Zaha's extraordinary output, and more broadly to advance research, learning, and the enjoyment of related areas of modern architecture, art, and design. ZHF supports young people and students from diverse and complex backgrounds in their quest to become architects, designers, and scholars.

ZHF is based in London and has a collection of c.15,000 works across a range of media as well as an archive and a research library. Its headquarters – including exhibition gallery and public events space - are at 10 Bowling Green Lane, Clerkenwell, the location of Zaha Hadid's office from 1985 until her death.