

SLICK ILLUMINATION

Well-travelled Capetonian Nadya Glawé's perspex wall lights in sensual 50s-inspired shapes and colours are a hit with locals and European tourists alike, writes **DAVID SHAPSHAK**

A RECENT Mercedes Benz magazine advert used a close-up of a mosaic light across two pages, with a miniature small car and the famous logo in the corner. That was the entire visual impetus of the ad, meant to convey all the notions of class and glamour that the high-end cars are renowned for.

It's a diversion from their usual advert styling. But what is more interesting is that the sophisticated backdrop for the German car is not an imported European sensibility, but the work of Cape Town artist Nadya Glawé.

Her artful lights have become one of South Africa's hottest new décor must-haves, selling faster than she can produce them.

The intricate mosaic lights — hand-made with different coloured panels of Perspex — were the beginning of a range that now includes sensual 50s-inspired shapes and colours.

These organic shapes have a timeless appeal and, at first glance, seem like originals from the mid-century era that epitomised stylishness.

Glawé started making the lights as an offshoot of her art. She says she had been making artworks for years using photography and "very clean materials like metal and Perspex".



HEAVENLY GLOW: Nadya Glawé's lights create a sumptuous ambience.

One memorable piece used 100 small Perspex boxes of individual images of flames to create a large likeness of a fire across a whole wall.

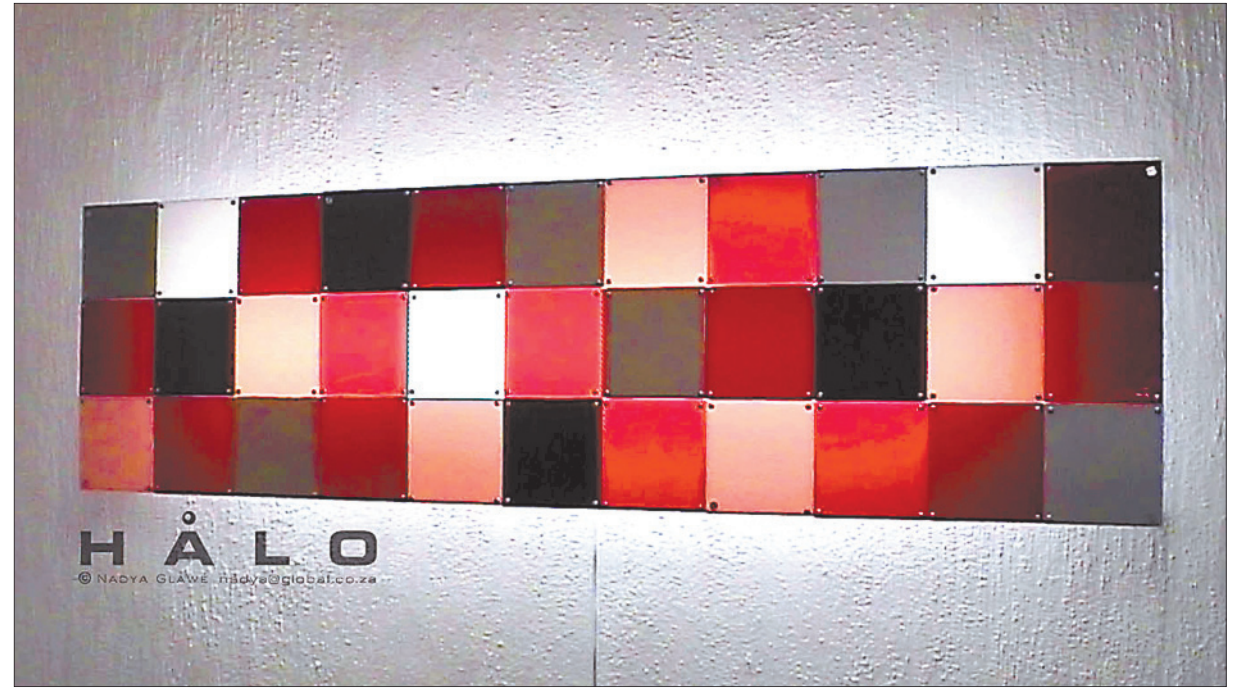
Glawé made similar pieces depicting clouds by photographing the sky on consecutive days. "All smaller pieces are part of bigger whole, even though they are individual and separate entities. A bit like us," she says. "A bit like everything really."

The wall lights, which she now sells

under the brand Halo, began "because I was doing a lot of artwork with photography and Perspex, and a friend asked me to make some lights for a club he was opening. It opened up that possibility."

What began as a few lights for a few friends, then for a few specialist design stores, including design *wunderkind* Tonic and the funky Five-0 Lounge, has mushroomed into a small business.

The lights now sell in several stores in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban.



Some of Glawé's larger lights are part of an interior display in the Woolworths store in Cavendish Square, Cape Town.

"In this country people are more willing to spend money on something functional rather than something artistic," she says. "I like to make beautiful things that are different and unique. It's a functional art object basically."

Brett Murray, a previous Standard Bank Young Artist award winner, might be more renowned for his pop art wall

lights, but Glawé's have a more understated sophisticated appeal.

Because she comes from a design background, the lines are cleaner and more design orientated.

"The store owners tell me that a lot of the lights really appeal to Europeans. A lot of Europeans buy my stuff. Coming to Africa they don't expect to find something so Eurocentric. It's their aesthetic."

Living in Amsterdam, London, Ger-

many and San Francisco has rubbed off on Glawé, who dresses with the same kind of verve that you find in her lights.

Tourists and locals are almost as impressed by the lights as by how relatively inexpensive they are.

Halo lights can be bought at The Space in Johannesburg and Durban, Bread and Butter in Cape Town, Bright House in Cape Town, and East of Eden in Cape Town and Johannesburg.

Contact Glawé on 082 687 8062.