

Satisfaction at the Design Indaba

Melissa van Rooyen —

FROM driftwood furniture and hand-made leather shoes, to delicately crafted ceramics, edible designer brooches and life-size rabbit candles, This year's Design Indaba promised to be bigger and better than ever...

The Design Indaba, held from 25-27 February, is an annual expo hosted in Cape Town at the CTICC for new and established local designers to show off their best works to the public and several international buyers. Each of the 260 exhibitors are handpicked by a panel of South Africa's best designers, stylists, critics and design industry experts, which explains the high standard and quality of every product showcased. The Design Indaba aims to awaken the patriot inside each of its visitors, as only local designs and locally manufactured products are included. Truly a Proudly South African Experience!

Being the sixth Indaba, you can be sure that organisers have everything planned out, to the finest detail: from the sponsors to the parking, food and entertainment. Even ticket sales ran very smoothly despite the unexpectedly large turnout. The expertly laid-out floor plan really makes the traffic flow quickly and smoothly and enables

you to admire every stall from up close. The mood inside the expo is very laid back and relaxing, allowing you to browse at your own pace.

The products include anything you can imagine sectioned into categories that range from advertising, architecture, craft, décor, film, fashion, graphic- and interior design to jewellery, new media, publishing, product design, and visual media – which means there is something for everyone.

The friendly exhibitors are all very eager to tell you about their products, without necessarily expecting you to buy something. The general feeling is very neighbourhood-market like with everyone chatting and thoroughly enjoying the great entertainment and exceptional design.

The refreshments didn't disappoint either. The Earth Fair Food Market's variety of tasty meals made sure the crowds weren't left hungry. Handmade, gourmet pies, sushi, Thai curries and a variety of pastries, burgers and wraps was on the menu. Grolsch, one of the main sponsors of Design Indaba 2011, provided refreshing, ice-cold beers while Woolworths served a variety of their famous organic coffees.

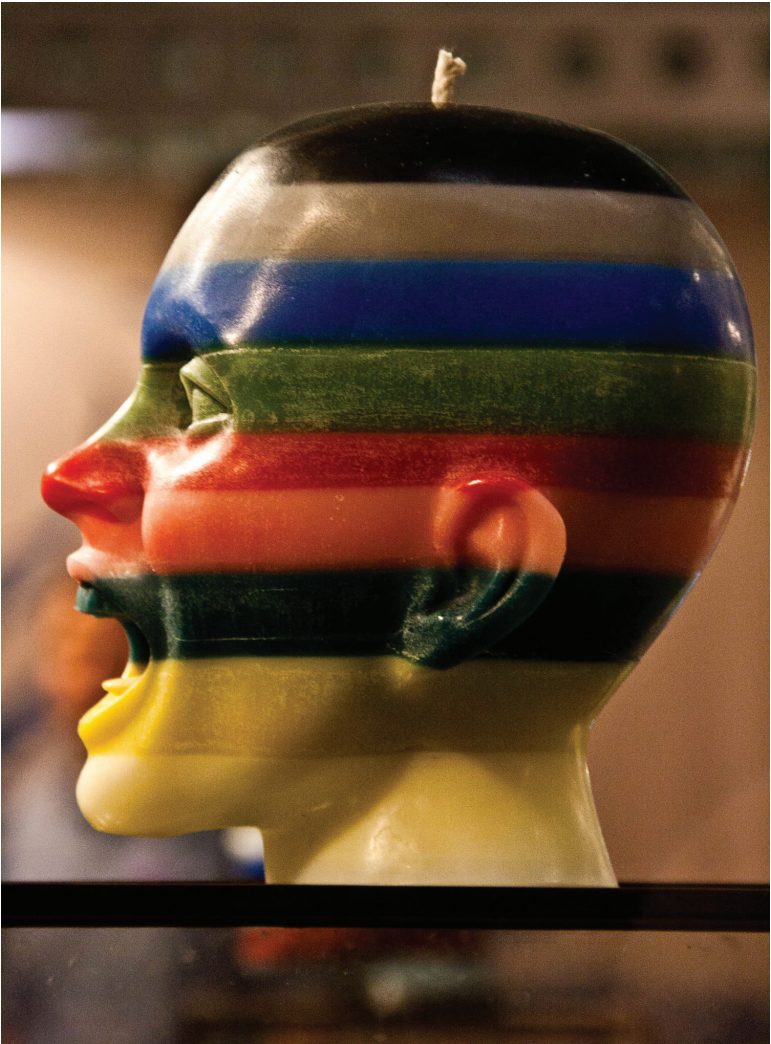
The majority of the products were made from natural, recycled or

environmentally friendly materials which gave the impression that there is a spirit of conserving natural resources among our local designers. Is this the start of a revolution?

Exhibitors included Tanielle Bell's Forgetmeknot line of bags, brooches and jewellery all created from cast-off materials like plastic bags, fabrics and wood. Muizenburg-based Skermunkil Design Studio was one of the popular jewellery stalls with cartoon-like characters perched on earrings, necklaces and rings, all at very affordable prices. Chapel Clothing designer Caleb Pedersen exhibited his range of unique handmade backpacks, ideal for university, which can be seen at www.chapelclothing.co.za.

Famous designers included Carrol Boyes with a range of her latest kitchenware, David West with his unique range of clothing and furniture and Woodhead's with their collection of genuine local leather products. Also spotted was Elle Décor's editor Laureen Rossouw, taking a peek at some new, young design talent.

Leaving the Expo you feel warm and fuzzy inside. Enriched, inspired, motivated. The words: "So worth R60!" echoing through the hallways. Nothing about this year's Design Indaba was average and yet there are talks of doing it even bigger and better next year...



VALUE FOR MONEY – Bartél Sobeit Studio's "Scream". Patrons relished in one-of a-kind art pieces at reasonable prices.
Picture: Gemma Cowan



STAR-STUDDERD - RAMfest 2011 promises to be bigger and better than previous years.

The RAM Diary

Xavier Van Der Zandt —

ONE of the current realities of music journalism is that there has to be an angle; a thing that sets the story apart from banal reviews and more questions about where an act got its name. As a sweet sacred infant, RAMfest has more angles than Babylonian geometry.

The first time I encountered this chaotic festival was on the end of an all-night bender that left me drinking Bioplus like berry juice in the driver's seat of what looked more like a breadloaf than a van. I drove past a poultry slaughter house and into the great unknown of the Nekkies Resort. From then onwards, the going got weird. Music aside, it must be understood that escapism is integral to the human mind. It stops us, to some degree, from completely losing it. It is no coincidence that most of the crazies out there are all presidents or some other variety of workaholic.

It suffices to say that the feeling of universal oneness that swept over me on that body-humid night in 2010 – just before the crowd turned into a gluttonous mass of writhing vampires – had never been with me before and has never been with me since. You might say mushroom – I say RAMfest.

This year promises to be no different. There will be appearances by UK-based Funeral For A Friend and the US Billboard charting Alkaline Trio, satanic punk enemies of all that is wholesome, who by their vocalist's own admission, "Never in a million years did I

think I would ever be saying... we're really looking forward to [playing in] South Africa".

But there are stories closer to home which cannot be. Our very own The Sleepers will be playing their last festival show with vocalist Simon Tamblin. Drummer Steven Jacobson shares that it has been a difficult time for the band, "It's emotional for us, it's a sh*t time for us but it doesn't mean we're falling apart". It would be foolish to miss a band of their stature sing their swansong before opening a new chapter.

On the other side of the braaivleis divide, Van Coke Kartel will be putting on a show that will either see them emerge as MK Award victors or victims of robbery. On some other sunshiny-day in a Buitenkant pub, slinging beer and tequila, Francois Van Coke called Skop, Skiet en Donner "...the pinnacle of what we've done," while bassist Wynand Myburgh expounded on their then-new philosophy of "Weird is good." I remind you that this was before their Maniac video, which entrenched that ideology.

There is, as always, more. Die Antwoord will be making an anticipated, for whatever reason, homecoming, while Not My Dog returns to the RAMfest stage. The electro tent features the French DJ Tom Deluxx. There is just too much. This is sensory overload. Be warned though, I have seen too many middle-aged Twihards not to drive a wooden implement through your chest if you damn pesky vampires reveal yourselves again.