

## 7th National Furniture Design Competition winners announced

Ian Perry from Durban-based furniture manufacturer Homewood won in the Established Manufacturers category while Mikhayla Peterson, Amukelani Mathebula and Michael Sushan from the University of Johannesburg took the win in the Student category of the seventh National Furniture Design Competition.



Homewood founder and director Ian Perry

Presented by the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (dtic), the winners were announced by deputy minister Nomalungelo Gina during the recent online Proudly SA Buy Local Summit & Expo.

According to Professor Desmond Laubscher, chairperson of the judging panel, the theme of the 2020 competition was 'This is mine and these are ours', with the brief to design furniture for young, newly employed people who have come together to rent a modest apartment. "The aim of the design was to use a minimal budget, while designing a range of multipurpose and functional furniture that is modular, that can be purchased as budgets allow," said Laubscher.

### Distinct South African flair

"Possibly the most important criteria when judging the entrants were innovation and how contestants were able to interpret and incorporate functionality and useability, with the design aesthetics and identity having a distinct South African flair," Laubscher said. "We judged the ease of how the designed product can be manufactured, the number of parts that must be produced, the size and shape of the product and finally, what makes the most impact when the final product just looks right."

Bernadette Isaacs, managing director of the South African Furniture Initiative (SAFI), says that the competition is extremely important to identify and nurture furniture design and talent in the industry. SAFI is a partner and one of the main stakeholders in the competition. "In terms of quality and cutting edge design, South Africa is up there with the best in the world, but we still have to work on capturing our story, building a truly African design identity. The furniture design

competition goes a long way towards reaching that goal,” said Isaacs.



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10 Dec 2020



## High-value niche furniture products

When announcing the winners, deputy minister Gina emphasised how important to the South African economy the furniture sector is. “I believe it is possible to position the local furniture industry as the producer of high-value niche furniture products that are globally competitive and based on quality and differentiated design,” she said.

“Consumers must have access to local products and Proudly SA plays a pivotal role in achieving this,” Gina said. She explained to the delegates how the Furniture Design Competition assisted in achieving some of the outcomes contained in the Furniture Industry Master Plan and how locally manufactured and designed furniture demand was on the increase.

“The competition is part of our efforts to raise and nurture design capabilities in the country, raise the image of the furniture manufacturing industry and to grow the industry’s competitiveness by encouraging new product design and differentiation. The furniture industry is an important sector in the South African economy because it has the potential to contribute to the reduction of unemployment, increase of exports and boost the development of the small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMEs),” she said.

“By encouraging participation in the furniture industry, promoting the use of design to respond to changing living space, the use of locally manufactured inputs and getting continuous investments, maximum impact will be achieved,” she said.



## Prospect of new SA design qualification excites furniture industry

26 Oct 2020



Five finalists each in the Students and Established Manufacturers categories were in line for prizes, which included a one-year internship in the furniture industry, a six-month Furniture Design Incubation Programme by Furntech and a graphic design tablet for the students, a one-year Proudly South African membership, a one-year Institute of the Interior Design Professions memberships as well as an opportunity to participate and exhibit at selected platforms for the winning manufacturer.

The competition was presented in partnership with Proudly South Africa, the South African Furniture Initiative, Coricraft

Furniture, Mecad Solidworks, Furntech Centre of Excellence, Lewis Stores, the African Institute of Interior Designers and Tsogo Sun Hotels.

## **2020 Furniture Design Competition finalists**

### **Students category:**

- Mikhayla Peterson, Amukelani Mathebula and Michael Sushan (UJ) – winner
- Benedikt Johannes (TUT) – first runner up
- Katlego Madumo and James Fowler (UJ) – second runner up
- Natalie Selibas, Dennis Xavier and Anthony Abbotts (UJ)
- Simoné Pretorius (Potch Academy)

### **Established Manufacturers category:**

- Ian Perry (Homewood, KwaZulu-Natal) – Winner
- Sandile Nkosi (Protovate, Johannesburg) – first runner up
- Peet van Straaten (Raw Studio, Pretoria) – second runner up
- Chris Fouché (Karwei Industries, Cape Town)
- Korrie Bross (Caneworld, Cape Town)

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