

Q&A with MBOISA, expo winners

 By [Simone Puterman](#): editor-at-large

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This year, the big winners at the [Design Indaba Expo](#) were jeweller [Kirsten Goss](#), graphic designer [Mike van Heerden](#); and [Andy Cartwright](#) of Andy Cartwright Homeware. Bizcommunity.com finds out what [these wins](#) mean and how the expo was for them, as well as their plans for the future.

The Lily Pad Ring by Goss ([@kirstengosslon](#)) is the [Most Beautiful Object in South Africa](#) 2012; Van Heerden ([@mikejvanheerden](#)) won the [Most Creative Stand](#); and Cartwright ([@_AndyCartwright](#)) walked off with the inaugural [Design Indaba Innovation Award](#).

What with all three having strong connections with Durban, it was a strong showing for KwaZulu-Natal this year.

■ What does it mean for you to have won?

Kirsten Goss: It's been the most startling and thrilling experience for us to get this great accolade. We were deeply humbled to be pitched alongside such an esteemed bunch of designers with the nomination. All credit to our exceptional team of goldsmiths and staff in London and South Africa for making this brand what it is. We are bursting from the seams about our little gem, the [Lily Pad ring](#).



Kirsten Goss's Lily Pad ring, MBOISA 2012.

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Mike van Heerden: I actually never expected to win "Most Creative Stand" at the Design Indaba, because I had a look at many other stands and was really blown away by them. So it was quite a shock when they presented me with the award. All that hard work paid off, which is a great feeling. I think because the Design Indaba is an international event, it helps give some credibility, to what I am trying to achieve as a designer. Although, I fully understand that prestige is a small percentage of success, but I do think it helps somewhat.



An example of Mike van Heerden's craft.

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It's great to see Durban actually producing some cool stuff, [because] there is a lot of talent here, but also a lot of apathy. There was another emerging creative with me from Durban, and his jewellery was very cool! But to be honest, it's not really about location at all for me; it's about the people and design.

Andy Cartwright: We have been slogging away at becoming a truly successful design house for over 11 years. It has required nothing less than total dedication and sacrifice. All this is made easier when you are passionate about what you do. An award like this can only sweeten our journey and serves as a springboard towards our vision of global success.



The Andy Cartwright Homeware stand. Pic: Andy Cartwright.

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■ How was the expo for you?

Goss: We were not exhibiting but it was a privilege to be part of MBOISA. [However, part of the prize is 6m² of floor space at 2012 expo] and apparently they want us in [Salon Privé](#) next year. So we'll be there, yes! Hoping to do something very conceptual and couture, as opposed to the more pret-a-porter jewellery we saw there. We'll also have a brand new cutlery collection there.

Van Heerden: I really enjoyed the expo. I had never been before, so learnt a lot about what is required to run a creative business, be a salesman and showcase work in a professional manner. I was also able to go to the [simulcasts](#), which were filled with such great content. It was such an honour to be chosen as an [Emerging Creative](#).



2012 Design Indaba flag with Andy Cartwright's modular design.

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Cartwright: At the heart of Andy Cartwright Homeware is the desire, through our designs, to fill people's homes with a sense of joy and fun. This is made possible through expos such as Design Indaba, where we can connect with fellow designers to make that light shine at its brightest, showing the world what South African designers are capable of.

What are your plans for the future?

Goss: Apart from the London flagship store and our production studio is in Durban with a retail shop alongside it], we opened in Johannesburg last year and we are looking to open in Cape Town this year. We are also exhibiting in New York in April and Hong Kong in June. We will continue to exhibit globally until, ultimately, we would like to open another shop in New York.

Van Heerden: Right now, I've decided to go on my own and start up my own business as a 2D and 3D graphic designer and see what happens from there; it's exciting because my designs had really good reactions from buyers and the public alike. A few of my pieces are actually on their way to

Amsterdam to be a part of a gallery exhibition. Things seem to be looking up, but I can't rest just yet; there's lots of work to be done.

Cartwright: Design Indaba is perfect platform for brand awareness and product recognition. It also develops confidence in your research as to whether your new products are going to be popular amongst consumers or not. The hard work now is opening ourselves up to the world of buyers, generating sales and keeping up a great level of service... and, if that isn't enough to keep us busy, we are obviously compelled to sustain our focus on what we do best, which is designing and innovating for our brand.

For more:

- Kirsten Goss: www.kirstengoss.com
- Mike van Heerden: www.behance.net/mikevanheerden
- Andy Cartwright Homeware: www.andycartwright.biz

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Simone Puterman (@SimoneAtLarge) is currently editor-at-large at Marklives.com and deputy chair of the Sanef online editors subcommittee. After majoring in psychology and linguistics at Rhodes University, and then completing her honours in psychology, she has been in the world of B2B publishing since 1997, with 7.5 year stints at both WriteStuff Publishing and Bizcommunity.com (March 2006-August 2013). Email her at simone@marklives.com.

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