

# The custom craftsmanship behind winning SA furniture design

As recipients of Best Furniture Design at the recent 2018 100% Design South Africa, held alongside Decorex in Joburg, Cape Town-based design duo Kino made an impression on the public and its peers with strikingly minimal pieces.



Having launched Kino at the show last year as part of the 100% Talent feature, Nico Hendriksz and Anton Louw walked away with 'Best of 100% Talent', propelling them into a year of positive forward momentum.

Their most recent accolade is proof of the exponential growth they've experienced over the last year as a result of being exposed to the industry as a result of the show's platform. "Getting a stamp of approval from design professionals and the media is incredibly valuable to us and encourages us to continue what we love doing," comments Hendriksz.

This year's Designing in Wood exhibit at the show, conceptualised and spearheaded by creative director Cathy O'Clery, allowed the pair to create something special. The Heildronk Kas (heildronk means 'to toast something' in Afrikaans) was designed to showcase the creativity and craftsmanship inherent in working with wood as a medium and the beauty of American Walnut and black Ash.



### Modern take on traditional craft

Hendriksz and Louw started their workshop doing odd manufacturing jobs and custom pieces. "It was an important time in our careers in that it allowed us to hone our skills and develop deeper material knowledge," explains Louw. But the projects weren't rewarding enough in terms of the expression and scope they offered. Desiring a project that they could call their own, and that allowed them the room to develop a range of products that expressed their own design identity, they started Kino.



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10 Aug 2018



Balancing considered craftsmanship with contemporary lines, the pieces speak to a modern design lover, who appreciates a pared-back aesthetic but not at the cost of skillful manufacturing. "Our products are not mass-produced in a large factory. Instead, each is made to order by a small team of skilled and passionate craftsmen," notes Nico. This ensures that each item is made with care from start to finish, an approach that adds value to the story of the product.



Combining a traditional furniture-making medium and an up-to-date aesthetic gives the pieces they produce a fresh and current, but timeless feel. "The beauty of working with this wonderful material is that it enables us to communicate a youthful

and contemporary style through a medium that has deep roots in traditional craft," says Louw.

Kino's new Neut collection (neut is the Afrikaans word for 'nut') was inspired by the use of American Walnut and takes this exploration of method and medium still further – it was designed to celebrate the natural beauty of timber. "We kept the design of this range very simple, with considered details that would complement the natural grain in the timber," explains Hendriksz. The first range the duo has designed using wood exclusively, without combining it with other textures or contrasts in colour, Neut celebrates the material in its truest form.

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