

Rich Mnisi makes his furniture design debut at Southern Guild gallery

Young fashion designer Rich Mnisi has ventured into furniture design, debuting specially commissioned pieces at Southern Guild's Extra Ordinary group exhibition at its gallery in Cape Town's Silo District.



Mnisi's furniture debut, consisting of a chaise and a stool, follows his latest fashion collection – titled Nwa-Mulamula, after his late great-grandmother – which showcased in Lagos last October. The extended collection stands as a "physical representation of Nwa-Mulamula as the ever-present guardian, whose teachings live on through storytelling generation after generation".

"For me, the chaise, which takes the shape of Nwa-Mulamula's (The Guardian) body in the form of a navy leather couch, represents her presence and long-lasting teachings, and the stool, in the shape of an eye with gold puddles, represents her tears, which were never in vain. Without her pain and her experiences I wouldn't exist. I couldn't be the person I am today," explains Mnisi.

The commissioned items will form part of a group show of multidisciplinary artists, all in celebration of Southern Guild's decade-long journey in collectable design in South Africa, and includes ceramic artists Zizipho Poswa and Madoda Fani, sculptors Daniella Mooney and Stanislaw Trzebinski, and newcomers such as 3D illustrator

Ferdi B. Dick.

"The whole concept was to encourage the designers to work outside their comfort zone, providing mentorship and guidance along the way. They're accomplished designers already – so we wanted them to think differently about themselves and their work," says Julian McGowan, co-founder of The Guild Group.



Mnisi's work in progress.

The result for each designer is a piece that springboards a new body of work.

"I'm very excited about the exhibition, and the opportunity to have had this platform which enabled me to be free, and

expand my vision into a whole new and different reality,” concludes Mnisi.

The exhibition will run until 16 April 2018 after which some of the pieces will travel to be showcased internationally.

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