

LOULE ON SOUTH AFRICAN ROADS BY 2010

South Africans can look forward to pilot taxis of the future electric car on their roads and around the globe from 2010 onwards, with mass production making it widely available from 2012. Designed by renowned South African car designer Keith Hellel for Cape Town-based company Optima Energy, the multi-purpose urban passenger vehicle promises to dispel the myths that electric cars are unattractive and sluggish.

PRISM AWARDS TO CHAMPION GREEN DESIGN

Piacenza's prestigious architecture and design competition, Prism enters its 10th year of championing local design with a challenge to create a space inspired by nature's cycle of renewal and regeneration. Winners will be selected by some of South Africa's most influential design experts in three categories including public buildings, residential and commercial spaces. The competition offers designers an opportunity to have their work seen by industry leaders, acting as an invaluable springboard for their careers. Deadline: 28 May. Website: www.piacenzaprismawards.co.za

South Africans in Milan

Exclusive design label Misael again presented a selection of top South African design at the Milan Furniture Fair. South Africans Lyall Sprong, Walter Oltmann, Bronze Age and Leonard Shapiro completed the international contingent of designers on the Misael stand.

The Misael project involves artists and designers who, relieved of complying with dictates, guidelines, trends

for approaching everyday objects in a surprising way. Raising the chair to a mysterious luxury object, this year Sprong designed three chairs and concealed a diamond, only visible through X-ray, in one of them. The other two chairs are clad with precious writings about the designer's life.

"The pieces exhibited here are an extension of my in-



or specific topics, are free to express themselves by creating products unique to their genre. This freedom saw the designers push beyond their commercial constraints: Oltmann went from sculpture to chandelier made entirely of intertwined aluminium wire; Shapiro went from craft development to casting gross mats in aluminium; Bronze Age pushed beyond their trademark bowls to design a striking cabinet; and Sprong went deeper than the surface in his exploration of perception.

Sprong's second Milan Furniture fair on Misael's stand, the young Capetonian has become renowned

vestigation into perception and reflect the suggestion that perception is more powerful than design," he commented.

A second piece by Sprong will also be shown on Elle Decoration Italia's curated exhibition of best emerging designers from around the world. Called Hotspot, the piece is a floating spherical stool made from a pilates ball and waste fabric. The chair is embellished by workers at Melie, a Cape Town job-creation company that makes clothing and home accessories from T-shirt factories' cotton off cuts.

