



**PAPER WILES:** Inspired by the popular Madiba jive, Wiles hid a small paper spring in the Mandela toy, allowing the torso to move in a dancing motion.

# Reviving (and improving) the paper plane

**Esau Dlamini**

MOST people will remember the days when creating paper aeroplanes was part of their childhood. Modern inventions in the toy industry, however, have reduced public interest in paper toys with paper being mainly used for writing and drawing.

Durban University of Technology (DUT) graphic design student Graham Wiles is reviving interest in the art of paper planes. He's using his knowledge in graphic design to create designs for paper toys.

As part of his BTech research, Wiles, also known as Urbski, explored the art of paper folding.

"As a starting point I first looked at the origins of paper and paper folding throughout the century. I read up on origami (a classic Japanese art form of creating three dimensional objects by folding paper) and looked at contemporary designs," said Wiles.

His practical covers a series of paper toy designs inspired by social interaction and incorporates some of the designer's

memories as a South African.

In a six-week period he held workshops with St Benedict's School pupils in grades four and seven and first-year graphic design students at DUT.

The groups were tasked to design and construct toys with the concepts, When I grow up, In my spare time, and Good vs Evil.

Contrary to his initial doubts concerning the outcome, the designer said the workshops were a success. Thus, his goal to develop renewed interest in graphic design, art and paper folding was achieved.

He said the workshops enabled him to discover a target market and inspired the launch of Urbski Paper Toys.

Various designs, ideal for mothers and children, pupils, students and collectors, are downloadable on his blog. Fans have the pleasure of constructing personal toys with the recommended A3, 250g cardboard paper. Wiles is expanding his brand, adding wallpapers, post-cards and T-shirts.

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