

Zim designers regroup to resuscitate association

By [Staff reporter](#)

3 Mar 2011

Zimbabwe's graphic artistes came together to resuscitate the Graphics Association of Zimbabwe (GRAZI), which had been dissolved after an exodus that hit the advertising sector during Zimbabwe's economic crisis.

The association, a member of the Canada-based International Council of Graphic Design Association, a partner of the International Design Alliance, had been closed in 2006 after what Michael Danes, who runs brands development agency, Danes Design, described as "a flight of creative people" within Zimbabwe's once-vibrant advertising industry.

Creatives heading back to Zim

Now, these creative people are trooping back into the country, but, say the veterans in the sector and industry standards have dwindled and something needs to be done to quickly rescue the market from mediocrity.

"It's acknowledged everywhere that Zimbabweans are very creative people," argues Troy Reid, who owns iClick, Zimbabwe's new Authorised Apple Reseller. He laments, however, that sampling the work on Zimbabwe's billboards and other advertising genres reflects a dearth of creativity on the local market.

"There is no reason for this," charges Reid, who once ran Gecko Digital Media together with veteran designer, Jarrod Pretorius.

Pretorius recently returned to Zimbabwe after some time in England freelancing or working for several design or advertising companies and was over the past six months been working around to revive GRAZI together with Danes, who chaired the first meeting that culminated in the resuscitation of GRAZI.

Re-launch of GRAZI

On Monday evening, 28 February 2011, the designers, who appear more inclined to describe themselves as "the creative people", met at the same venue where GRAZI had been dissolved in 2006 at the Zimbabwe Institute of Vigital Arts (ZIVA), run by Saki Mufundikwa.

At the meeting, the designers formally re-launched GRAZI with the election of a committee comprising the following: chairman: Saki Mufundikwa; vice chairperson: Jarrod Pretorius and Mike Danes; vice chairperson (technical): Troy Reid; secretary: Christopher Scott; communications officer: Farai Wallace; and associate members: Claire Dongo, Mandisaa Saurombe and David McAllister.

"I'm excited that we got GRAZI moving," said Pretorius soon after the election of the committee. "We've got a very good team behind us and it's good to have something to make a name for ourselves."

Boosting creativity levels

"Everybody agrees there's a lot of talent but standards had deteriorated over the past decade due to a flight of experienced people. The vision is to resuscitate GRAZI and get as many creatives on board in order to bring the level of creativity back up," said Pretorius.

Mufundikwa said his challenge, as the new chairman, would be to ensure GRAZI was the organisation for designers.

"Most of the work out there is crap," he remarked about current standards, vowing to use GRAZI to improve the situation.

For more information on GRAZI and membership, email Michael Danes on mike@danessdesign.com or Jarrod Pretorius on jarrod@idesign.co.zw.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>