

decor, design & architecture

VISI

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here they are

OUR DESIGNER OF THE YEAR FINALISTS



Brandt architect

Jeremy architect

Marina Kleinloog designer

Mbongeni Buthelezi artist

Lesley Carstens architect

Silvio Rech architect

Hefer mer

Gamble designer

Modernis

VISI DESIGNER OF THE YEAR

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GAWIE FAGAN TO MARTIN KRUGER - MEET THE LEGENDS OF LASTING DESIGN AND THE YOUNGSTERS IN THE WINGS
ARDMORE'S REVIVAL AND CERAMICS TO TREASURE

lasting design



VISI has crowned some extraordinary design legends in the five years that we have been hosting the Absolut VISI Designer of the Year competition.

I'm not ashamed to reveal that my personal favourite is Gregor Jenkin, whose flat steel interpretation of a Cape Dutch table is still one of my most coveted objects in the world. (My heart skipped a beat this morning when I spotted one in the British Airways Slow Lounge so elegantly created by the team from Tonic).

Still, it's an impossibly hard task to single out one designer for his or her contribution to the South African design landscape, so thankfully we once more have the brilliant Paris-based trend expert Li Edelkoort to select the final winner. Thank you to Li and our local nominating panel for lending us your fresh eyes and helping the team at VISI to make this tough call.

Our annual award – the Oscars of the design world – inspired the VISI team to explore the phenomenon of lasting design in South Africa and, to our delight, to discover the fascinating stories behind both the old and the new. We are a nation of extraordinary talents and have been for more years than we can remember.

From lucky Philippe and Carmen van der Merwe's Rex Martienssen gem in Greenside (page 82), to the seven-years-in-the-making masterpiece that Martin Kruger has just completed for artist Wilma Cruise (page 66) – these are all designs that have and will stand the test of time and we hope you enjoy the stories behind their creation.

But when all is said and done, and the archaeologists of the future come to unearth the remains of our civilisation here at the southern tip, what will they find? Our decor editor Tina-Marié Malherbe reckons it will be our extraordinary ceramic talents, as she showcases in a delightful production worthy of a design award itself (page 108).

And it's no coincidence that this issue ends with the younger and more innovative amongst this country's thinkers and designers. Because while we cherish the history of South African design, it is going to be the courage of talents such as messy cook Jono Cane (page 116), sustainable furniture designer David Krynauw and architecture activist Brian McKechnie (page 124) that ensure that great design and design thinking, endures.

We've loved putting together what we think is an evocative mix of old and new lasting designs, but we're pretty sure there's a lot we've missed. We'd love to continue this exploration and appeal to the VISI community to send us your thoughts and pictures of designs you believe will forever be part of the local design landscape. Let's continue the conversation on our Facebook page at <http://on.fb.me/es9aVn>.

Jacquié

future fantastic



FULL OF THE THRILLS OF POSSIBILITY, THESE YOUNG SOUTH AFRICANS ARE CARVING OUT THE WAY FORWARD. THEY ARE THE CREATORS AND CURATORS OF THE TIMELESS DESIGNS OF THE FUTURE.

MARK HAEFELE, JAMES SMITH AND FRANK VAN ROOIJEN Advertising executives, 1984

Q: What do you think makes design and ideas timeless?

A: When there's nothing left to take away.

With a name like 1984, this prophetic collective of young advertising execs is proof of the changing nature of advertising, not only in South Africa, but worldwide. 1984 is a baby agency born from Ogilvy, but already making waves in the business of selling ideas rather than products, having worked with high-profile clients like KFC and Cell C. The difference between these guys and a typical ad agency is their approach to the relationship between brands and audiences. "In an age where everyone

knows what market speak sounds like, 1984 shows brands how to pull audiences in, instead of pushing advertising out," says James. 1984 achieves their award-winning feats by learning how to understand people through many platforms, including social media. They tell their clients that not everybody loves them and help them become the brands that people can relate to – not something to be achieved by following flaky trends, but by offering consumers an experience through entertainment, digital engagement, content and other contemporary communications. • Ogilvy. 011 709 6600, james.smith@ogilvy.co.za, www.ogilvy.co.za, Skype: jamesat1984



DAVID KRYNAUW, 26

Furniture Designer

Q: What do you think makes a design timeless?

A: I think good design is all about simplicity, trying not to overcomplicate things. It is also something that is not influenced by trends but rather a design inspired by the function of the object and the properties of the materials used.

Like the award-winning furniture designs under his burgeoning David Krynauw brand, David's philosophy is simple: design with integrity. "I believe that as long as I enjoy my work, there will be an audience for it," says David. As a sustainable furniture designer, he manufactures and produces his sought-after minimalistic pieces from his own farm or uses wood salvaged from other local areas. He names Vogel and Adriaan Hugo among his favoured designers, humbly stating that he is not yet good enough to have a favourite piece of his own, although his famous wooden chandelier design – made from recovered pieces of jacaranda tree stumps – has resulted in him being awarded the annual Eskom Lighting Design award. In the new age of green-washing, where business simply falls back on the it-word "green" to appear ethical, David's philosophy and work is the real thing, rare and superbly futuristic.

• David Krynauw, 084 626 3807,
david@davidkrynauw.co.za,
www.davidkrynauw.co.za