

TWO-MINUTE MENTOR

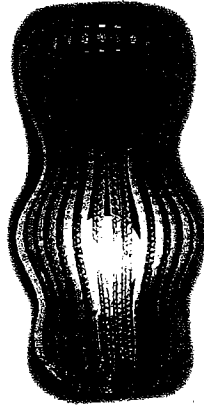


SANDILE KULA is the founder of Beehyv Arts, a Khayelitsha-based design house. He has faced many challenges, but has persevered and succeeded thanks to a steadfast desire to live his dream and some

help from a small consulting firm. **You won numerous awards and bursaries during and after your diploma studies. Why did it take so long to start your own business?**

The exposure was great but fleeting. To make a success of a venture in the creative industry requires a lot of support. I was exposed prematurely to a lot of pressure and expectation, and reflecting on it later in life I learnt the importance of having support, not just exposure. Maturity is also important, as is self-discipline, to manage one's creativity.

How did you get back on track? I dropped out of my BTech year due to financial constraints but revived my education through learnerships with MadeSA and the Cape Craft Design Institute. I later completed my BTech. I showcased my work at a conference at the University of Cape Town Graduate School of



Business, and was lucky enough to catch the eye of the founders of Mithente Research & Consulting Services who decided to support me in developing the business. They provided financial support and mentorship and secured the opportunity to display at the Design Indaba. It shows that every business, even small ones, can help place someone else on their way to new opportunities.

What inspires your creativity? Interacting with nature is what fulfils me. Absorbing the environment on different levels – spiritual, physical, cultural and emotional for example – feeds into the creative work and one can then interpret the world into a product.

How do you contribute to development in your community?

I understand the struggles of poverty and unemployment in my community and really want to use my business as a vehicle for social upliftment. Exploring the talents of people in my local community is important to me and I would like to see Beehyv Arts develop into a true beehive of creative activity that helps sustain and elevate people, helping to preserve heritage whilst curbing social ills.