

METROPOLIS

ARCHITECTURE AND
DESIGN AT ALL SCALES
November/December 2018

Looking Back, Looking Forward



Year in Review

Special Section: Becoming Sustainable



SEDUCTION

DESIGNER: Najla El Zein

EXHIBITION: *Women + Design: New Works*
at the Dallas Museum of Art

CURATOR: Sarah Schleuning

It's fitting that Najla El Zein's *Seduction* sculpture debuted in 2018, a year when women's issues took center stage. Created for the Dallas Museum of Art's *Women + Design: New Works* exhibition (open through February 17, 2019), the reconfigurable work evokes the legs of a woman in repose—perhaps an odalisque. Depending on how the work's two pieces are

placed, the crossed limbs can alternately appear inviting or aloof.

A young Beirut-based designer, El Zein is proving her mastery at infusing stark Modernism with emotion and eroticism. *Seduction* is the latest expression of her fascination with evocative, anthropomorphic objects: After graduating from École Camondo in Paris, El Zein

gained headlines with a line of body brushes—"pleasure tools," she calls them—made of provocative materials like press-on fingernails, fake eyelashes, feathers, and hay. Last year, another project, a concrete bench titled *Distortion*, similarly elicited coos from critics, who were moved by its sleek and sensual curves. ■

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Quinto, Anne. "The Year in Exhibitions," *Metropolis*, November/December 2018.

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