

Joint Press Release 18 September 2011 by Willowlamp & Source Interior Brand Architects (IBA)

Local designers take a stand against plagiarism

If a stand is not taken against copying the ideas and designs of others, it will undermine and affect the livelihood of all creative people.

Cape Town based interior design studio Source Interior Brand Architects (Source IBA) and Johannesburg based lighting brand Willowlamp have turned adversity into a united statement on protecting original design from plagiarism.

What started as a dispute over the similarities between a distinctive Willowlamp chandelier, The Faraway Tree, and a business pod design for the award winning 15 on Orange hotel in Cape Town by Source IBA has led to a mutually beneficial collaboration.

“I first noticed similarities between the business pod and one of our original chandeliers (The Faraway Tree) in a television insert on the hotel,” explains Adam Hoets, owner of Willowlamp. Founded in 2005, Willowlamp is a prestigious South African lighting brand that designs and manufactures locally and exports across the globe.

Hoets then approached Jeremy Stewart, MD of Source IBA. Says Stewart: “Source IBA prides itself on being an active participant in establishing original South African design as internationally competitive.” Stewart continues by explaining that their regard for the success of Willowlamp’s distinctive work made the allegations even more unfortunate.

In a twist of fate the ensuing exploration revealed similarities of another kind – a shared vision for local design, the protection of local creative skills and the possibility of working together.

This shared vision led to the studios collaborating on another installation for the same hotel – a custom-designed three-storey chandelier in the core of the entrance staircase.



Willowlamp’s award-winning Faraway Tree



Source IBA’s Business Pod installation at 15 on Orange, Hotel, Cape Town

“What started as creative differences has led to an installation that benefits both studios and the project greatly, “ says Stewart who believes that the installation has also led to even more international exposure for both studios.

In a final word, Hoets warns: “If a stand is not taken against plagiarism it will undermine and affect the livelihood of all creative people. As creative people we have a moral and ethical obligation to protect the rights of other designers and artists. Every time designers, artists or craftspeople have their work copied, they are deprived in some way.”

Willowlamp is showcasing its new Enchanted Faraway Tree, an illuminated sculptural art-piece at the Johannesburg Art Fair (through Southern Guild) at the Sandton Convention Centre from Friday 23rd to Sunday 25th September 2011.

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The collaboration between Willowlamp and Source IBA resulted in Willowlamp’s custom designed 3-storey chandelier in the stair-well at 15 on Orange, a boutique hotel in Cape Town