



# AFRICA IS NOW

A Design Indaba  
Project

# AFRICA IS NOW

A DESIGN INDABA PROJECT

**An exhibition of design, décor and architecture from across Africa.**

Africa is rejecting the descriptions that have historically defined it and is instead becoming the new benchmark for growth and innovation.

Contextual solutions that have sprouted from the fertile creative soils of Africa are in demand worldwide, redefining the traditional exchange between the so-called first and third worlds.

This exhibition is a snapshot of creative work being produced across the continent right now: an up-to-the-minute survey of emerging, established and unexpected talent from across Africa. It is not a retrospective of a typecast past nor a utopian vision of an imagined future. It reflects the Africa that is.

The Africa Is Now exhibition is not just a one-off focus on Africa; it heralds a platform-wide fundamental shift for Design Indaba. While we remain committed to incubating and celebrating South African design, our mission over time will be to celebrate and grow African creativity and provide a platform for it in South Africa, and beyond.

Kicking off this long-term commitment is this centrepiece exhibition at Design Indaba Expo 2014, which brings together the work of 66 designers and innovators from 25 African countries.

The work featured here was sourced through a call for entries put out to creative communities across the continent. Further contributions were received from our advisory panel of international design leaders with roots in Africa, including product designers Bibi Seck and Ayse Birsel; fashion designer Ozwald Boateng; architects David Adjaye, Francis Kéré, Joe Osae-Addo and Kunlé Adeyemi; *Financial Times* writer Lucia van der Post; and mobile technology entrepreneur Rapelang Rabana.

# AFRICA IS RESOURCEFUL

Nowhere does the adage “necessity is the mother of invention” ring truer than in Africa where designers are coming up with ingenious contextual solutions drawn from the wisdom of local experience. Both high-tech and lo-fi innovations and services are also finding application elsewhere in the world.

## MPEDIGREE GOLDKEYS APP

**mPedigree Network, Ghana**

30% of all medications sold in sub-Saharan Africa are counterfeit. The mPedigree Goldkeys app is an online cloud-based platform that serves as an authentication and verification engine allowing consumers alike to check they are getting the right product. mPedigree Goldkeys is an accessible and affordable way for consumers to independently check whether the medication they were buying was fake or original. Product manufacturers incorporate special numeric codes, which are hidden on retail packs that are revealed once scratched off. Consumers SMS the code to a hotline and get a response in 5 seconds or less detailing the product name, expiry date and active ingredients.



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[www.goldkeys.org](http://www.goldkeys.org)

# MADIBA2GO BUGGY

**Shonaquip, South Africa**

The Madiba2Go Buggy is a rugged and adaptable mobile seating system, especially suited for children living in challenging rural environments. The lightweight modular seat is detachable from the base frame and can be fine-tuned through adjustments in depth, width, height and angle to manage and improve the posture of individual users. When correctly set up, this helps to reduce and prevent serious secondary health complications. A sturdy base frame with thick, hard-wearing wheels offers a solid, yet foldable foundation onto which the seat attaches via quick-release plates. The frame folds completely flat for easy storage and transportation, while still maintaining its strength and manoeuvrability.



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[www.shonaquip.co.za](http://www.shonaquip.co.za)

# MORABA MOBILE GAME

**Afroes, South Africa**

Moraba is an award-winning educational mobile game that raises awareness of gender-based violence among youth. It is a digital, quiz-based adaptation of Morabaraba, the traditional southern African board game. How Moraba mobile game works: You download the app. Once installed you selected to be either a male or female character player. A game of Morabaraba ensues, once you get three piece in a row, you have to answer a question related to gender-based violence in order to score the point and gain one of your opponent's pieces. The hope is to change mindsets, through playing the game, surrounding gender stereotypes, harmful social norms, cultural practices and peer pressure.



[www.afroes.com](http://www.afroes.com)  
[www.playunite.org](http://www.playunite.org)

# OPERA VILLAGE

**Francis Kéré of Kéré Architecture,  
Burkina Faso**

A natural disaster sparked the design of the Opera Village. Initially Christoph Schlingensiefel approached architect Francis Kéré to design an Opera House in Laongo, Burkina Faso. In 2009, Kéré was travelling with Thomas Goerge, Schlingensiefel's stage designer, to the site when a flood hit the area decimating the informal settlement. This made the team re-assess the opera house project, to expand it to include developing a new housing prototype. A basic module, which could be self-constructed, was designed to be replicated and adapted to different functions. Local materials such as clay, laterite, cement bricks, gumwood and loam rendering, along with concrete structural elements are used for construction. The vision for the Opera Village includes a theatre, workshops, a health station, guesthouses, and a school for up to 500 students, along with a well and electricity provided by solar panels.



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# ROADLESS PROJECT

**Ackeem Ngwenya, Roadless Ltd, Malawi/UK**

The Roadless wheel system is Malawian designer Ackeem Ngwenya's graduate project for his studies in Innovation Design Engineering at the Royal College of Art and Imperial College London. Ngwenya has designed a wheel that adapts to different terrain conditions typically found in rural areas similar to where he grew up. The design addresses the difficulties locals experience moving goods, accessing markets and making a living. The wheel works on the same principle as a scissor jack that you might have in your car: as you crank the central hub up and down, the wheels expand to create more contact area for muddy conditions, or contract to give better ground clearance for rough terrains. The wheels can be fixed to an axle and used to transport goods. Instead of laying new roads, the Roadless Project takes the absence of basic infrastructure and services as a playground for creativity and innovation.



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# WINSENGA

**Aaron Tushabe, Joshua Okello and Josiah Kavuma Cipher256, Uganda**

WinSenga is a low cost mobile antenatal app that helps increase access to quality and timely antenatal care and monitor foetal heart rate during labour, especially in rural areas. WinSenga is a technological enhancement of the Pinard horn that many midwives still rely on. The new device still consists of a plastic trumpet, but with a highly sensitive microphone inside. The device, which is placed on a women's abdomen just like a regular horn, connects to a Windows-based phone running an app that basically plays the part of an experienced midwife's ear. The system picks up the fetal heart rate, transmits it to the phone, and then the phone runs an analysis. The app, developed in conjunction with medics for the UN agency Unicef then recommends a course of action, if any, for the mother and her unborn child.



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[www.cipher256.com](http://www.cipher256.com)

# THE FREEPLAY FETAL HEART RATE MONITOR

**Philip Goodwin, Stefan Zwahlen and John Hutchinson, Freeplay Energy, South Africa**

The Freeplay Fetal Heart Rate Monitor (FHRM) is a fit-for-purpose Doppler ultrasound device that measures the fetal heart rate, empowering developing world healthcare workers to make life-saving decisions during childbirth. The FHRM is an answer to the problem of measuring the fetal heart rate in under resourced health-care environments. It is durable and simple to use but most importantly it is human-powered and not dependent on an external power source. By simply turning the crank human energy is efficiently converted into electricity, and stored in rechargeable batteries. Every minute of winding provides ten minutes of use. Intelligent electronics also allow rapid recharging by using solar energy and grid electricity if available.



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# M-FARM

**Jamila Abass, Linda Omwenga and Susan Eve Oguya, MFarm, Kenya**

M-farm is a mobile solution that empowers farmers to work and communicate in new and innovative ways. Kenyan farmers who don't have ready access to the internet can simply send an SMS to get information pertaining to the retail price of their products, buy their farm inputs directly from manufacturers at favourable prices, and find buyers for their produce. MFarm also realised the root problem was not just price transparency but the fact that farmers produce low volumes and many wholesale buyers won't bother getting the volume they need from multiple farmers. This led MFarm to offer a group selling tool, which gets farmers to team up to bring produce to certain drop off points. They then send an SMS to the system promoting what they have to sell. MFarm has also developed a group buying tool, allowing farmers to pool resources to negotiate better prices for things like fertiliser.



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[www.mfarm.co.ke](http://www.mfarm.co.ke)

# BRCK

**Ushahidi, Kenya**

Ushahidi is a team of software developers, engineers and technologists who live and work in Africa. In 2013 they branched out to hardware with BRCK that was designed and prototyped in Nairobi, Kenya. The aim was to create a connectivity device that fit the particular needs in Africa, where electricity and internet connections are problematic both in urban and rural areas. "As we laid out what such a device would look like - physically robust, able to connect to multiple networks, a hub for all local devices, enough backup power to survive a blackout - we realised that the way the entire world is connecting to the web is changing." BRCK has a big battery pack, which means you can charge other device off it.

A port allows you to connect to almost any sensor or computer device and you get 4GB of on-board storage that can also be upgraded. It is built to withstand dust and the odd sprinkle of water. You can also charge it off anything from a car battery to a solar panel or standard wall plug.



[www.brck.com](http://www.brck.com)

# CARDIOPAD

**Arthur Zang, Cameroon**

Cameroon, a Central African country with a population of some 20 million people, lays claim to only 30 heart surgeons. To make matters worse, these heart surgeons are mainly concentrated in Douala or Yaoundé, the country's two most important economic hubs. The Cardiopad, a touch screen medical tablet that enables heart examinations such as an electrocardiogram (ECG) to be performed at remote, rural locations while the results of the test are transferred wirelessly to specialists who can interpret them. The device spares African patients living in remote areas the trouble of having to travel to urban centres to seek advanced medical examinations.



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# FASO SOAP

**Moctar Dembele and Gérard Niyondiko  
Burkina Faso**

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), about half of the world's population is still at risk of contracting malaria. Moctar Dembele and Gérard Niyondiko, two students from 2iE Foundation, have found an innovating solution – Faso soap an antibacterial and anti-mosquito soaps made with 100% local resources. The Faso Soap is made from different ingredients, including herbs, shea butter, and essential oils of lemongrass as well as their own secret ingredients. The “soap of Faso”, offers an innovative solution for the prevention of malaria, which takes into account financial constraints and cultural habits of African families.



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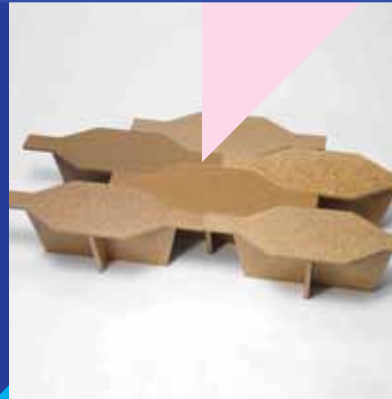
# AFRICA IS URBAN

Shrugging off the perception that Africa is largely rural, the continent is home to seven rapidly growing megacities. These engines of growth and opportunity present an eclectic mix of contemporary urban challenges and possibilities. They are a source of vibrant design inspiration, from new architectural and urban typologies to fashion with real street cred.

## PARTICLE BOARDS FROM AGRICULTURAL WASTE

**Charles Job (designer); Bern University of Applied Arts, Ahmadu Bello University and University of Nigeria (partner universities); Patrick Kaiser (workshop and production), Nigeria/Switzerland**

This research project aims to develop building materials from agricultural waste products for affordable housing in Nigeria. Using locally-sourced agricultural waste materials such as corn cobs, rice husks and groundnut shells presented a more sustainable alternative to cement and a more cost-effective alternative to derived timber products, which are imported into Nigeria. It also avoided the pollution released by the incineration of corn, rice and groundnut residues. The ultimate goal is to provide case study houses informed by local building traditions and integrated into the local community, using the particle boards. The research project was awarded a Holcim Award for Sustainable Construction in 2011 and the Materialica Design + Technology Gold Award in 2012.



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# NEW RUGO SOCIAL HOUSING

George Periclès, Rwanda

The 'uruga' is a traditional Burundi and Rwandan homestead. Beehive-shaped houses made from woven branches and grasses and covered with clay were clustered together to form compounds, promoting a sense of community. New Rugo, designed by architectural group George Periclès, is a low-cost housing project that draws its inspiration from this vernacular. The New Rugo, moves away from the colonial models of a single house on a lone plot and embraces the traditional compound model. The living units, constructed from compressed stabilised earth blocks, made on site, not only provide dignified shelter but also creates jobs. The house are easily replicable and environmentally sound employing natural ventilation and rainwater harvesting.



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# MAKOKO FLOATING SCHOOL

Kunlé Adeyemi of NLÉ Design Architecture  
and Urbanism, Nigeria

Makoko is an aquatic community of 100 000 people living in Lagos, Nigeria. To address tidal changes and varying water levels NLÉ designed a safe, floating structure that also uses renewable energy, recycles organic waste and harvests rainwater. The structure's flotation system consisting of 16 wooden modules with 16 recycled barrels in each creating a 100m<sup>2</sup> platform. The three-storey A-frame is made from locally-sourced, eco-friendly bamboo and wood. The first is an open-plan area that also works as a community space after school hours. The second level is an enclosed space that functions as classrooms holding between 60 and 100 pupils. The third level is a semi-enclosed workspace. Makoko Floating School was recently nominated for Design Museum's Design of the Year award.



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# 25S32E BOOKCASE

**Aldo Tornaghi and Ab Oosterwaal, Piratas do Pau, Mozambique**

The 25s32e line is a handcrafted scrap-wood furniture collection designed by members of the Mozambican design collective Piratas do Pau. The range draws on Maputo's architectural language to define its design vocabulary and to generate, through a simple shift of scale, the five different geometric patterns that are a direct visual reference to the local urban environment. The pattern language is then applied to bookshelves, cupboards, desks and coffee tables. Pine wood from recycled pallets creates a dialogue with the more fine and uniform local hardwood, Umbila.



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# MAMELODI POD

**Architecture for a Change, South Africa**

The Mamelodi Pod is a prototype for an off-the-grid, low-cost housing solution. Initiated in collaboration with an NGO and a donation from Arsenal Football Club, the pod is being used as the clubhouse for Mamelodi Soccer Club. Occupying the space between formal and informal housing, the Mamelodi Pod is a zinc structure – like so many informal dwellings in South Africa – but its thermal and environmental performance mimics that of formal housing. The composite wall, a sample of which is displayed here, consists of an exterior zinc layer, a Sisolation layer (reflective foil material), an Isotherm layer and an internal plywood layer. The result in better thermal performance than a double masonry wall and is in stark contrast to surrounding shacks' zinc-only walls, which are extremely cold in winter and extremely hot in summer. The structure is prefabricated and can be assembled by three people in minimal time.



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# BLUE WORM ONESY

**Anisa Mpungwe, Loin Cloth and Ashes**  
**South Africa/Tanzania**

The Loin Cloth and Ashes' Spring/Summer 2014 collection takes its inspiration from 80s and 90s teen movies; cult classics like Clueless, Empire Records and The Breakfast Club. While remaining true to the label's core femininity, this collection has a tongue-in-cheek tomboy aesthetic. This sassy onesy retains the Loin Cloth and Ashes signature high neckline and sleeveless look but trades structure for street culture. The design recontextualises the traditional prints, sourced from across Africa, giving it a contemporary, even futuristic spin. Whether worn with high heels or high tops this onesy sure has swagger.



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[www.loinclothandashes.com](http://www.loinclothandashes.com)

# MABUSHI RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

**Kunlé Adeyemi of NLÉ Design Architecture and Urbanism, Nigeria**

The Mabushi Residential Development, a low density residential development in Nigeria's capital, Abuja, seeks an alternative architectural typology that takes the climatic conditions of Abuja into account. The oversized roof structures of the popular building typology is converted into habitable space roof space. The wood-clad box is a canopy, which provides shade and outdoor spaces in the cool dry seasons. A three floor atrium is created at the intersection of these two spaces bringing daylight into the heart of the building – the living area. The building orientation, form and materials provides high thermal, spatial efficiency and comfortable living environment. The unique architecture consequently reduces substantial long term energy costs.



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# MOLADI PLASTIC FORMWORK SYSTEM

## Moladi, South Africa

Moladi developed a system that constitutes the use of a removable, reusable, recyclable and lightweight plastic formwork mould, which is filled with an aerated mortar to form the wall structure of a house in as little as one day. Each set of Moladi formwork panels can be re-used 50 times making the technology cost effective due to its repetitive application scheme, reducing the cost of construction and transportation significantly. The Moladi system produces durable and permanent structures.

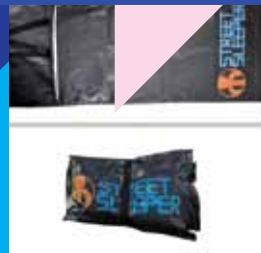


[www.moladi.net](http://www.moladi.net)

# STREET SLEEPER

## Oliver Brain, South Africa

Street Sleeper uses innovation to tackle challenges facing homeless men and women. The social enterprise upcycles PVC advertising billboards, destined for landfill, into survival sleeping bags that provide protection against the elements at night and double as backpacks during the day. Transforming the negative impact of waste into immediate relief of those living on the street, bundled up in the long-term vision of enabling positive change in their lives.



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[www.streetsleeper.org](http://www.streetsleeper.org)

# POZZOLANA CEMENT

## Constructs R+D, Ghana

Pozzolana Cement is a product of Pozzolana Ghana Ltd, a cement additive that can replace up to 33% of ordinary Portland cement. Pozzolana cement is made from pozzolana clay, abundant in the central region of Ghana, and is therefore a 100% locally produced building material. In addition, Pozzolana cement improves the performance of ordinary Portland cement by reducing hydration and appearance of cracks in concrete works; additionally it is environmentally friendly and supports the local building material economy.



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# AFRICA IS TRANSFORMED

African makers and creators have a singular, make-do approach to materiality, transforming what's at hand into unexpected objects and designs that delight. Found objects are repurposed in ingenious ways while mass produced materials are reimagined in novel applications – always reflecting traces of a previous incarnation.

## TEXTILES FROM MAN VS NATURE (2013) AND MARVELOUS REALM (2014) COLLECTIONS

**Zinzi de Brouwer, Mozambique**

Textile designer Zinzi de Brouwer pushes the boundaries of materials and technology to create complex knits with three-dimensionality. The 'Marvelous Realm' fabrics include snake leather embroidered with pure silk yarn, organic cotton yarns with metallic polyester yarns to create delicate knit structures and lustred yarns to create shimmery effects in the weaves. Her previous collection, 'Man vs Nature', used specially treated leathers, double-sided with piercing blues and greens to create a series of textures that are unpredictable, fierce and beautiful. Feathers, smooth sturdy leathers and skins have all been dyed, treated and twisted to give the textiles a different dimension. She aims to enhance the materials ability to age beautifully and gracefully to and have a longer life.



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# SKOP

**Lara Kruger & Roché van den Berg,  
South Africa**

SKOP upcycled 1000 reject soccer balls into a dynamic range of functional and decorative interior objects, jewellery and surface designs. They unpick rejects soccer balls and re-stitch and crochet the patches into new shape-combinations and patterns. The neckpieces range from larger more elaborate statement pieces, to smaller ready-to-wear pieces that can be worn alone or layered. Adopting a playful approach they use eclectic and often contrasting techniques, colours and textures to create objects that celebrate South African multiplicity, vibrancy and pride.



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# MWANGABORA

**Sustainable Development For All-Kenya  
Evans Wadongo, Kenya**

Mwangabora translates to "good light" in Swahili. The solar lantern, made out of recycled materials is more than just a light, it is a system. It works like this: First a poor community with limited access to electricity is identified. Then an engineer visits the community and designs a solar lamp model that works with the local materials. With the help of local leaders young people are identified and trained to make the lamps. The lamps are distributed to existing women's groups and they are trained to maintain the lamp as well as basic micro-enterprise development and financial management. The women are encouraged to collectively save the money they previously used on kerosene or candles within their group. SDFA-Kenya tops up the savings with a seed grant that the women then use to set up an income-generating venture of their choice.



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# MAKAPADS

**Dr. Moses Musaazi, Technology for Tomorrow and Faculty of Technology, Makerere University, Uganda**

The reality in Uganda is that many girls are not able to attend school on the days they menstruate because they can't afford the basic sanitary products. Research also revealed about 90% of the urban poor women and girls don't use (off-the-shelf) sanitary pads because it is too expensive, instead improvising using with unhygienic materials such as banana fibers, grass, leaves, old newspapers, and pieces of cloth. Makapads is a sanitary pads made from 99% local materials, mainly papyrus reeds, cut from the vast swamps and riverbanks across the country, making it 75% cheaper than other commercial products. The labour intensive production process also creates employment opportunities.



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# COLOUR CUP

**Siyazama Project and Simunye Craft Collective with Margrethe Odgaard, for Editions in Craft, South Africa**

Editions in Craft, founded by Renée Padt and Ikko Yokoyama and based in Stockholm, Sweden, is an international platform for artists and designers to explore the technical and artistic possibilities of traditional crafts. They teamed-up Siyazama Project, a bead craft collective and the Simunye Craft Collective from KwaZulu-Natal, with Danish designer Margrethe Odgaard to develop marketable items that would ensure a source of income for the collectives. The result is the Colour Cup, a design, which exploits the fact that glass beads let light and colour through. The light bulb covers slip onto bare bulbs transforming a purely utilitarian item into a décor piece. The Colour Cups shown in the exhibition are made by master beadcrafters Lobolile Ximba and Phiwé Mchunu.



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# UMTWALO WOODEN BACKPACK

**Inga, Gubeka, Indalo Décor, South Africa**

Cape Town-based designer Inga Gubeka's love for wood inspired him to try and make a backpack using this unconventional medium. He experimented with bamboo but through a prototyping process found plywood to work the best. The technique of bending plywood is traditionally associated with furniture but here he employs it to create a fashion accessory. He uses a 5mm thick sheet for the body of backpack that gives it structure but is still light enough to be practical. The lid is made up of strips of plywood, not only contributing to the backpack's unique aesthetic but also ensuring optimal functionality. The backpack is finished using leather straps and lined with shweshwe, a fabric synonymous with Xhosa culture in South Africa or PU lining.



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# METAL CHAIR

**Hamed Quattara, Hamed Design Studio, Burkina Faso**

Through his raw mixed-media creations Hamed Ouatarra aims to bring out design that exposes the realities of modern Africa. "My goal is to provide a key point in a continent which suffers from imports and all kinds of imitation furniture, especially of poor quality and which does not reflect our culture," he says. Although also a painter, Hamed really comes into his own with his designer furniture pieces made from salvaged metal sheets and frames using metal welding. The pieces, ranging from chairs to cabinets, stools to tables, retain a patina of their previous incarnation but are utterly transformed into contemporary, clean-lined furniture.



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# NOSTALGIA BAG & SWEATER

## Vernac bags by Dennis Chuene, South Africa

The Nostalgia bag and sweater is inspired the ubiquitous use of the “china bag” sold by street vendors across South Africa. The bags, with their distinct tartan-like pattern, become a carry-all for everything from shopping bags to becoming luggage for long trips to rural homes. Dennis observed everyday behaviours that promoted his designs. Due to the size of the bags they become very heavy to carry by hand and people tend to carry them over their shoulder. This inspired him to create a backpack. The bags also function as shelter and even clothing for people who live on the streets.



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# BLANTYRE JAR

## People of the Sun, Malawi

The waste that Blantyre City in Malawi generates and the creative skills of the city's low-income artisans inspired the design of the Blantyre Jar. The Blantyre Jars are made by three different micro-enterprises: Zochita Zambiri, who cut discarded wine bottles, from hotels and restaurants into jars by hand; Magobo who make the individually-fitted lids out of mahogany hardwood with the aid of a lathe machine; Warm Hearts who make the packaging out of recycled cardboard and paper collected from supermarkets, offices and schools.



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# SMATI TURTLE 1

## Melle Smets and Joost van Onna, AARDSCHAP foundation, Ghana

Melle Smets and Joost van Onna followed the trail of Europe's discarded cars to the Ghanaian neighbourhood of Suami Magazine, where over 200 000 craftsmen recycle discarded car scrap. In this immense open-air automobile factory, cars are transformed into African cars. Simple, strong and cheap adjustments make them suitable for the African road. It is a place where craftsmanship, knowledge of recycling, ingenuity and self-sufficiency rule the daily life. Together with these resourceful craftsmen, Smets and van Onna created a new, characteristic African car: the SMATI Turtle 1.



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# AFRICA IS TRADITION REINVENTED

As the cradle of humankind Africa has the oldest tradition of making and innovation. Today's designers interpret on ancient vocabularies of form, material and craft, into a new visual language, creating African icons anew. It is about the juxtaposition of the age-old and the future-forward, about recontextualising the here and now.

## BILLIE TOP AND ZAMA SKIRT

**Sindiso Khumalo, South Africa**

This digitally printed top and skirt, by fashion designer Sindiso Khumalo, forms part of her debut Spring/Summer 2013 collection. The bespoke prints on these garments are inspired by the graphics in traditional Zulu beadwork. Khumalo believes the future of textiles lies in retracing our old ways of making and renovating them into a new and contemporary context; looking back and forward at the same time by finding ways of integrating new technologies with old techniques.



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# DISCO PIPE FOR AIRDIEM

**Hicham Lahlou, Morocco**

Industrial and product designer Hicham Lahlou has reinvented the traditional hookah pipe by streamlining its design and making it out of recyclable polyethylene. Airdiem, a French company and the world's leading manufacturer of today's narghiles, has taken a new approach to a product that has a history of more than 500 years old. Lahlou believes that redesigning objects with a strong cultural connection is only justified if the reimagined design is "relevant and brings novelty, freshness... otherwise, it ends up being redundant and standardised." His design of the Disco Pipe is a case and point. It is radically different from a traditional hookah with its ovoid and offbeat form, achieved using rotational moulding; it also sports futuristic pop colours.



[www.hichamlahlou.com](http://www.hichamlahlou.com)

# CRAZY LEGS TABLE

**Tekura Design, Ghana**

Run by husband-and-wife team Josephine and Kweku Forson, Tekura Design makes furniture and décor items in Accra, Ghana. The Crazy Legs Table is a delightful wooden table, which according to the designers depicts "the competition we go through as people in our own particular environment". "We may be different in diverse ways, we may come in different forms, shapes, sizes and even colour, and with different mentalities yet we have a common root and destiny, says Josephine. "The legs depict our diversity, and the top represents our common bond, our common destiny." Tekura's respect for the heritage and quality of life in only informs their designs but also extends to the environment and their pieces are produced exclusively from carefully selected, reclaimed wood to facilitate land reforestation.



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[www.designtekura.com](http://www.designtekura.com)

# **YELLOW FEVER FILM ANIMATION**

**Ng'endo Mukii, Kenya**

*Yellow Fever* is Kenyan animation director Ng'endo Mukii's breakout film. Currently on the film festival circuit, it has enjoyed numerous awards including Best Animation at the Kenya International Film Festival (2012), Best Short Film at the inaugural Africa Magic Viewer's Choice Awards (March 2013), and most recently the Silver Hugo for Best Animated Short at the Chicago International Film Festival (October 2013). The film questions the effect of media on African women's self-image and on their concept of skin and race, using mixed media to describe our almost schizophrenic pursuit of globalised beauty. *Yellow Fever* uses a mix of stop-motion, found imagery and computer animation typical of her richly textured style.



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# **AFRICAN ZEN SERVING TABLE**

**Allan Schwarz, Mezimbite Forest Centre,  
Mozambique**

Like everything made by the forest-dwelling carpenters at the Mezimbite Forest Centre, the first and largest indigenous tree nurseries and reforestation programme in Mozambique, this table makes sustainable use of natural materials. It is made from Panga Panga and Songololo woods upcycled from old sawmills. Panga Panga takes over 200 years to grow to commercial size, while Songolo is commercially extinct. The table has been designed to optimise the noble hardwood, engineered to be produced in the hot and humid forest and be able to withstand transport to cold, dry climates.



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[www.mezimbite.net](http://www.mezimbite.net)

# SMOCK COLLAR

**Susan Didcott, Trip Handbags and Accessories, South Africa**

Susan Didcott translates the traditional technique of smocking into something contemporary and African. While the collars are reminiscent of a Victorian collar, so too do they evoke the aesthetic of a traditional Zulu neckpiece. The embroidery technique of sewing elastic thread into the folds of fabric gives it stretch, detailing and texture. Didcott's interest in traditional sewing techniques has a personal connection to her fondness of smocked dresses as a young child, made by her mother's English nanny.



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# BOGOLAN THROW

**Boubacar Doumbia, Ndomo, Mali**

This 100% organic cotton fabric, dyed using natural vegetable-based dye and clay mud, is the product of a social enterprise, Ndomo based in Segou, Mali. Here Boubacar Doumbia not only teaches young men the skills to weave, dye and make these textiles, they also received entrepreneurial training and life skills that enable them to start their own enterprises. The textiles, a contemporary interpretation of traditional Malian fabrics, are made using age-old natural dyeing techniques that employ earth ('bogolan' also known as mud cloth), vegetables ('basilan') or natural indigo or 'gala'. The base fabric is also hand woven on site using traditional techniques for smaller pieces, and modern looms for wider fabrics.



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[www.ndomo.net](http://www.ndomo.net)

# PROJECT PAINTED CHILDREN'S CHAIR

**Ab Oosterwaal, Piratas do Pau, Mozambique**

For 'Project Painted', the Mozambique-based Pirates do Pau asked local artists to apply a watercolor paint technique traditionally used to decorate bowls with graphic patterns to furniture. The project is still in the prototyping phase and as such has only been used on chairs and stools for children, but will soon be broadened to other items. Piratas do Pau is working on mapping the patterns and colors and their significance, and designing a furniture collection using this technique to imbue items with local culture.



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# CONE NESTING STOOLS

**Designed by Rentaro Nishimura and made by Mango Club for People of the Sun, Malawi**

Basket-weaving in Malawi is still practiced in rural areas, where materials are readily available. Baskets are used in day-to-day activities in both urban and rural centres and their functions and forms have remained virtually unchanged for generations. The clever Cone Nesting Stools, the result of a creative synergy between People of the Sun, designer Rentaro Nishimura and Mango Club basket weavers in Malawi, breathe new life into the basket making. The London-based designer, inspired by the elaborative process of basket making and the skills of Mango Club, designed Cone, a stool within a stool. The techniques are applied in a more structural and modern application.



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# TABOO STOOL

**Ayse Birsal and Bibi Seck, Taboo Furniture  
Senegal**

Taboo stool and table draw inspiration from the daily habits of Western Africans, who traditionally sit on stools or squat on the floor around low tables to eat from a communal tray laden with food and then spend hours conversing and drinking Attaya tea. The stool and table are made from 75% recycled material. To create the collection, Ayse Birsal and Bibi Seck collaborated with a Transtech manufacturer of septic tanks that uses recycled materials in its process. The Taboo Collection furniture comes in a range of colours; the colour is dependent on the colour of the plastic being recycled to create the furniture. The furniture can be used both indoors and outdoors.



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[www.dereconstruction.com](http://www.dereconstruction.com)

# MANDJAQUE HAND-WOVEN TEXTILE

**Aissa Dione, Senegal**

Traditionally, Senegalese weavers produce a fabric of 15 to 20cm in width, which is an obstacle for the furniture industry. Aissa Dione convinced traditional weavers to make the technological leap and move to the minimum width of 90cm. This then allowed them to develop the business of furnishing fabric. To broaden its product range, Dione has recovered looms from France which allows it to industrialise and diversify its production, offering up to 140cm wide tissue now. The quality of African cotton fibers associated with raffia, abaca fiber or other authorities, the use of natural dyes and weaving hand, the wealth of patterns created by changing traditional patterns, tailor-made and the level of finish can produce a very high end product sought by leading brands such as Hermès.



[www.aissadione.net](http://www.aissadione.net)



# STATE OF THE NATION BASKET CHAIR

**Designers without Borders in collaboration with Sian Eliot and the Costa do Sol weavers, Mozambique/South Africa**

Hand woven using dried palm leaf, the State of the Nation basket chair incorporates age-old craftsmanship with modern engineering knowledge to fashion a sellable and sustainable furniture piece. The basket seat of the chair is woven in Mozambique by the Costa do Sol weavers and it is then completed in South Africa. The stackable leg detail allows for easier transport and market access.



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# BROTHER VELLIES

**Aurora James, Namibia**

The history of the velskoen, or veldskoen (in Afrikaans, “vel” means “skin” and “veld” translates to “scrub land”; “skoen” means shoe), is intertwined with the footwear of the traditional Khoisan people and later with the Afrikaans boers (farmers) when these light boots became the footwear of choice for the Great Trek. Traditionally they are made from tanned leather or soft rawhide and attached to a leather or rubber sole, or one made from old car tyres. Brother Vellies is a contemporary take on these traditional shoes. Although made using the same age-old techniques, “velskoene” have never looked quite like this: metallic, in snakeskin, with neon toe caps and even peep toes.



+13 47 627 8869  
[www.brothervellies.com](http://www.brothervellies.com)

# AFRICA IS SHARP!

Africa is audacious. Africa is irreverent. Africa is sharp! Africa likes to show off with bright colours as bold as those found in the diverse natural landscape, rich patterns as intricate as the interwoven cultures on the continent, shapes and silhouettes that cast a thoroughly modern vision of Africa.

## SAWA SHOES FOR SHINE SHINE

**Sawa shoes + Shine Shine,  
Ethiopia/South Africa**

There is a strong tradition of using fabrics and textiles to tell stories, commemorate important events or even communicate everyday messages in Africa. Inspired by this long tradition of politically and religiously commemorative cloths Shine Shine fabrics are a fun; contemporary, and more urban take on these traditional clothes. Tracy Rushmere, works alongside with fabric and graphic designer Heidi Chisholm, to develop Shine Shine's distinctive tongue-in-cheek style. The designs find a new application on Sawa's retro-cool high tops designed and made in Ethiopia.



+ 33 61 104 6444  
[www.sawashoes.com](http://www.sawashoes.com)

# MO ARMCHAIR

Cheick Diallo, Diallo Design, Mali

Located on the hills of Bamako, Mali – in the suburbs where a multitude of artisans manufacture domestic objects from salvaged materials such as old tyres, bottle tops, cans and computer batteries using make-do methods – is Diallo Design studio. Here Cheick Diallo and his team of artisans manufacture finely crafted furniture and objects from everyday detritus. The traditional traps used by the Malian fishermen inspire the design of the MO armchair, made from fishing wire and nylon over a metal armature. A perfect amalgamation of economy of material, ergonomics and local aesthetics results in an elegant, light chair that can be used indoors or outside.



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diallo.design @ gmail.com

# MR SOMEBODY & MR NOBODY

Sharon Lombard and Heidi Chisholm

Welcome to the world of Mr Somebody & Mr Nobody's and their two personal assistants where golden chickens reign supreme and people go to heaven in luxury German sedans. In Ghana, it is customary to send loved ones off in beautifully carved, painted coffins that resemble the deceased's most precious possession in life... a sewing machine, a cellphone, a Coke bottle. Mr Somebody & Mr Nobody's turned these containers into the final resting place for your clutter. Also in their range of homeware are buckets that double up as seats, scatter cushions that look like radios and plucked chickens. You can also step out in Mr Somebody & Mr Nobody style with khangas and bands while twirling a staff.



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[www.mrsomebodyandmrnobody.com](http://www.mrsomebodyandmrnobody.com)

# PLYWOOD CHAIR

**Issa Diabaté, Koffi Diabaté Architects,  
Ivory Coast**

Architect Issa Diabaté's goal with this low lounge chair was to create a visually interesting object out of an everyday, affordable material – plywood. Diabaté used his signature style of sensuous but pared down forms to create a furniture line – there are also three low coffee tables in the series – that combines simplicity, low cost and modern design principles. The furniture is a distillation of Diabaté's architectural objectives of bringing a more informed, intentional design approach to bear on everyday life in Africa's urban centres. With this series he proves that one can create simple furniture with personality at very low cost making design accessible to young urbanites.



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# UKHAMBAMBA LIGHT

**Sian Eliot and Ari Geva, South Africa**

The Ukhamba lamp grew out of Ari Geva's and Sian Eliot's love for woven metallic mesh, the pooling of their experience and knowledge and their desire to create an iconic South African light. The mesh's reflective texture gives the light a weightless, veil-like and elusive quality. The lamp's form is inspired by the Zulu 'Ukhamba', a hand-coiled, unfired burnished clay pot. This traditional object is a perfect example of an age-old vernacular craft that has been repeated and refined over considerable time, resulting in an elegant and mastered form. For this technically challenging piece, the production process and final product requires equal ingenuity. The designers are working with engineers to design and build the tooling for production. Geva and Eliot note: "In creating and participating in the engineering process, our inspiration comes to life and more innovation occurs."



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# LAYERS COLLECTION FALL-WINTER 2013/ 2014

**Nana K Brenu, Studio 1981, Ghana/Italy**

For his second collection under his 1981 label, Ghanaian fashion designer, Nana K Brenu, analysed the concept of layers found in architecture and modern design. He was interested in how construction materials could be used to create either a fluid or a more rigid look. He drew inspiration from the Design Museum in Holon by Ron Arad and "Mutated Panels" an art installation by Richard Meier. He translated this concept in the Layers collection by contrasting structured and fluid layers achieved through contrasting fabrics such as knits against silk. A neutral palette helps to convey the architectural feeling while a pop of colour lends some warmth to the collection, ultimately reflecting the brand's core philosophy of contradiction. Seen here is a grey silk crepe peplum layered jacket over a nude silk long sleeve shirt and orange wool pencil skirt.



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[www.studio1981.com](http://www.studio1981.com)

# FASHION RISING SPRING 2014 COLLECTION

**Abrima Erwiah and Rosario Dawson  
Studio One Eighty Nine, Ghana/US**

Each garment in Fashion Rising's Spring 2014 collection is entirely handmade by artisans in Ghana. The range celebrates brilliant colour using hand-batiked fabrics and is finished off with a carefully thought-out series of accessories in vegan leather, cotton and cotton-and-canvas. In all of its designs, Studio One Eighty Nine infuses traditional techniques such as basket making, kente weaving and 'bogolanfini' (a Malian weaving and dying technique for textiles) with innovative concepts to develop products that preserve heritage and tradition but are at the same time modern and contemporary. See here is the green Aggie shirt and jacket with batik-printed green Ralph shorts.



[www.studiooneeightynine.com](http://www.studiooneeightynine.com)  
[www.fashionrisingcollection.com](http://www.fashionrisingcollection.com)

# SPAGHETTI BOWLS

**Marjorie Wallace, Matupo Pottery, Zimbabwe**

Marjorie Wallace produces these fine porcelain bowls, inspired by traditional baskets. Each creation is scratched, pressed and incised with linear designs and decoration. "I have loved baskets since I was quite young. I have memories of the people who made them, how they sat, where they collected the grass and what they were looking for when they collected it. We had baskets hanging on the wall in our house, and we used them," she says. "When I started decorating pottery I thought more and more about baskets, how they look and how they are woven. They too are vessels. I saw my task as being no different from the basket makers."



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# GONE RURAL FLUORO VASES – SERIES 2

**Philippa Thorne, Gone Rural, Swaziland**

With the creation of The Fluoro vases – Series 2, the Gone Rural weavers have pushed the boundaries of their traditional skills. The fun, graphic vases are a modern translation of traditional African patterns, scaled up, and with an injection of acid/fluoro tones. They are made from 100% recycled fabrics and sustainably harvested natural fibres. The vases are the design of Philippa Thorne, a product designer originally from London who has been working with Gone Rural for more than 12 years. The Fluoro vases were woven free hand by 12 master weavers from the Ngwavuma region in Swaziland. Master weaver Sipiwe Mngometulu created the two largest pieces.



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[www.goneruralswazi.com](http://www.goneruralswazi.com)

# VESPRESSO

## *Arte Meccanica*, Paolo Mastrogiuseppe South Africa

Espresso Veloce Serie Carbonio Nero V12 is a Grand Prix inspired espresso machine. It is a half-scale tribute to the powerplants used at the top level of motor racing in the early 1990's. Conceived and hand built in South Africa by Paolo Mastrogiuseppe, the masterpiece is fashioned from magnesium, titanium, aerospace aluminium and authentic, thermoset carbon fibre. Series strictly limited to just 380 individually numbered units.



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[www.espressoveloce.com](http://www.espressoveloce.com)

# DRESS

## Taibo Bacar, Mozambique

The printed material used for the coat is the traditional 'capulana' fabric, from Mozambique, used here in a non-traditional way. Taibo Bacar's Fall/Winter 2013 collection celebrates the traditional 'capulana' fabric with a ready-to-wear collection that is quintessentially Mozambican yet modern and contemporary. He explains the collection embodies a cross-cultural language and exchange that links European architecture and fashion with Mozambican heritage. The brightly coloured capulana, which is a sarong-type piece of clothing traditional worn as a wrap-around skirt or dress, is used here in a non-traditional way.



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[www.taibobacar.com](http://www.taibobacar.com)

# BE STREET COLLECTION


## Selly Raby Kane, Seraka, Senegal

The Be Street collection by Senegalese fashion designer Selly Raby Kane fuses elements of rock, urban glamour and street culture. The collection is a homage to the visual culture and grit of urban centres celebrated in graffiti, music and art. Silhouettes are structured and materials combinations are atypical resulting in a collection that pulsates with the vibrancy of a real African metropolis.



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[www.sellyrabykane.com](http://www.sellyrabykane.com)



60

OBJECTS

25

COUNTRIES

66

DESIGNERS

A DESIGN INDABA PROJECT

DESIGN  
INDABA