

# A new way of retail with Now Showing

 By [Ruth Cooper](#)

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Now Showing is a constantly evolving boutique store, gallery and events space that recently opened its doors at 109 Waterkant Street in Cape Town. Brought to you by the cool cats from popular design store [The Space](#), Now Showing is the first Cape Town out-of-mall shop from this Durban born brand and promises to give shoppers a unique and innovative consumer experience.

Now Showing is split into two definitive spaces – downstairs offers a starkly white and mirror adorned labyrinth-like space showcasing fashion from top local designers such as Colleen Eitzen, Amanda Laird-Cherry and Leigh Schubert, while upstairs offers an ever-evolving and meticulously curated and crafted boutique store.



Currently showing is The Dark Side which runs until 28 October. Offering gifts, oddities, décor and art for those with a wonderfully wicked outlook on life and dark sense of humour, Now Showing fills a gap in an otherwise predominantly generic shopping sphere. Think charcoal water, inky black pasta, macabre jewellery, darkly cute art, erotic leather paddles and taxidermy.



Image by Tony Christie

We got in touch with founder and retail entrepreneur Neil Roake to find out more for #InnovationMonth.

■ ***What was the inspiration behind launching an everchanging retail space?***

Recently, a new mall opened in Ballito and if you had to walk through the mall you could be anywhere in South Africa - all the same shops with the same shopfronts are just stepped and repeated, and everything is very “vanilla”. Boring. The Space brand is now 20 years old and we wanted to try something out-of-mall that had some energy and split the home wear and gifting into a new genre of shopping – a sensorama – smell and touch are key factors.



Neil Roake - Image by Elsa Young



Image by Tony Christie

■ ***The shop seems to straddle the lines between retail, art and events how do you balance these elements?***

We are not in a mall so we need to attract attention. Our opening party drew 160 crazy folks and loads of wine was consumed. Now we offer weekly wine tastings in an informal way and introduce new customers to our store. It's in essence very personal shopping.

■ ***Can you share some of the upcoming themes?***

We currently are in The Dark Side, with all things that go bump in the night and then we're opening The Light Side on Thursday, 2 November. From 1 February 2018, the multi-talented Egg Design team will refit the upstairs into Apartment Waterkant showcasing their new furniture collections fresh from Maison Objet in Paris – it will be a complete apartment including kitchen, bedroom, bathroom and lounge. In May 2018, we go Afro Addict and take a spin across the African continent.



The Space launches Now Showing, its first out-of-mall boutique store

5 Sep 2017



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■ ***How do you select your designers, artists and suppliers?***

They are curated for the themes, so I am constantly looking around, keeping one eye open for exciting talent.

■ ***Can you explain why there is a division between the lower and upper floors? Will the lower floor also be ever changing?***

The ground floor houses the collections of founder designers Colleen Eitzen and Amanda Laird Cherry, as well as stalwart Leigh Schubert. These include their premium collections and highlights the talent of these homegrown designers. As the themes changes, so will new inputs arriving as the fashion seasons change.



Image by Simon Deiner

■ **What has the response been like since the launch?**

Fantastic... I can sense that when people arrive they are touched by just a little magic dust. If I can have people just feel a little and love a little longer, I will be very happy.

■ **What would you like to see change in the local retail space?**

Retail in SA is dominated by large groups who simply roll out stores by the dozens. I would like to see some curated content, unique touch points and immersive experience... Keywords that are very overused but need to now be taken seriously.



Image by Tony Christie

■ **Do you plan to launch more concept stores like this?**

Nope... we want this to be a unique experience. Maybe something else, but firstly The Space launches its online

offering on 1 November 2018. That is keeping us busy.

## Dates to diarise:

- *The Dark Side*: Until 28 October 2017
- *The Light Side*: 2 November 2017 – 27 January 2018
- Apartment Waterkant featuring Egg Design: 1 February – 31 March 2018
- Lammershoek wine tastings: 21, 28 September and 5, 12, 19 and 26 October

For more information, visit [thespace.co.za](https://thespace.co.za) or follow Now Showing on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).

## ABOUT RUTH COOPER

Ruth is the production manager at Bizcommunity. [ruth@bizcommunity.com](mailto:ruth@bizcommunity.com)

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