Let's motivate future innovators

By Juanita Pienaar

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This year Open Design Cape Town Festival is hosting a Steam Symposium that will join art and design together with subjects: maths, science and technology to inspire innovation, and will take place at the Cape Town City Hall on Monday, 14 August.



We're celebrating Women's Month and in doing so, I chatted to graphic design lecturer, Jacqueline Beling, who will be one of the speakers at the Steam Symposium about how she feels about the challenges women are facing in the design industry today. She also shares her views on why the integration of creativity and design to the Stem subjects is so important and how the youth can benefit from this symposium.



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Please tell us more about yourself and how you got into design?

I have always been an 'Indigo child' and knew I was destined to be a creative, an innovator, a change maker and that my life's purpose was to question everything. Design has been the only way for me to fulfil this purpose.

Why is the integration of creativity and the vision of art and design thinking to the traditional Stem subjects so important?

This integration contributes to a learner's development in critical thinking and problem-solving skills, cultivates a learner's ability to empathise and innovate. Developing a more holistic learner will culminate in an instinctive ability to be more flexible and adaptable through the learning process.



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In light of Women's Month, how do you think women are excelling in the design industry? And what are the challenges (if any) that women are faced with today?

I don't necessarily think that the challenges that women face are specific to our industry alone. I think that the heteronormative view of men and women is definitely a work in progress.

In your role as educator, how do think South African youth, in particular, can benefit from the Steam Symposium?

It is important for young South Africans to be a part of a community who want to see change in a system that directly influences their future. South Africans in general need to be enthused in the potential of our country, to motivate future innovators who are not self-entitled but rather self-driven.



Practice creativity with confidence

Juanita Pienaar 7 Aug 2017

What is your vision for the future of Steam education?

To be inclusive of all learners regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic or political backgrounds.

What inspires you?

I am inspired by passionate idealists who are able to realise their objectives. The kind of people who aren't afraid to share their failures, the raw organic processes that evolve into a refined innovative creation.

ABOUT JUANITA PIENAAR

Juanita is the editor of the marketing & media portal on the Bizcommunity website. She is also a contributing writer.

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