

The creative industry needs change

 By [Banele Rewo](#)

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The 'creative industry needs change, but where are the creatives?' excuse should be retired. (video)

Respectable creative industry heads have written a glutinous number of articles and have spoken at just as many events about the lack of [true creative talent](#), [transformation](#) and the absent [Afrocentric influence](#) on advertising and marketing.

The rhetoric continues to stagger while actions are stagnant. It's more like 'as long as it is spoken and written about in public platforms, then there is no need to actually act and change the environment'. The industry can then move on to patting itself on the back, and then resume regurgitating, blanketing and stereotyping.

Who's watching and who cares?

The outspoken South African hip hop artist [Siyabonga "Slikour" Metane](#) has been raising serious social issues in his music for years now.

His new single ["Blacks R Foolz"](#) makes considerable mention of how marketing companies overlook African or "black" artists in favour of acts such as The Parlotones. In his opening stanza...

Ten years in the game I know white bands that only seen
Two years of fame but they set for life
Look at the Parlotones and KFC
I ain't knocking them it's really just what I see
Zola was the biggest star that we've ever seen
But what's sad was it was only seen by Cell C
While we work hard just to sell a CD
They make millions of a couple of mp3's
And break bread for their own race, own creed
I wish black executives could take the lead
But they put us down like we embarrass them
And give us deals that equate to embarrassment

...In his second stanza he makes it clear regarding issues concerning favouritism and promotion of foreign music by this country's media.

Media undermine us
They even offend us
Radio don't play us
They don't even recommend us
Journalists with scandals to misrepresent us

He continues...

We show off the BMWs, and VWs but doesn't that trouble that they don't consider you
In their marketing strategy that's my view
But they know that you have the fashion IQ
Chances they don't even like you
But they know you going to make their brand cool
Coz we so materialistic we're such fools
They don't give a buck to the same hoods

Starting to speak openly

The answer is that members of the public, more especially the rebellious young urban South Africans, see these acts and they are starting to speak openly, and slowly weaning themselves off supporting brands with marketing strategies that do not serve their ambitions and communities that consume the products.

Sibongile's ambition is to grow her business and create employment; all she needs is adequate support so she can buy the necessary equipment to ply her trade, and she is willing to work for it. She asks herself what's the point of being seen wearing a famous brand if all they ask her to do is buy, retweet, share and get her peers to "like" the brand. She would rather support her peers with businesses that compete globally on a local and social scale.

Where are the creatives then?

While the industry is talking the talk, we are already gone.

On our own

We are collaborating and producing quality material on our own and offering this to Mr Brand.

We know very well how creative industries would rather take a risk on a cousin with a startup providing social media services than on a talented creative from eKasi with no twang in the tongue. That is, up until you are nominated for an award overseas or you show serious potential to win them awards locally; your ability to communicate with the market you are part of is last on the list.

Some future thinking brands have taken up the innovative route and are giving back to the market more than T-shirts and key rings:

- Global alcohol brand Miller Genuine Draft has been collaborating with seeders and influencers for the last four months, including the opportunity to meet and discuss challenges and potentials with [SABMiller chairman Meyer Kahn](#).
- Play Energy Drink formulated an entire campaign called the [Griffin Project](#) around exceptional individuals influencing popular culture - but the kind you never see on TV. This will culminate with a three-day event involving music, exhibitions and streets culture.

Not a flash in the pan



Entrepreneurial photographers collaborate with [Authentic Creatives](#).

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Miller Genuine Draft collaborates with Authentic Creatives' exhibition.

We develop creative strategies for ourselves and brands initiated by peers through developing our own collaborative networks by participation and creating what, we, the target market would like to see.

This is not a flash in the pan; it is what brands should have in their marketing plans.

ABOUT BANELE REWO

Banele Rewo is a creative strategy magician at Authentic Creatives (icreatewecreate.com). He believes the era of the star creative is dead and buried. He networks with creatives and, through collaborations with entrepreneurial photographers, Authentic Creatives has recently produced and exhibited the "May Johannesburg Bless You" photo series. He has also collaborated with young multimedia and production company SOOT to create a series of videos for inspired by FreedomDay. Contact Banele at rewobanele@gmail.com, follow @Baniroquai on Twitter or view creative advertising on Baniroquai.Tumblr.com

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