

Tseliso Rangaka on the Mount Olympus of advertising



By [Karabo Ledwaba](#)

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Tseliso Rangaka, chief creative officer of FCB Africa and Hellocomputer, takes us through his journey as jury president for the Radio & Audio Lions jury at Cannes Lions.

Rangaka, no stranger to winning awards such as Cannes Grand Prix, One Show and D&AD pencils says the use of technology and AI was a major theme seen in his category this year.



Tseliso Rangaka is chief creative officer of FCB Joburg and Hellocomputer. Source: Supplied.

■ ***What has your journey with Cannes Lions, as a creative and a member of the jury, been like over the years?***

Cannes Lions will always be a special festival for me. As a junior starting out, this was the show to aspire to. Not only in terms of one's standard of work, but also for a chance to actually go there.

This was the Mount Olympus of advertising and the Gods' made proclamations that had a huge impact on people's careers. Over the years it's become even bigger, just as the Gods have become more human, and the festival itself relatively more accessible, thanks to an online presence.

■ ***How was your experience this year?***

The experience was unlike any I've ever had in Cannes. Radio and Audio is one of the first to be announced, so the jury typically arrives five days before most people even get there.

It's really crazy seeing the festival get scaffolded into place and quickly build up around you. The jury president responsibilities also gave the experience a different feel. The pressure of doing right by the entries, and the constant feeling that you're meant to be somewhere else that very minute, took getting used to. I had an amazing team of jurors and Cannes Lions facilitators who made every moment an absolute pleasure. Oh and standing behind that podium on the awards evening – nothing can describe that.

■ ***What were key themes in creative work you saw this year?***

We saw some category staples like music themed campaigns and 60 second monologues. The really interesting discussions were around the role of technology in the work, particularly the use of generative AI and the ethical questions this raises.

I loved how audio was being used to solve multiple problems, from anxiety relief for cancer patients, to protest, and levelling the field for people with disabilities - it was all there, including a project aim at combatting the harmful effects of noise pollution.



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The theme I welcome the most is the return of classic radio, albeit in an evolved guise. Watch the Radio and Audio Grand Prix winner if you haven't. Breaking radio out of the recording booth and co-creating campaigns with our audience is where the best future work will emerge.

■ ***What are some of the positives that African, but particularly South African jurors bring to Cannes judging?***

I think a diversity of backgrounds is always a great thing to cultivate. I was happy to see other African people on jury panels, it shows that the value of our contribution on global stages is finally getting acknowledged. I also hope it gives creative people on the continent more motivation to throw their unique perspectives into the ring.

With South African representation specifically I would say, given our contribution and our recognition at Cannes over the years, we have earned the right to participate in it.

■ ***In your opinion, how has advertising changed since you started in 1999?***

The biggest change for me has been that, when done well, it has become more difficult to tell the difference between advertising and popular culture. It really pleases me when advertising gets that invisibility trick right.

■ ***What advice do you have for African creatives who want to win big at Cannes?***

Really study what wins at Cannes and other shows. There are themes and patterns everywhere. Know your brand and audience intimately. Bring your client along with you on the journey. Get closer to the media and PR agencies, that's where results get unlocked. Then enter as many local award shows as you can. Don't be afraid to make the work reflect your personality. That's the magic ingredient.

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