



LIFE & STYLE





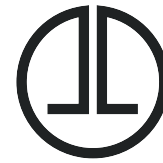
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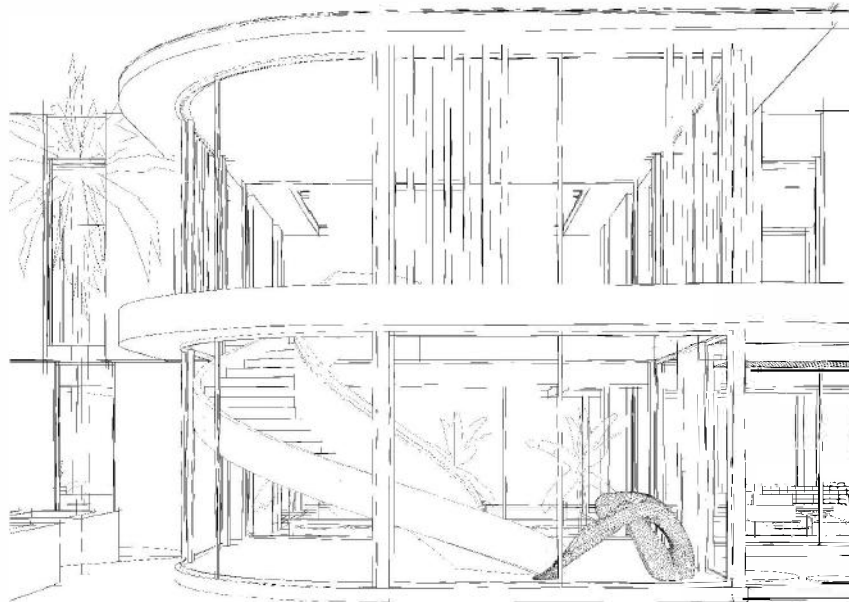
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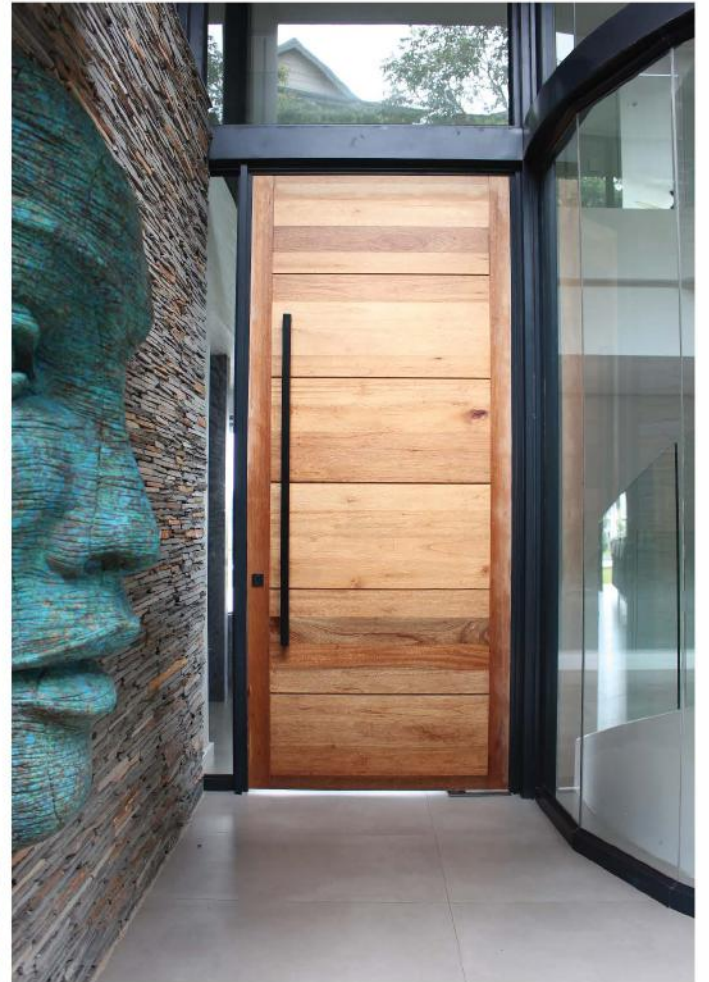
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Mia McCarthy – is a young writer based in Cape Town. She is an avid collector of coffee shops, tidal pools, and interesting true stories. Mia has a passion for creating magic in the kitchen and much of her writing reflects this. She continues to inspire readers through her contributions to this magazine and The Edit, our fortnightly digital newsletter.



Tara Boraine – Cape Town-based artist and writer who moves fluidly between music production, speculative fiction, and botanical perfumery. Through her organic creative methodology - she harnesses natural cycles of chaos, integration, and emergence across multiple artistic mediums. Currently working on a climate fiction novel and essays about neurodivergent perception, her writing has been described as 'ruthlessly tender.'



Dan Charles – is a writer, musician and therapy enthusiast based in Cape Town, and spends a good deal of time profiling and analyzing some of the most esteemed and up-and-coming local and international artists in the alternative music scene.



Penny Fourie – journalist and podcast host, she isn't afraid of hard questions. Her work is civic at its core, grounded in accountability. Her podcast, Uncensored, is built on holding truth to power and giving space to conversations that don't always make people comfortable. Mountains clear her head. Long conversations keep her hopeful. A perfectly balanced margarita remains her quiet party trick, mastered during the years she worked behind a bar to fund her postgraduate degree in London. She strives for a life grounded in purpose but still leaves room for mountain expeditions and the freedom to get a little lost now and then.



Lisa Smith – a freelance graphic designer and marketer who loves the heartbeat of the North Coast. With her newspaper and magazine industry experience Lisa has a passion to nurture brands with their online and offline presence through concise copy and creative design. When not sitting behind her laptop, Lisa spends time with homeless cats and getting outdoors.



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Cover

Studio MUTI Design

NEW SKIN FOR THE OLD CEREMONY

Friends, welcome to a New year, a New skin and a New issue of Life & Style.

THE COVER OF this magazine (that was beautifully illustrated by the wonderful Tamzyn La Gorce from Studio Muti) is a reinterpretation of a photo taken by Michael Oliver Love. The photo was part of a shoot that Love had been sitting with for months before finally sharing it online at the beginning of the year. According to the caption that he wrote accompanying the shoot on Instagram, the same thing that kept him from releasing the photographs was the same thing that compelled him to orchestrate the shoot in the first place - a feeling of inner turmoil concocted by the shattering state of the world, the uncertainty surrounding the implementation of AI in art and our daily lives and just feeling burnt out. That turmoil had him ruminating: "What is the point of all this?" I admit, a similar feeling has me ruminating too.

The shoot (titled "Totemic") was Love's attempt to reignite his creativity with the help of his friends, a wardrobe of gorgeous designer clothes (including a few RICH MNISI pieces) and some horses on a deserted beach. "It's not lost on me that this shoot is ready as we enter the Year of the Horse," he wrote in the caption. "I'm hoping this means fresh energy, sharing freely and creating more in the year to come."

I don't think that there has ever been more online content generated to hype up the entry into the new Lunar New Year than this year - the Year of The Snake leading into The Year of The Horse.

And I mean particularly amongst white and non-South East Asian people (but mostly white people like myself). In America, the beginning of the year saw the rise of an online trend called "Chinamaxxing" where people were making posts proclaiming things like "You met me at a very Chinese time of my life," while making content about adopting everyday Chinese habits, aesthetics,



and wellness routines. This has had mixed reactions amongst Chinese creators online (some joined in on the trend, eager to share their culture while others expressed their discomfort seeing their culture being appropriated for the sake of "content") but one of the big takeaways that media outlets drew from observing this trend was that this was an indicator of a mass disillusionment of young Americans with their own country - so much so that they are culturally defecting to a global force that is rapidly on the rise while their country is in a state of decline. "At a moment when America's infrastructure is crumbling and once-unthinkable forms of state violence are being normalised," Zeyi Yang wrote in Wired, "China is starting to look pretty good in contrast."

Kathy Pham, a creator on TikTok, cited bell hooks's writing on cultural appropriation in a video unpacking the rationale behind this trend: "Cultural appropriation of the Other assuages feelings of deprivation and lack that



assault the psyches of radical white youth who choose to be disloyal to western civilisation.”

As a white person who made a bigger deal of the Lunar New Year this year than I ever have before, I don't think that I'm exempt from that critique. But I don't think that I'm wrong in saying broadly that the West at large (which I guess that we're also part of even though we're kind of in the middle and at the bottom of the world) is lost and in need of some semblance of hope.

We started our new year with a few fireworks, a hangover and resolutions that were abandoned within weeks while the inner turmoil - similar to that of what Michael Oliver Love was writing about - came boiling back up to the surface. The poetry of a year that ends with the shedding of the skin of the things that we don't want to carry into a year that promises momentum and prosperity - the Year of The Snake entering The Year of The Horse - is the very thing that we all want to believe in.

But, unless you really make the effort to learn about another culture and observe its traditions with knowledge and respect, it shouldn't be your salvation. That's why it's probably more important than ever that art needs to be made and celebrated. We need to make new myths and new rituals - be they in the form of songs, poetry, fashion or beautiful photoshoots on beach with a bunch of horses - and we need them to be shared.

And that's why we share them in this magazine

Welcome to a new edition of Life & Style, I hope that you find a little bit of hope in here.

Yours,

Dan

LIFE & STYLE

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Our publications, website and social media platforms have shaped opinion in the KZN North Coast region for over twenty years creating a media brand that is credible, authoritative, and universally acclaimed.

Having expanded the platform to include Ballito's only commercial radio station - **Radio Life & Style 88.0FM** that also streams digitally via free apps on every platform, we now own the local media scene.

Our advertisers enjoy the unique advantages of cross-platform marketing in a local economy that is small enough to dominate yet big enough to excite those who appreciate the value that is available to be unlocked here.

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PONTOS GATEWAY

*Where Portuguese Soul Meets
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IN THE HEART of the bustling Gateway Theatre of Shopping precinct, **Pontos** Gateway has carved out a distinctive space where Portuguese heritage meets contemporary coastal elegance. It's the kind of restaurant that draws you in with the scent of flame-grilled seafood and keeps you there with its warm, unpretentious charm.

Rooted in Mediterranean and Portuguese tradition, **Pontos** is more than a dining destination, it's a celebration of flavour, family and connection. The menu pays homage to time-honoured recipes, from perfectly prepared seafood to expertly grilled meats, each dish elevated with a modern touch. Every plate tells a story of authenticity, passion and flavour.

Step inside and you're greeted by an atmosphere of relaxed sophistication. The interiors balance modern coastal style with inviting warmth, creating a space equally suited to long family lunches, celebratory dinners or spontaneous evenings out with friends. Guests are welcomed like family and encouraged to linger, share and savour. Beyond Gateway, **Pontos** has also become a favourite in Glenashley, extending its signature blend of hospitality and cuisine to another corner of the region.

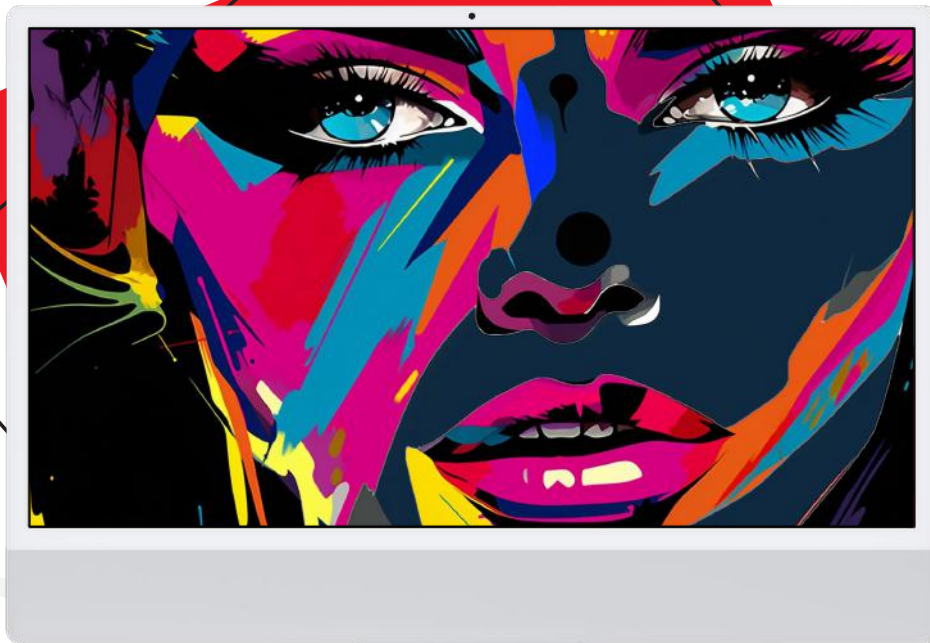
Pontos redefines casual luxury for the modern coastal lifestyle. For those who appreciate bold flavours, elegant surroundings and genuine warmth, **Pontos** isn't simply a place to eat, it's a place to belong.

www.pontos.co.za

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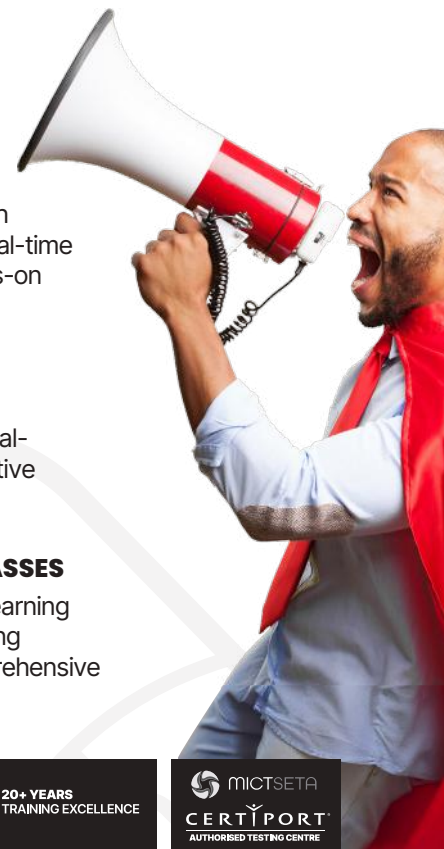
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Every two weeks, Life & Style writers Mia McCarthy and Shannon Devy come together to collate all the best design, fashion, art, music, tv, décor and books they've come across in recent days. They curate these discoveries in the L&S Edit, a fabulous newsletter for anyone interested in style, craft and creativity.

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Here are some highlights from the L&S Edit archives. Subscribe at www.lifeandstyle.fm today to never miss another fabulous issue...



Art

FOEGEPAINTINGS

Danish painter @foegepaintings creates ethereal landscapes that capture a remarkable depth of emotion and a sense of optimism.

foegepaintings



Style

SZILVESZTER MAKÓ for Who What Wear

The painterly photographs of Hungarian-born photographer and art director Szilveszter Makó have brought us some of our favourite sartorial images of the last decade. Makó's process is discernibly tactile. Every element from dressing the set to processing the photographs is an analogue process done by hand, producing richly textured foils to the refined glamour and arch playfulness of his subjects — which include Cate Blanchett, Gwendoline Christie, and Rama Duwaji. We're still thinking about this shoot he did with Elle Fanning for Who What Wear magazine. A masterclass in artful absurdity.

@szilvesztermako





DOUGLAS AND DOUGLAS

Douglas and Douglas is a local husband-and-wife operation crafting artisanal furniture, homeware, and hardware that balances charm and whimsy with elegant sophistication in any space. In addition to a ready-to-shop range of products, the team offers an array of interior design services ranging from space planning to decor and styling.

douglasanddouglas.co.za

D'ARCY & CO

D'Arcy and Co. is a family-run South African design studio specialising in 3D-printed lamps. The clean, organic lines of their designs give the impression of harnessing a nimbostratus cloud for a living room light. We have the Golden Aurewave in our lounge, and we're obsessed with the warmth and texture it brings to our home.

darcyco.store/collections/all



STUDIO DILLI

It's official — we've gone dilly for Dilli. We review a lot of local furniture design here at the Edit, and this is right up there with our all-time favourites. Designer Dille Thomas has mastered a playfully organic signature that straddles the contradictions of retro-futuristic style with ease. Think mid-century mastery by way of The Jetsons. Gorgeous!

studiodilli.com



MOS CONCEPT

Consider us captivated by the almost-alien arrangements from Cape Town floral design studio, Mos. These sculptural arrangements are arresting in their beauty; we'd like fifty, thanks.

mos.concept.sa



KNANFE

KNANFE Fashion is a Nigerian-based brand making clothes for the sophisticate who loves clean lines, colour, and subtle glamour. Founder Nanfe Oyeleke was born to a dressmaker mother and a fashion enthusiast father. After a career in fashion modelling, she returned in 2017 to her roots in design. Knanfe also offers homeware and kids' clothing ranges.

knanfe.com/collections/knanfe-fashion

WANSIE

WANSIE is a Tokyo fashion brand representing the best of modern Japanese style - minimalist, experimental, and marked by intentional layering that breathes dimension and intrigue into every carefully curated silhouette.

We are especially taken with these SS25 style samples of their men's styles. Fisherman functionality meets organic asymmetry. More of this, please!

[@wansie_official](https://www.instagram.com/wansie_official)

SPLACE

SPLACE is a brand rooted in purpose and community. The design studio partners with a Cape Town non-profit that equips women from nearby townships with valuable technical skills, mentorship, and dignified work opportunities.

Their inaugural Mother collection, inspired by the maternal bond, features the Everything Jacket: a funky and functional piece kitted out with a retractable hood, well-placed pockets, and ultra-feminine detailing. At every step from the brand mission to product design, SPLACE encourages women to find their place and take up space.

wearsplace.com



Accessories

/ L&S EDIT /



KITSCH KIOSK

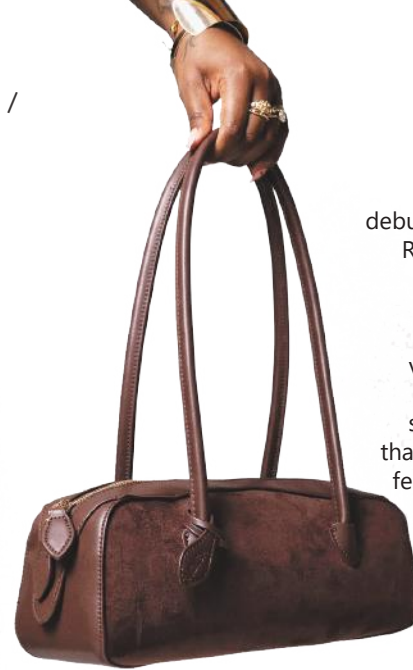
The objects created by Kitsch Kiosk, a Hamburg-based glass studio, occupy the thin wedge between art and jewellery. Each piece is handmade and shaped organically, so no two are ever alike. Their brightly-coloured pendants are organic and alien, resembling the kind of fantastically amorphous creatures that typically reside in the crevices of rock pools (on Earth and, perhaps, other planets). It's little wonder their candy-like creations have been featured in the likes of Vogue and L'Officiel. Next time you're in Germany, be a darling and bring us back a piece.

kitschkiosk.com

LINDEN IS ENOUGH

Leather is as timeless as it is resilient - especially when it is applied to the elegant designs of Linden Is Enough. The brand designs carry-alls, totes, and briefcases with clean lines and playful details. Perfect for a lifetime of carrying yourself with grace and style.

lindenisenough.com



NDISA

Local brand Ndisa has just debuted their first offering. The RIZA is a luxurious handbag marrying style and conscious creation.

Crafted from high-quality vegan leather, the RIZA is a beautiful option for those seeking an animal-free bag that doesn't sacrifice the look, feel, and durability of leather goods.

Sndisa.co.za



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WHERE THE OCEAN MEETS THE ARCHITECTURE

On the KZN North Coast, a new vision of coastal luxury is taking shape: one where the boundary between the home and the horizon simply ceases to exist.

IMAGINE WAKING UP on a Saturday morning. The sun is already climbing above the Indian Ocean, throwing long gold light across the water. You pad downstairs (barefoot, unhurried) and the house opens around you. Not because you've opened a door, but because the wall in front of you is glass. Floor to ceiling. Edge to edge. The sea is right there, immediate and alive, as much a part of the room as the furniture. You pour your coffee. You don't go outside. You don't need to.

This is not a fantasy. Along the KZN North Coast (from the leafy slopes of Simbithi and Zimbali to suburban sanctuaries scattered throughout Ballito and Salt Rock) homes like this exist. And increasingly, they are being shaped by the work of one company: NSG (North Shore Group), the architectural specialists who have made it their business to dissolve the line between inside and out.

NSG's expertise lies in the fusion of two materials that, in the right hands, become something close to poetry: architectural glass and precision-engineered aluminium. The glass captures light, frames views, and creates that breathtaking sense of openness that coastal living demands. The aluminium (slender, strong, and impeccably finished) provides the structural integrity and sleek visual language that elevates a home from beautiful to extraordinary. Together, under NSG's design and manufacturing process, they produce spaces that feel simultaneously expansive and refined.

Picture a wraparound terrace where frameless glass balustrades mean nothing interrupts the sweep of the ocean view: not a post, not a rail, not a visual whisper of obstruction. The salt air moves freely. Children play on the deck below. And from your lounger, the horizon stretches unbroken to the edge of the world. Or consider a poolside entertainment space where retractable

glass panels fold away entirely in the dry season, merging the indoor kitchen and bar with the outdoor terrace in one fluid, generous gesture; closing seamlessly when the summer storms roll in off the sea, keeping the party going without missing a beat.

These are the kinds of spaces that don't just look good in photographs. They change how you live. They slow you down. They make ordinary moments (a sundowner, a family lunch, a quiet evening with a book) feel like something worth savouring. And that is the difference between a home that is merely expensive and one that is truly luxurious.





What makes NSG uniquely placed to deliver on this vision is the rare combination of design sensitivity and manufacturing precision that runs through everything they do. Founded by Deon Olivier and headquartered just outside Ballito (with a newly launched Cape Town branch), NSG designs, manufactures, and installs entirely in-house. No outsourcing. No compromise. Every frameless glass panel, every aluminium profile, every bespoke fitting is produced to millimetre-perfect tolerances, then installed by NSG's own team. The result is a level of finish and a quality of execution that speaks for itself; one that has earned the company an enviable reputation built almost entirely on referrals from South Africa's most discerning architects, developers, and homeowners.

On a coastline where salt, humidity, and the relentless energy of the sea test every material to its limits, that precision matters. NSG's architectural systems are engineered to perform: not just on installation day, but for decades. This is coastal luxury that doesn't ask you to choose between beauty and durability. It delivers both, effortlessly and by design.

The North Coast has always promised a certain quality of life. NSG, quite simply, helps you live it.



To explore what NSG can bring to your home or development on the KZN North Coast, visit www.nsgroup.co.za

COME HOME TO THE NORTH COAST

Words: Murray Beattie

IN THE END IT WAS THE LIGHT. It could just have easily been the warm breath of the morning's south wester on the sea. Or the petrichor rising off the thick grass after an afternoon's thunderstorm. It could well have been the feeling of cool sand in between toes as one walks a dune forest path to the warm Indian Ocean on a morning in June. But in the end it was the light that reminded me that I had come home. That soft, warm light, always slightly tinted golden, often bouncing off of green hills. Home.

The pull to return to my home province was always strong, however the practicalities of life and needing to build a career kept me away. I'd always been told that this needed to be done somewhere else, at least up on the highveld but preferably overseas. It's a narrative that has been repeated for years and years, in households from Stanger to Mooi River. And in a sense

there used to be some truth to it. Johannesburg was always the major hub of commerce, Cape Town had the mountain and with it the tourists. Certain industries boomed in KZN, but if your interests lay outside of these you were choosing lifestyle over prosperity. A false dichotomy, but a very compelling one for a large portion of the province's youth.

KwaZulu-Natal has for many years held the paradoxical reputation of being both a sleepy holiday province and a political powder keg waiting to ignite. Tensions arising from the riots of the early 2020s and the hangover of the COVID years have cast a negative light on the province, with naysayers pointing at this instability as proof that KZN will forever be an economic laggard to the rest of the country.

Thankfully, this narrative has shifted in the last decade and the North Coast has begun its transformation from a place of beautiful beaches, warm water and sugar cane as far as the eye can see to one of the fastest developing areas in the country. King Shaka International Airport has meant that Johannesburg is a legitimate commute option, and the pull of a life of weekends spent on golden beaches while still being able to make the most of South Africa's commercial epicenter has helped to bring new families to the area. What was initially a trickle has grown into a torrent, and the resultant boom in luxury residential estates that have been developed to meet this ever increasing demand has helped to drive a broader economic boom in the area.

This growth is not however limited to property. Often overlooked by the Golden Triangle of Southern African tourism, KwaZulu-Natal has, until now, remained something of a hidden secret to foreign tourists. Even locally, one often finds Capetonians who have never experienced the joys of an extended swim in the sea in nothing more than some swimwear from Breazies. Collins Residential, one of the leaders in the broader development of the area, have furthered their investment by bringing South Africa's first Club Med to Tinley Manor, with its first occupants scheduled to arrive in the middle of 2026. With these visitors will come the next wave of investment into KwaZulu-Natal as European eyes get their first glimpse of one of the finest stretches of undeveloped coastline in the country.

The broader changes to the world that we've seen over the last decade appear to have resulted, for at least a portion of the population, in a heavier weighting in the way that we spend our lives. The hustle and drive to build a career that demanded 12 hours behind a desk is being replaced by a more balanced view of a life. The attraction of mornings in the surf before work, weaving your way through coastal forest single track at Holla Trails or watching your kids play cricket on what must be one of the most beautifully situated cricket pitches on earth at Seaton is a powerful pull factor. The growing population seeking to make the most of these factors are being supported by high quality schools, a rapidly improving infrastructure network and a booming local economy.

Naturally, one asks where to next? With abundant rolling farmland waiting to be developed, there will be major hotel operators looking to follow in Club Med's footsteps. Direct international flights from Europe's major cities will follow, not only bringing foreign investment into the area but giving locals the freedom of accessing Europe without the need for lengthy layovers. A new school at Seaton will continue to add high quality education opportunities to the area, along with an



entirely new retail and commercial precinct currently in planning.

And while the developments are critical to the growth of the area, the underpin is the place itself. It's the whisper of the sugar cane on a morning trail run. It's the sound of the pulsing winter swell sending you to sleep at night. It's the loamysmell of the coastal forest on a hot December morning. It's that golden light filtering through the fig trees. It's home.

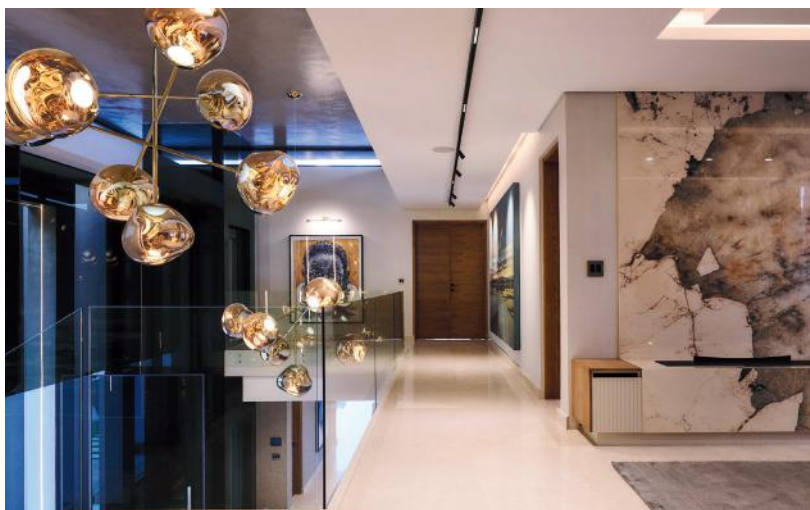
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RUSTENBURG *RETREAT*

By LISA SMITH



OLALA INTERIORS LATEST PROJECT IS SET TO INSPIRE, ENCHANT AND IMMERSE YOU WITH THOUGHTFUL DESIGN AND LAYERED DETAILING BALANCING THE EVERYDAY WITH A REFINED, ELEVATED FLAIR.

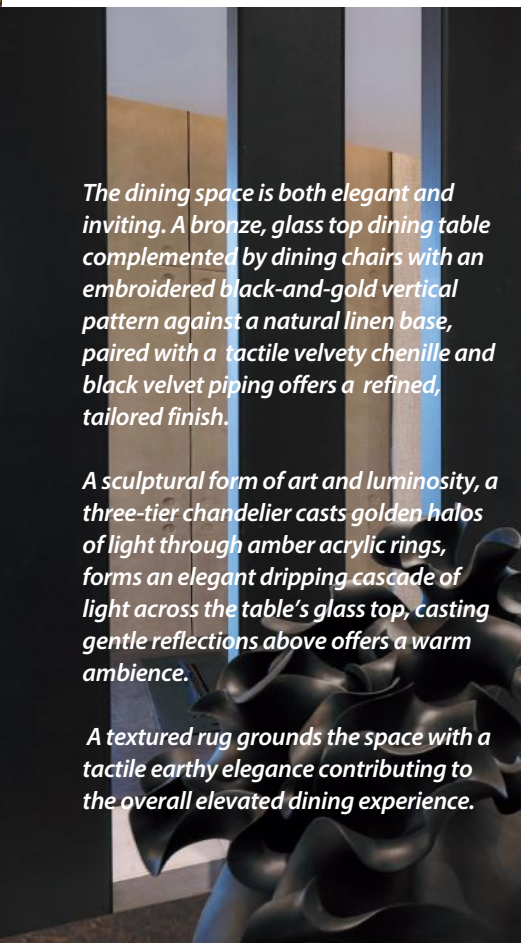
This residential home, nestled within a private gated estate at the foothills of the Magaliesberg mountain range, offers spatial harmony with a generous open flow across all levels.

Natural light is maximised through the use of glass and reflective surfaces, while its thoughtful design supports a lifestyle of effortless living and entertaining.

Boasting five en-suite bedrooms, living and entertainment areas that include a bar, wine cellar, gym, study, outdoor patios and two fully appointed guest suites, the space is a fusion of layered textures and nuanced detail adding warmth, character and depth.



Rooted in refinement, the interiors embrace a refined, yet grounded aesthetic, where rich textures in varied colourways introduce tactile luxury weaving local identity into the design.



The dining space is both elegant and inviting. A bronze, glass top dining table complemented by dining chairs with an embroidered black-and-gold vertical pattern against a natural linen base, paired with a tactile velvety chenille and black velvet piping offers a refined, tailored finish.

A sculptural form of art and luminosity, a three-tier chandelier casts golden halos of light through amber acrylic rings, forms an elegant dripping cascade of light across the table's glass top, casting gentle reflections above offers a warm ambience.

A textured rug grounds the space with a tactile earthy elegance contributing to the overall elevated dining experience.



The kitchen is strikingly modern, balancing form and function.

Black cabinetry combined with fluted glass seamlessly integrate appliances in a refined, clean-lined aesthetic. Sumptuous dining chairs in an intricate, small-scale geometric Brocatelle weave, interlocked with a lustrous neutral metallic yarn and black piping finish, adds art deco glam to the space.



Throughout the home, the beauty of nature is displayed through sculptural floral arrangements in organic shaped vessels. Aromatherapy candles and diffusers gently permeate the space with uplifting scents, creating an atmosphere of refined, sensory elegance.

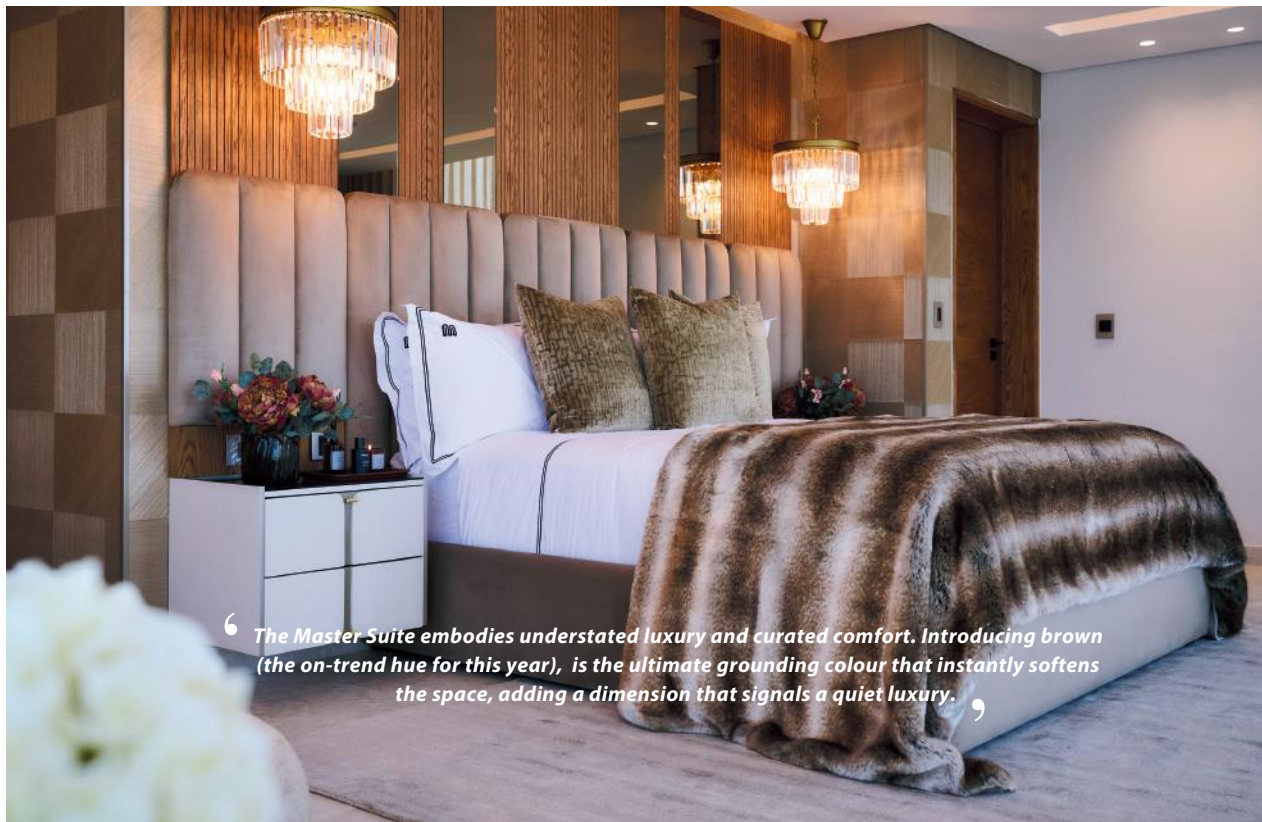
The inclusion of glass mirror doors to the wardrobe introduces a considered symmetry, visually extending the room that reinforces its curated elegance.



Layered lighting - light diffused through the ripples of a pair of sculpted pendants creates a sense of rhythm and a quiet elegance.



The master en-suite: immersive, classic, timeless.



“The Master Suite embodies understated luxury and curated comfort. Introducing brown (the on-trend hue for this year), is the ultimate grounding colour that instantly softens the space, adding a dimension that signals a quiet luxury.”



The master bedroom was curated as an opulent sleep sanctuary where comfort, craftsmanship and elegance harmoniously coexist. An interplay of layered tones in rich cocoa, caramel and espresso, add warmth, depth and sophistication that is refined and timeless.

The fluted headboard in an alluring soft velvet rests against a timber and glass mirror backdrop, adds depth and rhythm. Three-tier crystal chandeliers with gold detailing add a sculptural form of timeless luxury. Velvet scatters with an embossed labyrinth design, and a luxurious faux throw are indulgent layers of tactile comfort. A striking square-cut parchment wallpaper in a handwoven sisal adds texture and artisanal depth. A plush underfoot rug grounds the space in earthy elegance.

Various lounge areas designed for relaxation and conversation feature multiple seating ensembles layered in plush, tactile fabrics, complemented by modern coffee tables in glass, metal, stone and wood.



All bedrooms are conceived as calming sanctuaries, where texture and tone work in quiet harmony, offering a restful escape.



In a soft organic form, a matching chair and ottoman in a calming tonal contrast accentuates their sculptural form, offering a sense of ease and comfort whilst enhancing spatial flow.

All en-suite bathrooms feel classic and timeless. A striking stone shower slab wall features swirling marble veins with tonal contrast introduces rhythm and movement.

Powder rooms and guest WC's are equally elegant and timeless. Charcoal grey, three-tier crystal chandeliers introduces sculptural depth and a refined drama with soft diffused radiance.

Layers of alluring soft-touch fabrics offer inviting comfort - a warm-toned sofa is accentuated by the rich hues of crushed velvet scatters, whilst a quilt-effect scatter cushion showcases a rich interplay of colour and texture.





An outdoor entertainment patio on the first level offers a culinary dining experience that is both practical and elegant. A monochromatic blend of geometric patterns - horizontal and vertical stripes, chevron, and square motifs harmoniously blend that delivers layered visual texture and a refined sense of rhythm.

Interiors	OLALA INTERIORS
Cabinetry	BBD – Built by design
Architect	SBE Africa
Builder	Albers-Almeida
	Construction
Photography	Nic Baleta

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THERE IS NO SHAME IN DISENCHANTMENT

Words: Penny Fourie

LATELY, I'VE NOTICED a change in how people talk about the news. Not anger. Not outrage. Something quieter. A sentence that trails off rather than lands. I don't read the news anymore. At least, not like I used to. Sometimes it's said with a shrug. Sometimes with guilt. Often with relief.

I recognise the impulse, even though disengagement is not an option for me.

I don't encounter South Africa's failures through headlines alone. My work takes me into audit reports that don't reconcile, forensic investigations that circle the same conclusions without consequence, leaked documents that arrive cautiously, and whistleblower accounts weighted with fear and calculation. I spend days verifying claims, cross-checking figures, confirming timelines, and working out what can be proven rather than what merely feels true.

I unravel these stories for a living. Still, there are days when the accumulation feels heavy. Not because the work doesn't matter, but because so much of it lands without effect.

That is the quiet context in which we are approaching another election cycle.

The system feels broken. That much seems settled. What is no longer settled is whether staying engaged still matters.

Switching off can feel like relief. Muting the noise. Stepping out of the churn. Protecting your mental space from a steady diet of failure and delay. I understand the appeal. But disengagement carries a cost, even when it feels rational.

As a journalist, I sit uncomfortably with that question.

I still believe in exposing failure. I wouldn't be doing this work if I didn't. But I've learned that exposure on its own doesn't carry the weight it once did.

When nothing follows, when no one is held to account, revelation begins to feel circular. Over time, the work has shifted for me. It is less about naming what has gone wrong and more about understanding how decisions are made, where power actually sits, and where it has, on occasion, been forced to bend.

Against that backdrop, I've been paying close attention to how political movements elsewhere are trying to reach audiences who have already tuned out.

Recently, the UK Green Party released a campaign video that deliberately breaks with conventional political messaging. It isn't polished. It isn't dense with policy. It is raw, emotionally direct, and unembarrassed about its anger. The tone assumes scepticism. It assumes exhaustion. It speaks to people who feel spoken over, managed, or ignored by institutions that no longer seem responsive.

What struck me was not the ideology itself, but the strategy.

The video does not assume an attentive audience. It does not presume trust. It starts from the premise that large parts of the electorate are no longer listening by default. Engagement, it suggests, has to be earned.

South Africa is not the UK. Our political terrain is more fragmented, more unequal, more burdened by history. Imported rhetoric rarely lands cleanly here. But the underlying insight travels. People are not disengaging because they are ignorant. They are disengaging because they feel trapped inside systems that absorb pressure without reforming.

This is what I think of as the doom loop.

Failure is exposed. Outrage follows. Nothing happens. Attention wanes. The next failure lands in a quieter room, perhaps as a headline scrolled past on a phone at the end of a long day.

Over time, the loop becomes self-reinforcing. Journalism documents decline.

Audiences disengage. Institutions face less pressure. The space for accountability shrinks further.

Breaking that loop doesn't mean pretending things are better than they are. It requires something more difficult. Showing how consequence can still follow visibility.

This is also what many people who avoid reading the news are still quietly looking for. Not cheerfulness. Not spin. But evidence that change is possible. Clear explanations of how it happens. Proof that effort connects, however imperfectly, to outcome.

Optimism, in this sense, is not denial. It is earned through evidence.

One of the clearest examples of this comes from outside politics altogether.

In the Brazilian Amazon, one of the most significant factors in reducing deforestation during parts of the past two decades was not a sweeping new law or a single campaign. It was the widespread availability of satellite data. Once deforestation could be seen in near real time, ignorance was no longer plausible. The facts were visible, public, and verifiable.

The technology itself wasn't the solution. It just made it harder to look away.

That transparency altered incentives. It enabled enforcement where political will existed and created pressure where it did not. By grounding debate in observable fact, it narrowed the space for denial.

The lesson extends beyond forests.

Many systems do not fail because of a lack of passion or intelligence. They fail because of fatigue, fragmentation, and eroded trust. Addressing those problems requires more than better messaging. It requires designing work and telling stories in ways that allow people to stay engaged without burning out, to learn from failure without shame, and to see how their efforts connect to outcomes that matter.

For journalism, that has meant discipline.

Not every story is for everyone. Not every investigation needs to chase maximum reach. A more honest starting point is clarity about where consequence is possible. Whether that lies with a regulator who can act, a court that can compel compliance, a parliamentary committee that can summon officials, a municipal council facing public scrutiny, or voters deciding whether



participation still feels worth it. Different audiences require different forms of evidence and different kinds of narrative.

Relevance matters more than virality. This is where disengagement begins to carry political weight. As public systems weaken, those with resources start to find ways around them. They buy reliability where the state no longer provides it. Gated living, private security, backup power, water that runs, roads that are maintained. It is not indifference so much as an attempt to make daily life manageable. Those without those options remain exposed.

The public sphere narrows, but power does not. It becomes less visible, less contested, and harder to reach.

I don't think the answer is constant outrage. I also don't think the answer is withdrawal. I am less certain about what comes next, except that it has to sit somewhere between the two. Something that allows people to stay engaged without being consumed by it.

We are not uninformed. We are exhausted.

And until institutions, political movements, and journalism itself reckon honestly with that exhaustion, the question will remain unresolved at the centre of our public life. Does staying engaged still matter?

I don't pretend this resolves the tension I've been describing. It doesn't. But it does reflect where I am right now: unwilling to retreat completely, and equally unwilling to pretend that exhaustion isn't real.



/ COVER STORY /

OATHS AND SNAKES

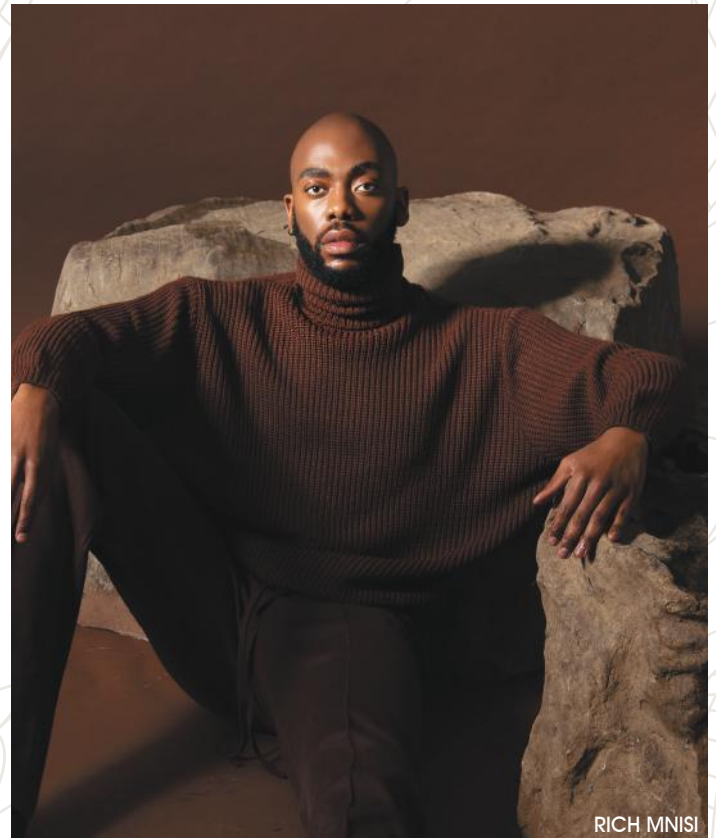
RICH MNISI

Words: *Dan Charles*

IT STARTED WITH A PROMISE. After winning the AFI (Africa Fashion International) Young Designer of the Year award in 2014 with a collection that he had made inside his mother's garage in 2014, Rich Mnisi launched his first fashion label. He called the label **OATH**, a name that would serve as a covenant between himself and his late sister to have his work represent a personal commitment to always creating from a truthful place. In keeping with that covenant, it was only right that the name had to change in order to truthfully represent himself and the family that he wished to honour in his work.

In 2015, **OATH** became **RICH MNISI** – a family name that now carries a reverence in the realm of South African fashion akin to that of GUCCI's name in Italy and Dior's in France. It is a name that has carried his family's legacy across some of the most prestigious runways and fashion publications in the world. It is a name worn by the likes of even Beyonce, adorned in a piece from a collection inspired by Mnisi's great grandmother, Nwa-Mulamula Munene Macheke, and his imagining of her lobola ceremony.

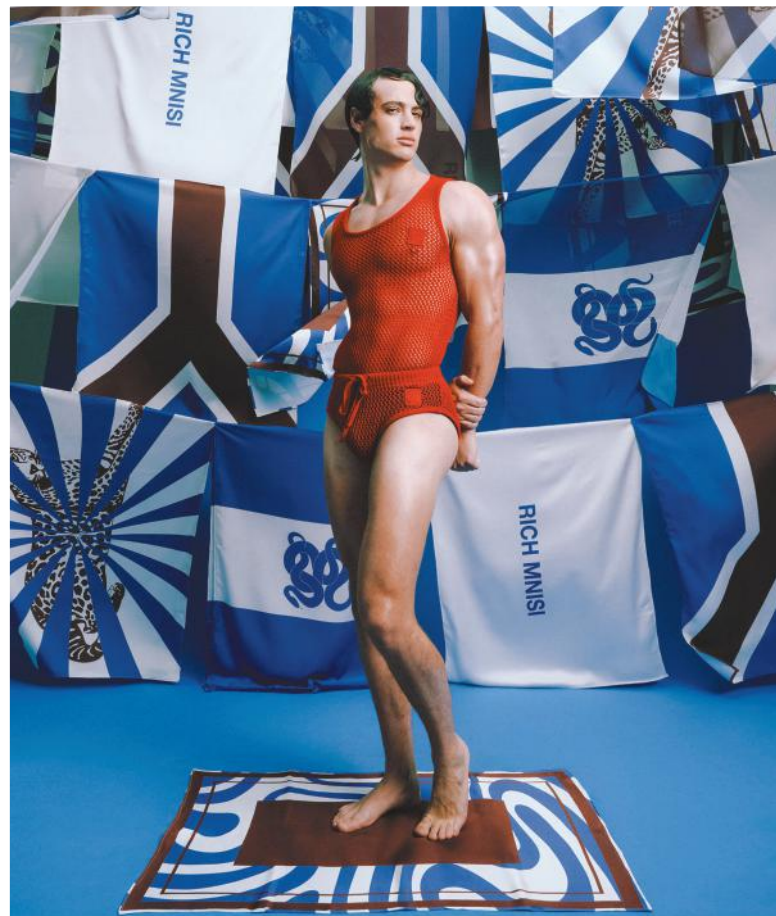
Mnisi published a magazine in 2021 to introduce the stories behind his fashion and furniture collection, **NYOKA** – a collection that was inspired by a dream that his mother, Daisy Macheke Mnisi, had of a terrifying and beautiful green snake crawling on her back that would lead Mnisi (someone who was once deeply afraid of snakes) to contemplate how this creature could be something emblematic of the themes of fear, beauty and rebirth within his work. In the pages of this magazine, Mnisi's mother wrote of how his great grandmother's xibelani – a traditional Tsonga dress – would cover her whole street and go around the block whenever she hung it up to dry after washing



RICH MNISI

Photo : Xander Opperman





it. “Everyone would know that today we are seeing Daisy’s grandmother’s xibelani,” wrote Mnisi’s mother of those days. In many ways, the work of RICH MNISI has been to stretch that xibelani across the whole world – like a long, powerful and beautiful snake – so that everyone can get to see Daisy’s grandmother’s xibelani.

RICH MNISI is a name that will forever be kept alive on the tongues and pages of the world that speak of beautiful things. It is a name that will continue to fulfil its promise.

Was there a promise behind the name OATH?

Yes. OATH represented a personal commitment to honesty and intention in my work. A promise I made to my late sister. It was about creating from a truthful place. In many ways, that promise still exists, just under my own name now. It is not something you complete, it is something you keep renewing with every collection. Over time it becomes both easier and harder, easier because you know yourself more, harder because the responsibility grows.

Is the 18-meter xibelani still in your family?

5km! Yes, it is still part of our family history, even if not always physically present in the way memory holds it. That story represents scale, presence and community for me. The image of a garment stretching across a highway is powerful because it speaks to how clothing can become something bigger than the individual. In many ways, my work is an extension of that idea, taking something deeply personal and allowing it to exist publicly, across borders and cultures.

Will the snake be forever a part of the RICH MNISI mythology?

The snake has become more than a motif, it is a language. It represents transformation, duality, fear, beauty and rebirth. Each collection interprets it differently, from NYOKA to Dzuvula and later into NAMBU, where it became almost symbolic of movement and continuity. I don’t see it disappearing because it speaks to a core philosophy of the brand, the idea that we are always shedding, evolving and becoming. The mythology grows as we grow.

What has incorporating the snake taught you about confronting fear?

Before NYOKA, snakes represented fear for me. Working with the symbol forced me to sit with discomfort and transform it into something beautiful. I realised that fear often carries power when you stop running from it. The process taught me that creativity can be an act of reclamation, taking what once intimidated you and making it part of your identity.

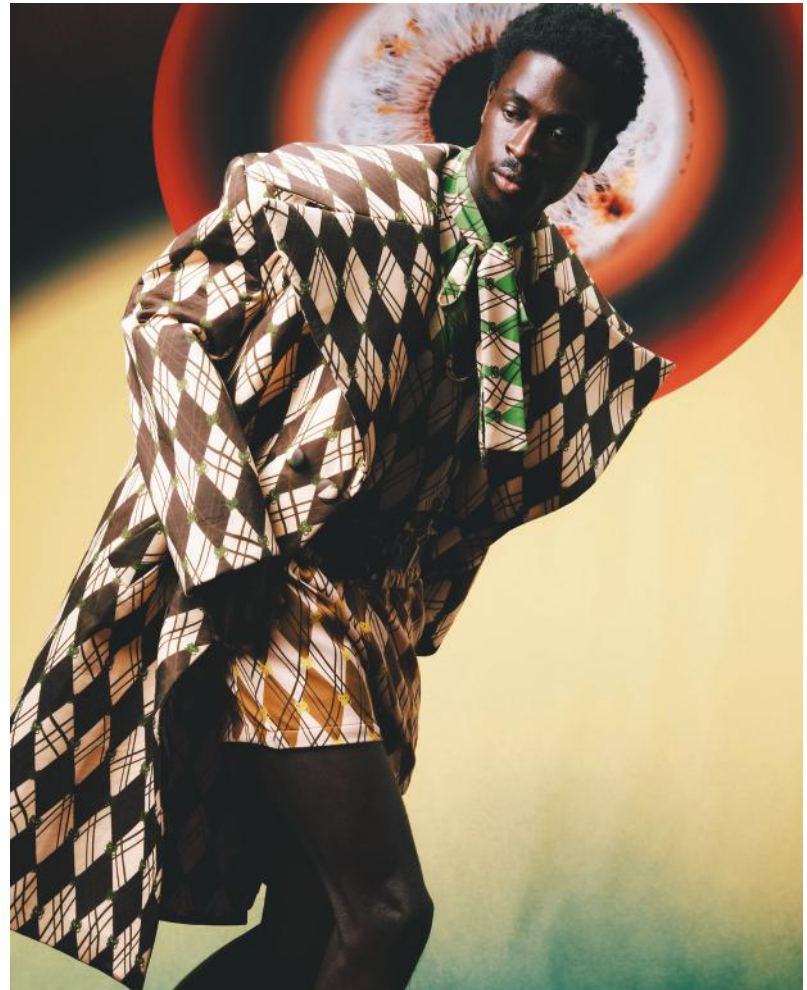
What are your thoughts on intimacy in fashion and furniture design?

I love that both fashion and furniture require participation. They are not

distant forms of art, they live with people. A garment moves with the body and a piece of furniture holds someone at rest. That intimacy makes storytelling more honest because the audience is not just observing, they are experiencing. Seeing people wear or live with pieces inspired by my family and history feels deeply emotional. It is like watching stories leave home and find new lives.

Is there a particular garment or collection that moved you profoundly? What inspires you outside of fashion?

NYOKA will always be emotional for me because it felt like the moment



where everything aligned, personal history, fear, beauty and storytelling. Outside of fashion, I am inspired by music, travel, conversations and everyday rituals. Sometimes inspiration comes from something very small, a memory, a texture, or the way light moves across a space.

What have collaborations taught you as a creative and entrepreneur?

Collaborations teach you balance. You learn how to protect your creative identity while also listening and adapting. They push you to translate your world into different contexts and reach audiences you might not otherwise reach. From an entrepreneurial perspective, collaborations have taught me about scale, accessibility and how to build bridges without diluting the essence of the brand.

How does RICH MNISI exist between accessible and aspirational fashion?

I don't really see it as a divide. I see it as a conversation. Luxury and accessibility can coexist when the intention is clear. Collaborations allow the brand to reach people who may not enter the world through our core collections, but who still connect with the story and energy. The goal has always been to create emotional access, not just financial access.

What does reaching the 10-year milestone feel like?

It feels surreal and grounding at the same time. When I started, success felt like a distant idea, something external. Now it feels more internal, it is about longevity, community and impact. The biggest difference is realising that success is not a destination. It is something you continuously redefine as you grow.

What has been inspiring you lately, and what can you share about the future?

Lately I have been inspired by movement, by the idea of fluid identities and spaces that feel both ancient and futuristic. I am interested in expanding beyond fashion into objects, environments and experiences that allow people to live inside the world of RICH MNISI. The future feels multidisciplinary, more immersive and more global while still deeply rooted in home.

RICH MNISI

www.shop.richmnisi.com
@rich_mnisi



Photos: Xander Opperman; Aart Verrips;
Ricardo Simal; Michael Oliver Love





THE POINT OF THE NEEDLE

Words: Shannon Devy



IT'S A DAZZLING SUMMER SATURDAY morning in Cape Town, and I'm washing down a Nosh bar with a Coke in a parking lot in Gardens. I've got a needle phobia and a tattoo booked across the street, so I'm raising my blood sugar in preparation. I neck the rest of the soda, lock the car, and push through the doors of the famous TOMB tattoo.

It's probably the sugar, but I feel cheerful. The shop is a riot of colour. Part shrine, part fever dream, it's packed from floor to 10-foot-ceiling with an unfathomable range of curiosities – stacks of skulls, hundreds of framed artworks, a werewolf head, old movie posters, reams of flash from the 80s and 90s, and, of course, the extensive Japanese toy collection of TOMB's late founder, Nicolas Mudskipper. I'm booked in with Bruce the Kid today, and once the size of the design is decided and the stencil placed, he fires up his gun, and we're away.

In the Western world, the earliest physical evidence we have of tattooing is found on the body of Ötzi the Iceman, a 5,300-year-old mummy discovered in the Alps, who sported an impressive 61 tattoos across his body, many of which served as therapeutic cures for ailments or protective charms. In Africa, body modification is an ancient practice dating back over 5000 years. Across the African continent, from Chad to Uganda, Senegal to Nigeria, Namibia to Egypt, tattooing and scarification have served deep social, therapeutic, magical and customary purposes for hundreds of thousands of years.

Back in the contemporary world, as Bruce's tattoo gun buzzes away, I wonder about the point of a dolphin ankle tattoo. What function do tattoos have, outside of these ancient cultural contexts? If I ever fell into a bog or similar, only to be dug up 5000 years in the future, I wonder what the sentient AIs would think of my collection as their microscopic nano bots work to restore my hide. Would my cute dancing skeleton holding a coffee cup and a cigarette tell them anything about white Western culture in the mid 2020s?

I ask Bruce what he thinks brings people through the doors. “I think people have control issues,” he says, “and you can’t be in control when you’re getting tattooed...it’s a huge letting go, and it’s a huge trust in a stranger. I think that’s the addictive part of it all...You have to give in, no matter how in control you are of your own life.” Face down on Bruce’s table with my arm bent awkwardly behind my back, I realise this hadn’t occurred to me. There’s certainly a lot of trust involved in getting tattooed, but I would have thought the process has more to do with identity and autonomy. Do I have control issues? I wonder. I crane my neck to try to see what Bruce is doing.

Bruce the Kid has been tattooing for 13 years, which I feel is just about long enough to trust him with a forearm. He started as a fine artist – a painter and sculptor. Then he went and got a tattoo, and fell in love with the artform. After a bit of a learning curve, he settled into a style he really liked. His work is, in my opinion, absolutely remarkable, often combining photo-realistic elements with an almost child-like cartoon style, all rendered in the most delicate, masterful linework. Like many other tattoo artists, he has a keen sense of being a part of something very, very old.

“The communities within tattooing are incredible. The respect for older stuff is insane.” He points to a framed picture of the legendary Jimmy Adams sitting in his shop in Woodstock. Adams set up one of the first (if not the first) tattoo shops in Cape Town, operating first in Simon’s Town, then the famous Hanover Street in District Six, and finally Woodstock Lower Main Road. He serviced foreign sailors as they passed through Cape Town in the 60s, tattooing them with, at first, three needles stuck to a matchstick, then with a machine he designed and hand-welded himself. “If someone were to come in with one of his tattoos, and they want to touch it up, no one in here will touch it,” says Bruce. Jimmy Adams was still tattooing at 78. He passed away in 2012, but his grandchildren continue his legacy, with tattoo shops of their own.

After about an hour, Bruce powers down his gun and leans back to inspect his work. He gives a little nod – done – then carefully wraps my new tattoo in a thin, sticky sheet of flexible plastic called “second skin”. It’ll hopefully heal up cleanly under its covering. No swimming or sun until then. And as I walk back to my car, I’m struck by the same feeling I always have walking out of a tattoo parlour after getting a new tattoo – a sense of being a little bit more myself than I was when I walked in.

TOMB
@tomb_tattoo





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A PEEK BEHIND THE CURTAIN AT TAMBOURINE

Words: Mia McCarthy

A THICK VELVET CURTAIN frames the entrance to the Tambourine restaurant on Harrington Street, where we have a dinner reservation. We are early. I reach out, tentatively, and draw back the curtain, the floor is empty but for a waiter bent over a table setting, making adjustments. I let the curtain fall again. “We are too early,” I hiss to my dining partner in a stage whisper.

Alerted to our premature arrival, the staff falls into a well-choreographed routine. The curtain opens again, this time to a smiling, upright waiter who ushers us to our table. As the first patrons of the evening, we get to see the restaurant floor for what it really is: a stage.

The scene stealer, predictably, is the food. Tambourine specialises in small plates made for sharing. They’re calling it New Cape Cuisine: think hyper-local ingredients, a focus on open-fire cooking, and classic dishes reimaged with an intercultural twist. Expect pedestrian ingredients rendered exotic by creative technique, or unheard-of ingredients presented in familiar settings.

Some of our past favourites include the miso-marinated fish collars, the compressed heirloom tomato with rooibos-kombu dashi broth, and the cold, cubed sweetcorn custard garnished with corn silk crisp. Oh, and you simply cannot leave without ordering a plate of madeleines each for dessert.

Ironically, though, penning an article about the food at Tambourine is a delicious waste of time - tough break for a food writer. This is partially due to the extraordinarily seasonal nature of the menu, which is determined solely on what’s available from their curated shortlist of suppliers. It’s also because, like any good restaurateurs, Executive Head Chef Darren Allsop and Head Chef Keane Munro didn’t get into it just for the food.







“For me,” says Chef Darren, “it’s all about the connections with other people.” He doesn’t just mean the tight-knit kitchen team, though they are certainly a big part of it. “In my role, I get to deal with such cool people, like the farmers, the foragers, the fishermen, the hunters. Seeing what they do and how it translates onto the plate, being able to tell their story and be a part of what they do, coupled with the hum and buzz of the kitchen, that’s what it’s all about.”

Almost every part of the restaurant is informed and upheld by the relationships that Tambourine has with its suppliers. “We try and do as little as possible [to the ingredients] to showcase what [our suppliers] do,” says Chef Darren. Tambourine aims for ingredients sourced from carefully vetted vendors that are, as far as possible, family-run suppliers of organic vegetables, pasture-raised livestock, and line-caught fish.

“If it’s not traceable, we won’t touch it,” was how Chef Darren put it. Tambourine also inverts the classic demand-supply relationship with its suppliers. “It has to be conversation. They let us know what’s good, and we tell them what we want.”

Working in this way - that is, treating ingredient sourcing as a conversation in seasonality rather than a commercial transaction presents its own challenges. “The menu always starts with ingredients - what is sustainable and easy for us to get over the next three months?” Chef Darren explains. Working with small-scale farmers and foragers can introduce an element of operational instability that some might find intolerable, but for the chefs at Tambourine, it keeps things fresh.

“It’s taught me to have a deeper respect for your ingredients,” says Chef Keane. “You respect your spinach, for example, the same way you respect your sirloin.” Chef Darren agrees. “You know if you’re only getting a limited supply of something, you’re not going to waste it.”

Navigating seasonal and local restrictions seems to drive rather than dampen the culinary creativity at Tambourine. At the moment, Chefs Darren and Keane are very into fermentation as a culinary technique. “It allows us to steal from other seasons — so, we can take a bit of summer into winter and vice versa without having to import anything. We also love



the slowness of it,” he continues. “Everything else in our life is like, ‘I need this now, I need this now!’ When you get a job that takes months and you can just watch it happen, it becomes quite a meditative thing.”

It’s remarkable, to say the least, that a chef should revere slowness this way. In an industry defined by high-speed velocity, the culinary leaders at Tambourine are calling for reform. When I asked Chef Darren if there was something he thought needed to change in the restaurant industry, I thought he might say something about supply chain transparency. Instead, he said this: “Kitchen culture. We need better work-life balance.”

He goes on to clarify that discipline will always be a central tenet of the kitchen. However, he is concerned that the grueling hours, unfair pay, and rampant verbal abuse experienced by so many prospective chefs especially early in their kitchen careers, working as scullers or similar, is deterring inventive creatives from staying in the industry. Fewer, more fairly-paid people in a kitchen with firm work-life boundaries is a good place to start, he proposes.

“That way, you come here, you do a great job, and then you go home and live your life. Because no great chef has ever become a great chef in the kitchen - you become a great chef by traveling, by eating, by talking to other people.”

Both chefs have cautioned that burnout is a regular occurrence in the restaurant industry, and lamented that it doesn’t have to be this way. “We put so much false pressure on ourselves in the kitchen, and it can create such a toxic environment,” reflects Chef Darren. “We’re here to nurture and feed people, and that’s the core of it. I think we’ve lost that somewhere, and it’s become about ego.”

Sitting across from my interview subjects in the broad light of day, I saw the full scope of collaboration required to get something like the humble leek from farm to fork illuminated before me. The restaurant is a theatre. Months of preparation, countless setbacks, rehearsals, failures, and drama incarnate lie unseen by the audience behind nightly performances, all for an hour’s pleasure. But, the chefs insist that this is the magic of the job.

“We get an instant gratification that isn’t possible in other jobs,” explains Chef Darren. “Come and enjoy it. We’re here to feed.”

And we’re here to eat.



Tambourine
104 Harrington Street, Cape Town.
Bookings can be made via Dineplan,
or via telephone on 021 612 0528.

The MARKET



OPENS 8AM DAILY

www.ballitolifestylecentre.co.za/themarket

Lifèstyle
THE BALLITO WAY

WELCOME TO ZIMBALI OASIS



JUST OUTSIDE THE GATES OF ZIMBALI COASTAL ESTATE, a familiar landmark has been thoughtfully reimagined. The newly redeveloped Zimbali Oasis Shopping Centre brings fresh life to the former Zimbali Wedge, emerging as a modern, convenience-led lifestyle destination serving the growing Ballito and North Coast communities.

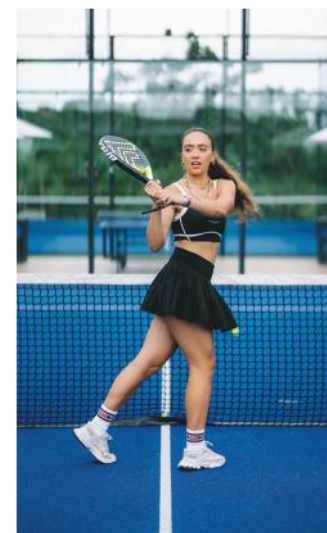
Strategically positioned close to the Northern entrance to Zimbali Estate, the centre offers easy access from major arterial routes, ample free parking and a secure environment designed for easy everyday living. The vision behind **Zimbali Oasis** is simple yet ambitious: to create a well-balanced space where shopping, wellness, sport and family experiences come together in one accessible location.

At the heart of the centre is South Africa's only **SPAR Gourmet**, offering a curated selection of premium, imported and specialty food products. Complementing this flagship store is **SPAR Liquor** and **SPAR Pharmacy**. Homeowners and renovators will also find inspiration at Jack's Hardware, a well-stocked destination for hardware and home improvement supplies that will soon complement a series of upcoming home interior showrooms.

For lifestyle services, **Vision Lounge Zimbali Oasis** offers a boutique optical experience, while a premium on-site car wash keeps vehicles gleaming.



Sport and wellness are a major part of the Oasis lifestyle. The vibrant **Zimbali Oasis Padel Club** features premium courts, dedicated spectator seating, an on-site retail shop and café, as well as social areas with table tennis and monthly community tournaments. Right next door, **F45 Training Ballito** delivers high-energy group fitness sessions for those seeking a more intensive workout.





Coffee lovers are spoilt for choice with the familiar comfort of **Seattle Coffee Company**, the vibrant energy of **Vida e Caffè** located inside **SPAR Gourmet**, and the refreshing health-forward options at Gulp Smoothie Bar. Casual dining is rounded out by the popular **Pizza Boys**, making the centre a relaxed meeting place for families, professionals and visitors alike.

Families are equally well catered for. The newly opened children's play zone located near the SPAR entrance offers soft-play turf areas, interactive murals, rock-climbing features and custom-designed play structures in a secure, supervised environment.

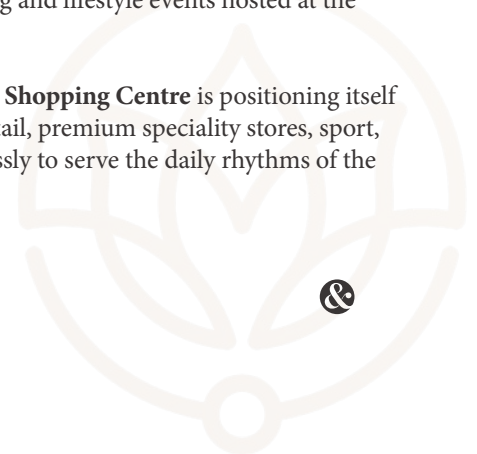
Importantly, because the centre is located outside the estate gates, it is accessible to everyone in the community, not just residents of Zimbali.

And there is more to come. Plans are underway to install a protective covering over the padel courts for all-weather play, introduce the innovative **Nest Playground** concept, and expand the calendar of sporting and lifestyle events hosted at the centre.

As Ballito continues to grow, **Zimbali Oasis Shopping Centre** is positioning itself as a true community hub where essential retail, premium speciality stores, sport, wellness and family amenities blend seamlessly to serve the daily rhythms of the North Coast.

Zimbali Oasis

@zimbalioasis





OLD SKIN

Snakes, horses, and myths we need to shed

Words: Tara Boraine

TURN 31 THIS MONTH. Apparently, that means it's time for some prescription-strength retinoids. They can cause a bit of peeling at first. But I've battled with my skin for years, so honestly? The idea of sloughing off my old one sounds fantastic.

According to Chinese astrology, last year's Year of the Snake has been inviting exactly this, the serpentine shedding of the old to make way for the new. Now, as we move into the lunar new year, the legendary Fire Horse awaits us.

Whether you believe in astrology or not, there's no denying that humans have always reached for symbols to mark time and make sense of change. And certain symbols become enduring archetypes. This is about those archetypes, and about the old beliefs, like old skins, that sometimes need to be shed.

The Snake

Transformation. Rebirth. The snake is one of the most ancient mythological symbols, appearing across cultures from at least 3000 BCE. Its ability to shed its skin made it a powerful symbol of regeneration, of becoming new while remaining yourself.

But snakes carry a stranger wisdom too. Their venom can either kill or heal. Fun fact: Captopril, one of the first blockbuster blood-pressure drugs, was originally derived from Brazilian pit viper venom. What harms and what heals are often the same substance, differently dosed. This *pharmakon* principle, poison and medicine in one, appears to have been deeply inspired by snakes. The Greek god of medicine himself bears a serpent-entwined staff, and this Rod of Asclepius remains the symbol of Western medicine, still seen on the side of ambulances today.

In our indigenous African spiritualities, snakes connect the living with the ancestors. The path of the healer, *sangoma* in Zulu, *amagqira* in Xhosa, often begins with dreams of snakes. This calling, *indlozi*, signals it's time to embark on *ukuthwasa*: the journey to be reborn. Just as the snake sheds its skin, the initiate must shed their former life, ego, and worldly attachments. The python becomes a healer's badge, showing they've crossed that threshold.

This journey of *ukuthwasa* offers a useful frame for any difficult passage: the

loss of the old, as painful as it might be, undeniably makes way for the new.

The last year revealed to me some myths I need to stop perpetuating within myself. Old myths. Tired myths. Some I didn't even know I was still wearing. Because beliefs are skins too. We grow into them young, and they fit for a while, and then one day they don't. The snake doesn't sentimentalise its old skin. When it no longer fits, it goes.

Here are four that I am shedding, as we move into this lunar new year:

The Myth of Separation

This is the pathological root myth from which others grow—the belief that things are fundamentally separate. Mind from body. Self from Other. Human from nature. Present from future.

We inherited this split from the Enlightenment, when reality was divided into mind and matter. The framing proved useful for a while – but somewhere along the line, we got confused, mistaking the map for the territory, and the lens for reality.

The settler-colonial project ran with it. If humans are separate from nature, extract without consequence. If "civilised" people are separate from "primitive" ones, conquer without guilt. If the present is separate from the future, take now and let tomorrow sort itself out.

From separation, three more myths grew:

The Myth of the Machine

The belief that bodies, minds, and ecosystems are simplistic mechanical systems—reducible to parts, fixable by intervention, optimisable through engineering.

This really took off around the Industrial Revolution, when humans built machines and then started seeing everything as one. Bodies became components, and Time became a resource to optimise.

Much of modern medicine runs on this logic: specialise, diagnose, intervene. Find the broken part, fix it, and return to factory settings. This logic works brilliantly for acute problems—infections, injuries, things with clear causes. But chronic illness broke that metaphor for me. Bodies aren't machines. They're more like gardens—complex, self-organising, responsive to context in nonlinear ways. The body, like the mind, is something you tend to, not engineer.

The Myth of More

The belief that more is always better—more consumption, more growth, more productivity. Your worth is measured by output. Rest must be earned. Enough is never enough.

The Protestant work ethic positioned productivity as holy and rest as suspect. Capitalism requires endless growth to function, a company that stops expanding is "failing." The colonial version: take now, replenish never. Consequences are someone else's problem.

We apply this logic to our own bodies. Borrow against future health. Push now, recover later.

But as psychiatrist Bessel van der Kolk says, the body keeps the score. It knows the difference between sustainable and extractive, even when the culture doesn't.

The alternative to more isn't less, it's enough. And enough is a real feeling. Given space to breathe, your body knows when it's full, rested, done. The More myth trains you to override those signals. Healing often means learning to trust them again.

The Myth of Total Control

The belief that sufficient willpower can override any obstacle. If you're struggling, you're not trying hard enough. Surrender is failure.

For many of us, control was survival. If your early world was chaotic or unsafe, you learned that vigilance kept you alive. Anticipate the threat. Manage every variable. Never let go.

The cruel underside: if you're struggling, it's your fault. The Control myth insists on individual responsibility while erasing every systemic force shaping our lives.

The Serenity Prayer, often read out in AA meetings, points to the alternative: *"Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference."*

Here's the paradox: letting go often creates more change than forcing. Sleep comes when you stop trying to sleep. Healing begins when you stop demanding it happen on schedule.

The snake doesn't force the shed. It waits until the new skin is ready underneath. Then it happens all on its own.

Jumping on the Fire Horse

You may not control outcomes. But you can tend conditions.

While the Snake teaches the slow, private work of becoming lighter, the Fire Horse asks what you'll do with that lightness. It's not enough to shed your old skin. Now you have to move.

The Fire Horse (Bǐng Wǔ) is notoriously wild in Chinese astrology, associated



with freedom, movement, power, vitality. While horses have often symbolised cavalry, conquest, control, and expansion, the Fire Horse refuses to be ridden easily. It carries its own will.

South Africa has no indigenous horses, but we do have zebras. Despite the best efforts of European colonists, they consistently proved too stubborn to domesticate. Our undomesticatable zebra makes a fine local metaphor for Fire Horse energy: wild, free, refusing to carry anyone's empire.

As we slither into 2026, things are certainly heating up. Climate, conflict, discourse, disease. One can almost hear the hooves. And it would be easy, so easy-to respond to this moment with the old myths. To try to control what we can't control. To push harder, extract more, separate ourselves from consequences we'd rather not face.

But what if this is exactly when we need the wisdom of the Snake's shed? The myths that got us here won't get us through. The machine logic that sees the planet as parts to optimise. The growth logic that treats limits as failures of imagination. The control logic that insists we can engineer our way out of anything if we just bite our tongues and try harder.

Fire consumes. But Fire also illuminates. It clears dead undergrowth so new things can grow. The Fire Horse doesn't ask you to have a plan for everything. It asks if you're light enough to move when movement is called for, and honest enough to see what's actually in front of you.

I don't know if I'm ready for what the rest of 2026 holds. But I know I'm lighter than I was.

So now I turn the question to you, dear reader: What are you still carrying that the Snake has asked you to drop? And when the wild Horse appears, when the moment demands movement, will you be light enough to ride?



WHERE BALLITO COMES ALIVE

Feel the rhythm of The Market at Lifestyle Centre, Ballito

THE MARKET captures the perfect blend of organic charm and inspired energy. It is a vibrant communal space where good food and great company come naturally. With a carefully curated mix of local eateries and artisanal fare, it has become a favourite gathering spot for the Ballito community to relax, connect and enjoy fresh, flavourful food.



From homemade-style breakfasts and fresh juices at Mia Coquina to comforting pub classics at Waxy's and great steaks and delicious burgers from Wozza Meats. Visitors can enjoy wood-fired pizzas from Bird & Co, while Street Food brings a vibrant fusion of Mediterranean, Middle Eastern and Asian influences. The Curry Bar serves up aromatic curries packed with boldflavour, and at Bite The Bao, soft, flavour-filled bao buns offer a delicious Asian-inspired bite. Seafood lovers can indulge in fish and chips or freshly prepared sushi from FISH, while the well-loved Yolis Bakery adds freshly baked delights to the mix. And to end off the perfect meal, visitors can enjoy homemade ice cream from Scoop Ice Cream.





Adding to the atmosphere is the sound of live piano music drifting through The Market each weekday morning. From 10am to 12:30pm, resident pianist Noelin Dorsamy provides a gentle soundtrack that has become a signature feature of the space.

Music continues to play an important role in the vibrant atmosphere of The Market every weekend. Live music takes place from Friday to Sunday, where some of the very best local artists perform, creating a lively yet relaxed social setting for visitors to enjoy.

Local talent also takes centre stage every third Thursday during Open Mic Night, where aspiring musicians perform for a live audience. The evening is paired with specially curated R95 dinner options from the various eateries within The Market, creating a vibrant midweek outing.

Sports fans can also join the action from time to time, with selected South African rugby games and global sporting events broadcasted live on the Big Screen, enjoyed alongside The Market's diverse food offering. Throughout the year, themed activations bring extra energy to the space, from festive St Patrick's Day celebrations and proudly South African Heritage Day gatherings to the lively spirit of Oktoberfest. At The Market, there is always something happening – and always a reason to gather.



/ DESIGN /

MUTI

MUTI is a creative studio founded in 2011, based in the city of Cape Town, South Africa. We're a dedicated team of illustrators and designers who are passionate about producing original and inspiring artwork.

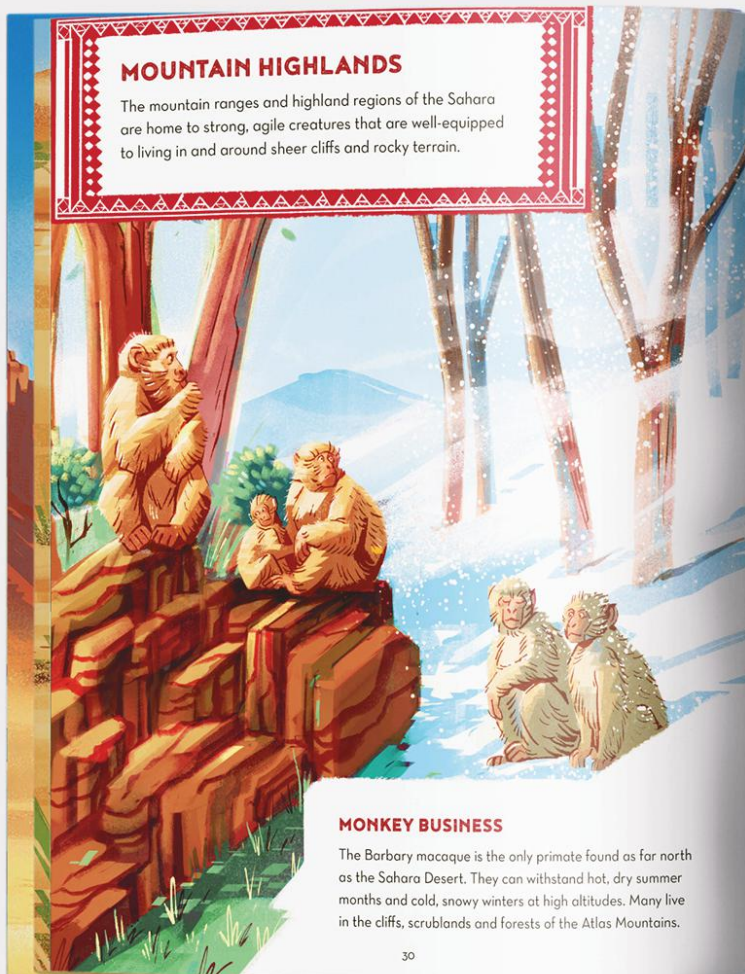
We worked with London-based publishers Flying Eye Books in creating an illustrated exploration into the fascinating world of the Sahara desert. The publication was written by Christina Webb.

www.studiomuti.co.za/earths-incredible-places-the-sahara



MOUNTAIN HIGHLANDS

The mountain ranges and highland regions of the Sahara are home to strong, agile creatures that are well-equipped to living in and around sheer cliffs and rocky terrain.



MONKEY BUSINESS

The Barbary macaque is the only primate found as far north as the Sahara Desert. They can withstand hot, dry summer months and cold, snowy winters at high altitudes. Many live in the cliffs, scrublands and forests of the Atlas Mountains.

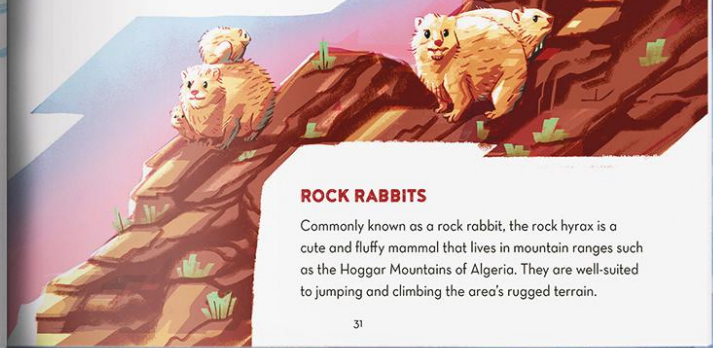
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HORNS AND HOOVES

Nubian ibex are nimble goats that roam steep mountainous clifftops. They boast majestic, curved horns that can grow up to 1.2 metres long.



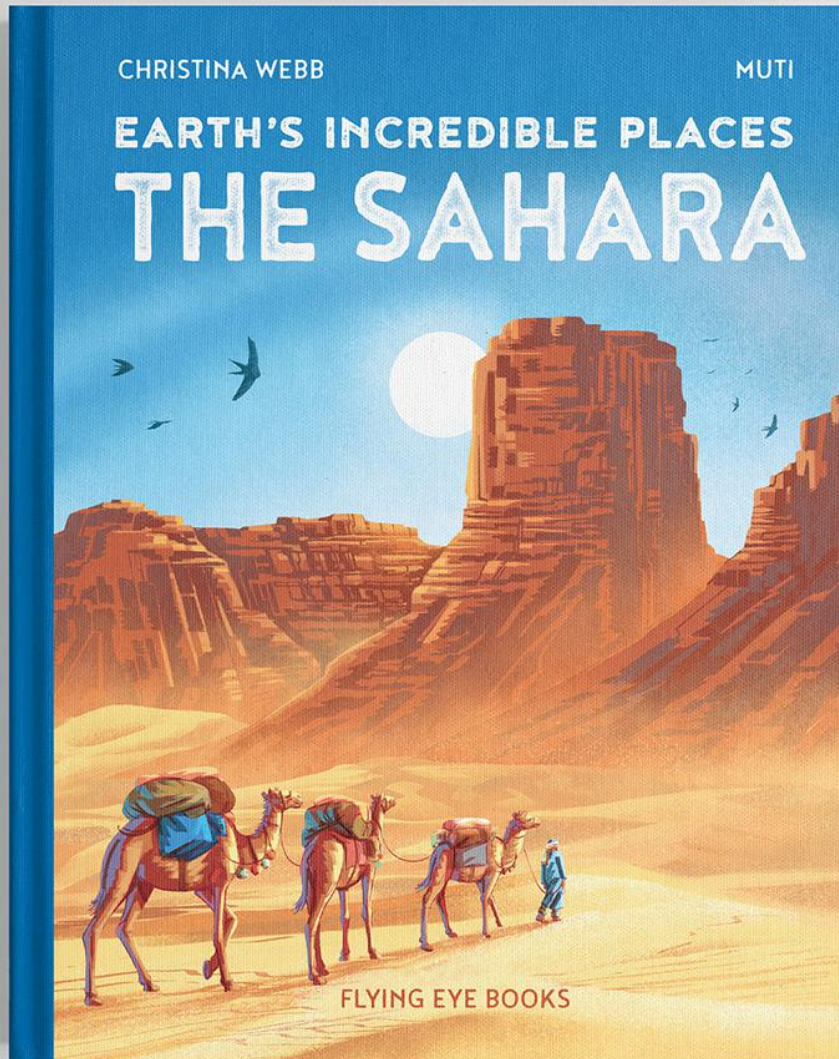
Though they look like small rodents, the rock hyrax's closest relatives are actually elephants and manatees!



ROCK RABBITS

Commonly known as a rock rabbit, the rock hyrax is a cute and fluffy mammal that lives in mountain ranges such as the Hoggar Mountains of Algeria. They are well-suited to jumping and climbing the area's rugged terrain.

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THE SOUTIE AFRICANS:

The Infinite Strangeness of British Heritage in Mzansi

Words: Cameron Luke Peters

***“I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.
The evil that men do lives after them;
The good is oft interred with their bones;
So let it be with Caesar.”***

Marc Antony in Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar.

DO I BELONG IN SOUTH AFRICA?

Under the laws, yes. Of course. I was born in Parklands Hospital in Durban when Mandela was President. I’ve spent nearly all my life here. I own no other pet but a Green Mamba. As the Constitution has it, I’m welcome to stay for as long as I like, and I’m sure I will. So that’s not the right question to ask.

The better way of proffering my concern would be to ask,
***‘Do I need to own my family roots in the British Isles if I want to be South African?
And can the tally of those roots amount to a just way of belonging in this country in the first place?’***

It’s a very privileged question. Almost greedy. Is it not enough that I freely get to live in South Africa as a middle-class white man decades after Apartheid? Do I need to seek reassurance in the fact that most of my grandparents were born (or grew up) here too? Perhaps not. My interest sparks from the shock I felt when I got to live in the UK for the course of my Masters degree in 2018-9 and, within a matter of weeks, could hardly wait to leave. It wasn’t just the weather. It wasn’t just the food. It wasn’t just the undercoating of depressed cynicism beneath every single conversation. It was that the person I knew I’d become if I stayed much longer would, in Wordsworth’s phrase, seem more like a man flying from something that he dreads, than one who sought the thing he loved.

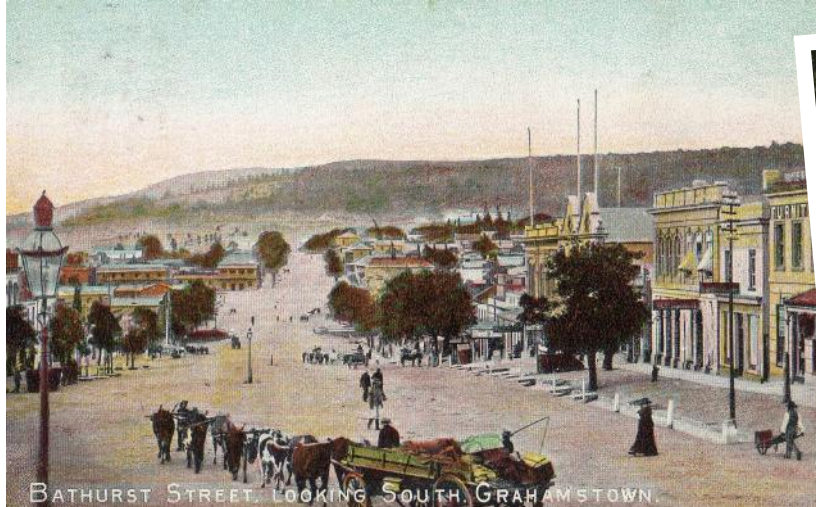
This experience was so intense that I returned to my new-old life in Cape Town like a born-again South African. When friends emigrated to the UK or built new lives in London, my brain and heart broke equally. I still don’t get

it at all. Even when complete strangers justified their continued residence in this country in the parlance of convenience, perks or mere over-familiarity, I struggled to hold back my annoyance. Yes, we’re dysfunctional. Yes, we’re unsafe. Yes, we’re always our own worst enemies. But is there a warmer place in the world to call home? And can you begin to recognise what a beautiful birthright it is to be born under the folds of our Constitution? The words that rang in my head for years were JFK’s injunction to “Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country.”

I felt like I’d had the chance to glimpse through to the truth that a good and meaningful and happy life could only be lived in service to your people. This didn’t necessarily require activism or building up a saviour complex. It just meant recognising that nothing you can create exists in a solitary vacuum. Everything you do to survive in the world is for others too, whether you like it or not. The trick of life is to take accountability for this involuntary impact, then learn to wield it. So the question stands: Which others would you most like to serve? To whose cause would you like to make your contribution?

This was how I finally got the sense of the phrase ‘Cry, the Beloved Country’ - that South Africa can be unproblematically adored like few other places on the Earth. But, at the same time, how did we create this many problems for ourselves? What degree of societal care is needed now to compensate for centuries of trauma? However, the phrase itself, I think, is part and parcel of one of the biggest issues. The sigh of “Agh, shame” implied by its declaration slides too easily into the exasperated whine of an English investor fed up with a land that’s proved itself more trouble than it’s worth. Alan Paton, the gentle novelist who coined it, did not mean it that way. He translated his reflections into political action. His mitigating testimony at the Rivonia Trial is thought by many to have saved Nelson Mandela from the gallows. Even his granddaughter, Carol, bears his torch today as one of the most respected journalists in the country. But words, as ever, live a life of their own.

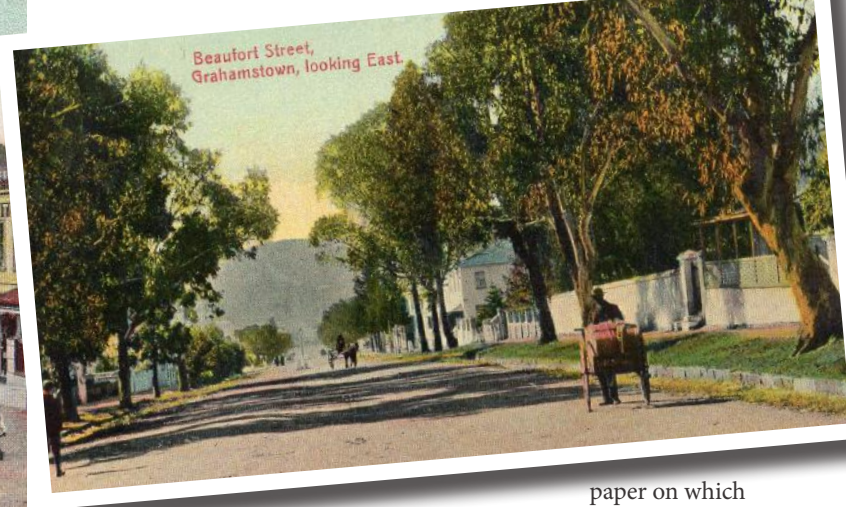
As I mulled my position over, I became more and more amused at how absurd my identity appears in the long arc of our story, considering how racism and tribalism have structured the narrative just as much as wine and



gold. I earn and spend my days as a tour-guide in the City Bowl and, occasionally, when a guest asks me what year the British ended up leaving South Africa, I answer that they never left. I'm still here. Sometimes I think of British-South Africans today as something like the strange minority assortment of mixed families and hybrid tribes left behind in Southern Britannia by the Roman Empire in the 5th-Century AD (back when the shoe was on the other foot). In some sense too, I think you can compare us to "[t]he stranded nucleus of older [Dutch] settlers from Western Europe" whom John Bond (in *They Were South Africans* (1957)) describes the first British colonists encountering on taking possession of the Cape back in the 1790's, and whom, he says, "felt a powerful and disturbing reinforcement" at their arrival.

The difference today, of course, is that we've never developed a South African-Englishness to match the pride (and mania) of the Afrikaner. And today's demographics do not promise any nation-building spectacles in the future; which is all for the good. Sometimes even I forget about us. A few months ago I was wandering through Kirstenbosch Gardens when I spotted a long, seated line of thirty- & forty-something white couples and families snaking down the hillside to the conservatory entrance. I did a double-take, struggling to place their origins or name the occasion. Belatedly, I remembered that the Goo Goo Dolls were in town for a Summer Sunday Concert, and that this picnicking crew was a cross-section of all the 90's Kids who'd recently bloomed into homeowners in the Southern Suburbs. There were thousands of them! Who knew?

The reason I felt (and feel) such a sense of surprise at all this is that there are very few colonial communities in any country's history who've made such a walloping impact on every imaginable aspect of national life, whilst remaining somehow inconspicuous as an actually extant body of people. Englishness is the 'vanishing mediator' of South Africa. It functions even today as the white



paper on which all the markers of the identities of other South Africans are inscribed. The official language which cuts through all eleven others in politics, business, journalism and literature is English. The basis of our government and our laws is British Constitutionalism. Our education system has evolved from the hierarchies of British universities, private schools and state services. Our favourite sports and games were first imported and played by British colonists. Although Afrikaners, Germans, Jews, Americans, and 'Hollanders' played major parts in starting our mining and retail industries, Cecil Rhodes was as British as they come, growing up next door to the current site of London Stansted Airport. It was the British colonial forces who conquered and dispossessed nearly every Black tribe in Southern Africa over the course of the 1800's. And it was the British who, between 1899 and 1902, decimated the Afrikaner people and burned down nearly every farm in the Free State and the Highveld just to resew the region into one united state just a few years later.

And yet, the people themselves have always seemed ephemeral. As C.O. Gardner, one of the exceedingly British Apartheid-era English professors at UKZN once put it: "English-speaking South Africans have tended to be [...] uncommitted, unsure and uncreative as far as the communal life of South Africa is concerned." This is exactly what Afrikaners imply (then and now) by the monikers *Soutie* and *Rooinek*: to be English-South African is to have the hyphen that connects the two identities dangle in the middle permanently like a penis dipping into the sea whilst the legs above it straddle continents (just like 'The Colossus of Rhodes' once straddled Africa). Similarly, it means to have stayed in Africa for generation after generation without ever stooping to adapt or evolve - never 'browning' or mixing, either physically, genetically or spiritually.

Why did this happen?

Well, because the British legacy has never once allowed its exiles to feel

marooned here, as the Dutch East-India Company once did. The British state first snatched the Cape Colony in 1795 because the Prince of Orange asked them to (and they couldn't stand the notion of the route to India falling into the hands of the Jacobins). In 1802, they were obliged to give it back. Then in 1806 they sailed right back again to seize it from 'the Batavian Republic'. In 1814 they committed to stay, and inherited all the frontier wars with the amaXhosa, mostly because retaining their new Navy base in Simonstown would secure their domination of the entire southern hemisphere ad infinitum. For the next century and change, "British governors and generals came and went in official invulnerability on the stage of South African history, profoundly affecting for good and sometimes for evil the destinies of the country in which they never settled." We only recall their names now through a scattered constellation of old border-dorpiess: Darling, Somerset East, Caledon, Greyton, Cradock, Napier, Harrismith, Ladysmith, Durban.

The motley settlers who followed in their stead were most often either dupes, pawns or desperate opportunists. The famed 1820 arrivals - the nearly 4,000 men, women and children from all corners of the British Isles, and all classes and professions, who hopped off 60 ships in Algoa Bay between April and June 1820 - were unaware they were being given huge tracts of other people's land because the colonial office sought to plant a human buffer-zone between the Boers, Khoi and Xhosa tribes in the ever-warring Eastern Cape. They were selected from more than 90,000 applicants who were promised warmth, property and opportunity half a world away from the grimy horror of the early-Industrial Revolution. As Guy Butler surmised whilst devising their Monument, "[t]hese early British immigrants were no more a hand-picked elite approved by the Minister of the Interior than were the seventeenth-century ancestors of the Afrikaners. They were average people from a country in one of its great ages." Unsurprisingly, they failed at their initial scheme.

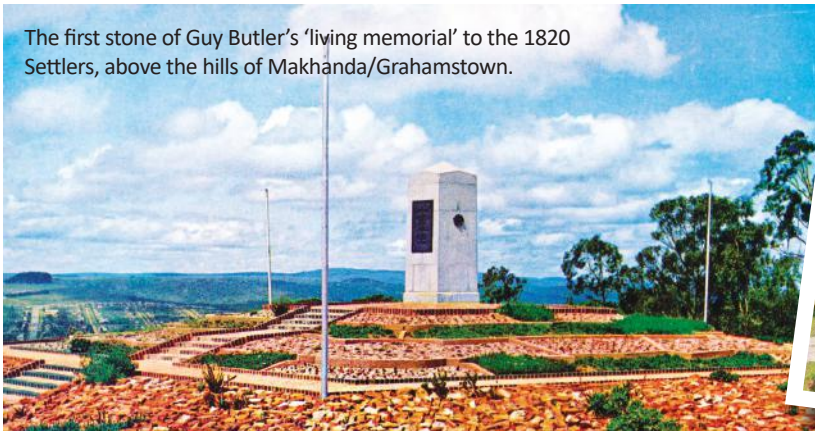
Unlike the VOC's company, the majority of the British arrivals never took to ploughing, sewing or herding. They swiftly dropped their arcadian illusions and huddled into towns like Bathurst, Grahamstown, Port Elizabeth and East London, which hugged the coastline in turn. As their presence here was

always the consequence of, and insurance for, maritime trade across the Empire, the British always remained the one sea-centric people of the subcontinent. Though the Dutch had preceded them in ruling the waves, their progeny at the Cape never established another port but Kaapstad. They became an African people by echoing the restless migrations of many of the indigenous tribes they conquered and then marrying themselves to the soil they seized. The British, for their part, remained Umlungu: 'the sandy white foam thrown up by the waves'. As Bond comments, "[t]he frontier Boer, however oppressed by danger and hardship, could say with truth, 'I am monarch of all I survey.'" Hence the Groot Trek, when tens-of-thousands of Boers crossed the Orange and the Vaal Rivers in the 1830's to recover this sense of independence and dominate as much land as they could. And hence Durban and the colony of Natal, which the British created in the 1840's mostly to landlock the Boers and secure the 'Englishman's Inn' at the entrance to the Indian Ocean. The sugar empires came later.

This early ambivalence about the land caused two knock-on effects for the Soutie identity. The first was that it forever set the British against the Afrikaners as the more 'mature civilisers' (in their own minds), taming the place and its peoples, white and black, by dragging them kicking and screaming into the modern world from the solitary depths of the 18th-Century. By the Apartheid era, this enlightened detachment had evolved into an abiding sense of cultural cringe at our cockney-Dutch cousins. Despite crushing them in war, we remained the feeble minority amongst the white-overlord community, numerically and politically, and we consoled and distanced ourselves by mocking their provincial culture and romantic self-mythologising, before judging them without irony for their house-brand of paranoid racism.

The second was that it gradually, and then catastrophically suddenly, transformed South Africa into a globalised society - an America-lite. The brittleness of South African-Englishness was diluted ever further by the communities which followed in the wake of their industrial rackets. The waves

The first stone of Guy Butler's 'living memorial' to the 1820 Settlers, above the hills of Makhanda/Grahamstown.



'The Settler Family Memorial', Ivan Mitford-Barberton's 1969 rendering of the Eastern Cape's rag-tag pilgrim fathers, mothers and children.



of Indian, Irish, Greek, German, Jewish, Portuguese, Chinese and diversely African residents who were either forced or seduced into building their lives here, in the decades after Diamonds and Gold, became mildly Anglicised over time, in both language and culture, because it was the only convenient medium between them all, and their own lives were the obvious products and subjects of Empire. The weird synthetic nationalism of the Scots, Welsh, Irish and English met and made its mirror in the artificial fantasy of 'the Union of South Africa': a literal description which read as more of a working-title than a proper name.

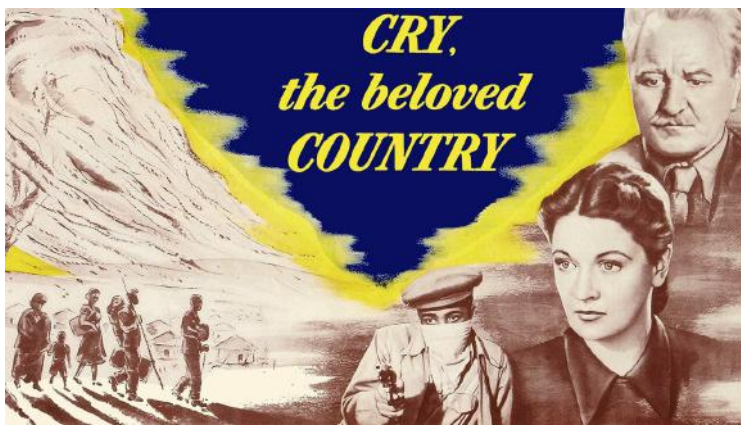
Finally, you could put the invisibility of the Soutie down to the fact that the British lost all control of the country 'two South Africas ago', to quote a brilliant phrase. Once upon a time, in early 1947, as recorded in Graham Viney's tour-de-force book *The Last Hurrah*, the Royal family spent two months on a grand tour around the entire sub-continent, finding themselves hailed with joy and reverence in nearly every town they visited, eventually being seen in the flesh by more than 60% of the entire population - Black, White, Indian, Coloured and Khoi. But the expedition still failed its mission. Colonials and liberals alike across the Commonwealth had hoped that the divine presence of the head of state and his retinue would repair the divides of World War II and save white South Africa from itself. But the very next year D.F. Malan's Nats steamed into power. Thirteen years after that, Hendrik Verwoerd (symbolically) defenestrated the Queen from the government, despite all her kind words for Kirstenbosch. And in the six decades since, the successive nation-building projects of the NP and the ANC have subconsciously collaborated on just one big shared accomplishment: the erasure of the role of their original best fiend, the British Empire.

Nevertheless, here I remain in Cape Town, the original soutie city for soutie people. My mum's paternal family, the Hultzers, are German-Dutch, going back to settlers from the 1850's, but I'd say I still count as a full soutie for

showing no real skaam for never learning any other language even semi-fluently than the one you're currently reading. There are perhaps 1,5 million of us still spread across the country, with more set to return from abroad now that the Global North's recent insanity is spilling over by the month. We are, I think, unique in the history of modern empire.

The pattern of colonial domination since the 1500's has usually followed one of only two paths. Either the settler community captures a territory through vanquishing its indigenous people by means of disease, war and privatisation before gradually repopulating it with new arrivals and ensuing generations who constitute the new face of the land, leaving the original people to rebuild themselves as a traumatised fragment of their former identity. This is the origin story of the USA, Canada, Mexico, Australia, New Zealand and the Western Cape (as we know it today). The other path is when a territory is insidiously brought under the command of the bureaucratic elite of a colonial power and a small settler community arrives to serve the enterprise and pocket the land for themselves, a la India, Vietnam, Mozambique, Kenya, DRC, Yemen, Indonesia and so forth. This settler community might take root for many, many decades, and grow to very substantial numbers, but when push comes to shove, as in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe, the mass of them are eventually obliged, or kindly asked, to leave.

Neither of these scenarios has played out according to any set template in South Africa. The Afrikaner community took elite control of the country during Apartheid to restore and ensure its dominance whilst Black South Africans remained the majority of the civilian population. There was no colonial motherland for Afrikaners to go back to, and by the 1980's their numbers were great enough that, even if one did exist, their forced expulsion or destruction would bankrupt the country. Thus Mandela proved his pragmatic genius by, amongst other things, learning and reading Afrikaans



Promo material for the now-forgotten original Hollywood adaptation of Paton's *Cry, the Beloved Country* (1951).

in his prison cell, reciting one of Ingrid Jonker's best poems at the opening of the first democratic parliament and wearing the old Springbok jersey whilst handing over the Rugby World Cup trophy to Francois Pienaar. My feeling is that he sincerely acknowledged and accepted Afrikaners as a people of South Africa, or at least he learned to perform this understanding so brilliantly that he assuaged their fears and found a miraculous method to tame a dragon that had nearly burned him alive.

But what of the English-South Africans? Were they off the hook for everything? Seemingly so. Even in the midst of Rhodes Must Fall and the colonial recriminations that have salted and peppered the discourse over the last twelve years, what has almost always been attacked is 'whiteness' and 'capital' - two nebulous, overhanging forces which, though strong in their implications, have seldom been attached to the narratives of any particular community who could potentially be nailed down as the political culprits. Sometimes guests on my walking tours are startled at the sight of statues of Queen Victoria and King Edward VII still standing - by the Houses of Parliament and athwart the Grand Parade - given the anti-colonial fervour they've read about us. The best guess I can give them is that some statues exude meaning and relevance forever while others just drop down to us like the crumbs of a leftover fantasy.

In his *Introduction to Better Than They Knew* (1972), a rare compendium of the lives of British South Africans, the editor R.M. De Villiers notes, in the middle of a very fawning passage, "[i]t is unfortunately true that the mass of English speakers have often been found wanting in their political wisdom or courage." Strong stuff for the middle of the high-Apartheid era. But this unwillingness to be collectively brave, loud or relevant in our commitment to our country reflects the basic fact that patriotism, for the common man at least, is not 'the last resort of scoundrels' but the painful acknowledgement that there exists no other home or community for them to escape to. We were complacent about fighting Apartheid en masse because we were here while

the going was good. Indeed, as the system started crumbling in the mid-80's English-South Africans increasingly voted for the Nats as they signalled their turn to reform before revolution, and the NP themselves learned to lean harder on their English support as they got outflanked to their right by Treurnicht's Conservatives.

In the Post-Apartheid era, nothing has forced us out. Loadshedding, corruption, crime and urban decay have each, in their time, felt like horses on a Merry-Go-Round of the Apocalypse. But the purchasing power, quality-of-life, living-space, constitutional rights and entrepreneurial opportunities South Africa has afforded middle-class whites for more than a century have remained steady. Nonetheless, many of us have trickled away, seeking out better money and more familiar neighbourhoods in the rest of the Commonwealth, or Dubai, or Israel, or whichever destination has been deemed flavour of the year, seeking a world 'as it used to be' and, more often than not, meandering back to find it in Cape Town.

We only have ourselves to blame for any present sense of dislocation. I still don't know quite where my love of this country stems from. It is, like any true love, fundamentally irrational and infinitely difficult to articulate. But as I want to remain in South Africa and serve a part in its future, what I can do to belong here is call on a list of ancestors who've echoed my love back to me. English-South Africans have failed, and continue to fail, at forming a communal identity, and we still need to recognise ourselves in the weave of the country's story. In all the debates around name-changes, statue-removals and 'the erasure of history', I've felt that a crucial point has been missed. All the names that have fallen away reflect a colonial legacy that was not committed by anonymous aliens, but by people whose descendants are still among us, or recently scattered out in the world. We need to escape our estrangement.

I will claim proud allegiance to one part of this legacy. On an individual basis, many British-South Africans have lived at the vanguard of asserting the sovereign human rights and democratic birthright of all South



Sir David Gill (KCB FRS FRSE FRAS), the greatest astronomer you'd never heard of.



James Stevenson-Hamilton, the immortal warden of the Kruger National Park and original 'Skukuza'.



Lucy Lloyd, a queen among African (and all) linguists.

Africans. I'm not alone in this appreciation. Despite all their struggles, both Desmond Tutu and Nelson Mandela often acknowledged that their lives and achievements had been formed in the mold of free Englishmen. Their Christian names show it, for one. Tutu, of course, was the Archbishop of the Anglican Church, and an equal celebrity in the UK as in SA throughout his career. And Mandela wore the trappings of an Anglophile, referring to the Queen often by her first name. When he addressed the British Parliament on the 5th of May 1993, he quoted John Donne back to them then laid down the law:

Your right to determine your own destiny was used to deny us [the power] to determine our own. Thus history brought our peoples together in its own peculiar ways. That history demands of us that we should strive to achieve what you, through the rediscovery of the practice of democracy, achieved for yourselves.

To me, this is the tone of an heir returning to the reading of a will to claim a rightful inheritance. As Bond claims, "[t]hose to whom [this] torch has been handed down will, at the peril of their souls, forget the contribution made to South Africa by the liberal spirit which is the glory of the English tradition."

It is also the shame of that tradition that it has not been upheld justly. But I want to follow the footprints of some of those who dearly tried to extend it:

Dr. John Philip (1775-1851), the Scottish missionary who devoted his life to lobbying for the rights of the Khoikhoi and enslaved peoples in Southern Africa against the colonial government (and who had Philippolis named after him).

His son-in-law, **John Fairbairn** (1794-1864), who fought and won the first great battle for press freedom in Cape Town in 1829, and played an instrumental role in founding state-sponsored education and the national insurance industry (as the father of Old Mutual).

Lucy Lloyd (1834-1914) who, with her brother-in-law Wilhelm Bleek, contributed decades of work to recording and archiving the language and stories of the San people, building one of the most sympathetic libraries of indigenous life in all modern history.

David Gill (1843-1914) who, by decking out the Royal Observatory in Cape Town, made South Africa's name as one of the great sites of modern astronomy, plotting the first photographic star atlas of the southern hemisphere and engineering a glorious era of international co-operation between telescopes.

James Stevenson-Hamilton (1867-1957) who almost single-handedly stitched together the Kruger National Park over 44 years, becoming the global pioneer of wildlife conservation, game-ranging and anti-poaching strategy whilst earning the affectionate nickname Skukuza ('the man who has turned everything upside down') from his Tsonga neighbours.



Henry Harold Welch Pearson (1870-1916) who fought like hell to establish and build Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens, became the first great advocate for indigenous flora in the 20th-Century and worked himself to death by the age of 46 before being buried in the middle of his creation, beneath a Celtic Cross.

Margaret Ballinger (1894-1980) who, despite working within the bounds of a sexist and segregated democracy, served as the face of white liberalism for three decades, was hailed as the first great voice for a multi-racial South Africa on the floor of the Apartheid Parliament, roasted Verwoerd to his face on many occasions and preferred to fold her party rather than comply with new limits on membership for different racial groups.

Roy Campbell (1901-1957) who casually re-invented English Poetry through a South African-modernist template and produced the first multi-lingual, anti-racist literary publication in the country's history before he turned 25.

Rick Turner (1941-1978) who was Steve Biko's greatest academic comrade, wrote *The Eye of the Needle* (perhaps the most enduring book of political philosophy inspired by anti-apartheid), became the intellectual voice of 'the Durban Moment' in the early 70's when trade-union activism reawakened the Struggle, and who was shot through a window in his own home by the state security services, dying in his 13-year-old daughter's arms.

Justice Edwin Cameron (1953-) who brought a career of Gay Rights-activism and HIV-awareness and welfare disputes to the highest court in the land and built on the potential of our progressive Constitution in the most dicey years of the post-Apartheid era.

I want to go on.

For now, for me, South Africa is not a place or a club or a trap or a destiny. As the poet Wopko Jensma would call it, South Africa is a situation I found, and continue to find, myself in.



MORE THAN A FIGUREHEAD

The Story of the Spirit of Ecstasy



PERCHED GRACEFULLY ON the bonnet of every Rolls-Royce motor car, the Spirit of Ecstasy is far more than a decorative mascot. For more than a century she has symbolised elegance, ambition and achievement, becoming one of the most recognisable emblems in automotive history and representing the spirit of excellence that defines Rolls-Royce Motor Cars.

First created in 1911 by illustrator and sculptor Charles Sykes, the figure has remained remarkably true to his original vision. Although her posture and proportions have been subtly refined over time, the sense of motion — leaning forward with robes flowing behind her — has remained constant. Today's version is closer than ever to Sykes' original drawings.

The mascot was commissioned by Rolls-Royce's first managing director, Claude Johnson, who wanted an official emblem to replace the many decorative mascots owners were placing on their cars. Johnson turned to Sykes, who had already designed a small aluminium figurine called "The Whisper" for motoring pioneer Lord Montagu of Beaulieu. Inspired by this work, Sykes created the Spirit of Ecstasy — a graceful woman leaning into the wind, her robes trailing like wings.

It is widely believed that Sykes' muse was Eleanor Thornton, who worked closely with both Johnson and Lord Montagu. Thornton and Montagu shared a secret love affair that had to remain hidden due to the social conventions of the time. Many historians believe her likeness and spirit inspired both "The Whisper" and the Spirit of Ecstasy, making the sculpture a quiet tribute to their story.

Officially registered as Rolls-Royce intellectual property in 1911, the figurine soon gained international recognition. In 1920 it won the Premier Prix gold medal at the Paris Salon's competition for the finest motor car mascot.

Despite changing regulations and technology, the Spirit of Ecstasy has endured. In the 1970s Rolls-Royce introduced a spring-loaded mechanism allowing the figure to retract into the grille if touched — a feature that evolved into the graceful "rise" that greets drivers today when the car is unlocked.

The figurine is still produced using the ancient lost-wax casting technique, now combined with modern digital modelling and precision engineering. Molten stainless steel is poured into ceramic moulds before each piece is polished to a mirror finish and fitted to the iconic Rolls-Royce grille.

In 2022 the Spirit of Ecstasy was subtly redesigned for the marque's first fully electric motor car, the Spectre. The figure now stands slightly lower with a more aerodynamic stance, echoing Sykes' original vision while reflecting a new era of design.

More than a century after her creation, the Spirit of Ecstasy remains a powerful symbol — not only of engineering excellence, but of artistry, heritage and human inspiration guiding Rolls-Royce into the future.





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THE FUTURE OF SLEEP IS HERE

HOW A SOUTH AFRICAN INNOVATION IS CHANGING THE WAY THE WORLD BUYS BEDS

Developed by the Kiran Sales Group, trading as Lylax Bedding and Serta South Africa, a breakthrough mattress technology is redefining comfort by proving that true sleep quality comes from engineered support, not simply how a bed feels.

Sleep is increasingly recognised as one of the most powerful drivers of human health. From cognitive performance and emotional wellbeing to immune strength and physical recovery, the quality of our sleep influences almost every aspect of daily life. Yet despite this growing awareness, the way most people choose a mattress has remained surprisingly outdated.

For decades, mattress shopping has followed a familiar ritual: walk into a store, lie down for a few minutes, and decide whether the bed feels **firm, medium or plush**. It sounds logical and practical. But sleep science suggests this approach may be one of the least reliable ways to choose a mattress.

The reason is simple. Feel is experienced instantly. Support is experienced over eight hours.

What you notice when you first lie down is the surface feel *ie.* **firm, medium or plush**, usually created by foam layers or comfort padding. But what determines whether your body remains properly aligned throughout the night is the **support system** beneath the surface. That internal structure carries the weight of the body, maintains spinal alignment and helps prevent pressure build-up that can lead to restless sleep, stiffness or fatigue in the morning.

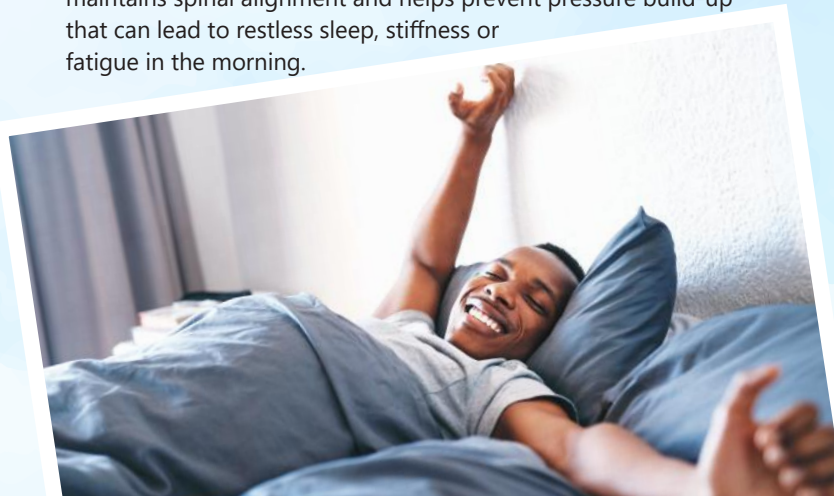
Understanding the difference between **feel and support** is beginning to change how the world thinks about sleep.

In South Africa, the **Kiran Sales Group**, trading as **Lylax Bedding** and **Serta South Africa**, is helping lead that shift. With more than 40 years of mattress manufacturing experience, the company produces internationally recognised bedding brands while developing its own innovations in sleep technology.

At the centre of this innovation is a patented spring system known as **Best of Both™**.

Developed by Lylax engineers, Best of Both™ combines two globally proven technologies, Miracoil continuous support springs and responsive mini pocket springs, into a single engineered structure. The Miracoil system provides consistent, continuous support across the mattress, while pocket springs respond individually to the body's contours, helping relieve pressure while maintaining stability.

The result is a mattress designed not around how it feels for a few minutes in a showroom, but how it supports the body throughout an entire sleep cycle.





Serta Perfect Sleeper



Serta Classic by Serta



Wellness Collection



Maxipedic



Perfect Sleeper Hospitality



Perfect Sleeper Hybrid -
Best of Both Technology

This approach reflects a broader shift in mattress design philosophy. Technologies such as Miracoil, pocket coil systems and advanced engineered spring platforms all play a role in delivering proper spinal support. Even entry-level spring systems, when well designed, can provide meaningful support for restorative sleep.

What matters most is not simply how a mattress feels, but how well it supports the body over time.

This understanding is also changing how mattresses are bought. Spending a few minutes on a showroom floor cannot accurately predict how a bed will perform over eight hours of sleep. Instead, many consumers are now focusing on the engineering inside the mattress, often purchasing through carefully curated online platforms where education and technology guide the decision.

Reflecting this confidence, the flagship **Best of Both™** mattress is offered in a simplified format: one engineered specification, one feel, and one price. It is available exclusively online through three approved distributor, **Dream Republic, ZeNnZzz's and Bed Studio**, removing the confusion of comparing dozens of models in a traditional retail environment.

The **Kiran Sales Group** also manufactures **Serta**, one of the world's most recognised bedding brands and a long-standing partner of the National Sleep Foundation in the United States. In South Africa, its products are endorsed by the Chiropractic Association of South Africa, reinforcing the importance of proper spinal support for healthy sleep.

The message behind this new generation of sleep technology is simple. The next time you shop for a mattress, **don't** start with the question: Is it **firm, medium or plush?**

Start with the question that truly matters: How well will this mattress support my body for the next eight hours?

***Because when support is engineered correctly, your body adapts to the feel.
But when support is wrong, no feel can fix it.***

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SAVING WILLOW

Words: Dave Charles

THEY SAY THAT NOTHING HAPPENS by chance and if ever I wanted reassurance that the Universe is unfolding as it should, the unexpected gift that we received in the dying embers of last year gave me exactly that.

I will admit that I have been overly concerned with the reality of getting older lately and have become a bit of a recluse as a result. Life has carried on at its petty pace from day to day as the bard put it, without much happening to jolt me from my reverie. I needed a bit of a shock to the system – a reason to recalibrate and appreciate the scent of the roses so to speak.

And it came in the most unexpected way.

On Saturday the 6th of December, as Sue and I were driving up Ballito Drive towards the Ballito CBD, we passed an alarming sight. A rather tough looking young fellow was pushing a trolley down the road heading towards the sea and piled one on top of the other in the small wire container was a collection of puppies. Even from the fleeting glimpse that I caught of them as we drove past, it was obvious that they were in distress. It was a very hot day and they were baking.

It took a few seconds to process what we had just seen and almost instinctively I put out a distress call on the Ballito Neighbourhood Watch group requesting some intervention as I couldn't bear the thought of what these puppies must be going through. Almost instantly several private security companies responded and within minutes two patrol vehicles had intercepted the puppy trafficker in a side street. He told them that the puppies were sick and that he was taking them to the sea to wash them.

It was at this point that Sue and I arrived on the scene and one look at the severely distressed puppies convinced me that they needed urgent care. The response from our community to our call for assistance was immediate and extraordinary. The combined effort saw the rescued pups placed in a place of safety and we all hoped for the best for them.

And there we left the matter – or so I thought. Sue, however had other ideas. While she was working to save them, one of the little puppies had looked at her with such longing in its eyes that she couldn't shake the image. We had a duty, she said, to give at least that little life a chance.

I was resolute. After all, for the past quarter of a century we have been a

German Shepherd dog family. Now THOSE are real dogs, and I didn't think that I could ever be persuaded to adopt a rescue dog of dubious lineage.

But two weeks later, we were on our way to Paw Prints in Assagay to collect our new ward.

The last time I had seen her she was a tiny puppy in very poor condition with what looked like a cigarette burn on her little head. It's amazing what a difference two weeks of care, medication and good food can make. The transformation was heart-warming. She was bright and alert with little tail wagging and coat beginning to shine. She leapt into my arms, gave my face a lick and suddenly I was crying.

I have become more emotional as I have grown older and am easily moved by glimpses of the beauty of the Universe. This was one such moment – a moment of pure joy.

This tiny little puppy has the heart of a lion and a personality that is irresistible. She is just so happy, and her boundless energy is infectious.

We named her Willow.

Some say that Dogs live almost entirely in the present moment and that their love is immediate and real because it is not distracted by past regrets or future fears.

I have plenty of past regrets and am sometimes afraid of what lies ahead, but I think that the Universe has sent us a reminder that joy can be found in the smallest moments.

We didn't save Willow. I think that she has come to save me.

With special thanks to Lindy Elmes Wildlife Rescue, Dr Malcolm de Budre, Paw Prints Rescue and Rehoming, Ballito Neighbourhood Watch and everyone else who played a part in the rescue of these puppies.



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