

|| At nearly \$2million, no wonder it's petrified! Rare wooden bath leads the stand-out products heading to INDEX – with world's largest clam shell SINK also seeking a buyer



Pictured: A rare petrified wood bath (left) and fossilized giant clam shell sinks (right) are leading the stand-out products heading to this week's INDEX 2018 at the Dubai World Trade Centre (March 26-29)

MEDIA RELEASE Dubai, UAE 25th March 2018: A 180-million-year-old petrified wood bath is aiming to become the most expensive bath ever sold when it goes on display in Dubai this week.

Designer-cum-explorer Nigel Fenwick will be bringing the ultra-rare gem-stone embalmed bath carved from an ancient log he found deep in the Indonesian rainforest to this year's INDEX interior design exhibition, which gets underway tomorrow (running 26-29th March 2018).

Fenwick is hoping to smash the world-record sum of \$1.7million paid for a bath of similar ilk sold in the Emirate in 2011, with his heart set on draining one well-heeled bather for almost \$2million (AED 7.35million).

He said: "The story behind this beautiful and extremely rare bathtub reveals a dramatic and risky journey in pursuit of the most perfect piece of art.

"Petrified wood is one of the rarest and most beautiful raw materials in the world and believed by many to have incredible therapeutic and healing properties, even having the power to extend your life."

However, believe it or not – his treasured tub won't be the only rare, fossilized, record-breaking piece of bathroom furniture making a splash at this week's show: a half-ton clam shell, said to be the biggest of its species ever discovered, will feature at the show for use as a luxury SINK.

Discovered by marine conservationist Volker Bassen, the fossil killer clam was found in Tanzania using GPR (Ground Penetrating Radar) techniques and is estimated to be 260,000-years-old.

Bassen said: "It took a team of four, five months to excavate the two halves of the clam shell, and another three months to painstakingly clean, grind and polish them. The result is breathtaking, it must be seen to be believed."

"The largest giant clam shell on record was discovered off the Japanese island of Okinawa in 1956, with a weight recorded at 270kg. My biggest clamshell weighs almost double the size. Today's giant clamshells, *Tridacna Gigas*, are heavily protected. Since my clamshells are fossils from an extinct species, *Tridacna Gigantea* which grew 30% larger, worldwide import and export is permitted.



Pictured: Designer-cum-explorer Nigel Fenwick (left) will be bringing the ultra-rare gem-stone embalmed bath carved from an ancient log (middle) he found deep in the Indonesian rainforest (right) to this year's INDEX interior design exhibition, which opens tomorrow

"Each individual shell weighed 225kg and 227kg despite having some broken off pieces weighing 93kg so the total weight of the killer clam I'm bringing to the INDEX show is a staggering 545kg. We also excavated these broken pieces of the clam and turned them into jewelry which we will sell exclusively at INDEX, limited edition, every piece unique."

Bassen will also exhibit some of the rarest pearls known to exist, certified by GIA. So far only seven fossil baroque blister pearls have ever been found from the extinct species of *Tridacna Gigantea*.

"We are also showcasing the Pearl of Venus, probably the most expensive pearl ever found considering that a similar pearl, the Pearl of Allah is estimated to be worth upwards of \$50 million. The Pearl of Venus is a must see, it's the size of a mango, priceless," added Bassen.

Alongside some of the rarest and most luxurious bathroom furniture in the world, the full spectrum of interiors products and services will be showcased at INDEX, representing the best of local and international design.

Ventura Dubai, curated by Dutch design agents Organisation in Design and Margriet Vollenberg, will be taking place for the first time in the Middle East at INDEX – the acclaimed international design event set to showcase the best in European innovation and originality.

As part of the feature, Dubai can expect to see nearly 40 exhibitors and four live installations which have been brought to the show by European designers Pablo Lucker, Daniel de Bruin, Gijs van Bon and Alessandro Mendini.

A first 'French Luxury Pavilion' at INDEX will also showcase the latest European design styles with a focus on ultra-luxury products.

Representing some of the best of the local design market and one to watch at INDEX 2018 is first-time exhibitor Y_Design by Yasmin Farahmandy.

Farahmandy, a highly-acclaimed young designer at Gensler based in Dubai won the INDEX Rising Star Award at the INDEX Architecture and Design Awards (IADA) 2017. This year she has been shortlisted for IADA's 'Best Residential Design' award for her self-styled family home in Meydan.

Farahmandy will be showcasing Y_Design's highly-anticipated first collection of furnishings at INDEX, with pieces that "celebrate luxury modern design with an unexpected twist". She added: "These unique furniture pieces push with elegance and intelligence the boundaries of the traditional furniture design to promote a closer and playful interaction with end-users."

Find out more about INDEX 2018, taking place 26-29th March 2018 at the Dubai World Trade Centre (opening at 11am daily), and register to attend the event for free at: www.indexexhibition.com

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