



LUXURIOUS DESIGNS IN THE HOME & BEYOND

How the Trend for Handcraft Supports Artisanal Design

Interior design trends are an excellent barometer for what's happening in the world on a larger scale – a litmus test of sorts that tells us what the mood of the moment is, what's driving homeowners and how that translates into what they choose to surround themselves with in their personal spaces.

Annually, Decorex Africa consolidates new and current designs from around the country for its various shows – in Durban, Johannesburg and Cape Town – in order to present design-lovers with a snapshot of what's desirable and available on the interior's scene.

It's no secret that trends ebb and flow each year, and what might be hot property one season can easily be relegated to the passé pile the next. However, some

trends show surprising staying power – testament to how powerfully they resonate with their audience.

HANDCRAFTED DESIGN RULES

One such trend is the resurgence of handcrafted design – a theme we've seen consistently over the past few seasons. Creative Director of Decorex Africa, Anita Bloom shares her take on why this trend is so persistent and how we can see it in action this year: 'With the rapid acceleration of technology, we are all re-discovering

the value of handmade – from traditional woodworking methods, to weaving and ceramics – in reaction to this,' says Bloom.

'Handmade matters – it embraces our humanness and gives that a voice.' Accordingly, design that represents the considered and crafted, rather than the mass-produced, appeals to us precisely for its sense of nostalgia and its ability to ground us. From organically shaped ceramics to traditionally woven rugs and original artworks, pieces that are unique and handmade are more sought after than ever.



It's also about owning something that's one of a kind - rather than one of millions - that makes handcrafted design so appealing. Its luxury lies in its rarity and uniqueness. 'Handcrafted products are often of a higher quality and have more attention to detail. They also serve as conversation pieces by virtue of having a story of how they came to be,' adds Bloom.

AFRICA'S HANDCRAFTED FUTURE

So what should we be looking out for now? Bloom sees four areas as hot trends in handcrafted design. The first is green living - tying into the move towards sustainability, we will see an increase in the use of recycled or reused materials, and high-quality natural textures to create quality pieces that last. 'As people increasingly live more mindfully, they recognize and celebrate things that are created in a more conscious fashion,' she says.

Bloom also believes textiles will be huge in 2020. 'Large-scale wall art including weavings and tapestries as well as oversized panels and canvases will be on trend. This is a spin-off of the micro-trend for softness and cosiness and the

desire to have an interior that feels warm and welcoming,' she explains.

Additionally, she's pinpointed minimalism as an area to watch. 'Minimalism never goes out of fashion due to its ability to bring light and breathability to spaces. But for 2020 we'll see it manifesting in handcraft via humanized minimalism - which is characterised as being less "cold",' says Bloom. Expect to see this translated via products that combine the simplicity of both Nordic and Japanese philosophies.

Lastly, she's flagged warm colours as an area that will gain momentum. From neutrals like off-whites, champagne and beige, to calm natural tones like sage green and indigo; and desaturated tones such as mustard and burnt orange; the trend will be for a palette that feels nurturing.

A conscious drive for the celebration and support of local industry goes hand in hand with the return to popularity of handcrafted design. Bloom agrees: 'Supporting local and small businesses is something we're increasingly striving for, and we have placed a large emphasis on this by creating the Artisanal Design sector at Decorex Africa - giving local artisans a platform to showcase their work,' she adds. 

