Design Indaba partners with Google to launch 'Colours of Africa'

Design Indaba has partnered with Google Arts and Culture to launch 'Colours of Africa', an online project that showcases 60 specially curated artworks produced by over 60 African creatives.

Image supplied: *Camouflage* by Vincent Montocchio

Each creative was invited to contribute a work that captures the colour and character of their home country.

"Africa is known for its bold, unapologetic use of colour. Each country, city and community is identifiable by its unique palette," says Design Indaba's founder Ravi Naidoo. Naidoo selected the featured creatives from a wide range of disciplines, from architecture, illustration, painting and ceramics to writing, engineering, the performing arts and visual communications.

Their creations have been converted into images, videos, texts and illustrations, showcasing the best of African craft, product, industrial design, fashion, film, animation, graphics, food, music, jewellery and architecture.

The multidisciplinary mix of artists includes Algerian photographer Ramzy Bensaadi, fashion designer Bisrat Negassi from Eritrea, filmmaker Archange Kiyindou "Yamakasi" from the Republic of Congo and visual artist Ngadi Smart from Sierra Leone.

The first artistic undertaking of this scale, the project enables viewers to discover the stories of Africa as told by the African creative community. The artworks are showcased online, where users are invited to spin a kaleidoscope to explore the works in a virtual journey through the palette of Africa, viewing each country through the eyes of a local artist.

Image supplied: *Spirit of Violet* by Anyango Mpinga

"This project tells a story of a continent through a universally accessible lens," says Naidoo.

To bring the project to life, Design Indaba enlisted former Design Indaba conference speaker Noel Pretorius and his creative partner, Elin Sjöberg, who collaborated with Google Arts and Culture Lab to create the design concept and interface for the digital exhibition. The kaleidoscopic navigation tool can be used to explore the art in a randomised way, giving the visitor a unique experience while allowing the art itself to shine.

"We're very excited to break new ground. This is an important artistic catalogue, the first of its kind to plot the expanse of African artistry on Google Arts & Culture. We salute Google for taking this important step to provide the world with a resource like this – not everyone can afford to travel here, or access physical art fairs and museums to view this kind of work," says Naidoo.

Image supplied: *White is a colour of movement* by Mayada Adil El

In addition to the 'Colours of Africa' platform, the initiative incorporates the launch of over 4,000 images and videos and 20 carefully curated exhibits from Design Indaba's extensive archive.

Award-winning initiatives like Sheltersuit, Arch for Arch and Emerging Creatives are extensively profiled online for the first time. New works by some of the most important creatives working on the continent and abroad are displayed. These include Fozia Ismail, who was a featured creative on Serpentine Gallery's Creative Exchange programme; Mayada Adil El Sayed, who represented Sudanese women at the Generation Equality Forum; and Lady Skollie, the winner of the 10th FNB art prize.

To view 'Colours of Africa', visit here.

For more:
www.designindaba.com

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