

iPod-based award judging, only in the week of the awards

 By [Leigh Andrews](#)

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While local and global award shows alike get their share of compliments, they also receive criticism - buckets and buckets full, mainly on the judging process. That's why I've made this year's Loerie Awards' judging process as transparent as possible, with insight from one of this year's international jury chairmen...

Remember how I flew to Durban a few months back with the Loeries team, to attend the [Town Hall meeting](#) in the Elangeni Hotel? That's how long the team's been ready for this year's Loeries judging process, even though judging will only take place during Loeries Creative Week, from 10 to 16 August.



Durban beachfront © Hongqi Zhang – [123RF.com](#)

In fact, so important is the judging process that our Loeries Durban preview festivities kicked off with a meeting at the Durban ICC in March, so that we could test their Wi-Fi for the iPod-based Loeries judging. Yes, it's all electronic.

Wi-Fi testing and an early Loeries judging taster

Wi-Fi strength is obviously affected by network and weather, but that doesn't mean the Loeries team hasn't already done all they can months in advance to ensure coverage is as stable and consistent as possible in every room of the ICC. The team had hauled their own routers along for the trip, especially to plug them in and upload, download and ping speed tests and determine exactly how many Telkom routers were required in each judging room.

Note I mentioned we were doing this testing far in advance of the actual judging process? That's because the Loerie Awards judging only takes place from Monday to Thursday of Loeries Creative Week, when most attendees are already in the city, so all the work is still fresh in the judges' minds when it comes to the award nights.

I got a taste of what it's like to be a Loeries judge, too, even if it was just by submitting one category's test scores on an iPod. This technologically-focused aspect is important because as with any awards show, Human says the bulk of the criticism they receive is around the judging process - usually by those not in the know. To make it more accurate, this form of '123 on a screen' judging doesn't even show the agency responsible for the work, and there's no human intervention, with instantaneous ballot counting, making it what Human laughingly described as "not almost fool proof, it is fool proof!"

While walking around the Durban ICC, Human also pointed out that the main auditorium section can have its boundary walls broken down or rebuilt as and how the actual event requires, making it as large or intimate as required. That's handy,

especially as the 2015 Loeries judging will take place during Loeries Creative Week, as mentioned above.

Who are these people, judging our creativity?

[Click here](#) for a reminder of this year's Loeries Communication Design judging panel.

In addition to Ji Lee, Creative Director of Facebook Creative Shop in New York, who is heading up the Communication Design judging panel as chairman this year, international judges include Chuck Porter of Crispin Porter + Bogusky, heading up this year's [TV, Film and Radio](#) panel; as well as Chris Clarke of DigitasLBi International, heading up the Digital panel; and Thim Wagner of Jung Von Matt, for the Print Communication panel.

I caught up with Wagner to find out what he's most looking forward to and his thoughts on the Loeries judging process to come...

■ **1. Always an honour to be asked to judge international work - how did you celebrate the news?**



Thim Wagner

Wagner: When I received the invitation, I thought: "Oh my God - I will not do it, I have no idea about the South African jury." But later on, I thought: "Wow, this is really cool - this will be an experience for life". I don't know that much about the African communication industry, the culture and their makers. I have only a neighbour, who is from Africa and he is a lawyer - a really great guy. He told me that I have to do it! And because I'm a curious person, I'm really looking forward to do this task. Plus, of course it is a special honour to be called the jury chairman.

■ **2. Indeed it is. Give us a brief overview of your work history and highlights along the way.**

Wagner: I started my career as an art director in a small German hot shop agency called BMZ, which was very famous in the 1980s. After that, I worked for half a year on a '3D-drop' from shampoo packaging. Gradually, all the good creatives left the agency and I decided to change to Jung von Matt.

Since then, I have developed campaigns for BMW, Sparkasse (a German bank), Bild newspaper, Ligne Roset, Nivea and Mercedes Benz. My most excellent work is 'The invisible drive' from Mercedes Benz.

■ **3. Certainly a well-known campaign. Tell us what it takes to actually create a winning Loeries campaign - what are you looking for in this year's entries?**

Wagner: I'm looking forward to meeting the other creatives from our judging panel. Together, we will look for all extraordinary, impressive and courageous work from the entries. For me, there is no difference in comparing Loeries to other international competitions. In addition to the selection criteria for a good creation, such as originality and handcraft - the emotional impact is very important for me: does the communication make me happy; has it touched me or enriched me.

■ **4. I know judging only takes place during the actual Loeries Creative Week in August - can you give us some insight into the actual judging process and what it will entail?**

Wagner: At the moment, everything is about the organisation from the festival. I don't even know my judging panel colleagues yet. I'm very excited about meeting all the different characters and cultures. The second most important thing is my speech, which I'm preparing right now on the value of creativity. You'll hear it at the end of the jury week at the DSTV Seminar of Creativity.

■ **5. How does the calibre of the South African work entered into the Loeries compare to other work you've seen internationally?**

Wagner: The winners from last year's Loeries really don't have to be afraid of the comparison to other big international festivals like CLIO, New York Festivals or ADC Europe. One of my favourite pieces of work from the Print category from

2014 is the BOSE campaign 'Noise-cancelling headphones'. I think it's the best example of great storytelling and the best proof ever that print is still not dead.

That's just a taste of what to look forward to... For more on what to expect from this year's Loeries' Creative Week, visit the [official Loeries website](#) or our special [Loeries Creative Week](#) section.

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