



South African product designer Heath Nash is lighting up the international design scene - he recently represented his country in the International British Council Young Designers Entrepreneur competition and has clinched several prestigious local and international deals.

The Cape Town-based designer joined nine other finalists from around the globe to visit design institutions in the UK. They also played the role of design ambassadors at the British Council stand at 100% design in London in September this year.



Nash's meticulous attention to detail is apparent in his modular lighting and other product designs. Together with production manager, Richard Mondongwe, Nash constructs and brings beautiful products to full bloom. His signature pieces are made from scrap plastic and wire work techniques typical of South African crafters and the new recycled plastic range introduces a creative recycling solution that is current but with a South African twist. Unfortunately, the absence of convenient and accessible recycling infrastructure in South Africa has hindered the production of this range. Besides being environmentally friendly, Nash's operation is a perfect case study for design development in South Africa. His designs, choice and use of material, as well as production process, affirm that South African designers can develop coveted products, create new jobs and grow the economy.

Nash's presence at the Design Indaba Expo in 2004 resulted in a deal with local retailers Woolworths and Loads of Living, as well as the Conran Shop in London and Paris where he supplied the White Flower ball and The Curl lights. A year later Design Indaba Conference speaker, Li Edelkoort, commissioned large screens for her North meets South exhibition about similarities between African and Scandinavian design. Mandy Munro from Tractor Home in Victoria imports Nash's products for Australia. This year Nash landed a royalty agreement with New York-based company Artecnic to sell his locally made wire and recycled range, and to mass-produce a new light design in China.



# SOUTH AFRICAN DESIGN LIGHTS UP

Story\_Zahira Asmal

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Ravi Naidoo, founder of Design Indaba, adds: "We are delighted at this success story, as one of the main aims of the Design Indaba is to help generate greater revenue and more jobs from design, and to encourage export."

The Expo component of Design Indaba provides a commercial platform for the finest South African designers to leverage local goods and services to the global market. It also introduces the most influential international buyers to the finest South African creative products and encourages exports. As a result, exhibitor sales in 2005 amounted to R1million (AUD\$175,292) and over R1.3million (AUD\$227,806) in 2006. The local market is stimulated as well. The Expo aims to create discerning consumers through exposure to the principles and products of good design, resulting in the demand and production of innovative, evolving and excellent South African creative products.

Asked if he's showing his stunning wares at the next Design Indaba Expo, Nash exclaimed, "I am definitely taking a stand next year. I am where I am because of Design Indaba Expo."

Preceding the Design Indaba Expo in February each year is the Design Indaba Conference - a gathering of over 2,000 inspiration-seeking individuals over three full days of presentations by a predominantly international cast of design specialists and thought leaders. Sir Terence Conran, Tom Dixon and Karim Rashid are among the 250 creatives who have presented to capacity audiences over the years. The tenth edition of the Conference, commencing 21 February 2007, promises to be a delicious treat for delegates with presentations by creative stalwarts such as Brian Eno, David LaChapelle, Daljit Singh and Konstantin Grcic. ☺  
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