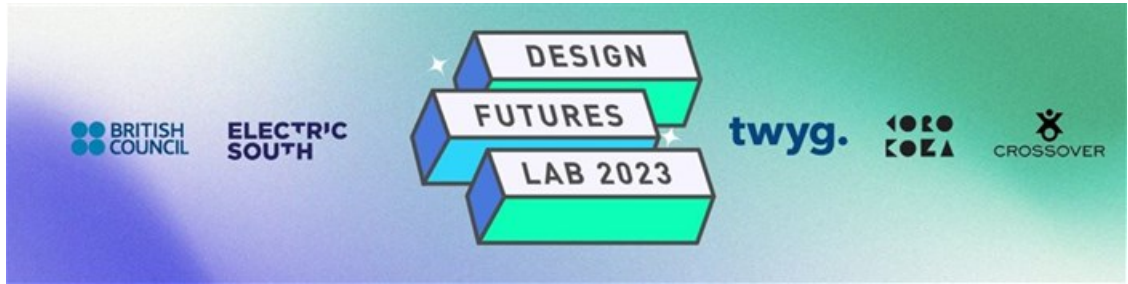


Meet the Design Futures Lab 2023 Creatives

This year a musician, artisanal fashion designer, culture activist and artist join cutting-edge photographers, filmmakers and creative technologists for the second edition of Design Futures Lab. After considerable deliberation, six Zimbabweans and six South Africans will participate in a four-day workshop from 9 to 12 May in Cape Town, before they create an immersive sustainable fashion prototype.



“Year two of the Design Futures Lab brings with it a new cohort of talented creatives and technologists committed to sustainability and we can’t wait to support their experimentation in the XR futures of fashion and design,” says Electric South’s Antoinette Engel.

The creatives will work in six teams of two. Each team receives a grant of R60,000 to develop their concepts. The digital lab (including a one-day workshop about sustainable fashion) will train and inspire the participants in preparation for their projects. The deadline to submit their final prototypes is in August.



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Evan-Lee Courie 19 Apr 2023



Multi-disciplinary artist, Larah Fishcer (aka Luh’ra), who will be working with Keith Dliwayo, says, “We feel honoured to be selected and so excited about expanding our current skills set, learning news kills, and having some fun!”

The Design Futures Lab is a collaborative project aimed at promoting young talent through driving innovation. Design Futures Lab invites artisans to explore the connection between extended reality and sustainable fashion.

“We are delighted to welcome twelve creatives to join us this year to hear from experts about the latest developments in sustainable fashion,” says Jackie May, founder of Twyg.

The Project Partners are Electric South, Twyg, Korokoza, Crossover Labs and is supported by the British Council #SouthernAfricaArts.

Tawanada Mudonga of Korokoza, the lab's new partner, says, "We are so proud to be a part of this groundbreaking collaboration and excited about an initiative which is sure to change the digital technologist landscape in Southern Africa."

Here are the Design Futures Lab 2023 Creatives.

Tarryn Tippens (aka Bambi) and Larnelle Bakala

Tarryn Tippens | Artist and designer: Tarryn Tippens is an artist and designer based in Johannesburg/Cape Town, South Africa. Creating under the pseudonym 'Bambi', her label of the same name is rooted firmly in small scale, handmade garments; with an emphasis on knitwear and handcrafting. Using natural fibres and local fibres, her design practice is bound by her commitment to eco-dyeing with natural dyes, repurposing and up-cycling - weaving together a vision for a more intimate relationship between garments and the wearer.

Tippens believes in energetically imbuing her clothing intention and seeks to create in line with a critically aware perspective of human and planetary health. Incorporating an exploration into crystal healing practices in the design process, alongside research and application of textiles as an intangible, healing component for the body, Tarryn's work exists at the intersection of cultural, social and ecological evolution beyond the dire "fast fashion" system. Follow Tarry Tippens on Instagram [@bambi.com](https://www.instagram.com/bambi.com)

Larnelle Bakala | Filmmaker, director and photographer: Larnelle Bakala is a 25-year-old filmmaker, director and photographer based in Cape Town, South Africa. Bakala has worked with musicians such as Uncle Waffles and brands such as Nike, to create films that help African youth tell stories about their unique experiences in the creative industry.

Bakala is inspired by community and by bringing people together through storytelling, as he believes this promotes learning and growth by leaning on each other. Follow Larnelle Bakala on Instagram [@lordnelle](https://www.instagram.com/lordnelle)

Siza Mukwedini and Plot Mhako

Siza Mukwedini | New media content producer: Mukwedini is a film and new media content producer based in Zimbabwe. To Mukwedini, storytelling is the oldest form of communication, it's the medium we choose to tell stories that are ever-changing. She has committed her life to staying knowledgeable about new media and new technologies.

An IT specialist and technology fanatic, Mukwedini has produced a wide array of content, from AR pieces, photo and surface-based, 360 filming and photography, VR world building, and animation. She is the founder of Matamba Film Labs for Women. The labs train women on new media storytelling tools and connects them to opportunities.



Siza Mukwedini. Image supplied

In 2015, Mukwedini was selected for the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders for her role in using film as a tool for social engagement. She has produced various award-winning current affairs and documentary features on women and development issues for renowned broadcasters such as the BBC, Al Jazeera and VOA. Follow Siza Mukwedini on Instagram [@SizaMukwedini](https://www.instagram.com/SizaMukwedini)

Plot Mhako | Creative director, journalist, digital creator and youth culture activist: Plot Mhako is a creative director, journalist, digital creator and youth culture activist from Zimbabwe. He is co-founder of Jibilika Dance Trust, a youth culture incubator, and digital creator and founder of the award winning earGROUND Digital Media.

Mhako documents and amplifies creative voices. He is also co-curator of Amplifaya festival and the Creative Business Conference, as well as the co-artistic director of Mafuwe International Festival of Dance. He is also co-founder of Kuenda Productions a multi-disciplinarian, and intercultural production company working in Dance, Theatre, Music, visual art and management operating in Uganda, Zimbabwe and Germany; co-organiser of the Zimbabwe Hip Hop Summit, Zimdancehall Summit; co-founder and organiser of SKATE ZIMBABWE which works to empower youths in communities.

Mhako is a fellow with the Mandela Washington Fellowship (Young Africa Leadership Initiative) YALI 2015, International Society For Performing Arts (ISPA) 2016 and 2020, International Visitors Leadership Program (IVLP) Hip Hop and Civic Engagement Fellow (2012) Follow Plot Mhako on Instagram [@plotmhako](https://www.instagram.com/plotmhako)

Larah Fishcer (aka Luh'ra) and Keith Dliwayo (aka Keith Virgo)

Larah Fishcer | Artist: Luh'ra is a Cape Town based artist, who expresses herself through music. With a degree in architecture and a background in numerous creative fields, Luh'ra is a well-rounded artist who encompasses music, art, photography, film, food, events and fashion. Her skill sets have led her to work in leading companies within these fields.

Following her architecture degree, she interned with architecture firm URBA. Within the contemporary art space, she worked with blank projects gallery working closely with some of the country's leading artists. Behind the music scenes, she has worked with artist management and booking agency, Black Major representing forward-thinking musicians as well as managing press and media for experimental music festival Search.



Larah Fishcer (aka Luh'ra). Image supplied

Within the film space Luh'ra has directed music videos for artists locally and internationally. She has also collaborated with various local fashion brands in various capacities. As a musician Luh'ra has released 2 EP's and performed on acclaimed stages across South Africa with some of the country's best up-and-coming and established musicians. Her music has reached international audiences through various playlists, airing on radio stations such as Worldwide FM and NTS, as well as live performances on global platforms such as Sofar. Follow Larah Fishcer on Instagram [@luh.ra](https://www.instagram.com/luh.ra)

Keith Dliwayo | Multidisciplinary artist: Keith Sphiwe Mpumelelo Dliwayo better known by his artist's name Keith Virgo, is a multidisciplinary artist from Johannesburg and is currently based in Cape Town, South Africa. He works in various mediums of arts which stems from his love of storytelling. His work varies from photography, visual arts and hand knitting crafts as well as handmade jewelry. He has exhibited his works in Cape Town, Amsterdam and New York. Follow Keith Dliwayo on Instagram [@iamkeithvirgo](https://www.instagram.com/iamkeithvirgo)

Chipo Mapondera and Sabina Mutsvati

Chipo Mapondera | Software developer: Chipo Mapondera has worked for top fashion companies including *Vogue*, *Elle*, Chanel, and the Net-A-Porter Group for over a decade. Her experience and expertise encompass fashion editorial, marketing and technology. Her current role as a software developer allows her to explore new technologies that engage consumers and help fashion brands reach their audiences.

Sabina Mutsvati | Multidisciplinary artist: Sabina Mutsvati graduated from Harare Polytechnic College with a Diploma in Fine Art and a National Certificate in Art and Design. Mutsvati is also a film wardrobe and costume designer trained by Women Filmmakers of Zimbabwe. She has taught Basic Design as a project lecturer at the Zimbabwe Institute of Visual Arts.

Passionate about art, Sabina's aim is to share her creative ideas with all those who are open to receiving them. Her designs are inspired by the never-ending roles of women in her Shona culture. Working with a variety of materials to help tell these women's stories. She makes use of recycled materials while bringing in familiar elements and giving them new metaphorical meaning and purpose. Follow Sabina Mutsvati on Instagram [@sabinam71](https://www.instagram.com/sabinam71)

Rufaro Magara and Ryan Harvey

Rufaro Magara | Unity Developer and XR enthusiast: Rufaro Magara is a Zimbabwean-raised, South African-based Unity Developer and XR Enthusiast. He studied Game Design and Electrical Engineering at Wits University but later moved to the University of South Africa to study for a Bachelor of Science in Informatics.

Currently in his final year at Unisa while freelancing as a unity developer based in Johannesburg. He holds a Unity (C#) Game Development Certificate awarded by Treehouse in addition to his creative practices in the technology space using software such as Unity(C#) Game Engine, Blender, and Spark AR being the tools. He is experienced in augmented reality within Unity using ARCore and Vuforia and in designing Instagram and Meta AR effects/filters allowing him to gain strong hands-on analytical and articulate viewpoint skills over the years.

His latest achievement has been being selected to be a part of Africa Games Week 2022 in Cape Town at the Me and The Machine Interactive Art Exhibition in which an interactive piece of AR he created in Unity was part of the exhibition. Follow Rufaro Magara on Instagram [@justrmag](#)

Ryan Harvey | Multidisciplinary artist: Ryan Harvey (b. 2000, Durban) is a trans-masc multi-disciplinary artist working across various mediums including animation, illustration, painting, photography, sound design, and videography to create worlds that conjure up complicated feelings within an audience.



Ryan Harvey. Image supplied

As an autistic artist, Harvey is attracted to uncomfortable art as a tool to help other people explore his complex emotions and make them confront the difficult truths about being autistic. Drawn to darker subject matter, Harvey seeks to challenge the notion of aesthetic merit opting instead for uneasy imagery that confronts the complacency of the art world and society more widely. Follow Ryan Harvey on Instagram [@uglycryan](#)

Jackson Chifamba and Joel Chandauka

Jackson Chifamba | Fashion designer, stylist and software engineering student: Currently based in Harare, Chifamba is a

self-taught fashion designer, stylist, thrift collector, and software engineering student. He is the founder of a 100% upcycled and handmade clothing brand that specialises in denim conceptualism, deconstruction and reconstruction. In 2021 Jackson showcased the first one of one collection at the Skeyi and Strobo Fabrik Party, and did so again the following year with his second denim collection Rotation of The Earth.

Chifamba has also collaborated with photographers on character concepts while continuing to create street style content using his background as a software engineering student to infuse his passions. Follow Jackson Chifamba on Instagram [@jaxxongram](#)

Joel Chandauka | Digital creative technologist: Joel Chandauka is a digital creative technologist specialising in 3D design and animation. Growing up, Chandauka was always fascinated by how cartoons were made, and as a result discovered 2D and 3D programs such as Blender and Adobe Animate. He is self-taught and always striving to improve.

He believes that the limitations of his country have held back a lot of people who have similar interests and so he feels inclined to tackle these hardships and give hope to those who are giving up. Follow Joel Chandauka on Instagram [@joel_zw](#)

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