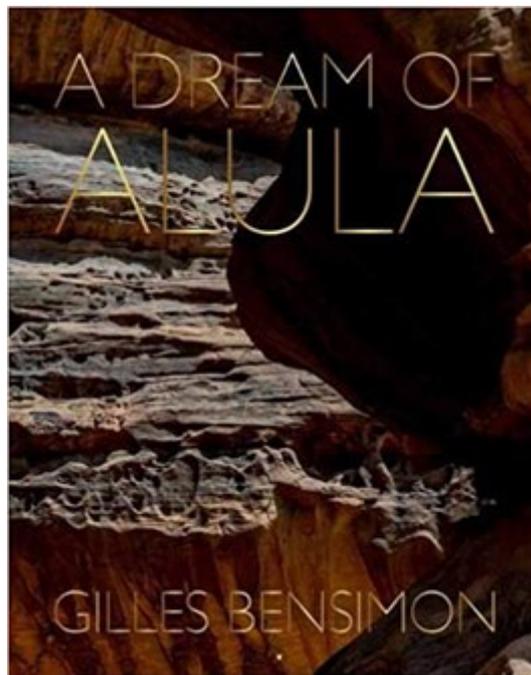


## Press release

Paris, April 11, 2022

### Famed fashion Photographer Gilles Bensimon Releases *A Dream of AIUla* – A Visual Exploration of Fabled Landscapes and Historical Gems

---



On the occasion of the publication of *A Dream of AIUla*, the Librairie Galignani (Paris, France) will welcome, on Tuesday April 12<sup>th</sup>, the artist Gilles Bensimon for an exclusive signing of his book.

Acclaimed photographer Gilles Bensimon publishes *A Dream of AIUla* and celebrates the rich culture of AIUla, a land of exceptional heritage, located in the northwest of Saudi Arabia. Filled with 215 pages of original photography, this book, published by Cassi Edition and Rizzoli New York, offers the unique experience of travelling to a mythical land and a preserved paradise still unknown.

In *A Dream of AIUla*, the photographer reveals the poetic aspects and magnificence of age-old desert landscapes and highlights the lives that they are home to. From lush green oases to barren expanses; from drifting sand to basalt uplands; from geomorphological wonders to millennia-old inscriptions; from elaborate pre-Islamic tombs to Bedouins going about their daily lives and camels racing alongside cars — these are just some of the unforgettable scenes of AIUla.



The French photographer and former International Creative Director of *Elle* magazine, Gilles Bensimon has collaborated with some of the most prestigious magazines in the world, working with models and celebrities such as Cindy Crawford, Christy Turlington, Yasmin Le Bon, Madonna and Elle Macpherson. He describes his creative process as follows: "*A Dream of AIUla* is a compilation of moments captured in the warmth of life, where the enthusiasm of the photographer and the wonder of the little boy who discovers the experience of beauty can be read. AIUla is a mirage, a sleeping beauty. She is a waking dream. I once had this dream. The Dream of AIUla."

G rard Mestrallet, Executive Chairman of the French Agency for AIUla development (AFALULA): "The inspiring power of AIUla is infinite. The book that is published today is a right example. Gilles Bensimon offers, with his sensibility, a fresh look at this millennial treasure. Through his experienced eye, we rediscover the landscapes, the relief, the shades, the light and, at the heart of this journey, the people of AIUla. *A Dream of AIUla* is a doorway to the magic of AIUla."





---

**About AFALULA (French Agency for AIUla)**

The French Agency for AIUla Development (AFALULA) was founded in Paris in July 2018 following an intergovernmental agreement signed by France and Saudi Arabia in April of that year. AFALULA aims to support its Saudi partner, The Royal Commission for AIUla (RCU), in the co-construction of the economical, touristical and cultural development of AIUla, which benefits from outstanding natural and cultural heritage. The agency's mission is to mobilize French knowledge and expertise and to gather the finest operators and companies in the fields of archaeology, museography, architecture, environment, tourism, hospitality, infrastructure, education, security, agriculture, botany and the sustainable management of natural resources.

---



RIZZOLI  
NEW YORK

■ CASSI EDITION

#### **About RCU (Royal Commission for AlUla)**

The Royal Commission for AlUla (RCU) was established by royal decree in July 2017 to preserve and develop AlUla. RCU's long-term plan outlines a responsible, sustainable, and sensitive approach to the urban and economical development, that preserves the area's natural and historical heritage, while establishing AlUla as a desirable location to live, work, and visit. This encompasses a broad range of initiatives across archaeology, tourism, culture, education, and the arts, reflecting a commitment to meeting the economical diversification, local community empowerment, and heritage preservation priorities of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 programme.

---

#### **Press contacts:**

**Mathias Curnier** (AFALULA) [mathias.curnier@afalula.com](mailto:mathias.curnier@afalula.com), tel: +33 6 77 04 56 18