**United by passion**

The over-riding commodity that this eclectic range of designers have that unites them all is passion.

Many people have incredible skills, but passion for their craft is what drives these designers.

So sit back, relax and enjoy the edition of Great Southern Design where local talent is celebrated.

**MAKE USE OF TIME**

ALBANY entrepreneur David Tomic was in the middle of completing a Masters degree and travelling Europe, aspiring to buy a timepiece in every city he visited, when the seeds of WHY Watches was sown.

After buying one watch for around $550, Mr Tomic decided there had to be an easier way.

“I thought to myself, ‘I have an architecture degree, surely I can sell a watch for cheaper’,” he said.

“It took me about 11 months to launch my first line of watches and it was absolutely a fluke.”

Mr Tomic was 21 years old when he first started WHY Watches and went through 10 different suppliers in China and Hong Kong before finding the perfect fit.

“They were all bigger suppliers and they would send me samples of the watches I desired right with full and dust under the glass, there were cracks and scratches,” he said.

“They just didn’t care. So I went with a smaller guy and they’ve been great.”

The first collection of watches launched in November 2016 with a series of five different styles.

Mr Tomic sold all of the black watches, now signed back with fluff and dust under the glass, from the first collection.

“My Year 10 woodwork truck had square wheels. A Windows, 95cd, extinct dodo could have done a better job.

So you can envisage how blown away I was with the talents of these designers from throughout the Great Southern.

Myself and the other feature writers also relished the opportunity to watch the design process and see how a plain object of noth-

ingness evolves into a design of beauty.

How a vision, or a thought, is thought through and wound into a physical product that is beautiful, inspiring and evokes a range of emotions.

Make use of time

**Feast of focus**

**Home sweet home**

**Disney on golf**

**Against the grain**

**Time to shine**

**Painting the personal**

**Drawn to create**

**Flawless service**

“I operate on feedback. Some females find the face of the watch a bit too big, so I brought the face down to 40mm.

“If you try to stay away from trends as they’re just too quick. I try to listen to the people and what they want.”

Mr Tomic uses 3D Modelling programs and other software to design each collection of watches.

“The only thing I don’t design is the movement,” he said.

“It’s not possible for me to make my watches affordable and design it.”

Mr Tomic said there were now 12 stores across Australia, China and Czechoslovakia that stock his WHY Watches.

“Singapore is one of my biggest markets next to Australia,” he said.

“At the moment I try to keep it as local as I can and market heavily for Australian consumers.

“I’ve sent watches to Egypt, the US, Canada, Russia, and even North Korea. That was a hard one to post.

“It’s a very scary first step, but take that leap of faith.”

Five per cent of all proceeds from WHY Watches are donated to the Starlight Foundation.

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Grace Jones
NAOMI Ebert is one of the hardest-working artists you will ever meet but she lives by the old adage: find a job you enjoy doing and you will never have to work a day in your life.

Mrs Ebert is self-taught in glass lampworking and glass kilnforming and is the owner/designer of Nazzy Fusion Art Glass that commenced in 2009 and has been expanding ever since. Her main products are art glass homewares, functional art glass pieces and fashion jewellery.

These products are now sold all over the state from Denmark, Bridgetown, Dandaragan, Jurien Bay and Mundaring to name a few, and also direct from her home studio.

There are also online sales through her Nazzy Fusion Art Glass Facebook page and Instagram.

Mrs Ebert said technology has enhanced her business from an advertising perspective. From a small business point of view, we cannot live without social media these days, she expanded.

Mrs Ebert is the proud co-founder of The Artisan and Designer Gift Fair that is usually held at the Albany Town Hall annually, but this year it’s at the Town Library Conference Rooms (while the Town Hall is renovated) from December 5 to 7.

“The biggest thing is curating and showcasing high-quality locally handmade and designed art works. It’s giving you a one-on-one opportunity with local artists that started out like myself; small, as a hobby, with a dream or idea of showcasing that to the local community,” she said.

“I am inspired by the many forms glass can take on in its liquid state. Colour variations, glass reactions, inclusions, current trends, native flora and fauna, the vast landscapes and oceans are the driving force in the trajectory of my art glass pieces.

“Everyday is a learning process with glass, just when you think you’ve got it, it up and breaks on you.

“So there’s always learning curves, but once you know how glass works and moves, you’re only limited to your imagination.”

Mrs Ebert said the Albany community supports handmade artists and designers.

“We have a large art presence. Allowing small studios to open over the Southern Art Trail has allowed the public to see that there more out there than just the centre of town retail outlets,” she said.

“There are little pots of gold to be seen in the residential areas; us small people are finally being seen.”

Ian Brown

“Design is the silent ambassador of your brand”

Paul Rand

“Design is the silent ambassador of your brand”

Paul Rand
CAPTURING the genuine essence of a moment with a camera is no easy feat.

But after spending no more than an hour with Albany photographer Jenny Feast, I’m convinced she’s got the technique perfected.

Just listening to her talk passionately about getting every shot as perfect as can be, and hearing about her incredible photographic experiences, I already want to book her for my wedding.

Ms Feast has always had a love for photography.

She describes her introduction to the professional photography industry as a “pretty silly story” but it is a story you probably won’t hear that often from shutterbugs.

Ms Feast worked for the Bureau of Meteorology for many years and in that role, worked as the Officer-in-Charge of the Meteorological Program in Antarctica.

For those who aren’t quite familiar with Antarctic travel, it only happens in a short window of time each year, due to expense and weather conditions.

For Ms Feast, the meant 14 consecutive months on Antarctica, all day, every day, with no trips back to Australia.

“So you go down there with everything to fill your time,” she said.

“Because there’s no popping to the shops if you want something or forgot something.

“I saw the most beautiful auroras, penguins, and just be feeling like the tiniest speck of a human.

“You’re feeling very insignificant, but it was phenomenal.”

In Antarctica, Ms Feast captured an array of auroras, icebergs, “You're feeling very insignifi cant, but it was phenomenal.”

“Two months prior, I get in touch with the couple to view my photos, so I sent in a selection.

“The next thing I know, HarperCollins hits me up for a book cover and I got asked to shoot a wedding and it kind of went from there.”

Ms Feast is now no stranger to the versatility needed to do more than one type of photography.

“Two months prior, I get in touch with the couple to view my photos, so I sent in a selection.

“With wedding and event photography, you’re getting to know people and travel the country-

“Then there’s event photography, where you’re working on the fl y, you’ve got to know your gear and it’s all very different.”

with landscape, working commercially and event photography.

“She now does landscape, wedding, maternity, commercial and event photography.

“With landscape, you’ve got time to set up and get the shot you’ve been planning.

“Then with weddings, you’re getting to know people and travel the country-

“You can’t stop them altogether – don’t even try to get between this woman and her

“She and fiancé Pete recently welcomed little William into the world, and she wants to spend time with him and travel the country-

“Two months prior, I get in touch with the couple to view my photos, so I sent in a selection.

“With landscape, you’ve got time to set up and get the shot you’ve been planning.

“No easy feat.

“Then there’s event photography, where you’re working on the fl y, you’ve got to know your gear really well and be really quick with settings, and anticipate what people are going to do so you can be in the right place to get the right photo – the photo that’s going to tell the story the event is tell-

“For landscape, you’re getting to know people and travel the country-

“She now does landscape, wedding, maternity, commercial and event photography.

“We’re away from the station, watching auroras fl  icker above

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first Shire-approved Earthbag dome home ever history; their home is widely considered the very along the way. necessary permits and working with a slew of volunteers constructing the strange building with their own boulders thousands of kilometres away in Cappadocia, Turkey. For Kate and Scott Ryan-Taylor, it’s simply home. The couple spent four long years designing and For some, the unusual building calls to mind the
for two years to attain the neces- sary permits and working with a slew of volunteers along the way. It’s not dramatic to say their efforts have made history. Their home is widely considered the very first Shire-approved Earthbag dome home ever built in Australia. “For us it had two different appetites: cost and en-
vironmental,” Mrs Ryan-Taylor said. “The overall price came to $41,600 which in- cludes the construction, permits, rain tanks and other elements. “Most of the cost is actually the tradepersons and then your foundations and the rest are actually quite cheap. “The bags themselves were only about $1200 and then we had about 5km of barbed wire which goes between all the bags.” The easiest way to describe the more than 4000 Earthbags that make up the walls of the overlapping five domes is as rammed earth insi- de a bag. Each one weighs between 120kg and 130kg when filled and contains around 30 per cent clay. 10 per cent moisture and a mixture of sand and aggregate, including some recycled from local goat and alpaca farms. Standing at 6-3m in the central and highest dome, the finished 88sqm product was show- case at an Open Day on November 3 and is a sight to behold. and volunteers and the plan is to expand it with a grouping of interconnected, cream-coloured domes reach for the sky. sary permits and working with a slew of volunteers along the way. It’s not dramatic to say their efforts have made history. Their home is widely considered the very first Shire-approved Earthbag dome home ever built in Australia. “For us it had two different appetites: cost and en-
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FOR Albany brothers Darrel and Len Radcliffe, nothing gets the senses buzzing as much as a fly with his chainsaws. "I don't cope with Len's precision, it does my head in. I appreciate it but I just haven't got the patience to do it," he laughed.

"Mine is just a bit more artistic and quirky, maybe," said Len. "I am a mechanic by trade, I like anything with lots of moving parts and mechanical concepts really intrigue me. The first thing I made was a steam engine that actually operated on compressed air."

Utilising his own detailed designs, the 67-year-old can create dozens of shapes and patterns and colours, what combinations of each may be popular, and how many you should make of each piece. This is a regular occurrence in Albany jeweller Mark Blyth’s workshop. 

"I can't cope with Len's precision, it does my head in. I appreciate it but I just haven't got the patience to do it," he said.

IF YOU have ever purchased jewellery for someone or yourself, you would be familiar with the difficulty of choosing the right thing. "There's design after design after design...it can be overwhelming."

And you’re only doing the choosing. Imagine being the one who has to design and create all of those pieces – trying to decide on shapes and patterns and colours, what combinations of each may be popular, and how many you should make of each piece.

For Albany brothers Darrel and Len Radcliffe, nothing gets the senses buzzing as much as a fly with his chainsaws.

Patience to do it." Len explained. "I did a bit of work placement with jewellery and I liked it, so I did a TAFE course and an apprenticeship and worked around the state."

"I was in Year 9 and had no idea what I wanted to do, so I got a list of jobs thrown in front of me that I could potentially follow," he laughed. "I did a bit of work placement with jewellery and I liked it, so I did a TAFE course and an apprenticeship and worked around the state."

"It was pretty cool working closely with Kununurra's pink argyle diamonds and noticing a recent trend in increased interest in them, with the closure of the argyle mine approaching."

Despite living up north, he and wife Tamara decided to settle in Albany.

In 2006, they opened the doors to Mark Blyth Fine Jewellery. "One thing Mr Blyth knew was that he always wanted to work as both a creative manufacturer and salesperson, continuing to practice his design skills and being directly involved with customers."

"When you're just a manufacturer, you get tired what to make, which can be a bit cookie cutter," he said. "But with my design background, it makes it more aesthetically pleasing."

"Mr Blyth has found a lot of his Albany work based around family jewellery, meaning he frequently works with precious stones and jewellery that have been in families for generations. He said it’s an honour to be trusted with people’s treasured pieces."

"We get some engagement rings that are 100 years old," Mr Blyth said. "The client won’t want it melted down, so we will reproduce watches that have worn away."

"That’s what I enjoy — being able to create something that someone is going to wear and enjoy."
GROWING up in a male-dominated household, Mount Barker man Barry Mackie saw a career in arts as the stuff of unrealistic dreams.

He remembers art was always of interest to him and he always had stuff to draw with as a child, but his father had worked on the railways for five decades and lived on a farm — in the eyes, an arts degree was certainly not a viable career.

So off Mr Mackie went, working his way into the accounting world.

But this endeavor was short-lived when he decided that was the last thing he wanted to do.

"I went on to do other things," he said, reflecting on his time in the not-for-profit sector.

"I was working with Green Australia, spending time in rural South Australia, particularly with the folk from the Aboriginal Lands Trust and I was seeing, places lots of people don't get to see.

"I thought, 'gosh, I'd love to reproduce some of this in a creative way.'"

And so, his inevitable return to his artistic roots came to fruition.

"What capped it off was when I saw an exhibiton at the National Gallery of Victoria that featured Frederick McCubbin, Tom Roberts, Sir Arthur Streeton … it was just mesmerising," he said.

"Three or four weeks later, I was enrolled at Adelaide Central Arts School."

Mr Mackie's work in the beginning was based around plein air landscapes, still life and portraits.

But now, having painted for near on three decades, he is tiring of the style.

He said he finds himself pushing his work more and more into abstraction.

"I can understand how people replicate a landscape — no doubt some of it is absolutely visually delightful — but I wonder just how creative that is… what are you actually expressing?" he said.

"So I started to get really interested in the evolution of what I'm thinking about in my head to what ends up on the canvas.

"Now, I think I have much more of an appreciation of that process: how you evolve some vague thought and transfer it to a canvas and feel as if you've created something.

"Because it's very personal."

But not everything translates from his 'whim-erVK' (short for canvas as planned).

"Every year, I burn 30 or 40 paintings. It's a very Zen thing," Mr Mackie said.

"If I'm not happy with it, I put it aside for a while, but if I'm still not happy with it, I have to get it out of my head."

"I have a ritual burning and then they're gone, finished."

Abstract art is what you make of it.

Appreciation of it can come in two ways — a 'shallow' reading of what shapes and imagery the colours form, and a 'deeper' reading, which differs from person to person.

Mr Mackie does not mind if people "read" his painting in different ways, as he has decided that the only person he ever wants to please is himself.

Although it can be more draining than his plein air or portrait work, Mr Mackie looks forward to the challenge of creating abstract art and wants to push himself even further past the artistic boundaries.

"I'd hate to be thought of as a landscape painter or a portrait painter … I just want to paint," he said.

"I want to express myself more than just create replicas."
Great Southern Design 2019

DRAWN TO CREATE

PTX Architects has a mantra that public space isn’t static, but has to be designed to not only meet the community needs now but also into the future, as local needs shift and change.

Design Director Meeske Hoessle said the company approaches every public space project with a view to creating shared areas that can evolve as the community does.

“Community is vital... and architecture is one of its foundation blocks,” she said.

“Our shared public spaces and amenities are where our sense of community is forged, so it’s vital that any community project takes part in a makes a positive contribution to that shared sense of belonging.”

PTX Architects was co-founded by Ms Hoessle and Principal Architect David Gibson in 2005. The duo first met five years earlier and worked together in award-winning architectural practices in London, Germany, Melbourne and Perth.

In 2008 they relocated their practice to Denmark where they have formed a philosophy of reverence for place, coupled with the importance of discovering harmonies between client needs and the area they live in.

Mr Gibson said their projects were defined by a sculptural quality that draws heavily on the features of the Great Southern landscape for inspiration.

He said after more than a decade of working in regional areas, the company has developed an extensive understanding of cost and construction within a rural setting, specialising in sustainable development and designing for bushfire-prone areas.

PTX Architects will continue to be driven by passion for its industry and the fundamental effect it has on people’s lives.

Ms Hoessle said her inspiration was to create possibilities for deeper connections with the natural world, and better connections with the community.

Ian Beeck

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CIPRIAN Showcase Jewellers Kit Davies designs unique and stunning handmade jewellery and stocks leading international designer brands but realises in fact that their main product is customer service.

“We try to help in anyway possible,” he said.

“Fine jewellery is our mainstay. Everything diamonds, engagement rings, dress rings, earrings, pendants and chains. We are your diamond destination.

“We also love our handmade products that we make right here in store but we also sell fabulous designer brands like Swarovski, Thomas Sabo and watches from leading brands like Seiko, Citizen and Jacob’s.

“Remodelling and redesigning existing jewellery is a big part of our business.

“But our main product would have to be our customer service.”

Mr Davies is the head jeweller and works with an apprentices and eight staff. The majority of whom have been working at Ciprians for more than 10 years.

Ciprians has been an iconic Albany store, opening in 1949 and now celebrating 70 years, an accidently so in every right, especially in this tight fiscal environment coupled with online sales and competition.

But Mr Davies is confident going forward, saying, “competing with online sales... this is an issue but also not”.

“Jewellery is a ‘get what you pay for’ item,” he expanded.

“I’ve seen many items come through for repair or valuation that have been fake, poorly made to save costs or have extremely low quality diamonds that aren’t what the customer paid for.

“We can sell the lower priced diamonds and do stock them next to the higher quality stones. In the end it’s all down to customer choice. We can compete with the online sales and our clients can be assured they are getting exactly what they are paying for.”

Mr Davies explained Ciprian’s sustainability efforts, saying they try to source Australian-mined gold and stones so as he believes the nation has some of the best environmental controls in the world.

He said people were receptive to quality products from boutique producers and are happy to pay premium prices.

“Most are happy to pay a little extra for an item that will last,” Mr Davies said.

“In saying that we are very competitive to other chains and I personally source each individual diamond or stone to suit our clients budgets and tastes. Everyone wins.”

Ian Beeck
HOT STONE MASSAGE

Our cosy Mount Barker Hair and Beauty boutique has a new niche for relaxing your tired muscles with hot stone massage therapy.

Our therapists use many different types of movements like long strokes, tapping, circular motions, kneading and more to give you hours of utmost comfort and relaxation.

Hot stone massage has many amazing benefits:

- Pain relief from different types of body pains
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- Relief from several autoimmune disorders such as Fibromyalgia, Rheumatoid Arthritis and more
- Enhanced cardiovascular health
- Stress relief
- Increased joint flexibility
- Enhanced sleep

Want to book a relaxing body massage for you or your loved one? Call 98511234

Booking essential to avoid disappointment - it will be our pleasure to meet you! - www.beyouhairandbeautyboutique.com.au

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