

# Design Indaba Day 2 - Drawing conclusions

 By [Terry Levin](#)

26 Feb 2004

Speakers on the second day of the Design Indaba in Cape Town included Mary Lewis of Lewis Moberley, design doyen Shigeo Fukuda, Texan filmmaker Bob Sabiston and the MD of Herdbuoys McCann-Erickson Happy Ntshingila.

## Mary Lewis



The design half of the Lewis Moberley consultancy, Mary Lewis, believes that appealing to the hearts and minds of the consumer through the eyes establishes an emotional equity for a brand. We are moving into an era where consumers expect less spin, more truth. Sensible packaging and ID, magnificently crafted for many of Britain's most aspirational brands - Dunhill, Boots, Stuart Crystal, Heals and Jaeger.

## Shigeo Fukuda



With the assistance of a translator 72 year old Mr Fukuda took us through a vast and breathtaking display of the wit and immeasurable talent of his life's work. Just when you thought you'd seen all the mastery of his illustrated optical illusion poster art, he throws a curved ball and starts doing them in 3-D. He says design must be interesting and funny. The wittiest wooden toys that are one animal when held one way and another when flipped, a bundle of 1,822 pairs of scissors that cast the shadow of a perfect schooner in full sail and 100's of civic sculptures both in Japan and other capitals of the world, will ensure he will be remembered as the Leonardo da Vinci of the 20th century.

## Happy Ntshingila

Ad man and part-time golfer, Happy drew the analogy from Scott Peck's book "The Golfer's Spirit" that in life one can either expect a "sea of penalties or a sea of possibilities". He reminded us that we are exposed to at least 300 designed objects from the time we wake up to the time we have our first coffee. That in his experience as founder of agency Herdbuoys, Ndebele motifs are always presented by South African creatives as the quickest cop out [along with zebra print, we suppose] and that we should look more to local culture as a means of inspiring ourselves. Changing our point of view - putting a white man in a taxi or dressing up as a rickshaw driver helps us see our environment in new ways. He defines design as thinking about a problem and making a plan to solve it, so that even a piece of wire that keeps the gate closed in fact a piece of design.

## Bob Sabiston



You may have seen this film maker and animator from Texas at the recent Resfest. His speciality, having written unique software that everybody wants. A pressure sensitive pallet allows you to draw directly onto the screen on top of video frames. When MTV was looking for an act to replace the long running Beavis and Butthead, Sabiston got the job. His films are true works of art - try and catch Waking Life on VHS or amazon.com - or visit flatblackfilms.com. Unforgettable stuff.

## Rashied Din



A regular visitor to SA, Rashied consults to Woolworths and intend spending more time in our land. Understanding spaces and looking at traditional market squares for inspiration, his assignments include the look and feel for FCUK retail and the marathon task of creating a "refreshing interchange" for forthcoming passengers to the interior of Heathrow's new Terminal 5 building. The sensitive handling of the Princess Diana museum and resting place at the Althorp family estate is also very impressive. They didn't want to commercialise the place, but in the end conceded to a tiny shop, now doing a respectable trade of £22,000 per day. I forgot to ask what they do with all the money.

## WORKSHOPS

An agonising choice of 4 "workshops" - 1. Design 2. Magazine publishing {Visi mag} 3. Fashion Indaba or 4. Architectural Indaba. Finally settling on Fashion Indaba I stayed where I was in auditorium 2 to listen to the presentation entitled: "SA Fashion - Innovate or Bust"

First up, glamorous and eloquent Nkhensani Manganyi inspired us with her enthusiasm and the success story of her Stoned Cherrie fashion label. Urging us to capture the Afro urban existence and embrace the abundant sea of creative energy that surrounds us, she points out correctly that as South African designers our slate is clean, we are free to write our own identity. She reminded us that "in Africa craft is taken very seriously as an expression of God", Gavin Rajah organiser of Cape Town fashion week, eventually came to the conclusion that what is required for our fashion to thrive is a collaboration of all interested parties and suppliers in the industry in order to really make it happen. This would be amazing to see.

Good to see Woolworths' Cecile Froehling and Brett Kaplan at this workshop using words like "passionate about supporting local design". Passion is not a word one hears too often from Big Business, neither is "we need to embrace design... and the best African talent" and the fact that this approach can help us find our own African retail voice is exciting.

## Peter Saville



Thoroughly disillusioned with his reputation as a celebrity designer in the British music, fashion and art industries, Peter Saville blames the the essence of his malaise on the fact that "most clients want you to make them look like they believe in something". He informed us that the public services in Britain are planning to sell off £900 million worth of police stations in order to replace them with kiosks in the local supermarket, so that "people can report crime while they shop". Having had a career that anybody would have wished for, he now yearns for a world of "intelligent societies - not just punters". Having begun designing album covers for the band New Order, ironically enough he is again searching for just that.

Will designers be influential enough to pull this one off. Evidently Happy Ntshingila's wire widgets will not do it. Woolworth's have identified that it will need to be a collaborative dialogue, not just swooshie things on plastic packages. But at least in Africa as Nkhensani Manganyi pointed out, we have abundant energy and talent. But we will need to dig deep to find more holistic, more spiritual approaches to the solving our own and world problems.

## ABOUT TERRY LEVIN

Brand and Culture Strategy consulting | Bizcommunity.com COO at large. Email [terry@offtheshelf.co.za](mailto:terry@offtheshelf.co.za), Twitter [@terrylevin](https://twitter.com/terrylevin), Instagram, LinkedIn.

▪ #RWC2023: The Rugby World Cup 2023 logo - the font that speaks French - 27 Oct 2023

▪ #Loeries2023: Three lessons on how creative thinking can change the world - 10 Oct 2023

▪ #NedbankIMC2023: From creator economy to cosy web to a new spirit of reciprocity and generosity - 18 Sep 2023

▪ #Loeries2021: A new pier for SA ad industry peers - 25 Oct 2021

▪ #DI2020: African icons at Design Indaba 25 - 3 Mar 2020

[View my profile and articles...](#)

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