



Hip Hop

There was a welcome absence of retro aesthetic – the deliberate allusion and imitation of previous styles and visual tropes. If you compare it with Europe, where every decade receives its instant “revival” and is being mined for visual puns and quotations, the Design Indaba was largely free of such attempts. Maybe nostalgia and retro aesthetics have less currency in South Africa because of its recent political history. Recent history is more defined by periods of struggle and political conflict, rather than wallpaper patterns.

Politics still play a large part in the production of craft and design nonetheless. It is obvious that South Africa engages the creative industries, including craft productions, as a tool for social regeneration, job creation and community empowerment. It is an arena where aesthetics meets ethics and humanitarian goals meet commercial successes. I guess a real surprise for me was the strong presence of “government” and government agencies as part of an expo. Johannesburg City Council, local government, provincial government and national government, including even the ministry of mining and minerals, were all represented by stands.

And this does not even include the government-funded but independent organisations like the Cape Craft and Design Institute and Cape Town Partnership. These hand-made and collective practices have a big role to play, as they provide access to markets and earnings. I am sure that a new generation of talented individuals will grow from many of these socially-led initiatives. I am looking forward to coming back to future Design Indabas and discovering these new individual voices and personalities with their own stalls and products.



Red Hot Glass



Peter Mthombeni



Miele



Give-It-Bag



Phumani Paper

The Most Beautiful Object in South Africa award this year went to The Most Beautiful Object in South Africa award this year went to Nestled Brooklyn Studio for the Nestled Brooklyn Studio.



the most beautiful object in South Africa

The Government of the Western Cape Department of Economic Development and Tourism stand, designed by award-winning theatre practitioner Brett Bailey, won the Most Creative Stand award.



Rory Allan from Ripe Design won the 2008 Art Vespa competition with his Ice Cream design.



Printed on Seppi Triple Green Print S&K 135gsm² and 250gsm²