

A photograph of two women from behind, walking away on a rocky, dry path. They are wearing traditional Mdukatshani clothing. The woman on the left wears a bright pink shawl over a red top and a blue skirt, with an orange headwrap and a large wooden spool on her head. The woman on the right wears a purple shawl over a red top and a red skirt with a white stripe, with an orange headwrap and a large wooden spool on her head. The background shows a hilly, arid landscape under a clear sky.

# Mdukatshani Ethnic Jewelry



Mdukatshani works to support African farmers and their families, through:

**Home food security programmes**, which include chicken, goat and Nguni cattle projects.

**Youth projects**, which include 25 lesson courses in animal healthcare for Grade 5 learners.

**A metal and bead work project** involving men and women working from home to produce sought after pieces for the international fashion and decor markets.

**Welfare**, this includes a wide range of activities including getting Aids patients to hospital for testing, and after support for patients.



See more at [www.mdukatshani.com](http://www.mdukatshani.com)

## **Mdukatshani Rural Craft Project**

The Mdukatshani crafters live among the hills of Msinga, one of South Africa's poorest and most arid areas, and until fairly recently, the centre of the gun trade in South Africa. Although there are few families who have no experience of violence, in the past ten years AIDS has become a killer, and in 2006 Msinga was in the headlines with the appearance of a deadly, multi-drug-resistance form of TB.

Crafters work from home, sharing loss as well as laughter. Some are innovators, some are plodders, but most are still bound by tribal tradition. Each woman specialises in different kinds of articles. Some are needlewomen, making jewellery, others work with fine gauge industrial copper wire making items such as woven beaded eggs, bangles, and different kinds of bowls. Both beadwork and wirework are traditional crafts – the wirework, in particular, being a link with a decorative tradition that goes back almost 1000 years.

In many instances, the crafters are the breadwinners in their families, and they support many livelihoods. Almost half of the crafters are widows, observing their three year mourning period by wearing black, grey or white- a colour denoting the status, and setting them apart at social events. The three years is a long, lonely period when handcraft becomes a lifeline. Even in good times it is more than work. It is an expression of the spirit, a hope for happiness.

In the 35 years since the project has started, Mdukatshani's customers have included celebrities such as Elton John, Princess Michael of Kent, Paloma Picasso, Aretha Franklin, Jacqueline Bisset ect, while the project was commissioned to produce jewellery for two haute couture collections for the French designer Yves Saint Laurent.

Crafters are experienced and adaptable and while they produce standard items for the Mdukatshani range they are always ready to try something new, regularly providing 'the hands' for the ideas of outside designers.











*Meeting the Makers*  
Contemporary Craft of KwaZulu-Natal







b1.

**Patterned**



b2.

**Straight**



b3.

## 30 Strand Beaded bracelets

Designs: Patterned or straight

Size: According to request, standard size approximately 18cm

*Specify length, colour and design*

b4.



b5.



b6.

b7.



b8.

b9.



b10.

b11.

## Flower Necklace



f1.



f2.

Size: 34cm (from clasp to clasp)

*Order according to colour*

## 36 Strand Neck Piece and Bangles

p1.



p2.



Neckpiece

Bangle

p4.



p3.





## Beaded angels



a1.



a2.



a3.



Length: 8cm

a4.

## Ancestral huts 'guqas'- copper beaded



h1.



h2.



h3.

Heights:

Small: 6.5cm  
Medium: 7.5cm  
Large: 9cm

Order by colour



h4.

## Beaded Copper Bangles



ba1.



ba2.



ba3.



ba4.

Narrow



ba5.



ba6.

Zigzag



ba7.

Checks



ba9.

Patterned



ba8.

Narrow

Patterned

Zigzag

Size upon request,  
standard size: 6.25cm



Studded

ba10



Bugle beads

ba11



ba12.

Mgongo, Studded zigzag, Open Weave

ba13.



Assorted designs, colours on request



bb1.



## Bead bangles

Designs: Striped or plain

Size: According to request, standard size: diameter 6.25cm

Thick bangle

Thin bangle



bb5.

## Hoop beaded earrings

Designs: Striped or plain

Order according to colour and design

bb2



bb3.



bb4.



## Beaded Copper Eggs



Sizes according to standard egg sizes  
Beaded eggs ordered by colour, no order duplicates designs  
Colours and designs can be specified

Selection of designs, available in different colour combinations







pa1.



pa2.

## 'Khambas' Beer Pots- Copper beaded

Price related to size

Size: according to request, between

Smallest: height 9cm, diameter 5.5cm

Largest: height 27cm, diameter 15cm

Woven on traditional clay pots made locally



pa3.



pa4.



pa5.



pa6.



pa7.



pa8.



pa9.



pa10.



pa11.



pa12.



pa13.



pa14.



pa15.



pa16.

## Beaded copper bowls



bc1. Chevron



bc2.

Size: height 7cm,  
diameter 13cm

Straight



bc3.



bc5.

Size: diameter 22cm, height  
7.5cm



bc6.



bc7.



bc8.

## Copper lampshade bowls

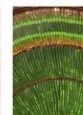


Size: height 9.5cm,  
diameter 37cm

bc4.



bc9.



bc10.

Straight



bc11.

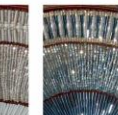


bc12.

Chevron



bc13.



bc14.

Pearls

Order according to colour and design



## 30 Strand Beaded Necklaces



na1



Patterned



na5.



na6.



na7.



na2.



na3.

Straight

## 60 Strand

Length according to request, standard length approximately 66cm



na8.



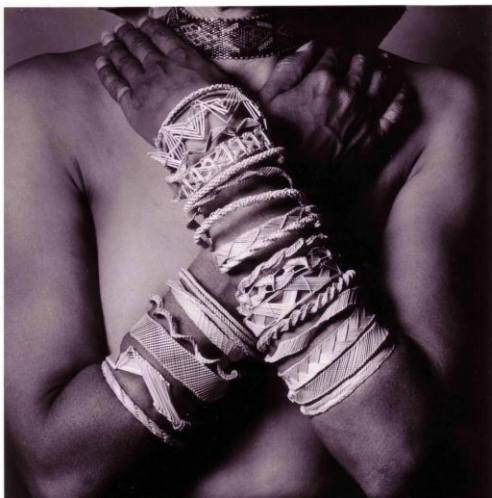
na9.

Order by length, colour and design

## Grass Bangles

Order by design or in groups, no group duplicates designs

Seasonal





## Beaded Drop Earrings

e1.



Sizes:

Small: 5cm

Large: 7cm

Long:

*Order by colour*

e2.



## Copper beer pots



Price related to size

Size: according to request, between

Smallest: height 9cm, diameter 5.5cm

Woven on traditional clay pots made locally



p1.



p2.



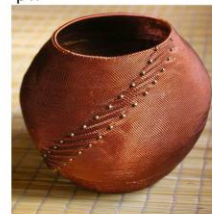
p3.



p4.



p5.



p6.



p7.



p8.



Past designs- all these pieces are still available for order



p1.



p2.



p3.



p4.

Anklets and bracelets



p5. Beaded double belt



p6. Beaded evening bags



Beaded Zulu girls  
p8.



p9. Beaded copper button



Beaded photo frames



p7.

## Past necklace designs



p10.



p11.



p12.



p13.



p15.



p16.



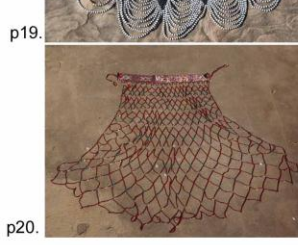
p17.



p18.



p19.



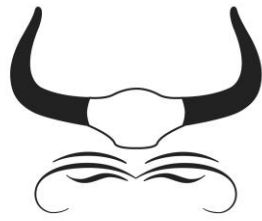
p20.

These are all past designs of beaded necklaces, some made to commission, including designs for Yves Saint Lauren.

All necklaces are still available for order.



# The earth is watching us



THREADS OF AFRICA



Threads of Africa is a joint project weaving gold, shakudu and silver into works of art. It is a partnership between MRDP and Julia Meintjes Fine Art and more information and sales can be found at, [www.threadsof africa.com](http://www.threadsof africa.com).







