

Most Beautiful Object in SA

 By Leigh Andrews

22 Jan 2016

Design Indaba is just a few weeks away, but the hype has already started - especially with Most Beautiful Object in SA (MBOISA) 2016 well underway.

In 2012 it was the [Lily Pad Ring by Kirsten Goss](#). In 2015 [Kirstenbosch's suspended walkway](#), affectionately called the Boomslang, was the public choice from the year's 12 nominations for MBOISA.

And 2016 may well see something even more esoteric walking away with the title of Most Beautiful Object in South Africa (MBOISA) - anything from a [Wasabi-spiced vegetarian dish](#) to a simple shaped wooden [skateboard](#).



This year's 10 MBOISA nominees

But what exactly is MBOISA and how does it work? Who gets to decide and have the final say in what is truly beautiful design? None of us and all of us. Let me explain...

Form & function = true beauty

Running for just shy of a decade, MBOISA started in 2007 as a way to engage this very conversation on the notion of beauty, and to question what it means in terms of South African culture. The first-ever winner of the title was the Condom Applicator by Roelf Mulder - an interesting choice that brought to light the consideration that beauty doesn't merely lie in aesthetics but also in function and role within our culture.

And as MBOISA typically has a very large media presence and campaign, it's not just the winning object that benefits. Exposure for all the nominated items is significant, but of course the winner benefits the most from huge exposure on traditional as well as social media. Plus there's the physical 'win' in the form of a 'trophy' of sorts that's awarded, as well as the bragging rights.

It's definitely a major coup. Megan Wolstenholme, executive producer of Design Indaba, tells us more...

1. How does MBOISA celebrate 'beautiful design' in South Africa?

Wolstenholme: The notion of beauty differs so greatly from one person to another. It depends so much on someone's beliefs, upbringing, culture, location, exposure to media and taste in general. MBOISA asks a diverse panel of influential South African cultural commentators to examine design in our country and nominate what they feel is the most beautiful. Their decisions are based on either an object's aesthetics, functionality or the thoughts and feelings it evokes. For 2016 there are 10 nominated objects ranging from social development initiatives to products and art projects. The nominated objects celebrate beauty by way of their diversity. Anyone in South Africa would be able to relate at least one of the objects to their own individualised notion of what makes something beautiful

2. Explain the importance of cultural commentary, especially in a country as diverse as ours.

Wolstenholme: It's important to acknowledge the differences in opinion. To take the country's cultural temperature, as well as to gain a better understanding as to why there are such differing opinions. As I mentioned above, the notion of beauty is so varied from person to person because of traditions, culture, beliefs, locations, history, upbringing and taste. These are things that are exceptionally diverse within South Africa, so we tend to have a diverse opinion on what makes something beautiful too.

3. Then looking to this year in particular, tell us about the calibre of the 10 nominated entries.

Wolstenholme: This year, same as every year really, all the nominations are exceptional. They are magnificently diverse and feature both known and relatively unknown projects/products. There is something for everyone. There is not one nomination that would be questioned as to why it's there. They are all a beautiful example of what South African designers are creating in our country.

View the video below of the Design Indaba team's nomination: [The Twenty Journey](#), which showcases the irony and anger of beauty in South Africa.

Inspirational to say the least. Creative South Africans can get involved by visiting the travelling exhibitions, which started at Rosebank Mall in Johannesburg from 12 to 18 January and will be coming to Durban at Gateway Theatre of Shopping from 26 January to 2 February, ending the run at the V&A Waterfront in Cape Town from 8 to 21 February. If you like what you see, put your voting power into play either through the www.designindaba.com/MBOISA official website, via the Design Indaba Festival App, or via SMSing 'MBOISA' + your vote to 40619, at a cost of R1.50 per SMS.

So look through [this year's nominations](#) and get voting - we're so keen to see what's selected as SA's most beautiful object for 2016!

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

- #Loeries2020: Behavioural economics as creativity, but not as we know it... - 24 Nov 2020
- #DI2020: Ignite your inner activist - representation through illustration - 27 Feb 2020
- #DI2020: How Sho Madjozi brought traditional Tsonga *xibelani* into 2020 - 27 Feb 2020
- #DI2020: Silver jubilee shines with Department of Audacious Projects launch - 26 Feb 2020
- #BehindtheSelfie with... Qingqile 'WingWing' Mbuluwa, COO at The Whole Idea - 26 Feb 2020

View my profile and articles...

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>