

Design students imagine the future at Decorex shows

Although the future cannot be predicted, designers are challenged to create products for an uncertain, unpredictable world. An exciting new Decorex project, the 'Sanlam Young South Africa Thinking Ahead', challenges young design students to imagine the future and create futuristic furniture for the home of tomorrow.

Sanlam Young South Africa Thinking Ahead will launch at Decorex KZN in March with students from the Durban Institute of Technology's Design School taking part in the project. Students from design schools in the Western Cape will take part in Decorex Cape (29 April - 2 May 2005). Gauteng students will get their chance later in the year at Decorex Jhb in August 2005.

According to Melanie Froneman, director of Decorex SA, the project is about experience and exposure. "It gives students a playing field for thinking outside the usual norms for materials and design, with room to experiment freely. The future designers also get the golden opportunity to show their talents to Decorex visitors and interact with the trade - perhaps securing their future as a designer."

"This is about lateral thinking," says Nicholas de Klerk, leading exhibition designer. "Why should a coffee table have four legs, simply because the past says so? To be timeless, the designs must be economical, money wise and space wise, and integrate practical solutions with aesthetics."

Recycled materials, compact living restraints, energy saving design, and combining functionality with aesthetics, are important elements to be incorporated in the design of the next generation of home comforts, ranging from shelving, a home office workstation, chairs and coffee tables to curtaining and light. Another sponsor, Belgotex Carpets, challenges designers to take carpets off the floor and integrate it with furniture.

The future furniture will be incorporated in the Sanlam Room, one of the real life room settings on view at all three Decorex shows. The Sanlam Young South Africa Thinking Ahead Award will be awarded at all Decorex shows, each with R5000 prize money.

For enquiries on the Sanlam Young South Africa Thinking Ahead project contact Tracy Watcham, Decorex Special Projects at Tel: +27 +11 549 8300 or email: .

Designing the future will also come under the spotlight at Decorex Talk Show, a series of high-level interactive talks by leading industry personalities at Decorex KZN, 18 - 21 March 2005, at the International Convention Centre, Durban.