

Walter Train brings his unique design aesthetic to Emazulwini restaurant



By [Evan-Lee Courie](#)

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Emazulwini restaurant at Makers Landing at the V&A Waterfront in Cape Town is a modern Zulu-inspired restaurant which seeks to celebrate Nguni cuisine and South African ingredients through a 21st-century fine-dining lens. The restaurant's dockside location has been transformed, with pared-back neutral tones brought to vivid life with the use of bold blues and reds, and beautiful and unique furniture and lighting by local designers.



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The gorgeous new space, which has become a stage for a developing South African aesthetic that pays respect to its heritage while charting the way forward in global style, is the result of a collaboration between Clout/SA, a purpose-driven creative agency and business-to-business market maker, and young interior designer Walter Train.



Clout/SA is transforming creative entrepreneurs to sector-leading businesses

Evan-Lee Courie 19 Apr 2023



Train, whose practice is informed by his own diverse heritage, describes his work as sitting at the intersection of two seemingly disparate worlds: one an Nguni upbringing rooted in family and culture, the other a western lineage intimately part of his birth.

We chat to Walter Train, to find out more about his journey...

■ **When did your passion for design start?**

It started at a very young age. I remember as a young boy correcting my mom on a colour being not blue but turquoise. I think from that moment they knew I would be in something artistic or creative. My passion for design really developed when I studied architecture and during my time at design school, where I learnt about all the famous architects and furniture designers around the world.

■ ***How did you get into interior design?***

From studying architecture, I wanted to take my knowledge of the built environment and translate it into interior design. The two worlds are very contrasted but also very similar. I like the relationship between the two, in which the architecture and interior of a space speak as one cohesive language.

■ ***When was that moment you decided to make interior design your life mission?***

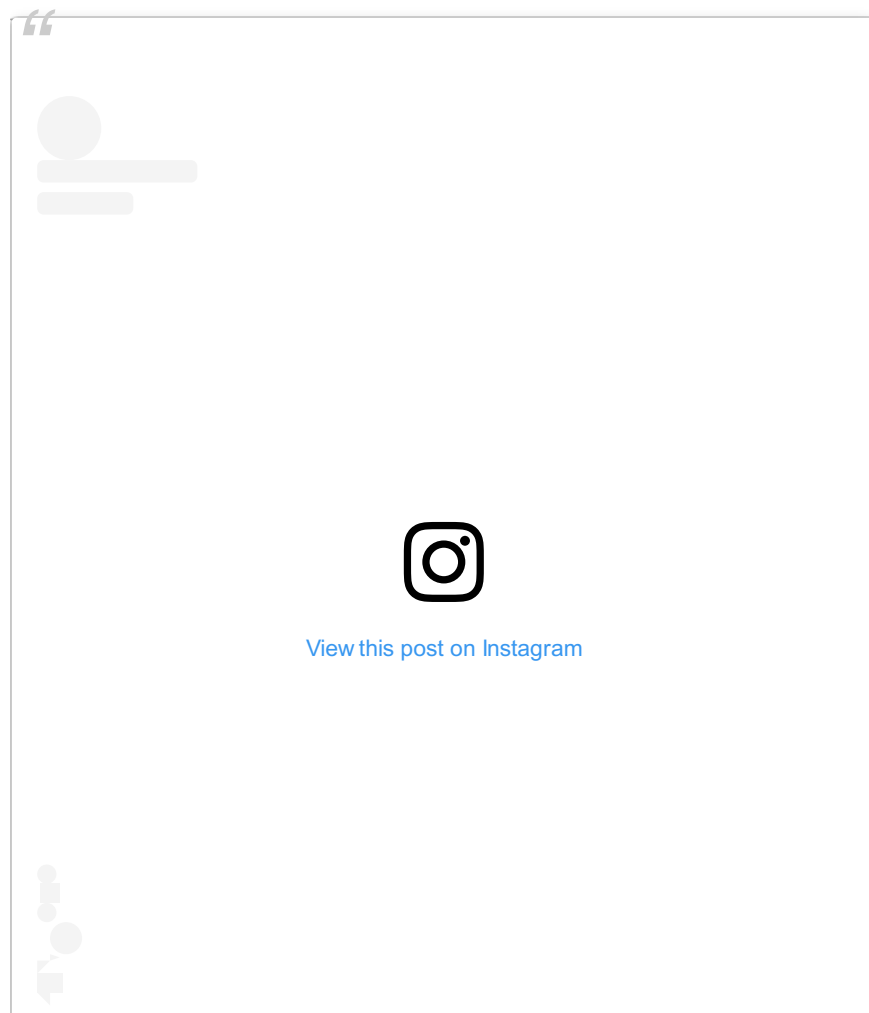
After going to the Salone del Mobile, the Milan Furniture Fair, I was really exposed to how much bigger design can be. Seeing the best of the best in the industry and the possibilities in interior design was really inspiring.

■ ***What was that feeling like?***

Excitement, and feeling like a student again, realising how little I know and how much I have to learn. Design and its ideologies are always changing, which is the great thing about it. I'm a believer in the notion that we are lifelong learners.

■ ***How would you describe your design aesthetic?***

I like a modern minimal aesthetic with vintage and classic moments. The juxtaposition between old and new is always interesting. In a word, my design aesthetic would be 'unique'. I guess I am always learning something new about myself and my design aesthetic through each project. I like to push the boundaries - I feel creativity has no borders, so my design aesthetic should be the same. If you walk into a space and feel excited, uplifted or happy, then I've done my job.



A post shared by Emazulwini Restaurant (@emazulwini_restaurant)

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▣ **Where do you draw your inspiration from?**

People and the environment, the environment around the project or culture, and the story of the patrons who use the space - those things will guide the design solution, the solution also being the moment of inspiration.



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▣ **What project are you most proud of?**

A conceptual restaurant project I did for a client in Riebeeck Kasteel – we produced a really elevated design in the space, mixing the modern framework with classic elements. The restaurant in Makers Landing at the V&A Waterfront, Emazulwini, is also up there - the space really turned out beautifully, bold as well as fun.

▣ **Have you tried any of the dishes at Emazulwini? What's your favourite?**

I've tried all of them. I think they are all fantastic!

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