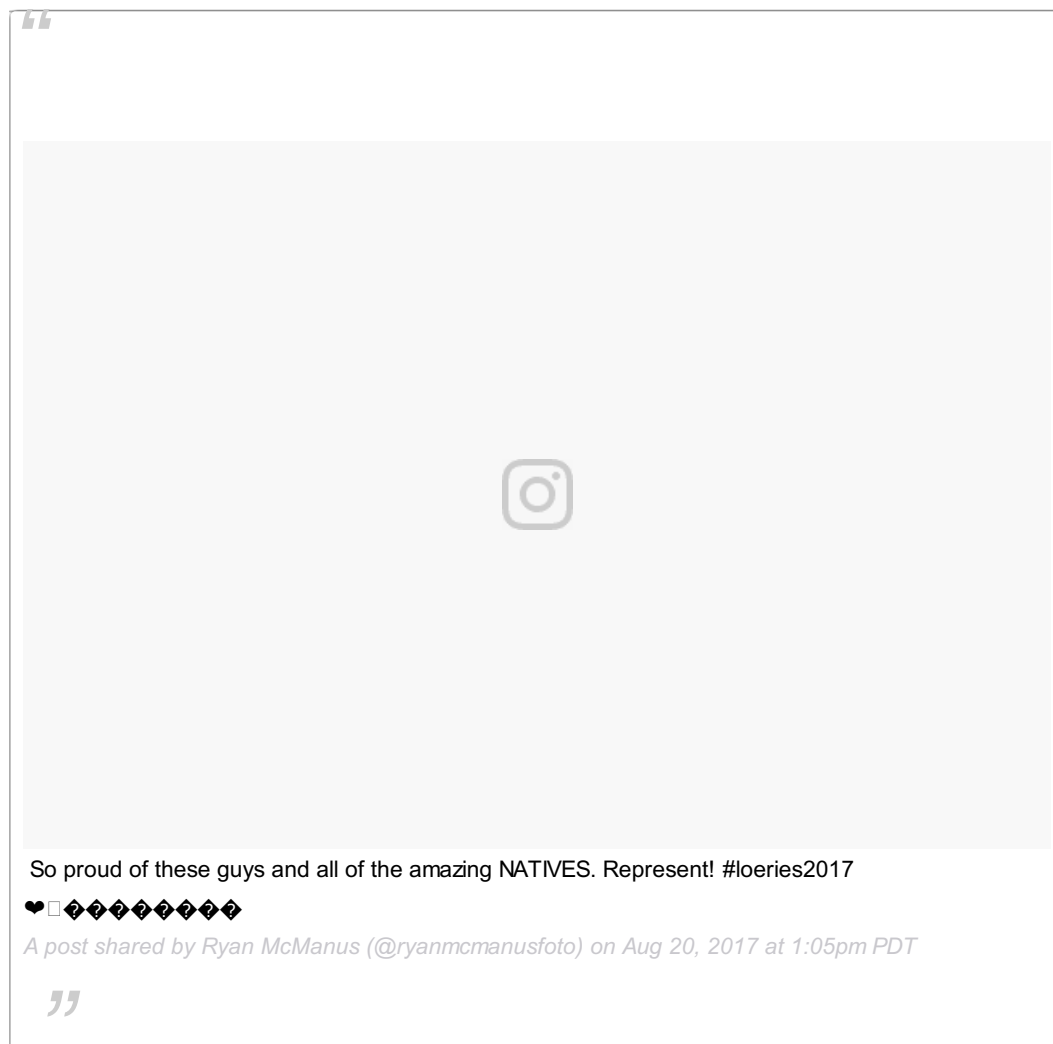


# #LoeriesRankings2017 with... Native VML

By Leigh Andrews

27 Oct 2017

Just when you thought the Loeries buzz was over, the Loeries' rankings are in! I chatted to some of this year's top-ranked creatives post-celebrations. We kick off the local insights with Native VML.



Native VML outdid the agency's personal best at this year's Loerie Awards. For starters, [Stop The Cycle - Tech, Fashion, Chocolate](#) for client **HuffPost SA** brought home 'digital and interactive – mobile media campaign gold', while 'Stop the Cycle – fashion' brought home 'media innovation – single medium silver'.

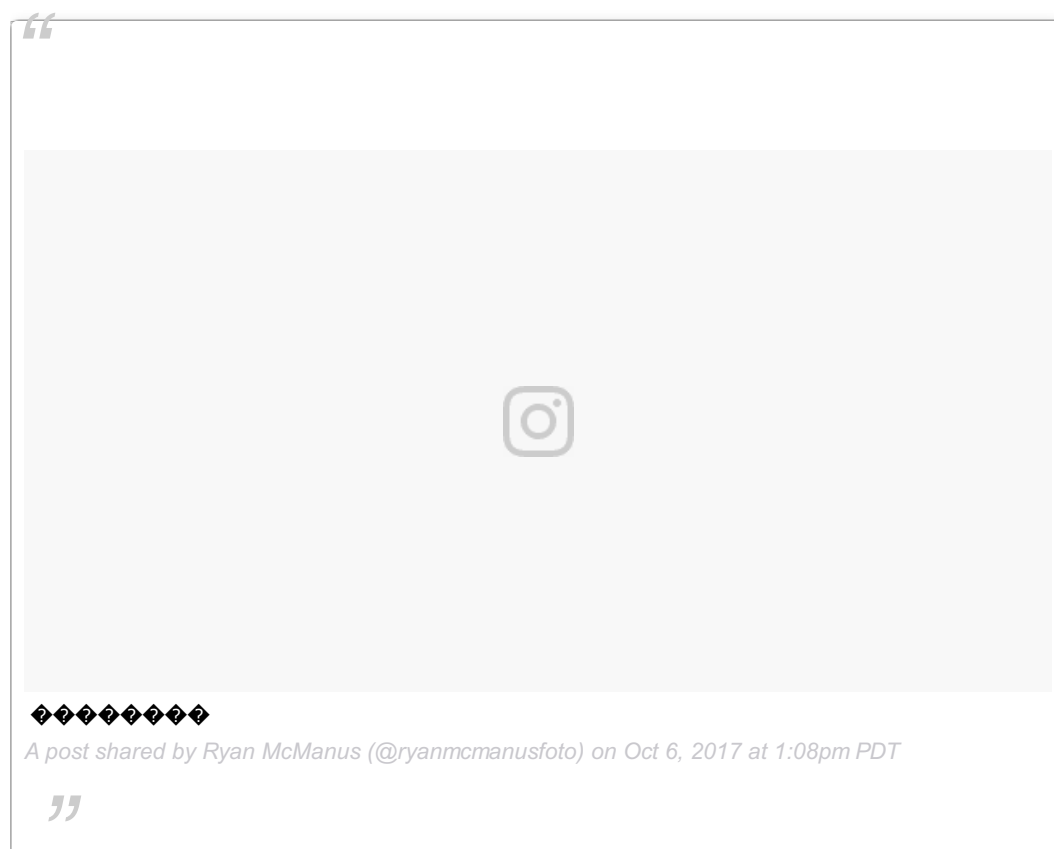
Then, the **Absolut One Source** campaign took home 'digital integrated campaign silver', as well as 'internet video – above 30s campaign silver', 'PR and media communication campaign bronze', 'integrated campaign silver' and 'digital and interactive – social media bronze', with the [Absolut One Source music video](#) bringing home 'branded content video – campaign gold', as well as a 'TV crafts – editing craft certificate'.

**Nedbank's** '[See money differently](#)' was awarded 'digital integrated campaign bronze' as well as 'digital and interactive – mobile media bronze', with '[Emoji Catwalk](#)' for **Edgars Fashion's Edgars Summer Range 2016** also bringing home 'digital and interactive – social media bronze'.

See all their winning work below:



As a result of that flashy flock of birds, the Native VML team also featured strongly in this year's Loeries rankings. VML itself ranked 6th for regional agency group 2017, with Native VML up from 16th last year to 4th this year in the overall ranking by agency 2017 table, and up from 12th last year to 3rd this year in the ranking by SA agency 2017 table.



Native VML was also ranked fourth in the overall ranking by agency size table for large agencies with 100 or more employees and third in the table ranking digital and interactive communication.

## **The flash flock of Loeries-ranked Native VMLers**

Looking to individual accolades, you'll need a few hands to tick off all of these: Jason Xenopoulos ranked third in the chief creative officer 2017 table, with Ryan McManus ranked fifth in the executive creative director table, while Adam Whitehouse is ranked as the top creative director, Gabriella Jardine is the top animator for 2017 and Kerry Hosford is top producer.

Ana-Nicole Rocha is fifth in the agency art director table with Ernst Lass seventh. When it comes to the rankings for writers, Anna-Mart Fourie is fifth with Karmen Wessels and Mari Basson sharing tenth spot. Basson is also in second spot in the strategist rankings. Rounding out the results, Gia Pope is sixth with Tanya Horak tenth for account management, with Kuli Chana ranked third in the table for music and sound composition.

In terms of clients, Absolut was ranked fourth, Nando's 12th and *HuffPost SA* in 19th spot in the overall ranking by brand table, while Absolut's Melanie Campbell is fifth in the brand representative table.



McManus



## #CannesLions2017: "Africa is the birthplace of creativity" - Melanie Campbell

Leigh Andrews 17 Jul 2017



Little wonder when you consider their impressive staff complement: Native VML ECD Ryan McManus, with the agency for 4.5 years now, works across the following brands: Absolut, Jameson, Chivas, Nedbank, Liberty, Standard Bank, Edgars, Amstel, Metropolitan, Nando's, Pepsico, Nike and RCL. While strategist and creative group head Mari Basson – yes, that's a dual role – also with the agency for about five years now, is a 'digitally born hybrid problem solver', working predominantly on the Pernod Ricard account and currently working on the next iteration of Absolut's One Source campaign set to kick off in November, as well as numerous projects for Jameson... amongst other things, of course.



Basson.



White.

Then there's Donovan White, lead digital strategist, also at the agency for five years now, who was announced as the IAB South Africa's Best Digital Strategist 2017 for his work on Nedbank, while creative director Andrew Shaw, originally an IT guy and only a 'Native VMLer' for five months now, who has won over 30 advertising awards since 2004 and was rated fifth in *AdReview's* Top Ten Directors of 2010. He currently works across the board on Nedbank, Amstel, Nike, Colgate and RCL.

I spoke to McManus, Basson, White and Shaw to find out how they plan to extend their winning streak next year and who they admire most in the industry...

### ***What do you attribute this year's successes to?***

**McManus:** This year's success is a continuation of our journey. We have a clear mission to do strategic, creative, and purpose led work that lives in people's lives', and it's amazing to see how it's resulted in such a strong showing in the rankings and award shows.

I think we've been able to do more of the kind of work we believe in through strong client partnerships and a shared belief that we need to create work with a local African voice that can truly become part of our culture.

**Basson:** Hard work, determination, collaboration, trust and madness.

**White:** The strength of Native VML is that we agonise over people and their experiences. You can't beat a great strategy with incredible human truths. More so, they say culture eats strategy for breakfast. We are super lucky that we have clients with very similar cultures and values as we have so it allows for great creative work to flourish!

**Shaw:** Clients willing to take risks and putting trust in their agency partners, will always allow exceptional creative to be made.

▣ **What plans are already underway to better your ranking next year?**

**McManus:** As always, we have lots of ideas, but it's about bringing the most meaningful and powerful ones into life. And crafting them to be as good as they can get. We are not focused on the award shows as an outcome, but of course would be great to keep improving against our own benchmarks, continuing to excel each year.



Shaw.

**Basson:** Industry recognition is always nice, but certainly not the objective. I want to do work to be proud of rather than work to win awards.

**White:** I've just returned from VML Kansas, and seeing how similar in thinking we are is just incredible. I would say thinking more globally would definitely be one of them.

**Shaw:** 'Keep the momentum moving forward', is the natural answer... but the wrong one. It's about accelerating forward!

▣ **How does this year's Loeries flock differ from your haul last year?**

**McManus:** Last year the agency took home 11 birds and this was our greatest year yet, as we took home 17 Loeries in total, and Karmen Wessels, who started with us as an intern and refused to leave won shared 'Best Young Creative', something that was really a highlight of the year for me.



#LadiesofLoeries: "Fight for your ideas, ask for what you want" - Karmen Wessels

Leigh Andrews 4 Sep 2017



We also won across so many categories, really proving our integrated offering. Of course, seeing Native VML move up the rankings to third in SA is also an immensely proud moment for us!

**Basson:** Last year I won for work across smaller campaigns, whereas this year I won in numerous categories, for one massive integrated campaign that kept me busy for about eight months!

**Shaw:** This year's winnings showed the industry that Native VML has arrived!

▣ **Tell us two people you personally admire in the industry in 2017 – both an established mentor figure as well as a newcomer making waves.**

**McManus:** I've always admired the work Nathan Reddy and the Grid team do. It's always incredibly inventive, purposeful and beautiful, and I love the way they inject meaning into every design decision.



#Loeries2017: Hall of Fame inductee Nathan Reddy on Grid's culture refresh disruption and curation

Leigh Andrews 20 Aug 2017



He also works in such a media-agnostic way, which is something I personally love.

In terms of newcomers, I'm not sure how new he is anymore, but I think Kyle Lewis from Arcade/Egg Films is really one to watch. For such a young guy he has been extremely prolific, hardworking, and really tackles every job as a learning experience.



## Kyle Lewis takes home nine Loeries

Arcade Content 23 Aug 2017



I think he's going to go very far, and is a great talent already. His ability to cross between advertising and entertainment will really push his work into a fantastic place in the future.

**Basson:** I have insane respect for Jason Xenopoulos – an ambitious, inspiring, caring and generous leader who I am very privileged to have as a mentor.



## #CannesLions: The gold standard in creative excellence

Leigh Andrews 13 Jun 2017



In terms of newcomers making waves, I love working with Melissa van Rooyen – she's smart and tough, yet humble, and empathetic – I can't wait to see what she does in this industry, and beyond!

**White:** I've always had great admiration for Jonathan Deeb of FCB Africa. His intelligence and natural talent for creativity is just out of this world.



## Shifting the traditional agency model

Jonathan Deeb 5 Feb 2015



Then, of course, Karmen Wessels. I've had the privilege of working with her on the likes of Pepsico. Apart from her being a fellow Native VMLer, I look at her and all I see is someone who doesn't accept limitations.

“



Happy birthday and huge congratulations to the best young creative @spotfishy 💎💎💎💎💎

A post shared by Ryan McManus (@ryanmcmanusfoto) on Aug 20, 2017 at 4:10pm PDT

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**Shaw:** Ryan McManus, our ECD here at Native VML!



#CannesLions2017: “Great ideas can come from anywhere” - Ryan McManus

Leigh Andrews 18 Jul 2017



Lots to celebrate and lots to looking forward to from 2018! [Click through](#) to our Loeries' special section for more, [here](#) and [here](#) for more on Absolut One Source, and be sure to follow Native VML on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

## 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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