

ALL FIRED UP FOR FASHION

Sanlam SA Fashion Week takes place August 26-30 at the Sandton Convention Centre. For more info, go to sanlamsafashionweek.co.za

TEA ANYONE?: Clementina van der Walt's tea service and (top right) the artist creating the pieces.



By JABULILE NGWENYA

You might not think tea has much to do with fashion, but Five Roses Tea begs to differ. The official hospitality sponsor of SA Sanlam Fashion Week later this month, the company is involved in sponsoring three collections and a student design competition.

At the show it will also unveil two works created by ceramic artists on the theme of the "Everyday Romance of Life". Their brief was to create works both beautiful and useful to bring alive the brand and its commitment to celebrating life.

This year, Five Roses Tea commissioned Majolandile "Andile" Dyalvane and Clementina van der Walt, both based in Cape Town. Dyalvane created a vase, while Van der Walt made a tea set.

Dyalvane, who has been making ceramics for nine years, is originally from Qobo-Qobo in the Eastern Cape and enjoys working with the four elements: earth, water, air and fire.

"I love fashion and everything around it," he says. "I liked the challenge of interpreting the theme in my work. The first thing that appealed to me was the colour red, which I believe is a very powerful, strong and warm colour," he explains of his design.

"Love, romance and beauty inspire me. I wanted to create a work to evoke the spirit of romance, and something that could contain roses, a symbol of romance."

Dyalvane is one of four young talented artists who comprise the Imiso Design Team, located at The Old Biscuit Mill in Cape Town, who work in the fields of ceramics, fashion and textiles.

Imiso, Xhosa for "many tomorrows", specialises in contemporary African-inspired designs and aspires to become an exclusive design house, both locally and internationally.

Clementina van der Walt, originally from Joburg, has 30 years' experience in working with ceramics and has her own studio.

Clementina Ceramics. Her platters, bowls and cups are admired for their seductive, buttery surfaces and the interplay of gloss and matt textures. For her, the commission was "a chance to combine the funky with the nostalgic".

She hand-threw the set on the potter's wheel, where the mugs and saucers fused into one, a reference to the current popular use of mugs for drinking hot beverages.

Her tea set has an African flavour; a graphic rose image and a platinum lustre to add a high-tech touch.

"The intention with this tea set, which should be used in a special 'taking time off' ritual, is to recreate an awareness of the act of drinking tea," she says.

"In Japan, the art of drinking tea is a meditative Zen practice. In the traditional English high tea, the ceremony also becomes an important social ritual.

"Because this is so rare these days, this becomes a nostalgic and romantic activity."



SPLASH OF COLOUR: Andile Dyalvane's vase shown from all sides and (below) the artist in the various stages of producing the piece.

