

Design Indaba



Inspiration shop

An orgasmic cornucopia of ideas is the only way to sum up the annual Design Indaba conference and expo, held in Cape Town every year. It is worth the investment as an annual inspiration injection as it provokes one to view the world in a more sustainable way and to live our lives – work, play, spirit – differently, whichever industry we are in.

By Louise Marsland

Forget walking on sunshine, I was walking on clouds after three days of Design Indaba in February. At a time when we are mired in a global recession – the scale of which has not been witnessed since the last century – it was wonderful to be able to devote three days to being inspired.

And inspire they did. There aren't enough superlatives in the English language to describe the carefully crafted creative thoughts and works of the local and international speakers who sell out the main auditorium and adjacent student simulcast every year.

The emerging keywords were: sustainability, collaboration, co-operation, partnership, passion, love.

As founder Ravi Naidoo says, it's all about a desire to promote design, creativity and innovation as a platform for economic and social change. He wants to rekindle optimism, even in these tough times. "After all, there's never been a bad time for a good idea."

As far as design trends go, nature is still right up there and apparently birds (the feathered kind) are big in design, products and jewellery this coming season.

This year it was the showcase of the creative genius of the 'Incredible India' duo of W+K Delhi; Le Francois: the 5.5 designers; trend activist Li Edelkoort; Massive Change proponent Bruce Mau and the completely sublime Czar of Chefs,

Ferran Adria's gourmet works of art, among many others. "This gorgeous cast of thought leaders... these reformers, dreamers, idealists and activists..." to quote Ravi Naidoo, came from far to motivate for new global thinking in designing a more sustainable lifestyle. They believe it is up to the creative industries to save the world, not the gormless politicians.

Idealistic activism

When you're "stuck in a creative tar pit" of your own design, with great ideas (you think) that the market isn't responding too, you need to take time off and go do something different for a little while to nudge inspiration, says Thirst's Rick Valicenti,

Best takeaway

"If you produce great content, you will have people wanting to pay you for it," said Mohit Jayal and V Sunil of W+K Delhi.



Anthony Dunne and Fiona Raby



W+K Delhi



Bruce Mau