

THE CORALARIUM BY JASON DECAIRES TAYLOR OPENS AT FAIRMONT MALDIVES SIRRU FEN FUSHI

Globally celebrated eco-artist launches his first coral regeneration art installation in the Maldives



July 2018 – AccorHotels' first and only Fairmont Resort in the Maldives launches the world's first semi-submerged art gallery, created by renowned underwater naturalist and artist Jason deCaires Taylor.

Situated around the pristine atoll where Fairmont Maldives Sirru Fen Fushi is the sole hotel, the sculpture Coralarium is a semi-submerged tidal gallery space that exhibits a series of sculptural artworks on the skyline. Homage to the abundant sea life and pristine coral house reef surrounding this world-class resort, this is the Maldives' first and only coral regeneration project in the form of an Underwater Art Installation.

With his large following and international influence in media and environmental conservation, Jason deCaires Taylor's collaboration with Fairmont Maldives Sirru Fen Fushi creates an ideal global platform to showcase the fragile beauty of the Maldives and our oceans.

"Over the years I have realized that the really humbling thing about what we do is that once we submerge the sculptures they're not ours anymore. As soon as we sink them, they belong to the sea and nature takes over," said Jason deCaires Taylor. "The Coralarium is a place of preservation, conservation and education. Together with the resort we hope to raise awareness for the protection of Maldivian coral reefs. I want to see a better future for the ocean, for people to see it as a delicate place, worthy of our protection."

Both AccorHotels and the Fairmont brand have a strong reputation globally for sustainable tourism and are committed to improving the well-being of local communities and ecosystems wherever they operate and addressing the environmental impacts of their operations. Fairmont is renowned for capturing the heart of a destination through community engagement and memorable guest experiences.

"Taylor's art focuses on the natural beauty of the location, creating an extraordinary linkage between our resort and the destination to encourage sustainable tourism," said Patrick Basset, Chief Operating officer AccorHotels Upper Southeast & Northeast Asia and the Maldives. "This artwork provides a portal for our guests to engage with the area's fabled natural wonders while enjoying the renowned Fairmont hospitality."

Resort guests will be able to enjoy the view of the ocean with the semi-submerged Coralarium placed exactly in line with the horizon. Leading from the 200-meter infinity pool at the heart of the resort, the artist has created the installation as a linear extension of the resort in the form of an underwater pathway for guests to participate in the propagation of corals. A short swim from the shore leads visitors through a portal from a well-known world above the

surface down to a habitat space portraying a symbiotic fusion of terrestrial shapes colliding with sub-oceanic marine life. The materials, textures and configuration have been designed to encourage the settlement of biomass so the work acts as an artificial reef, giving nature a chance to thrive.

The artwork creates artificial reefs, using non-toxic, pH-neutral marine-grade compounds free from harmful pollutants, which will eventually become an integral part of the local ecosystem. The museum structure represents a sheltered space that offers a permanent sanctuary for ocean life such as fish, crustaceans, octopuses and marine invertebrates offering visitors a new experience to engage with art and nature. The installation focuses on coral and biomass restoration and aims to be the most high-end coral regeneration project in the Maldives.

The Coralarium holds three dimensions of artwork: rooftop sculptures placed at the top of the cube structure; the underwater art pieces and sculptures placed on plinths at various heights to highlight tidal movements; and the semi-submerged architectural cube element, which creates a bridge and fusion between both terrestrial and sub-oceanic worlds. The installation focuses on a stainless steel cube structure at a depth of three meters in the lagoon, raising up six meters from the seafloor.

Ten hybrid organic forms and a series of terrestrial species such as shapes of bread-fruit, shells and leaf formations will be exhibited in the underwater gallery. The abstract hybrid forms are entwined in shapes of strangler ivy, standing on molded root systems of Banyan trees and covered in sculpted sponges, mushroom corals and staghorn coral formations.

The various forms of ocean life complete the sculptures, transforming them from inert structures to textured, growing and living organisms, celebrating the marine diversity of the Maldives while creating an unforgettable experience for visitors to snorkel through the Coralarium.

Fairmont Maldives Sirru Fen Fushi offers 120 keys. The all-villa resort is ideal for couples or families, and features overwater private pool villas as well as luxury safari-style tented villas nestled in the island's lush interior jungle.

Guided tours in small groups led by the resort's resident marine biologists are available several times a day. In the evening, an integrated light system illuminates the museum and attracts marine life while creating an impressive sight from the island shore.

For reservations and general information, please visit www.fairmont-maldives.com email reservations.maldives@fairmont.com, or contact +960 654 8888.

For more information about the works of underwater naturalist and artist Jason deCaires Taylor, please contact underwatermuseum.maldives@fairmont.com or visit www.underwatersculpture.com.

Fairmont Maldives Sirru Fen Fushi is located at Shaviyani Atoll, North Maldives. The resort is accessible by a 50-minute scenic seaplane flight directly to the resort. AccorHotels today counts three hotels in the Maldives, including Mercure Maldives Kooddoo Resort, Dhevanafushi Maldives Luxury Resort and Fairmont Maldives Sirru Fen Fushi.

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