



synopsis

**NEWAFRICA**

– design at the cutting edge

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## Introduction

**NEWAFRICA**, design at the cutting edge, is a design exhibition showing the latest and most contemporary products from Africa.

The project is the first of its kind in the world and will challenge prejudices against design from the African continent and create more complex and diverse images of African culture.

The exhibition will leave the audience with a refreshing view of the continent, by presenting a field in which Africa is on the very front edge of globalization – with strong roots in tradition and region.

The promotion of African design will inspire and encourage innovative African designers. In Europe, we will get the chance to experience new design cultures and discover new ways and possibilities for collaboration.

A further aim, is to research and define aspects of contemporary African design culture, to map and articulate new design values that have evolved not only from African culture and the massive complex of social and economic problems, but also from globalization. A comprehensive exhibition catalogue will document the new design cultures in different areas of sub-Saharan Africa.

The exhibition is structured around the following thematic:

### Fashion and graphics

The exhibition will emphasize design areas that are in rapid development. Especially fashion and graphics are being redefined into reflecting a very strong African design identity.

They are both categories that change fast and are constantly striving to express the African roots in a unique and contemporary way.

There will be portraits of a couple of designers/companies.

The Cape Town based design cooperative, Daddy buy me a pony, is determined to put Africa on the map and their efforts are making the international design scene sit up and take notice. "We're so tired of the continent being portrayed as a place of poverty and AIDS. There really are so many cool people and things happening in Africa." Daddy buy me a pony, was formed by Heidi Chisholm and ex-ad-agency maverick Piet Pienaar in 2001.

The Coca-Cola Company have in their latest campaign "Creating a Better World" engaged an African design studio, Rex and Tennant Mc Kay, to design a new afro-inspired clubcola in an aluminium bottle.

### Compact living/architectural design

The need for housing of relatively poor people has initiated many projects of smaller residential units that deal with the situation of living in a township and contains a large impact of flexibility.

Makeka architects has developed a mobile art gallery that can be moved from community to community.

### Sustainability/community projects

Due to poverty, recycling of waste products has always been a recurring tendency in many African cultures.

This tendency is being developed in many different products, not only from the motivation of fighting poverty, but merely from an idealistic point of view and the possibility of empowering different groups of people. The Zulu Mama chair by Haldene Martin is a very successful example of these community projects and collaborations.





The new African furniture and product designers are inspired by this concept, not only in relation to the communities, but also in many other contexts.

Gregor Jenkin is one of the most creative designers in interpreting the complexities and new values of Africa.

#### **Transport**

Presentation of design workshops and prototypes. Sustainable rural transport. Low cost, nonmotorized technology.

#### **Prototypes**

The exhibition will present two to three prototypes as the result of specific collaborations between African designers and Danish production companies. Kvadrat [www.kvadrat.dk](http://www.kvadrat.dk) will present two textile prototypes and Guldagergaard [www.ceramics.dk](http://www.ceramics.dk) will present the result of their collaboration with African ceramists.

#### **Section through design in general**

Ceramics, product design, textile and jewellery

#### **Activities**

**Exhibition** at Rundetaarn Exhibitionhall: Aug. 17. - Sep. 30. 2007

**Exchangeseminar** with focus on the postcolonial space as a breeding ground for innovative design cultures and how we can establish a network for promotion and visibility of African products. A number of African specialists and designers will be invited to Copenhagen.

#### **Travel exhibition**

The exhibition will be designed as a travel exhibition, travelling around the world in 2008 and 2009.

First Venue will be held in Rundetaarn Exhibitionhall in Copenhagen Aug. 17. - Sep. 30. 2007.

The exhibition is produced by Solvgade Studio in collaboration with Professor Des Laubscher, President of Design South Africa.

## Funding

The exhibition is funded by The Danish Artfoundation (Danish Ministry of Cultural Affairs) and CKU/DCCD (Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs).



KUNIST >



CENTER FOR KULTUR OG UDVIKLING | CKU  
DANISH CENTER FOR CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT | DCCD

## Organization

**NEWAFRICA** design exhibition is planned as a travelling exhibition visiting European museums throughout 2008 and 2009.

**NEWAFRICA** is produced by Solvgade Studio, Copenhagen in collaboration with Professor Des Laubscher, Danish Museum of Art and Design and Index 2007 Awards.

Des Laubscher is project coordinator in Africa and will organize communication with design organizations, ministries of cultural affairs, designers and sponsors in Africa.

Exhibition team:

Elisabeth Topsøe, Architect SDS/MAA Solvgade Studio, Curator.

Tina Midtgaard, Architect/designer MAA/MDD, Solvgade Studio, Curator.

Else-Marie Bierlich, M. phil Anthropology, Dialogue Coordinator.

Des Laubscher, President of Design South Africa. Coordinator.

Consultants: Danish Museum of Art & Design.

## Contact

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The synopsis is developed for the use of all involved partners.

Text: Tina Midtgaard, Elisabeth Topsøe

## Collaborating Partners

**Rundetaarn**, exhibitionhall. Købmagergade 52 A, 1150 Copenhagen K, +45 33730373.

Managing director: Jesper Vang Hansen, [jvh@rundetaarn.dk](mailto:jvh@rundetaarn.dk). The exhibitionhall has agreed to host the exhibition.

**NAD**, Network of African Designers. Contact through Des Laubscher.

**Danish Museum of Art and Design**, Bredgade 68, 1260 Copenhagen K, T: +45 33185656,

[www.kunstindustrimuseet.dk](http://www.kunstindustrimuseet.dk). Managing Director Bodil Busk Laursen: [bbl@kunstindustrimuseet.dk](mailto:bbl@kunstindustrimuseet.dk).

The museum will be a visual partner in advertising and publications and will act as advisor and consultant in relation with curating and editing of the catalogue. The museum will host seminars and lecturers and will also initiate a collaboration with an african ceramist and one of their close partners: Guldagergaard, International Ceramic Reseach Center, [www.ceramic.dk](http://www.ceramic.dk).

**Index 2007 Awards**. Strandboulevarden 47A, 2100 Copenhagen Ø, T: +45 33892005,

[www.indexaward.dk](http://www.indexaward.dk). Program Director: Lise Vejse Klint, [lvk@indexaward.dk](mailto:lvk@indexaward.dk).

Index is a non-profit organization that focuses on Design to improve life worldwide. They are awarding design from all over the world worth € 500.000. Furthermore they are presenting international design exhibitions and hosting summits for the world leaders of design and innovation. The Newafrica designexhibition and IndexAwards are coinciding in time and location and will cooperate in advertising. Furthermore there will be collaboration in relation to seminars and workshops.

The Newafrica designexhibition will have the international audience of Index 2007 (last index participation had 150.000 visitors from around the world) as well as local guests.

## Endorsements

**Justice Albie Sachs**, Constitutional Court Johannesburg

**Marianne Frandsen**, committee member of Danish Designers and IFI (International Federation of Interior Architects/Designers)

**Des Laubscher**, President of Design South Africa, committee member of IFI

**Design South Africa**, Johannesburg

**NAD**, Network of African Designers

**ICOGRADA**, International Council of Graphic Design Associates

**Decorex SA**, Director: Melanie Robinson, Johannesburg

