

Designed to inspire

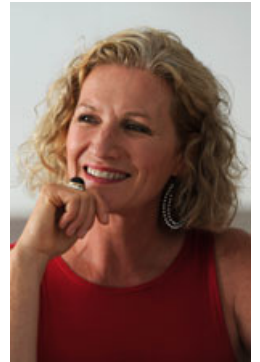
By [Our Reporter](#)

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It seems fitting that the advertising industry will be gathering in Cape Town once again, the city dubbed the World Design Capital 2014, for its celebration of creativity in the guise of the Loerie Awards next week.

But holding the title of World Design Capital carries far more weight than just focusing on aesthetic creativity. Cape Town's bid did not revolve around the city claiming to be an already established 'design capital', rather it was a statement of acknowledgement that design thinking could be used as a tool for transformation.

The World Design Capital merit is awarded to cities that recognise design as a tool for social, cultural and economic development. "We are looking at design as problem solver and how it improves lives within our uniquely South African and African context," says Alayne Reesberg, CEO: World Design Capital Cape Town 2014. "Our biggest role is convening people from multiple diverse silos to come up with solutions," she adds.



She goes on to point out that South Africa already has a rich heritage of innovative design - the Kreepy Krauly pool cleaner, Pratley's Putty, the CAT scan, the world's leading coal-to-oil refinery and the heart transplant are just a few of the inventions that have put the country on the world stage.

Over the past nine months, Cape Town has been the backdrop for a mosaic of events and projects with more to come until the end of the year, mostly designed to foment social change. These are as varied as looking at improving transport models, harnessing indigenous knowledge for better urban development and food security.

On the more interactive side, conferences, public arts festivals and street performances are also a feature throughout the year. All of which have drawn considerable interest, collaboration and investment from leading design countries such as The Netherlands, Italy and Great Britain, according to Reesberg.

So how does a gala of high-end creativity like the Loeries fit in?

In fact, the awards dovetail perfectly with what the World Design Capital concept tries to achieve. "Something like the Loeries and its focus on communication design creates the magnetic north. It's the sophisticated events which create the platform to pull all the other activities through," she explains.

Far from just being a glitzy party for agencies to celebrate their success, the Loeries added other dimensions with a focus on education and sharing knowledge a few years ago, which is very much in line with the principles of World Design Capital.



The introduction of Creative Week - with the inclusion of a student exhibition and the Creative Seminar comprising a draw card of global leaders in brand communication - has laid the groundwork for a legacy project with a healthy fringe component made up of a number of local events, explains Andrew Human, The Loerie Awards CEO.

"We've also established the Future Creative Scholarship, where we go out to high schools across the country, build awareness and seek out the kind of talent that would benefit from our support," he says.

The scholarship covers just about everything - fees, study materials, accommodation and living

expenses. It also offers mentorship, internship and employment in the communications industry. Through this process, learners who would otherwise be unaware of the opportunities available are brought into the creative industry.

"Our role in this project is to show that creativity adds intellectual and economic value to the country," says Human.

In addition to the scholarship, the Loeries also supports and promotes emerging talent on the verge of entering the industry through The Loeries Exhibition, where students have the opportunity to showcase their work, while the Young Creatives award recognises the work of people just starting off in their careers.

A design within a design

The structure of Creative Week and the ceremony itself also have a design element in the way they have been carefully crafted to create an environment in which delegates can network and exchange ideas.

"Cape Town is vast and disparate, so we've tried to create a village within a city. In the week preceding the awards, we have concentrated hubs of activity which move from node to node so that agencies can plan their agendas and gain maximum benefit from the Loeries," says Human.

The first few days are centred on Cape Town's City Hall where the judging, expo and the DStv Creative Seminar will take place. "Then we move on to the actual awards ceremonies on Saturday and Sunday evening which happen at the Cape Town International Convention Centre and the after-parties in a concentrated area in Long Street and a venue at the Waterfront respectively," says Human.

The countdown has begun, so hold on tight Cape Town as the Loeries has grand designs for the city.

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