

'Work that gets referenced around the braai'

 By Leigh Andrews

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We know what a few of the industry's top creative minds are most excited about as Loeries® Creative Week™ Durban gets underway, now we find out more of their favourite work from the rest of the industry.



Peter Khoury, chief creative officer of TBWA/Hunt/Lascaris; Tseliso Rangaka, ECD of Ogilvy & Mather Cape Town; Gordon Ray, executive creative director of M&C Saatchi Abel; Eoin Welsh, chief creative officer of Havas WW SA; Graham Lang, chief creative officer at Y&R South Africa and Africa; Gareth McPherson, ECD of Publicis Machine; and Roanna Williams, creative director at Joe Public, share their thoughts below...

1. Explain the true significance of a campaign win at the Loeries, for agency and client alike.

Khoury: I don't know an agency or client out there who wouldn't want to go up on stage and be recognised in front of their peers and the industry for the great work that they've managed to achieve as a collective. Great client and agency teams – who work collaboratively, are disruptive, intuitive and brave in their approach – are the ones whose work is celebrated.

Rangaka: The Loerie Awards aim to reward creative work that pushes the boundaries for clients and agencies in the areas of innovation, relevance and effectiveness. A win here is testament to a healthy partnership. It's also a fantastic opportunity to profile both parties.

Ray: A win at Loeries means your work is relevant to a South African audience. Winning locally with work that resonates and gets referenced around the braai feels especially rewarding.

Welsh: It's a great achievement, because it means that piece of work is regarded as one of the best and most effective pieces of creative work to date in our country and region.

Lang: If you win for a piece of work that's truly original and perfectly crafted, has been lauded and applauded by your agency and client before it won an award and has helped shift product or mindsets – then it's very significant and should be celebrated.

McPherson: A campaign win at the Loeries is a great accolade for both the agency and client that have partnered on the campaign. The winning piece would've been judged off four criteria – innovation, originality, execution and effectiveness; and for it to score high across all four means it's a piece of work that has solved a business challenge in a fresh, unique and intelligent way. The significance of a win is that the piece sets a standard. To be recognised for a piece that does the above, you ultimately are lifting the relevant industry related to the client to new realms. Pioneering campaign work sets the standard, and then you find others will follow.

Williams: A campaign win serves as confirmation of great work, as the Loeries is tangible evidence of creative excellence for the South African ad industry. Agencies that get a genuine and prestigious win are seen by clients or potential clients to be performing at a very high level. It gives recognition to creative excellence, which can deliver on business results in order to grow clients' brands. Naturally, winning also serves as a good marketing tool as there's great PR that comes with it. Winning is also integral to acquiring great talent, which ultimately enables an agency to do better work, which contributes to building its client's business. Finally, it creates a great team spirit between clients and their partner agencies, as it inspires everyone.

2. This year's Loeries theme is 'Creativity Unites'. Do you agree with the sentiment?

Khoury: Creativity is a double-edged sword. It has the power to pull us together or pull us apart, and it goes way beyond advertising. Take our current political climate as an example. Political parties have used many different creative ideas to opportunistically gather support for themselves at the local elections. As the broader group of South Africans, we're slowly being pulled apart from each other, based on the political parties' narratives and antics. As marketers and advertisers, we have a great responsibility to add positively to the cultural and social fabric of South Africa. Our sphere of influence is massive. Are we creating inspiring work for the young, hungry minds out there? Are we reflecting the status quo or challenging it positively? What value are we adding to people's lives? I wish more marketers and agency people would ask themselves these higher purpose questions before the inevitable "money, profit, target" questions come along. One of our biggest impediments to national unity is the language barrier. If we all focused on how to overcome this through the power of big brands and their communication, we would achieve a lot as South Africans, and would leave a lasting legacy.

Rangaka: Absolutely. The best examples of creativity are those that bring people together around a common passion, ideal or cause. It is probably the single most unifying force after sport. Examples are everywhere. In music, film, design and art. In our world, brands like Dove have brought women all over the world together around the idea that they are naturally beautiful. The Nike Run platform has created a community of runners, all driven by their ambition to beat their best. Airbnb continues to harness the power of design and technology to intersect people's lives through enabling them to share their most intimate spaces. The proof is overwhelming.

Ray: Ideas that tap into cultural nuance or reflect a national zeitgeist engage local audiences and remind us of what makes us unique.

Welsh: Yes and no. Creativity can divide, too – it can polarise opinions, separate the risk-takers from the risk-averse and simply frightens some while exciting others. None of which is bad – great creative *should* do this. It should be provocative.

But great creativity also does away with traditional barriers and divisions, like the ones between the digital world and the traditional one, between businesses and between people. I love the recent Ster-Kinekor “first movie to see” campaign – it melts hearts while marketing the brand and its core values, so among many other unions, it unites business objectives with a genuine desire to make lives better.

Lang: We’re all part of one industry and we’re all hopefully looking to move the narrative forward through outstanding ideas – so, in that sense, we are united.

McPherson: Creativity has the power to do a lot! And yes, uniting people is definitely one of them. Just looking at the festival format itself, it brings together the creative minds of international judges and people from South Africa, the Middle East and the rest of Africa in one place to recognise, share and inspire... Only great things can come from that. In terms of brand communication, the influence of great creative thinking certainly does have the power to unite, it has the power to influence and change behaviour and it brings people together to act. Work like Coca-Cola 'Rainbow', Peninsula School Feeding Association's 'Social Feed' and UN Women are great examples of these.

Williams: Yes. Creativity Unites. It’s our common language. No matter where you come from, who you are, what the colour of your skin is, where you live, what your circumstances are, creativity can speak to you. It has no boundaries. And it can make a difference. A great example is the [Love has no labels](#) campaign, which unites people and makes them rethink their bias and prejudice ways in a very unexpected and creative way.

3. What’s the impact of an individual Loeries accolade or ranking on that creative’s career?

Gainsford: At MullenLowe, we don’t only hire winners. We hire hungry creative people with the drive, and the will, to win. They will be winners. This is what great clients want. An agency full of competitive, energetic, driven winners that will do what it takes to win awards, market share, and share of voice.

Rangaka: Winning a Loerie elevates you above your peers. It’s an acknowledgement by the best minds in the industry that you’re at the top of your game. It’s exceedingly difficult to win and for the few that manage to bag one, the rewards in career opportunity are multiplied.

Ray: Every industry has them, they say you’re good at what you do, and therefore worth hiring.

Welsh: High. Having the reward of a Loerie next to a piece of work you did validates its creative worth considerably.

Lang: It builds confidence, and that can be a good or bad thing. Personally, I’m not a fan of lists or rankings; purely because they never really tell the whole story. A more defined outline of someone’s ability is built on consistently doing great work.

McPherson: It definitely plays a part in the individual’s career development and advancement. Points are allocated to individuals who are credited on winning work and a top ten list across different career fields are published post-Loeries. If you’re winning Loeries awards, then it goes without saying that you’re being recognised for the creativity of the work you’re producing. That’s a good measurement to gauge if someone is performing at the top of their game.

Williams: Winning at the Loeries can have a significant impact on a creative’s career. If you’re talented and ambitious and want to negotiate a good salary, get a promotion, be taken seriously or be ranked highly by your peers and the industry, it helps to have the clout of accolades behind your name. These can help authenticate a creative’s ability to consistently do great work. However, I think it’s important to know what the accolade was for. Accolades achieved with measurable results by producing creative work for your clients that grows their business should be the true measure of a creative individual’s success.

4. Let us in on your current favourite work from the rest of the industry and why it

resonates with you.

Khoury: I'm sad to admit that my favourite pieces of work are not local. Burger King's McWhopper and REI's Opt Outside campaign lead by example – big brands, being brave and challenging the status quo. A lot of South Africa's work is playing it on the safe side at the moment; there are exceptions though, and these are the pieces of work that get a huge amount of PR and win big at awards shows. There has never been a better time to work in this industry. As media options explode, digital becomes a pipeline of new creative opportunities. There's been a huge shift of media becoming more relevant in people's lives. But it becomes incumbent upon us to add value, to be as compelling as traditional entertainment, as content is shared by friends and family. But people have to want to share our work and that means it has to break through, and this takes courage from all sides. Courage that's in short supply.

Rangaka: I really like the new Unisa TV spot, beautifully shot by director Kevin Fitzgerald. It manages to capture the solitude and dedication that comes with distance learning. The agency could have quite easily ended up with smiling people at a graduation ceremony. Instead they produced an honest story with great cast and a lovely soundtrack to boot.

Ray: I love the Vodacom "You should've called" radio. They're funny, beautifully crafted and rooted in an undeniable human truth.

Welsh: KFC "Man meals" is great radio done the old way – a smart idea, beautifully crafted. Ster-Kinekor's "first movie" is just a fantastic way of looking differently (no pun intended) at a classic brand. Toyota "Social Test Drive" is a brilliant way of combining a consumer need with a broader social one.

Lang: From a South African perspective, I really enjoyed the KFC radio ads that won the Grand Prix in Cannes. No doubt that they'll do great things at the Loeries. Unfortunately, there's not much else in the other channels that really inspired me. But let's see what happens in the judging.

McPherson: There were a few pieces last year that really stood out for me. I've mentioned the two already, and won't be biased and mention our own Hasbro campaign... I really liked Santam's One of a Kind campaign. I thought the TVC played to a strong insight and it was beautifully executed. The fresh approach of tourists telling each other about our quirks and odd behaviour, making light of our challenges as a country, really hit home the 'one of a kind' sentiment and made people feel proud of it. It's a great example of how to create positivity around a grudge purchase such as insurance. From an innovation and tech point of view, I thought KFC's 'Soundbite' Table was a great solution to enhance the in-store dining experience and to get people to linger at the KFC outlets for longer. The piece had "wow" factor in its execution and something fresh that hadn't been done before for a brand. Looking to this year's batch of work, there are also a number of pieces that I really like. I think KFC's 'man meal' radio ads that did well at Cannes will do well at the Loeries. So will Passop's 'I'm a Muslim' campaign that was executed so beautifully. Really strong portrait photography here.

Williams: There are a few creative pieces that I really love, however I like the latest commercial done for Coronation Fund Managers for its insight, simplicity and how beautifully crafted it is. It's an ad that everyone can relate to, no matter your race or profession. The end line: "If your money came easy, you'd invest it with anyone," is really insightful.

Here's to an insightful and inspirational creative week all round. Follow the [#Loeries2016 hashtag](#) on Twitter for more and [click here](#) for a reminder of what the attendees are most looking forward to from Loeries® Creative Week™ Durban...

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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